

**DISCOURSES ON DANIEL**  
**THE INTERPRETER OF DREAMS**  
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*"Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but He revealeth His secrets unto His servants the prophets"*  
*Amos 3:7*

**INTRODUCTION**

Daniel is the prophet of "the times of the Gentiles," though viewing them from the standpoint of the Jew. The phrase, "times of the Gentiles," signifies that they have dominion for a certain period. It was sovereignty given to them by Jehovah. The term is used in contrast with the "times of the Jews." The latter were the chosen people of God. Nationally and religiously, they represented Him upon the earth. He brought them out of Egypt and planted them in Palestine that they might be a witness to Him in the middle of the earth. He gave them laws and bylaws; while even their physical daily life was regulated and directed by His commandments. The fruitfulness of the land and their permanency in it was conditioned upon their obedience to Him. They were to hold their possessions in subjection to the Lord, being continually dependent upon Him; but they failed in their allegiance. They sought unto Egypt in their trouble and gradually lost their fear of Jehovah and their gratitude for His goodness.

Isaiah, one of the pre-exile prophets, witnessed again and again of the dire judgments which were about to fall upon them unless they would repent. But they stiffened their necks and hardened their hearts and refused the admonitions. The word of prophecy fell upon dull ears. They continued in their disobedience, independence and rebellion until finally His words by the prophets were fulfilled. The "ten tribes," called Israel or Ephraim in Scripture, were carried into Assyria B. C. 740, according to secular chronology - II Kings 17. The sins for which judgment fell upon them are enumerated. They walked in the ways of the heathen; set up groves and burned incense to other so-called gods, and feared them instead of fearing Jehovah the true and living God. These ten tribes have never been regathered nor restored to their place in the land - Hosea 6:1, 2.

Jehovah went on dealing in mercy with Judah (as the two remaining tribes were called) for probably the space of 135 years after Israel had been scattered; but they finally became so incorrigible that He sent them out of the land for seventy years and gave the domination of the earth to the Gentiles. It is at the beginning of this prophetic period that Daniel takes his place upon the stage. He was taken down to Babylon in the first deportation of the captives of Judah, B. C. 606 - Daniel 1:1-6.

Jeremiah came on the scene 60 years after Isaiah and just previous to Daniel. He decaled the seventy years captivity of Judah. His prophecy concerning their servitude, as well as that of all other nations to Nebuchadnezzar, is wonderful - Chap. 27. He literally acted out the subjection of Judah by wearing upon his neck a yoke, first of wood and then of iron. He is called the weeping prophet; for the tears ran down his cheeks like streams, because of the disobedience of the people and the judgment which he knew was sure to follow. He believed God. His prophecy and preaching were not a theory to him. He was assured that he was the mouthpiece of Jehovah; therefore the words which he was speaking would come to pass. It makes men different to believe God. Faith creates characters such as these men, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Daniel, etc. It was in the first year of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, that Jeremiah commenced his prophecy concerning the world's sovereignty passing into the hands of Nebuchadnezzar. But it was not until the third year of his reign that the king of Judah actually was made subject to the king of Babylon. Jeremiah continued to prophesy during Jehoiachin's short reign of three months; also thru the eleven years that Zedekiah sat upon the throne - II Kings 24. The latter is most significant. It plainly denotes that Judah's captivity took place in relays or stages; for if it became an accomplished fact in Jehoiakim's day, why should the prophet continue to urge the people to yield to the inevitable and submit to the king of Babylon? We say that Judah's carrying away occurred in stages covering a period of nineteen years; likewise we should expect a corresponding gradation in their deliverance at the end time. And as the beginning of the times of the times of the Gentiles covered a period of time; so we should judge their close will embrace a similar period. Furthermore as the last king of Judah, Zedekiah insisted upon holding the dominion, in defiance of Jehovah's edict, that He had given it to Nebuchadnezzar; so will it be in the case of the Gentiles.

They too will insist on holding the reins of government. The last king, like Zedekiah, will be a usurper.

### **DIVISIONS OF THE BOOK**

The Book of Daniel falls easily into Two Divisions - Chapters 1-6, and chapters 7-12.

THE FIRST DIVISION relates altogether to the Gentile world powers, their failure in ruling and the judgment of God upon them - Chaps. 1-6. It was written in the Chaldean language, as pertaining especially to the nations. It is an external view that is given, as man sees the nations. At the end of the first section, we have these words again repeated: "Daniel prospered in the reign of Darius and in the reign of Cyrus the Persian."

THE SECOND DIVISION gives us an internal view. It is of special interest to the Jew, or those who are concerned with the things of God - Chaps. 7-12. This part was written in the Hebrew language, which we consider a most pregnant fact; for these six chapters are of special moment to God's ancient people, the Jews. At the end of the second section, we find these comforting words to Daniel: "But go thy way till the end be; for thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at the end of the days."

### **DANIEL, A CAPTIVE IN BABYLON**

#### **Chapter One**

"IN THE THIRD YEAR OF THE REIGN OF JEHOIAKIM, KING OF JUDAH, came Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon unto Jerusalem and besieged it; and the Lord gave Jehoiakim, into his hand with part of the vessels of the house of God which he carried into the land of Shinar the house of his god" - Dan. 1:1, 2.

Have you noticed how many of God's prophets were captives? It seems to be a special mark of favor. Paul was a captive. Ezekiel as well as Daniel was carried down, a captive, to Babylon. Jehoiakim reigned three years before Nebuchadnezzar besieged the city and took some of the people captive. This important event transpired 606 B. C. The exact date was formerly considered a doubtful question, but need not be so now. Since the marvelous happenings of the past few years and their striking relation to the Jew, we are sure of the year of this first invasion. It marked the beginning of the SEVENTY YEARS captivity of Judah in Babylon, tho' it was only a partial bondage. Nebuchadnezzar bound Jehoiakim in fetters (II Chron. 36:6) presumably to carry him to Babylon; but later he was released and given the throne again, only as subject to the king of Babylon. It was at this time, that Daniel was taken captive. He must have been quite young; for he was still hale and hearty and a great man of affairs in Babylon after the Seventy years captivity had expired. There were three other Jewish boys of the royal house of David taken captive at the same time. And this was all in fulfillment of the prophecy of Isaiah, 120 years previously, referring to Hezekiah, king of Judah, who was of the lineage of David. "Behold the days come that all that is in thy house xxx shall be carried to Babylon. xxx And of thy sons that shall issue from thee, which thou shalt beget shall they take away, and they shall be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon" - Isa. 39:7, 8. These young men were the choicest of this chosen line and taken captive in the first siege.

Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon commanded Ashpenaz, the master of the eunuchs, to select "certain of the king's seed, princes of Judah," the very best to be found. These were made eunuchs - sterile - unfruitful as regards the natural man. He wanted the wisdom and beauty of Judah to enhance his kingdom, but he did not desire to perpetuate the royal seed. It might jeopardize his throne. These four young princes were children in whom there was no blemish; for so were the instructions - V. 4. They must be well-favored and skillful in all wisdom, and cunning in knowledge and understanding science. Further they must have ability, or right as the king's seed, "to stand in the king's palace."

