

#515 The Rise of Michael the Archangel – *The Time of Troubles*, part 4, Dealing with False Dmitri

[This continues the story of *The Time of Troubles*.]

Key Understanding: *The Time of Troubles* in Russia in the early 1600's was a part of the fulfillment of Daniel 12:1.

Daniel 12:1 (KJV) And at that time **SHALL MICHAEL** [the Archangel] **STAND UP**, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and **there shall be A TIME OF TROUBLE**, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book.

Answering the cry of the Russian people, a young man claiming to be Dmitri, the son of Ivan IV, had surfaced, ready to take the throne that was “rightfully” his. False Dmitri spent a short time in Moscow in 1601, where he was pursued by the law because of his claims. He fled to Poland to plan his return. In Poland, the pretender became Roman Catholic and promised the Jesuits to Catholicize Russia upon seizing power, in exchange for their aid in his one-man invasion. In 1604, while Boris Godunov was still tsar, False Dmitri headed eastward to Kiev, joined along the way by bands of Cossacks, eager to topple Godunov’s position. Pushed back at once by the defending armies of the tsar, he eventually arrived at Moscow with a force of 1500 Cossacks, adventurers, Polish mercenaries, and others eager to march into the city. The tsar’s armies were simply too large for them to overcome, but in April 1605, Tsar Boris suddenly fell ill and died. His military commander soon joined the ranks of False Dmitri’s supporters. Godunov’s wife and his son, who ruled shortly as Tsar Feodor II, were deposed and murdered. False Dmitri entered Moscow amidst cheers. [Some mark this invasion of Moscow by False Dmitri as the specific beginning of *The Time of Troubles* (as opposed to either of the events of the death of Feodor I in 1598 or the death of Boris Godunov in 1605), for Russia was torn by civil war, invasion, and political confusion from this point until 1613.]

False Dmitriy enters Moscow on June 20, 1605. Painting by Klavdiy Lebedev.

The new regime entered into business. Prince Vasili Shuisky, the investigator who had declared the real Dmitri’s death a suicide, reversed his claim and backed the new ruler. Further, the



real Dmitri's mother was brought to Moscow for a reunion in which she publicly declared False Dmitri to be her son. Ignatius, a Russian priest who had supported the pretender from the outset, replaced the patriarch of the Russian Orthodox Church. But Tsar (False) Dmitri had immediate problems. Shuisky and others began spreading rumors that he was an imposter after all. Dmitri shocked Muscovites with his foreign mannerisms, his refusal to attend Orthodox Church services, and his habit of wandering the streets dressed as a Pole. Poles accompanied him. Russians and Poles did not get along, and the city was filled with tension. Tsar Dmitri then announced he was marrying a Polish aristocrat, Marina Mniszech.



Vassily Shuisky (about 1552-1612),
Tsar of Russia 1606-1610

Vasili Shuisky proceeded to play his hand well. Less than three weeks after the wedding, he assembled a force of soldiers near Moscow, announcing that it was to “save the tsar from the Poles.” After getting closer, he boldly announced that False Dmitri was, in fact, a false Dmitri. The force overwhelmed the palace guard at the Kremlin. False Dmitri would have escaped if it were not for his “mother”. While the soldiers attacked from the outside, she convinced the streltsy (armed Russian guards of the Kremlin) that her “son” was indeed an impostor. The streltsy, who had intended to help Tsar False Dmitri escape, instead grabbed and handed him over to the attackers. After he was killed, his body was displayed publicly in Red Square, then cremated. The ashes were loaded into a cannon, and fired in the direction of Poland.

It was not the end of *The Time of Troubles*. [The story of *The Time of Troubles* is continued in the next Unsealing.]

Last minutes of False Dmitriy (1879). On the morning of May 17, 1606, about two weeks after the marriage, conspirators stormed the Kremlin. Dmitriy tried to flee through a window but broke his leg in the fall.



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