

PREPARING TO STAND

Number 19 — May 2009

“In this age, just prior to the second coming of Christ in the clouds of heaven, God calls for men who will prepare a people to stand in the great day of the Lord.” SW 3-21-1905

“Surely the Lord God does nothing, unless He reveals His secret to His servants the prophets.” Amos 3:7

The “The Abomination of Desolation, Spoken of by Daniel the Prophet”

by Jim Buller

Jesus said, “when you see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, ... flee to the mountains ... for then there will be great tribulation, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world ...” See Matthew 24:15-16, 21. “The abomination of desolation spoken of by the prophet Daniel,” then, is our sign to flee, and it marks the beginning of the time of trouble. Looking in Daniel, we find the Abomination of Desolation is mentioned directly in two places, in chapter 11:31, and 12:11. There is also a similar wording in Daniel 9:27.

As we consider these references, let us remember that the prophecy in Matthew 24 has three parallels: the destruction of Jerusalem, the “Dark Ages,” and the end-times. Since Daniel chapter 9 refers to the coming of the Messiah, His work and death, and the destruction of Jerusalem, the reference there must be primarily concerned with that parallel. The other two references are part of the vision recorded in Daniel chapters 10 through 12. Although we won’t take the time to look at it here, it is worth noting the similarities between Matthew 24 verses 4 through 31, and Daniel 11 from about verse 27 through chapter 12 verse 3. In this study we will primarily concern ourselves with the reference in Daniel 11:31.

Ellen White does not say much about Daniel 11. However, what she does say, is significant. Notice the following statement from *Manuscript Releases Volume Thirteen*, page 394.

“We have no time to lose. Troublous times are before us. The world is stirred with the spirit of war. Soon the scenes of trouble spoken of in the prophecies will take place. The prophecy in the eleventh of Daniel has nearly reached its complete fulfillment. Much of the history that has taken place in fulfillment of this prophecy will be repeated. In the thirtieth verse a power is spoken of that ‘shall be grieved, and return, and have indignation against the holy covenant: so shall he do; he shall even return, and have intelligence with them that forsake the holy covenant.’ [Verses 31-36, quoted.]”

Notice the part that says, “The prophecy in the eleventh of Daniel has *nearly reached its complete fulfillment*. Much of the history that has taken place in fulfillment of this prophecy *will be repeated*.” (Emphasis supplied.) Thus, in addition to parallels in the past, this indicates a future, end-time application of *these verses*. To make sure we know which part of the chapter is being particularly referred to, verses 30-36 are quoted. [Although verses 31-36 were only referenced as being *quoted* here in *Manuscript Releases*, (presumably to save space), please note that they *were* part of the original as it came from the pen of the author.] Verse 31, a part of this section, contains the Abomination of Desolation—the subject of this study. Therefore, it is very likely that *this* reference to the Abomination of Desolation is the one Jesus had in mind for the end-time application of His prophecy in Matthew 24.

Before we go any farther in Daniel, let’s go back to Matthew 24, and review the significance of the Abomination of Desolation as a signal event. In Matthew 24:15-16, Jesus says, “when you see the abomination of desolation, ... flee to the mountains.” The equivalent of these verses in Luke, which is found in chapter 21:20-21, say, “when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies ... flee to the mountains.” Thus we find that the “promised sign” for the early Christians—their signal to flee—was Jerusalem being “surrounded by armies.”

Next, let’s compare this with *Testimonies for the Church Vol. 5*, pages 464-465, which says: “As the siege of Jerusalem by the Roman armies was the signal for flight to the Judean Christians, so the assumption of power on the part of our nation in the decree enforcing the papal sabbath will be a warning to us. It will then be time to leave the large cities, preparatory to leaving the smaller ones for retired homes in secluded places among the mountains.”

Thus, the Abomination of Desolation in the end-time, *our* promised sign, is a “decree,” “on the part of our nation,” “enforcing the papal sabbath”—a national Sunday law in the U.S.A. (Note that Ellen White was a U. S. citizen, and that this also goes together with typical Adventist teaching regarding the second beast in Revelation 13.) The Abomination of Desolation in Daniel 11:31, must therefore be a reference to this National Sunday Law.

From the context of the chapter, the “King of the North.” is the one who sets up the “abomination of desolation.” And although the *Testimonies for the Church Vol. 5*, quotation above says the U.S.A. is the one who makes the National Sunday Law, please note that the U.S.A. is *not* necessarily the “King of the North.”