Nebuchadnezzar considered that he was conferring a high honor upon them as dignitaries of his court; but the real fact of the matter was that he was honored by their presence in Babylon. They were the flower of Judean fruit. The king of Babylon desired the choicest specimen of David's line. He wanted his kingdom to be beautified and made prominent in every respect by the spoils of his conquest of Judah. And so it was. There were none comelier among all his court than these royal sons of Judah. They proved not only their kinship to David and his house, but their kinship to heaven, which is the better.

The master of the eunuchs changed the names of these Jewish captives, giving them Babylonish names. He did not want to be reminded of God. Danel, "God is Judge" becomes Belteshazzar,

lord of the straitened treasure." Hananiah, "the grace of Jah," is called Shadrach, "the breast was tender." Mishael, "who is what God is," is known as Meshach, "who is what thou art;" and Azariah, "helped of Jehovah," finds the much less beautiful name of Abednego, "servant of brightness."

Nebuchadnezzar appears in some measure cognizant of God's plans as to his sovereignty. He, as well as Daniel, was a chosen vessel for an appointed time. God had already prepared him as the instrument in His hand for the chastisement of His people Judah. His father Nabopolassar conquered Nineveh and brought down the pride of the capitol city of the Assyrian Empire while Nebuchadnezzar was only the heir apparent to the throne, yet he established a record, even then as a conqueror. In fact according to Jeremiah 25:1 he was not yet seated upon the throne when he made his first siege against Jerusalem (compare above citation with Dan. 1:1); but even then he was the man of the hour. God gave him the honor.

#### **Daniel's Great Decision**

"Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the king's meat, nor with the wine which he drank; therefore he requested of the prince of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself" - V. 8.

The above Scripture gives us the key to Daniel's life and shows us that he was a prepared, yea, a chosen vessel of Jehovah. His conduct at the outset marks him as one whose life was already modeled by the will of God. He passed thru the gates of the new capitol of the world with purpose of heart. His decision of character is amazing in one so young. No foolish, earthly ambitions to excel in the Babylonish court entered his mind. He was altogether and only interested in Jehovah and His interests. And remember he was a prince in the dawn of his youth entering new scenes where there was every prospect and worldly inducement to tempt him from the memories of his childhood days and his moral upbringing. It was a sudden and violent contrast to his former manner of living and marked a critical epoch in his life. But the difference in the moral and political surroundings and influences into which he was cast only served to root his faith deeper in the God of His fathers and their national and religious hopes. Daniel was no weakling, as the record here assures. He did not drift with the tide; but stood and dammed the current of the times in which he lived, for others of that day. At the risk of losing not only every hope of worldly advancement; but more, bringing down upon himself the dreadful anger and vengeance of the absolute monarch of the world; he decided that tho' he was obliged to live in the worldly court of Babylon he would not be of it. Oh, what a lesson of abnegation and sacrifice! What an example of loyalty to Jehovah! And this was not a purpose formed in a moment. Oh, no; it simply portrays the young man's attitude of heart. His heart was fixed, unwavering in its faithfulness to God. He lived and walked with Him. He knew his God.

Observe further that Daniel made this decision, settled it in his own heart before he mentioned the matter to the prince in charge. No doubt the critical time in which he lived had much to do with his purpose to forego all the pleasures and stimulating influences of Babylon (which the eating and drinking represents). He was simply carrying out in practical life the rules afterward laid down by the overcomer, Paul, which he himself practiced - "I keep under my body and bring it into subjection" - I Cor. 9:27. He made his body serve him and thus was "a vessel meet and sanctified for the Master's use."

"Now God had brought Daniel into favor and tender love with the prince of the eunuchs." He was a favorite, we would say, and he takes advantage of the situation to request permission to choose his own bill of fare. What we eat and how we eat has often much to do with our spiritual growth. There is an over-indulgence in the matter of food as well as strong drink. An inordinate appetite for food should be conquered as well as other inordinate desires. If we give ourselves up to any craving of the body, the latter is not then brought under, but rather the opposite. We are overcome and God cannot use such folks in His greater projects.

"Then said Daniel to Melzar whom the prince of the eunuchs had set over Daniel, Hananiah, Michael and Azariah, prove thy servants, I beseech thee, ten days and let them give us pulse to eat and water to drink. Then let our countenances be looked upon before thee and the countenance of the children that eat of the king's meat and as thou seest deal with thy servants" - V. 11, 12, 13.

Daniel was not afraid of the result. He was willing to let the one in charge decide the matter after a test of ten days. He knew that His God would prove faithful. Daniel believed in divine health. His

fare was poor compared with the menu of the king's table, but the outcome is marvelous. Melzar consented to the trial. He took away the portion of their meat and the wine that they should drink and gave them pulse according to their desire. At the end of the ten days they were fairer and fatter than all the others who had fed on Babylon's fare. Naturally they would have been glad for such food; but they were believing God and therefore it was refused. It was connected with the false gods of Babylon, being a part of the fare of an idolatrous king. The law of God was stringent as to the separation between things clean and unclean, and Daniel as a Jew was under its obligations. A lesser character would have let down, succumbed to the temptation, easing his conscience by the plea that he was a slave there and could not help himself. Or he might have gone a step further and argued that God had allowed his captivity and he had to obey the king of Babylon now rather than Jehovah. We are apt to find good reasons for doing what we want to do; but Daniel really wanted to please God. And the Lord knew his servant and answered his faith and they were spared further trouble on that score. Notice the sequel.

"As for these four children, God gave them skill and wisdom." And this was in natural things, but not in a natural way nor by natural means. But it was super-natural wisdom and understanding that put all the skill of the natural man to blush. It appears to me that God is gifting some of these sons of Judah today in a remarkable manner, tho' we cannot say they know their God as did Daniel. Yet it is amazing what they are doing in the world and how the greatest men in every walk of life have to acknowledge the genius and skill of the Jew. Take for instance Dr. Chiam Weizman, the noted English chemist, whose great discovery cost England the land of Palestine. He would take nothing less and nothing else as his reward. And it was God that gave him the skill and understanding; for his discovery was used to bring some of His ordained purposes to pass. Likewise in Babylon's court and before Nebuchadnezzar, the wisdom of these Jewish boys was not alone a matter of comment, but of real practical value to the land of their captivity. Daniel however had added gifts, spiritual gifts; for we read, "He had understanding of all visions and dreams." These qualified him as the leader among the other equally faithful Hebrew boys. He was endued above his fellows for a special purpose, for a special time. God wanted him to shine in Babylon as His representative and He got him there. And he was a worthy one; no fault was found in him. He easily carried off the honors in every way - his testimony unshakeable; his faithfulness unchangeable; his word unimpeachable; his skill and understanding supreme. Morally, intellectually and spiritually he towered above them all because he was a figure, a witness, a sign.

