

Lesson 4

\*April 20-26

## Standing *for the* Truth

Let Gods word empower us Jill

Let Gods word instruct us - John

Let Gods word feed us \_ Jason

Let the word of God free us from fear-

Daniel

### Sabbath Afternoon

**Read for This Week's Study:** Dan. 7:23-25; Rev. 12:6, 14; Jude 3, 4; Rev. 2:10;

Acts 5:28-32; Ps. 19:7-11; 1 John 5:11-13.

**Memory Text:** "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life" (John 3:14, 15, NKJV).

The modern Turkish seacoast city of Izmir was once the biblical city of Smyrna mentioned in the book of Revelation. This ancient city of approximately 100,000 inhabitants flourished in the late first and second centuries. It was a prosperous city, and fiercely loyal to Rome.

Once a year all the citizens of the Smyrna were commanded to burn incense to the Roman gods. Evidently in the second century Smyrna had a thriving Christian community as well, and many were not going to comply. Polycarp, an early church leader, was martyred in Smyrna's public square, burned at the stake for refusing to betray his Lord by burning incense to the Roman gods. When asked one last time to disavow Christ, the old man replied, "Eighty and six years have I served Him, and He has done me no wrong. How can I speak evil of my King who saved me?"

Throughout the centuries men and women have been willing to experience martyrdom rather than give up their faith in Christ. Their sacrifice rekindles our courage. The story of their commitment to Christ renews our own commitment. This week we will look at some biblical principles that motivated the Waldenses and later reformers, such as Huss and Jerome, to stay faithful to the Lord no matter what—even at the threat of death from the same power that killed Polycarp: Rome, but now the papal phase.

*\*Study this week's lesson to prepare for Sabbath, April 27, which is based on The Great Controversy, chapters 4-6.*

**Sunday**

April 21

### **Persecuted Yet Triumphant**

**Read Daniel 7:23-25 and Revelation 12:6, 14. What prophetic times periods are referred to in these passages?**

1260 days

Time, times and half a time

Whenever God's people remain faithful to Him, Satan is enraged. Persecution often follows. The prophet Daniel described a time, still future to him, when the medieval church would "make war against" and "persecute" God's people (*Dan. 7:21, 25, NKJV*). The prophet John described this same period as a time when God's church was forced to flee into the wilderness, where she would be "nourished for a time and times and half a time" (*Rev. 12:14, NKJV*). Revelation 12:6 adds, "The woman [the church] fled into the wilderness where she has a place prepared of God" (*NKJV*). God's people were nourished in the wilderness. His Word strengthened and sustained them, as the great controversy raged on during this long and dark period of papal domination.

God's people found a "place prepared" for them by God. In life's greatest challenges, God always prepares a place for His faithful followers. During the times of their greatest trial, His people have found refuge in His love and care. (*See Psalm 46.*)

The 1,260 days, and the time, times, and half a time in Revelation 12:6, 14 are both referring to the same period ( $3\frac{1}{2}$  times or years x 360 days/year = 1,260

days). Bible prophecy is often written in symbols. In the prophetic portions of Daniel and Revelation, one prophetic day equals one literal year. We find this day-year principle in Numbers 14:34 and Ezekiel 4:6

The day-year principle rests not on these two texts only, but on a broad scriptural foundation. Dr. William Shea, chronologist and Old Testament scholar, gives 23 lines of biblical evidence throughout the Old Testament for this principle. Bible interpreters have used it throughout the centuries.

NEW TESTAMENT VERSES THAT CONFIRM THIS: MESSIAH PAGES 37, 38 - 3ABN HAS IT AVAILABLE.

ROMANS 5:6- "IN DUE TIME CHRIST DIED FOR THE UNGODLY"

MARK 1:15 - "THE TIME IS FULLED THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS AT HAND REPENT YE AND BELIEVE THE GOSPEL"

John 7:6, 8 - TIME IS NOT YET; NOT YET FULL COME.

MATTHEW 26:18. - "AND HE SAID, GO INTO THE CITY TO SUCH A MAN, AND SAY UNTO HIM, THE MASTER SAITH, MY TIME IS AT HAND; I WILL KEEP THE PASSOVER AT THY HOUSE WITH MY DISCIPLES."