To understand the identity of the “King of the North” one needs to recognize that all of Daniel’s prophecies follow the same basic pattern—the flow of superpowers throughout history: Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, Rome, the divisions of Rome, and the Papacy, ending with Jesus’ eternal kingdom—the ultimate “superpower!” Viewed as a whole, the vision in Daniel chapters 10-12 follows this same basic pattern. The characteristics of the “king of the North,” at this point in this vision, correspond with the characteristics of the “little horn” in both Daniel chapters 7 and chapter 8 which clearly represent the Papacy. Therefore the “King of the North,” at this point in the vision is the Papacy, not the U.S.A.

But remember, in Revelation 13 we find a close cooperation between the Papacy and the U.S.A. in the end-times. Note also that during the dark ages when the Papacy wanted to do something that required civil or military strength, it got one of its political allies

to do it. Therefore, in the end-times we can expect civil or military action on the part of the Papacy to come from its chief political ally in the end-times —the U.S.A.

In addition, keep in mind that even though the National Sunday Law is enforced by the U.S.A., it is the “*papal sabbath*,” and the “*mark of the beast*.” Therefore, since the Papacy *is* the one behind it all, it can still be said that the Papacy, the “King of the North,” is the one who sets up the Abomination of Desolation, even though it is the U.S.A. that makes and enforces, the Sunday law.

But taking a closer look at these verses in Daniel, we find more. Notice that in the quotation from *Manuscript Releases* above, Ellen White says, “In the thirtieth verse a *power* is spoken of that ‘shall be grieved, and *return*.’” (Emphasis supplied.) Reading on through verse 31, we find that upon his “return,” this power takes action “against the holy covenant” and then sets up the “abomination of desolation.” This raises some interesting questions. Why is he “grieved?” And what is he “returning” from? To answer these questions we have to look back to verse 29. As we read through Daniel 11:29-31 below, notice the sequence of events.

“At the appointed time he shall return and go toward the south; but it shall not be like the former or the latter. For ships from Kittim shall come against him; therefore he shall be grieved, and return in a rage against the holy covenant, and do damage. So he shall return and show regard for those who forsake the holy covenant. And forces shall be mustered by him, and they shall defile the sanctuary fortress; then they shall take away the daily, and place there the abomination of desolation.”

Now, this deserves a *lot more study*, but it appears that the sequence of events that results in the Abomination of Desolation / National Sunday Law being set up, goes something like this:

1. the King of the North invades the King of the South
2. the King of the North withdraws the attack due to the “ships of Kittim”
3. because of having to withdraw, he is enraged, and turns against the holy covenant
4. he sets up the Abomination of Desolation

Can we expect this sequence of events to happen, *just before* the National Sunday Law? This raises many questions, and as stated earlier, it all deserves a *lot more study*. But, at the risk of creating even more questions, I will offer what I’ve found on the subject so far:

(1) The “appointed time”

Verse 29 starts off stating that this sequence begins at the “appointed time.” This wording is interesting, because the phrase, the “appointed time,” is the translation for the Hebrew word “*moed*,” which is the same word used to denote the Jewish feasts dates. Will this sequence begin during one of the feast holidays?

(2) The “King of the South”

In this vision, (Daniel chapters 10-12), the “King of the North” starts out as the Northern part of the Grecian Empire. In time the “King of the North” develops into the

Roman Empire, and in still more time it develops into the Papacy. (By the way, we see this same pattern in the vision of Daniel 8, where the “Little Horn” “grows” out of the Grecian Empire, becomes the Roman Empire and still later becomes the Papacy.) So, at this point in the vision, the “King of the *North*” is more symbolic —rather than just referring to a *geographic* “North.” In the same way, at this point in the vision the “King of the *South*” may also have more of a symbolic meaning than a geographic meaning.

Like the “King of the North,” the “King of the South” starts out as the Southern part of the Grecian Empire, which was primarily centered around Egypt. Noting Exodus 5:2, and what is said in *Great Controversy* chapter 15, especially on page 269, symbolically, the “South” and “Egypt” refer to “atheism.” So, at the beginning of the above sequence of events, where the “King of the North” invades the territory of the “King of the South,” can we expect the Papacy and it’s main end-time ally, the U. S. A., to invade an atheistic country? —we *do* find a few of these around the world!

(3) Notice the “spirit of war” context in the *Manuscript Releases* quotation.

There will undoubtedly be some “reason” for the U.S.A. to attack an atheistic country. *Country Living*, page 7 says, “The ungodly cities of our world are to be swept away by the besom of destruction. In the calamities that are now befalling *immense buildings* and large portions of cities, God is showing us what will come upon the whole earth.” (Emphasis supplied.) In this context, I am reminded of what happened September 11, 2001, and the national anger that followed. The nation found a vent for that anger in the invasion of Afghanistan. Suppose for instance, there were to be another terrorist attack. It would undoubtedly create the same type of anger. Another invasion could likely result as a vent for this anger. However, if an angry U.S.A. was forced to withdraw the invasion, it would no longer have an *outward* vent for this anger. It is understandable then that the anger would be turned *inward*. This seems to be the type of “climate” we see in Daniel 11:30-31, which leads to the setting up the National Sunday Law.