After the years of their training had expired, when they had finished their course of study, as we would say, Daniel and his three companions were presented before Nebuchadnezzar for their examination. He found none like them. They excelled above all other candidates. Nebuchadnezzar was so impressed with Daniel's superiority that he made him minister of his royal court. And later he was promoted to higher honor, sitting as a ruler and a judge over the whole province of Babylon - Chap. 2:48. He was preferred above the chief men and the wise men of the kingdom. Furthermore he not only served during the long reign of 44 years of Nebuchadnezzar, but also the other Babylonish monarchs and continued in high honor under the succeeding Medo-Persian dynasty.

Therefore we see that Daniel's official career spanned the whole Seventy Years of Judah's captivity in Babylon. As we intimated, he was a witness for God there, a witness to the truth of His Word and its positive fulfillment. We read, "Daniel continued even unto the first year of king Cyrus." He was no doubt an effective agent in the hand of God at that time; for the restoration of the captivity began in the first year of the Persian Empire. Daniel knew the time was at hand. He read Jeremiah's prediction concerning the Seventy Years of the desolations of Jerusalem - Chap. 9:2. Also from Isaiah the prophet, he learned even the name of the man who should be the instrument of Judah's release - Isa. 44:28; 45:1-6. And he no doubt instructed Cyrus relative to God's will concerning his part in the drama that was then about to be enacted. He must have also shown him the prophecy of Jeremiah with the definite time fixed for the termination of the captivity which had just expired, as Cyrus took the throne in 536 B. C. All this without doubt influenced the Persian king to issue the decree which began the release of the exiles - II Chron. 36:22, 23.

The sovereignty of God is shown in this book in greater manifestation than in any other book of the Bible. We are surely amazed to see the positive evidence that "the heavens do rule." This very first chapter is a table of contents to the whole of the book. It begins with Daniel and Judah's

captivity and ends with their release. See last verse of the chapter. Daniel himself appears to be a figure of the Jews in some sense and a figure of the Jew - Christ Jesus - in another. He is a marvelous character, standing out in vivid relief because of his contrast with others. An overcomer, strenuous, energetic, abstemious in the midst of luxury, of unbelief, of worldliness; in the midst of everything that is against God, he stood for God, a witness, even as his words of prophecy, shining the brighter because of the darkness.

We have now had an introduction to the man of our book, Daniel. We are somewhat acquainted with him and his times; while the influences which molded his character and the providences which changed his career and fitted him for his destiny are no longer a secret to us; therefore we are the more intelligently prepared for the marvelous revelations which follow in his prophecies. According to the man, so are his writings.

## **THE GREAT IMAGE**

### **Chapter Two**

"AND IN THE SECOND YEAR OF THE REIGN OF NEBUCHADNEZZAR, Nebuchadnezzar dreamed dreams where with his spirit was troubled and his sleep went from him" - V. 1.

The above noted event happened to the king 603 B. C., which was three years after Daniel was taken to Babylon, and two years after Nebuchadnezzar had come to the throne of the Chaldeans, 605 B. C. - Jer. 25:1. As we said under chapter one, Nebuchadnezzar was not yet seated on the throne when he made his first siege against Jerusalem. At the time of this dream, Daniel was already numbered among the wise men of Babylon, having passed a successful examination and received his credentials.

The king commanded that the magicians, astrologers, sorcerers and Chaldeans be called to show the king his dream. That is, they were required, not only to interpret the dream, but more, they were required to tell the king his dream. It was such an unusual experience, that a man should have a dream so wonderful and peculiar which left such a strange, ineffaceable impression upon his mind, and yet he could not remember the dream. It is not difficult to understand that he wanted the interpretation of it all.

The wise men were in a quandary. "They answered the king, There is not a man upon the earth that can show the king's matter. xxx It is a rare thing that the king requireth and there is none that can show it before the king except the gods whose dwelling is not with men" - Vs. 10, 11. The wisdom of the sooth- sayers, sorcerers, astrologers, etc., is taxed to the uttermost. Their magic arts are of no avail whatever to fathom this mystery. They say to the king, You have asked a hard thing. No one has ever been required to tell a dream. It is difficult enough to interpret a dream when it is known. No ruler before ever made such a demand. They are indignant at the unreasonableness of the matter and they voice their sentiments. It is impossible, they argue, to do as the king requireth. Only the gods whose dwelling is not with men is able to show the king his dream and give the interpretation. Thus they virtually acknowledge the defeat of the wisdom of the world. There is a limit to their arts. They also admit a higher wisdom which alone is able to cope with such a problem. They point Nebuchadnezzar to the supernatural.

"For this cause the king was angry and very furious. He commanded to destroy all the wise men of Babylon. And the decree went forth, ... and they sought Daniel and his fellows that they should be slain" - Vs. 12, 13. Nebuchadnezzar was the sovereign of the world by the edict of God. And tho' he never did take possession of the earth in its entirety, nevertheless the dominion belonged to him. He was now simply showing his absolute authority in commanding those wise men of his realm to be put to death. And Daniel and his fellows were included in that wholesale slaughter, tho' as it appears they knew nothing whatever of the circumstances. They had not even been given a chance to tell the dream and interpret it. They were in ignorance of their peril until they went forth to slay them. But God was in it all. He not only allowed that procedure on the part of Nebuchadnezzar, but He ordered it. Nebuchadnezzar was a great sovereign, but yet he was only a little atom in the hand of The Sovereign. He gave the king that dream which was afterwards not remembered and which none of his wise men could interpret; for He desired that Daniel and his three fellows be given the place in Babylon's court that He had purposed for them. They were to be honored above all the wise men of the world. They represented the heavenly throne and divine wisdom which rules over the earthly throne and worldly wisdom, and God was making Nebuchadnezzar acknowledge this fact.

Then Daniel enquires of Arioch the captain of the kings guard, "Why is the decree so hasty from

the king? Then Arioch made the thing known to Daniel. And Daniel went in and desired of the king that he would give him time and that he would show the interpretation" - Vs. 15, 16. What faith! What assurance! Yea, what confidence Daniel exhibits; yet, it is not confidence in himself, but in his God. He knew that he was chosen of Jehovah to represent Him in Babylon; hence he could not be destroyed. There must be a way out, he argued; but this assurance did not lead to listlessness nor indifference. No, indeed! He went in, first to the earthly king and then he went in to the great heavenly Sovereign. He went to his own house and made the thing known to his companions and they prayed.

Do you see how we find out secrets? We find out secrets by waiting on God. Prayer opens up deep mysteries to us even now. Daniel's God is our God. They went in unto God. He never has "No admittance.." on His door; but always "At home." Daniel prayed to "The God of Heaven." This is significant. It is His name in this book of Daniel. He is no longer the God of earth. He has taken away His presence from the children of Israel and cast them out of their land; so He was known in Daniel as "The God of Heaven." The Gentiles were not His people. He is allowing them to have dominion for a limited time that they may learn how little fitted they are to rule for Him; for always the lower kingdom must be subject to the higher. The Gentiles will have to acknowledge that they were no more obedient to God than the Jews. he has given them a chance that they may know they are not able to rule the world; for the man who rules the world must first rule himself. Jesus Christ is the only Man that did so. He is God's Ruler. He was proved in this world and was found faultless, walking in dependence upon God every step of the way. He honored God to the uttermost.