1 TIMOTHY 2:6 - "WHO GAVE HIMSELF A RANSOM TO BE TESTIFIED IN DUE TIME"

A REBUKE FROM CHRIST DIRECTED AT THE PHARISEES OFFERS. ANOTHER PIECE OF EVIDENCE DIRECTING US TO THE FULFILLMENT OF THE 70 WEEK PROPHECY. THESE RELIGIOUS LEADERS POSTED TO HAVE A GREAT PROPHETIC KNOWLEDGE YET THEY WOULD NOT "DISCERN THIS TIME" LUKE 12:56. THE REBUKE IS EVEN MORE SIGNIFICANT BECAUSE LUKE IS THE ONLY GOSPEL WRITER TO RECORD IT. ONE CANNOT HELP, BUT CONNECT THIS REVIEW TO LUKE'S HISTORICAL RECORD THAT CLEARLY ESTABLISHES THE TIMEFRAME OF THE 70 WEEK PROPHECY. THE JEWS SHOULD HAVE BEEN AWARE OF THIS PROPHECY, BUT THEY FAILED TO MAKE THE APPLICATION OF THE TIMELINE TO JESUS. THEY REFUSE TO ACKNOWLEDGE JESUS, AS THE MESSIAH, THE PRINCE.

LUKE FURTHER RECORDS THE PROPHETIC WORDS OF JESUS TO FUTURE GENERATIONS, WARNING THAT THE SAME NEGLECT TO DISCERN THE PROPHETIC MESSIANIC TIMELINE WOULD BE REPEATED. FALSE RELIGIOUS TEACHERS WOULD SAY "THE TIME DRAWS NEAR" LUKE 21:8. CHRIST WARNING POINTS TO FALSE RELIGIOUS TEACHING EVEN TODAY. THEY, LIKE THE RELIGIOUS LEADERS BEFORE THEM, MISAPPLY THE 70 WEEK PROPHECY, TEACHING THAT IT IS YET TO BE FULFILLED WHEN IT'S REALITY IS IN CHRIST. CONFIRMATION OF CHRIST WARNING CAN BE FOUND IN THE "LEFT BEHIND" ENTHUSIASM THAT HAS TAKEN MUCH OF THE EVANGELICAL WORLD BY STORM.

THE JEWS APPLIED THE PROPHECIES OF THE MESSIAH TO A CONQUERING CHRIST. TODAY, THE 70TH WEEK OF DANIEL'S PROPHECY IS BEING APPLIED TO A CONQUERING ANTICHRIST. BOTH INTERPRETATIONS FAILED TO CONNECT DANIEL'S TIMELINE PROPHECIES TO JESUS CHRIST.

LUKE 21 HERE JESUS WARNS THAT SOME WILL TRY TO APPLY THESE TIME LINE TO OUR DAY - WE SEE THIS IN THE ATTEMPT TO DETACH THE LAST PROPHETIC WEEK OF DANIEL'S 70 WEEK PROPHECY AND APPLY IT TO ANTI CHRIST AND THE END TIMES WHEN IT WAS FULFILLED BY JESUS CHRIST IN AND HIS ATONING SACRIFICE ON CALVARY.

ANOTHER WAY THIS WARNING IS BEING FULFILLED IS IN THE REPEATED ATTEMPTS MADE BY HONEST BUT MISLED ADVENTISTS TO RE APPLY THE TIME PROPHECIES IN LITERAL DAYS - FOR DECADES AND EVEN THIS YEAR PEOPLE HAVE SHARED THEIR PET THEORIES BASED ON A REAPPLICATION OF TIME PROPHECIES THAT HAVE ALREADY BEEN FULFILLED. JESUS WARNED US THAT THESE PROPHECIES SHOULD NOT BE REAPPLIED IN THE LAST DAYS.

The Visigoths, Vandals, and Ostrogoths were tribes that believed doctrines differently than Rome's official teaching. The 1,260 days began when the last of these barbarian tribes, the Ostrogoths, were driven out of Rome in a.d. 538. This period of spiritual darkness continued until a.d. 1798, when Napoleon's general Berthier removed the pope from Rome. Countless Christians were martyred during this

long period because they obeyed the Word of God. Even in death, they triumphed. In Christ they were free from the guilt and the dominion of sin, overcoming "through the blood of the Lamb." Christ's victory over Satan on the cross was their victory. Though they died, their death is only a rest until the return of Christ.

**How has fulfilled Bible prophecy strengthened your faith?**