(4) The “ships of Kittim”

Notice that the attack is withdrawn due to the “ships of Kittim.” Most Bible dictionaries relate “Kittim” (or “Chittim”) to: “Cyprus,” “the western coastlands,” the Greek islands, or mainland Greece and Italy. For example, the *Illustrated Davis Dictionary of the Bible* states, “in 1 Mac. i. 1 Alexander the Great is said to have come out of the land of Chittim, and in viii. 5 Perseus is called king of Chittim, meaning Macedonia.” (And, for what it is worth, one Bible dictionary said, Kittim was “China.”) Whoever *is* represent by the “ships of Kittim,” must be powerful enough to get the U.S.A. to back down!

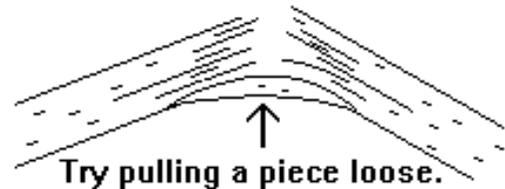
In closing, let’s remember what is said in *Testimonies for the Church Volume Seven*, page 14. “Those who place themselves under God’s control, to be led and guided by Him, will catch the steady tread of the events ordained by Him to take place.” The most important thing in understanding and recognizing the fulfillment of this, or any other prophecy, is to be sure that we are surrendered to God every moment. “In *all your ways*, acknowledge Him.” Proverbs 3:6.

Carving and Burning-Out a Spoon

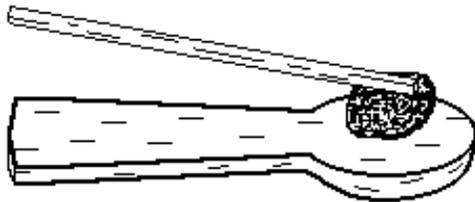
Whittling a pair of chop-sticks, or flattening a stick to make a sort of spatula are both simple utensils you can make in the wilderness. However, carving and burning-out a spoon is good woodworking practice, and it can make cooking and eating easier.

Choose a piece soft to medium-hard wood that is free of rot to work with. A recently killed small tree that is still standing or recently knocked over can be ideal, as it would already be seasoned. If you need to, you could cut a green branch, being careful to “prune” it out of an area that is overcrowded and needs thinning. Green wood, however, may not burn-out well until it has had a chance to dry. Willow, Alder, Sycamore, Birch, Aspen, Poplar and similar woods make good spoons. Pines, firs and similar resinous woods may work, but their pitch can be messy. Avoid Cherry and Elderberry wood which contain cyanide and are poisonous. Other woods with a “chemical” type smell should probably also be avoided.

If you only have limited tools, look for a tree or branch that has been bent and split by a storm.



Begin by cutting an appropriate length and splitting it down to about the thickness of one of your fingers. Tracing out the general shape of a spoon with a piece of charcoal before you start carving can be helpful. Then with your knife, carve out the general shape. (If you are using green wood, you may want to go ahead and refine the shape enough so it could be used as a spatula while you are waiting for it to dry enough to burn it out.)



After you have roughed out the general shape, burn out the "bowl" of the spoon. Choose a live coal, and with a couple of sticks, pick it out of the fire and place it on the spoon where the “bowl” will be. Hold it in place with a stick, and blow on the coal. You could also place one end of a thumb-size stick in the fire to burn and form a coal on the end. Then pick up this stick and place the coal on the “bowl” part of the spoon. Be sure that you are working in a safe area, so if the coal drops, or breaks up and falls, it will not burn anything.

As you blow on the coal, it will heat and burn-out the area beneath it. Every so often, remove the coal and scrape the burnt wood out of the depression with your knife or a sharp rock. Go slow, and watch closely what areas are being burnt, shifting the coal as necessary to burn-out the "bowl" as evenly as possible. Continue to burn and scrape until the "bowl" is the right size and depth.

After you are done with the “bowl,” finish carving the rest of the spoon. The reason for doing the final carving last is to leave more thickness in the “bowl” area so it doesn't heat too quickly and burn through. Doing the final carving last also lets you work around any areas that may have burned irregularly. After you have finished carving, you can use a piece of sandstone or other rough rock to smooth the spoon further if necessary. This same process of burning and scraping can be used to make larger items such as bowls, and even dug-out canoes.