"Then was the secret revealed unto Daniel in a night vision. And Daniel blessed the God of heaven" - V. 16.

Observe that he does not only praise God for the personal deliverance he and his fellows received, but his heart is bursting with praise to the God of heaven for the wondrous revelation that was vouchsafed to him. He is overwhelmed with the magnitude of God's sovereign dealings with all the nations of the world. "Blessed be the name of God forever and forever; for wisdom and might are His. He changeth the times and the seasons. He removeth kings and He setteth up kings. He giveth wisdom to the wise and knowledge to them that know understanding" - Vs. 20, 21.

Daniel was given to know the dream and its interpretation, tho' he may not have understood the length of time which was figured by the symbolic image which Nebuchadnezzar saw. He himself is the proof of his words here as to God's ways with men - giving wisdom to the wise and knowledge to men of understanding - Daniel exemplified both. "To him that hath, more shall be given." He had known some things and now he learns some more. He learns that God had changed "the times" from Jewish to Gentile and that the seasons were being changed also. He learns that it was God who had removed the kings of Judah and had given dominion to whom He pleased. All this, I say, Daniel had learned and he glorified God for His sovereignty over the nations. He was shown that Jehovah is indeed the God of heaven and as we are taught later in this book, "the heavens do rule," tho' to many this is superstition. But Daniel was wise, and was growing wiser every day in every way.

He was given to see that Nebuchadnezzar's dream and its interpretation was simply a disclosure of Jehovah's vast, fore-ordained purposes for the nations of the earth. He was revealing these facts before they came to pass that men might believe that He is God and that there is no other god. He calls attention to fulfilled prophecy as the greatest evidence of the truth of the Bible - Isa. 41:22. Out of a multitude of books of all lands and all ages, the Bible is unique in that it is the only record of genuine prophecy in the world. And Christ based His claims upon the correctness of His prophetic utterance - John 13:16. And this book of Daniel is a book of marvels on this line. So many of its prophecies are now history that the critics would like to take it out of the Bible or at least prove that it was written after the things of which it tells before, had come to pass. They put them to shame because they have been so literally and perfectly fulfilled. The very image, of which Nebuchadnezzar was so insistent to get the interpretation, is prophecy in symbol as we learn first from the interpretation and later from history.

Jehovah reveals these deep and hidden things to men so that when they come to pass they may fear Him and acknowledge His power and wisdom. He knows that man can never search them out; for his intellect is in darkness. He is ignorant as regards to God's things. Therefore he must

come to Him as did Daniel for the interpretation of his dreams and the solving of questions. Daniel went in unto Arioch, whom the king had ordained to destroy the wise men of Babylon, and informed him that he could now satisfy the king's demands as to his dream and its interpretation. He says, "Destroy not the wise men of Babylon. Bring me before the king." Arioch seemed only too glad to be relieved of the slaughter of the wise men. He gladly availed himself of the way of escape and brought Daniel into the presence of the king in haste, saying, "I have found a man of the captives of Judah that will make known unto the king the interpretation." What a blow to all the vaunted wisdom of the world! They can never understand God or His purposes. It was revealed to a captive of Judah, as Arioch was made to say to the king.

Daniel is the real sovereign in this scene. Nebuchadnezzar is a suppliant at his feet. He is dependent upon him to understand the things which are coming to pass upon the earth. He eagerly questions Daniel - "Art thou able to make known to me the dream which I have seen and the interpretation thereof? Daniel answered xxx and said, The secret which the king hath demanded cannot the wise men, the astrologers, the magicians, the soothsayers show unto the king; but there is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets and makes known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days" - Vs. 27, 28.

Here is where Daniel steps upon the scene as a prophet. I say, he is the king, tho' disguised, it is true. He boldly informs Nebuchadnezzar that none of the wise men of his realm is able to interpret his dream, and furthermore adds that the king is indebted to Daniel's God for the interpretation of these things, symbolized by the image, which shall come to pass in the latter days. Observe the emphasis upon the time of the fulfillment of the dream. It points especially to a future consummation.

And these latter days must be viewed in relation to the things concerning "the times of the Gentiles." Nebuchadnezzar's first invasion of the land of Judah not only was the beginning of the Seventy Years of Babylonish captivity; but it also introduced the long and not yet ended domination of the Gentile. And while the dream and interpretation compassed the whole Gentile time, yet God would make known to Nebuchadnezzar (who stands here as the representative of all Gentile world-powers), what shall befall them at the end.

#### **The Forgotten Dream**

"As for thee, O king, thy thoughts came into thy mind upon thy bed, what shall come to pass hereafter... Thou O king, sawest and behold a great image. This great image whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee; and the form thereof was terrible. This image's head was of fine gold; his breast and his arms of silver; his belly and his thighs of brass; his legs of iron; his feet part of iron and part clay. Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands which smote the image upon his feet which were of iron and clay and broke them to pieces. Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver and the gold broken to pieces together and became like the chaff of the summer threshing floor and the wind carried them away that no place was found for them and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth" - Vs. 29-35.

I have quoted quite at length that we may get the dream just as tho' Daniel was telling it to us today; for we are living in the very time upon which the revelation is especially focused. The dream was marvelous, not only because of its prophetic character, but simply marvelous to behold. It was an awe-inspiring sight - a majestic, shining, colossal figure standing upright before Nebuchadnezzar until a stone, coming suddenly from the mountain, falls upon the feet and the image disappears. It is enough to make any one wonder and seek the solution.

Nebuchadnezzar no doubt recalls the dream as soon as Daniel begins his description, revealing the image in successive stages from his head to his feet; but it is the latter section, the feet, upon which he rivets the king's attention. It is upon these that the stone falls, not upon the whole figure, tho' the entire image is therewith demolished. And, as it is the latter day phase of the image that Daniel informs the king is important, we may rightly infer that the combination of the iron and clay which is found in the feet (two radically differing elements) are a sign of the latter days. Finally the climax consists in the catastrophe which happens to the image when the stone falls upon it and the resultant metamorphosis of the stone; the image being destroyed, the stone becoming a great mountain filling the earth.

Nebuchadnezzar must have been impressed indeed as Daniel proceeded with the description of his dream. And he must have realized its import in some measure even before the prophet gave

the interpretation; for it is plainly evident that God gave this dream to Nebuchadnezzar that he as well as all other Gentile rulers might know that their supremacy is but for a time, limited and controlled by the God of heaven, and that the end of their earthly rule would come thru being smitten by a supernatural power, and by the setting up in its place of another kingdom of an entirely different character and origin.

We are impressed at this moment with the significance of Nebuchadnezzar forgetting his dream. He stands here as representative of all the Gentile rulers; and it is in this capacity that he fails to recollect the vision of the night. They will not remember the fiat of the God of Daniel, that their tenure of office is but for a limited time. God reserves to Himself the right to withdraw the sovereignty of the earth from them at any moment. He has given it to them at His own good pleasure. He will take it away in like manner. The prophets have declared over and over this fact to the kings of the earth; but they, like Nebuchadnezzar, forget the dream and its interpretation. They will refuse to abdicate in favor of God's Man when His hour has come.

#### **The Interpretation Of The Dream**

"Thou, O king, art a king of kings; for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, strength and glory; wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of heaven hath He given into thine hand and hath made thee ruler over them all. Thou art this head of gold. And after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee, and another third kingdom of brass which shall bear rule over all the earth. And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron; forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things and as iron shall it break in pieces and bruise. And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of potter's clay and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; but there shall be in it the strength of the iron, forasmuch as thou sawest the iron mixed with miry clay. And as the toes of the feet were part of iron and part of clay; so the kingdom shall be partly strong and partly broken. And whereas thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men; but they shall not cleave one to the other even as iron is not mixed with clay. And in the days of these kings, shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed and the kingdom shall not be left to other people; but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms and it shall stand forever. Forasmuch as thou sawest until a stone was cut out of the mountain without hands that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold, the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter; and the dream is certain and the interpretation thereof sure" - Vs. 37-45.

The latter part of verse 38, "Thou art this head of gold," gives us the first striking feature of the the image and the key to its interpretation. It symbolizes four world empires of which Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom (Babylon) was the first. The names of the other three are easily found now; for the prophecy of this massive, metallic symbol has now almost become history. But I want to emphasize the fact that even without secular history, we are at no loss to know the names of the other three. We need go no further than this book of Daniel for the greater part of the information. In Chapter 5:28, we read these words given to Belshazzar, the last Babylonish emperor, "Peres, thy kingdom is divided and given to the Medes and Persians." Here is the second empire, answering to the breasts and arms of silver on the image. The Medo-Persian dynasty succeeded the Babylonish about 536 B. C. And this happened just in the order and time, as was prophesied by Jeremiah relating to Nebuchadnezzar. "All nations shall serve him and his son and his son's son until the very time of his land come" - Jer. 27:7. Belshazzar was the grandson of Nebuchadnezzar.

Again we may find the name of the third kingdom, symbolized by the belly and thighs of brass, depicted and named in chapter 8:5. There we are informed that the united Medes and Persians would be succeeded by the Grecian empire with its fourfold division at Alexander's death - Chap. 8:20, 21. And in this latter kingdom was introduced a feature which was not in the other two. It was to "bear rule over all the earth." And that world conquest was literally fulfilled in the career of Alexander the Great, the first king of the third empire; for while Nebuchadnezzar and Cyrus were conquerors, it remained for Alexander to put them in the shade. In the course of a few years he overran the whole of the then known world. In fact he is the general whom history records wept because he had no more worlds to conquer, as tho' he had really taken possession of the earth. The kingdom of Greece came into being 328 B. C.

The next question, Does Daniel interpret the fourth kingdom for us? may be truly answered. Yes,

he does, tho' not quite so explicit as in the Word of God. In the first chapter of Luke, verse one, we hear of another great empire which had world dominion. "It came to pass in those days that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be taxed." Here is a fourth kingdom. The Word assures us that it was universal; for it summoned men from the four corners of the earth to be enrolled as its subjects. It is the answer to "the legs of iron" upon the image. We learn from history that this was the Roman empire. It crushed the power of Greece and extended its dominion over all Asia. It was the strongest empire, in a sense, as Daniel informs us. "The fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron; forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things and as iron all these, shall it break in pieces and bruise." The Roman empire succeeded the Grecian 61 B. C. and was divided into two spheres, the Eastern and Western, (ruled over by one king) depicted by the two legs and feet upon the image. (The Grecian empire was rapidly declining in 61 B. C. but the Roman empire was not really launched until 31 B. C., although it was gaining in national prowess before.) It remained in this divided condition for years; but Daniel tells us that this same empire, renowned for its amazing strength, is to be an exhibition of the greatest weakness. The compactness, solidity and strength of an absolute monarchy is sadly disrupted by the ten-fold partition seen in the toes upon the image. These latter are said to be "part of iron and part of clay."

The iron was the original element. It is a metal, while clay is another element altogether. It does not properly belong to the image. But we are thus taught the deterioration that would be manifest in Gentile rule, deterioration in governmental quality as well as in amalgamation. The former is seen in the succession of silver to gold, brass to silver and iron to brass; the latter is evidenced by the dual breast and arms representing the dual empire of the Medes and Persians in contrast with that of the Babylonish represented by the head of gold. And while the deterioration manifest in the four-fold partition of the Grecian kingdom is not depicted by the image; yet in the Roman empire it is plainly marked by the division of the two legs.

But both these characteristics, or weaknesses, governmental and cohesive, are greatly exaggerated in the last phase of the fourth empire represented by the feet and toes. These constitute the latter days of "the times of the Gentiles," the history which the symbol images. This phase of the image (feet and toes) was most remote at the time of the vision; but note that the prediction regarding them is the more detailed; therefore we are to rivet our attention upon them. These represent the last nations of the Roman empire, the present nations of the world, who will shortly coalesce under one head.

At the beginning of Gentile times the imperial form of government was most absolute as seen in Nebuchadnezzar's reign and that continued with varying degrees of deterioration manifest in the succeeding three empires until the world war of 1914. At that time there were great imperial monarchies in Europe - German, Russian, etc., which appeared invulnerable and commanded the attention of the world because of their iron rule. They were the remains of imperial Rome (note their ruler's titles, Kaiser, Czar, etc. agreeing with that of Caesar); but where are they today? They are gone. The very remembrance of them is an offense among the nations. Who could have imagined such a catastrophe without the lamp of prophecy to light the way? The extremity has been reached; the end is here as has been foreshadowed. The stone will soon fall; for the weakness manifest in the mixture of iron and clay is very apparent.

What does this signify? someone may ask. The answer is given us by Daniel himself, the interpreter of the image. He says, "They shall mingle themselves with the seed of men" - V. 43. In the time of the end, "the latter days," an unexpected form of government shall prevail, a form differing very radically from what has preceded. It will be a combination of imperialism with democracy - the kings with the people. They shall mingle; but there shall be no cohesion "They shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with miry clay" - V. 43. Here we are informed of an unheard of combination, a union of contradictory elements. And remember that Daniel is describing the latter phase of the fourth world-empire. He is telling Nebuchadnezzar and all the Gentile rulers the conditions which will obtain way down to the end of their times. He says that in the final government there will be no real union or harmony. Historically we are living in the days to which the feet on the image point; but we have not yet arrived at the last days of the toes. We see the shadow in the distance.

It is marvelous to contemplate the wisdom shown in the structure of the dream image. The very fact that the legs gave way to the feet and yet are counted as one kingdom is amazing when the

prophecy is understood. The two advents of Christ, Emperor of the Fifth World-empire, are compassed in these two phases of the fourth world-kingdom. He came first when the Roman empire was in its infancy - the iron legs stage of the image was in its beginning; while His second advent will be in its end - the clay and iron feet stage will be in evidence. The latter must precede the setting up of Christ's Kingdom. It forms the necessary background for His marvelous, lightning-like appearing. Many prophesied during the late war that its close would reveal the complete collapse of imperial rule and the triumph of the populace; but such is not the case nor ever shall be. The Book of books does not so instruct us. Nebuchadnezzar's prophetic dream, as well as manifold other Scriptures, forbids such a conclusion. These irreconcilable conditions, monarchy linked up with democracy, as to world rulership is the expected consummation of the age; these hostile elements will be in apparent harmony for a specified time. We are not yet in the last day period of the toes; but the structural formation of the feet is surely before our eyes. Many almost see the joints and ligaments coming together into place for the building together of the last gigantic world empire of the times of the Gentiles.

"And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed. And the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms and it shall stand forever" - V. 44. This verse gives us the key to the whole purpose of the dream. God desired Nebuchadnezzar, as well as future Gentile lords, to know that their times as rulers on the earth would be superseded by another form of government. This appears to be the one great object of all the revelations of this book of Daniel. The God of heaven would have men realize that He is Lord over His own universe; and that they cannot rule Him off in their calculations, nor expect Him to acquiesce in their plans and purposes for this little earth-ball. He has His own blue-print design for this planet which antedates that of man by some thousands of years. He Himself intends to set up a Kingdom with the King of His choice at the helm. It will be a heavenly Kingdom. The heavens will truly rule then, not invisibly as at the present time, but the fact will be manifest. Righteousness, justice and judgment will be actualized upon the earth. Furthermore the revelations given in this book, tho' they proceed from the standpoint of Gentile supremacy over Israel, all focus upon this period, (remote when they were given), the last days of that dominion. They insist upon the rise of Israel from her degradation into exaltation and preeminence as the people of God and His channel of blessing to the world. And the description of the beginning of their kingdom is peculiar and astonishing. A stone falls from heaven, torn away from the battlements of glory, not by human hands, but by divine power, and strikes the great image upon the feet. Amazing the result, the image disappears.

Herein we are given a vivid representation of the earthly powers prospering and progressing until in a moment a great catastrophe is manifest. An unlikely power, a supernatural something has made its appearance; suddenly without any warning apparently (tho' prophecy has declared it), the great image which had appeared invulnerable is reduced to nothingness by the little Stone. And then, note the marvelous transformation and development of the Stone. It becomes a great Mountain and fills the whole earth. The figure is beautiful and so perfectly in harmony with Scripture when we consider the fact that a mountain in inspired language signifies a kingdom. We would therefore infer that Christ's Kingdom and the Jews exaltation, while comparatively limited in their beginnings will shortly become universal in the earth. The supremacy will never be given to any other people. Israel will come into her own place as God's chosen nation, "The head and not the tail," and she will never lose this honor. The Stone of Israel (Gen. 49), the good shepherd who had given His life for the sheep will arrive in great haste to deliver the little believing remnant from the wolf (anti-Christ) who will be tearing them to pieces; for the false, hireling shepherd (false prophet) having sold out to his master, will flee and leave them to the destroyer - John 10:12, 13.

"Then the king, Nebuchadnezzar, fell upon his face and worshipped Daniel and commanded that they should offer up an oblation and sweet odors. And the king answered Daniel and said, Of a truth it is that your God is a God of gods and a Lord of lords and a Revealer of secrets" - Vs. 46, 47. In the king's acknowledgment of Daniel's God, we have a hint of the Trinity - supreme God, supreme King, and Revealer of secrets. Nebuchadnezzar is overwhelmed with the disclosures which have been vouchsafed to him. The result is to bring him to his knees in worship of the true and living God whom Daniel represented. Accordingly he exalts the servant of such a great God and gives him many gifts and makes "him ruler over the whole province of Babylon and chief of

the governors of all the wise men of Babylon."

God desired Nebuchadnezzar to know and acknowledge the fact (as we have intimated) that He was the Sovereign and that Nebuchadnezzar had been given his kingdom as subject to Himself, for a certain time. He revealed to Daniel and thus to the king that there was to be a restoration of Israel to their place of supremacy. The Gentiles have refused to acknowledge the Jew's place on God's program and their obligations and accountability to Him for an appointed time. What terrible judgment awaits them when "the King of the Jews (His title on the cross) arises to shake terribly the earth. Habakkuk the prophet gives us a vivid description of the mighty devastating power of Jehovah as He comes in fierce anger for the deliverance of His waiting people. He tells us (tho' he only saw the vision) that his body trembled and his lips quivered at the voice of the Lord. Rottenness entered into his bones as he viewed the majesty of the King in His coming advance against the usurping nations of the end of the age. Oh, how we should be like Daniel ourselves and seek to make the people know what shall be in the latter days. "And Daniel requested of the king and he appointed Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego over the affairs of the province of Babylon; but Daniel sat in the gate of the king" - V. 49.

### **A SPIRITUAL LESSON**

And there is another application of this dream image which we may plainly trace thru the writings of the Apostle Paul. He gives us the key to this phase of the mystery when he says, "Howbeit, that was not first which was spiritual, but that which was natural" - I Cor. 15:46. The first man must have his opportunity in everything, before the Second Man comes upon the scene. It was thus in the beginning. Adam was created first, but he was only a figure of Christ who was the ordained Man before the world was made. Furthermore there would never have been the creation of the natural man if the spiritual Man had not been in view.

And so in the case of the world empires which were symbolized by the dream image. They would not have appeared upon the scene of this world if the Kingdom of Christ was not to follow. And even these successive kingdoms are but figures of different spheres of authorities, principalities and powers which shall be manifested in that rule of heaven upon the earth. The great man which Nebuchadnezzar saw in vision is but a feeble representation of Christ and His Body, the Church, seen in its growth and perfection. The words said to Nebuchadnezzar, "Thou art this head of gold," really apply to Christ of whom he was a type. The other ranks in the kingdom are represented by the lesser grades, or inferior metals that were seen in the image.

God had a great plan outlined for the ages before these times began. He, as the Architect and Builder, had a heavenly design, marked out for the exaltation of the human family, but it necessitated a humbling first. Therefore man's fall and full redemption is the working out of the scheme or plan of God. He purposed in His blue-print that His Son should reign over the earth, but as a man, with a body of people over whom He should be Head. It is this mystical Christ which shall be the ruler of the Fifth World empire, and the very number five, is significant. It speaks of God and man, joined together in an indissoluble union; one harmonic whole. The hand and foot of man is an expression of the power of such union. The four fingers or toes are inadequate and insufficient without the one thumb or large toe; so man without God is weak and helpless; but with God he is mighty. He can do all things. And he, as a new creation, is going to reign over the whole created universe of God. Already God has raised Christ up out of the dead ones (the earnest of the resurrection of His Body) and seated Him in the heavenlies, "far above all principality and power and might and dominion and every name that is named, not only in this age, but also in that which is to come; and hath subjected all things under His feet, and constituted Him the Head for that congregation, which is His Body, the full development of Him, the all things filling" - Eph. 1:20-23, Diaglott. Weymouth's translation of the last two verses here is beautiful. He says, "God hath put all things under Christ's feet and has appointed Him universal and supreme Head of the Church, which is His Body, the completeness of Him who everywhere fills the universe with Himself." That is, the universe of God would be incomplete without His Church. It is a wonderful mystery. God's plans demand a full-grown, perfected Man to rule the heavens and the earth and that Man is still in process of development. Nebuchadnezzar was given a vision at the beginning of the times of the Gentiles, a symbol of this mighty mystical world-conquering Man; but there had to come first that which was natural. The figure of the different spheres of glories of this marvelous Kingdom of heaven had to first appear; these successive empires had to run their course; but the end is almost in sight now. The Fifth World

empire, with its glorious New Man Ruler looms large in the distance. The times are about to change.

### **Nebuchadnezzar's Image**

#### **Chapter Three**

"Nebuchadnezzar the King made an image of gold whose height was threescore cubits, and the breadth thereof six cubits. He set it up in the plain of Dura in the province of Babylon" - V. 1.

In Chapter two we were shown God's sovereign dealings with the nations of the earth. He took the rulership away from Israel, because of the failure of their kings to acknowledge His authority, and gave the dominion into the hands of the Gentiles. Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon was the first servant of this new order of things. He introduced the imperial system of government by the change. One ruler was thus the potentate of the world, its absolute ruler in every respect. Gentile times began in that manner and they will end in the same way; but the latter world-potentate will be a usurper. He will be entirely out of divine order, tho' the time will be ripe for the imperial form of government; but the wrong man will be in the saddle for a time. He will be a pretender, Satan's counterfeit of the true King, God's choice. It is this false ruler and his false worship that are most strikingly portrayed in our present chapter.

The good effect made upon Nebuchadnezzar by Daniel's interpretation of his dream was short lived. It moved him to acknowledge the God of heaven and His sovereignty regarding him and his kingdom, in that all power and authority were in his hands; but now we see him moved just as strenuously in another direction. He is rather puffed up than humbled by the marvelous disclosure of the prophet as to his place upon the great program of the age. The dream image had left an abiding impression upon his mind; for had not Daniel intimated that he, Nebuchadnezzar, was represented by the head of gold? therefore he desires to perpetuate that dream. He wanted to glorify himself and his kingdom; for the inference is plain that the image was of himself.

The structure of the idol was immense. It was in the form of a man, 90 feet high and 9 feet broad. The purpose of its great size was no doubt that the people might be enabled to see it from a distance. Furthermore it was set up in an open plain, that it could be seen from every direction without anything to obstruct the view. There was method in all the king's madness, we may be sure. He wanted the worship of the people. God gave the man governmental power, but as always he abused his privileges by setting up idolatry. Men want to see something, tho' it be only an image which their own hands have made; and they will fall down and worship it. It is proof of their degeneracy. After the Lord delivered Israel out of Egypt by His own stretched-out arm, they made an image of a calf (no doubt with several heads) and said, as Jehovah informed Moses, "These be thy gods, O Israel, that have brought thee out of Egypt" - Ex. 33:8. And in the end of this age when the Lord will have again brought them up into the land of Palestine by His own mighty power, they will make an image and give the glory of their deliverance to the man whom it represents.

Note the similarity in some respects of the description of this last day image as John gives it, with that of the image of Nebuchadnezzar, as here given by Daniel. "Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of a man and his number is six hundred, sixty and six" - Rev. 13:18. The number 6 has a place of prominence in both instances. It is the number of man; his day and his perfection, or imperfection as we might say, are thus signified. The Lord's day and its consummation are symbolized by the number 7. Man has six work days; the seventh day belongs to God. It is His day. He will take charge of affairs and finish His work after man has failed.

Nebuchadnezzar demands worship of his image, the refusal to be met with death; the beast demands the same absolute homage for his image. Nebuchadnezzar desires to unify his kingdom by the worship of the golden idol that he sets up; likewise the last king of the Gentiles. He desires but one religion in his realm and that is the worship of himself. We read that he will "lift up himself above all that is called God or is worshipped, so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God showing himself that he is God" - II Thes 2:4. There is no influence so potent as religion. Unity of worship generally brings unity of purpose and aim. It will do more to weld the heart of the world together than any other force in the end of the age. We see evidences of this unity today. What is the meaning of union religious meetings, where the real power of God is denied? What else means the coming together of Masonry and Catholicism? The whole world will wonder after and worship the beast. He will be its god.

### Dedication Of The Image

"Nebuchadnezzar the king sent to gather the princes, the governors, the captains, the judges, the treasurers, the counselors, the sheriffs and all the rulers of the provinces to come to the dedication of the image which Nebuchadnezzar had set up. Then a herald cried aloud, To you it is commanded, O people, nations and tongues, that at what time you hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, dulcimer and all kinds of musick, ye shall fall down and worship the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king hath set up. And whoso falleth not down and worshippeth shall the same hour be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace. Therefore at that time when all the people heard the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery and all kinds of musick, all the people, the nations and the languages fell down and worshipped the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar had set up."

And this very condition is present today, tho' yet in its infancy. The national powers are in a semblance of coalition; while the churches are advocating unity continually. Both of these confederacies will be full-grown shortly and together launch a counterfeit millennium with its counterfeit king, the antichrist. Observe that the heads over all the Chaldean empire were called to the dedication of the image set up in the plain of Dura which was near to the capitol city of the kingdom. It is an official command and none dare to disregard the order; yet it appears that Daniel

was not included in its sweeping edict. There is no mention of him, while his three friends, "who had been set over the affairs of the province of Babylon," occupy the greater part of the stage in this chapter. And we believe that is not accidental; for we are not reading just ordinary history, but happenings which have prophetic value. In fact these four chapters, the third to the sixth, are wonderfully suggestive of future events that stand related to one another and which will follow immediately after the launching forth of the league of nations upon the Gentile sea. This latter, the feet phase of the fourth world-empire, political Babylon, is figured by Nebuchadnezzar and his kingdom in this chapter; while his image of gold to which all men must bow is a shadow of religious Babylon which will be linked up with political Babylon in the latter days.

### **The Three Hebrews**

"Wherefore at this time certain Chaldeans came near and accused the Jews. They spoke and said to the king Nebuchadnezzar, O king, live forever. Thou, O king, hast made a decree that every man that shall hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, dulcimer and all kinds of music shall fall down and worship the golden image, and whoso falleth not down and worshippeth, he shall be cast into the midst of the burning fiery furnace. There are certain Jews whom thou hast set over the affairs of the province of Babylon, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego; these men O king, have not regarded thee. They serve not thy gods nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up."

We are impressed as we read the above inspired account with the stratagem of Nebuchadnezzar. He lays siege to the religious trend in the natural man by surrounding his false worship with everything that would attract him and appeal to his senses; therefore "all kinds of music" have the prominent place upon the platform and contribute to the startling effect of the scene. The emotions are mightily stirred by music. As someone has said, "Music hath charms to soothe the savage beast." Nebuchadnezzar was the first of whom we read to make use of the orchestra in religious things. It was this Babylonish king, moved no doubt by Satan, that had "all kinds of music" for his world-wide revival, and we should beware of his example. It is a snare to the people of God. How much of the Babylonish ways we see in the Church these days! How much talk of big things. Great revivals, startling effects, miracle men and women, wonderful sermons, marvelous music, etc., are heard on every hand. The stock of adjectives is almost exhausted to describe all the doings in religious circles; but we truly believe much of it is carnal and Babylonish, not spiritual nor Christian. God never stirs the soulless, emotional man. He works thru the spirit of man. That does not mean that such do not feel most wonderfully, but rather the opposite. They are beside themselves, but not about man, nor man's doings, but ecstatic with the glory of God. They are not filled with praises to man, but filled with praises to God. The Church in the beginning was simple in her manner of worship. Paul had no brass bands, no opera stars nor any great well-known orchestras to draw the people nor hold their interest. God was his only drawing card. Christ was the only great man that he preached, while the Holy Ghost created all the interest in his meetings and stirred all the emotion that was felt. The Church is not taught to

look for any great world-wide revival, nor great unity of religions before Christ comes; and she is not to be swayed by Babylonish ways or methods which appeal to the flesh. Alas, how few there are that are free from Babylon. She still rules and reigns over the greater part of even God's free people; for to refuse to obey her dictates is to make oneself a prey to her ridicule, mockery and later her fiery indignation.

The three Hebrew boys were certainly in the limelight in this chapter. They occupy the center of the stage, for they are the only ones mentioned that dared to defy the king and absent themselves from that religious gathering. And Babylon even today exerts a more potent spell over the minds and hearts of people than the word of the Lord. They are more afraid of disobeying her mandates and thereby incurring her displeasure and mockery than they are of disobeying God. And remember Babylon's ways are diverse and she is disguised in many wonderful, attractive phases. You may have her in any form that you desire. She delights in form and ceremony, but refuses everything of the supernatural and unseen. Her ways are manifested and her worship is the style in almost every Christian gathering in the world. She may easily be identified if we walk in the light. Let us with anointed eyes learn not to bow to her gods even if we are called upon the carpet of the world's court, as were those three sons of Judah. They protested against Babylon's rule over their consciences and refused to conform to her religion. Three charges were preferred against those protesting, non-conformists; the first, "These men have not regarded thee," speaks of contempt for the king; the second, "They serve not thy gods," would signify a division, lack of unity etc; but the third charge; "Nor worship the golden image," is a step further and speaks of absolute rebellion against the government. Remember Nebuchadnezzar's command to worship the image represented the fact that all the world must have one religion and that religion was backed up by the power of the united world-empire. That was certainly an exhibition of daring. These three young men, defenseless as it were, refused to do as the world required and as the government demanded. That was the bravery of faith; an illustration of true consecration. They had already heard from heaven; received their orders from a higher court.

"Then Nebuchadnezzar in his rage and fury commanded to bring Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. Then they brought these men before the king. Nebuchadnezzar spoke and said to them, Is it true, O Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego? Do you not worship the golden image which I have set up? Now if ye be ready that at what time ye hear the sound of the flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery and dulcimer and all kinds of music, ye fall down and worship the image which I have made, well; but if not, ye shall be cast the same hour into the midst of a burning fiery furnace, and who is that God that shall deliver you out of my hand?" - Vs. 13-16.

Nebuchadnezzar's orders had been disobeyed; his decree was held in contempt; but yet he is reluctant to destroy these sons of Judah. They are among the great men of his realm and he no doubt remembers his dream and their association with Daniel who interpreted it, so he grants them another opportunity to worship the golden image. Again they refuse to bow their knees to Babylon's god. No power on earth, not all the combined strength of the world is able to make them to break faith with Jehovah, the true and living God. They are not quaking with fear either as they stand before the world's court; for their words prove that their spirit is undaunted, unafraid. They say, "O Nebuchadnezzar we are not careful to answer thee in this matter. If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace and He will deliver us out of thy hand, O king. But if not, be it know unto thee O king that we will not serve thy gods nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up" - Verses 17, 18.

They need no time for deliberation as to their attitude to this false idol. Nebuchadnezzar's second chance makes no impression upon them. The king had really thrown down the gauntlet and challenged their God in these words to them, "Who is that God that shall deliver you out of my hand?" They could not do less than stand pat, for Jehovah's honor was at stake in the matter. The king himself had shown that the issue was between the true God and the false idol. Jehovah Himself must be given the opportunity of defending His own honor, faithfulness and power. These three Hebrew boys were simply given the opportunity of letting God prove Himself thru them. The king knew the God of Daniel, the very One that had given that marvelous dream to him and then gave the interpretation to the Prophet. He had at that time acknowledged Him as the supreme God, Sovereign of the earth, and now he is actually disputing His claim to these three young men. There had come a decided change in Nebuchadnezzar. He is "feeling his oats," as the saying is. In other words, he feels secure and independent. He is the king of the world and he

wants all men to know this fact and acknowledge his supremacy.

In the former chapter he is more humble; for he was not yet the absolute master of the scene. The city of Jerusalem was yet standing; the temple of Jehovah was not yet in ruins. He had not yet got complete control of the situation. The captivity of Judah was not yet consummated. It was only in partial effect; but now, at the time of the setting up of the idol, it was an accomplished fact; therefore his pride is in evidence here. He is taking to himself the honor and the glory of all that God has done for him.

These comely sons of a princely tribe rise to the occasion. Their answer is a marvel of wisdom; their conduct is superb in every respect. They prove that they are of kingly stock in the manner of their address to the king who apparently had them in his power; but no, indeed they will not admit the latter. There is a greater power ruling over the affairs of men and He is their God. And they are fully persuaded that He is able to deliver them out of the hand of Nebuchadnezzar, but they will not even make that miraculous deliverance that condition of their refusal to worship at the footstool of another god. Ah, what a victory they are enjoying! What a vision of God and what confidence in His omniscience, as well as His omnipotence, is granted unto them. He is able to deliver them, they declare; but even if He wills otherwise, their conduct will be the same. They will worship no other God than Jehovah. They may even die for their refusal, but they will not worship the image which Nebuchadnezzar had set up. That is the indomitable spirit that the constraining love of God can inspire in the human heart. It is the spirit of the martyr - the truly consecrated soul - that spirit of sacrifice that loves not its life unto death and thus wins the crown of life. But the Babylonish monarch is not impressed with the self-abnegation and corresponding faithfulness to God expressed in these words of fervor and faith; rather he is moved to anger.

Confidence Triumphs

"Then was Nebuchadnezzar full of fury and the form of his visage was changed against Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego; therefore he spoke and commanded that they should heat the furnace seven times more than it was wont to be heated. And he commanded that most mighty men that were in his army to bind Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego and cast them into the burning fiery furnace. Therefore because the king's commandment was urgent and the furnace exceedingly hot, the flame of the fire slew those men that took up Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. And these three men fell down bound into the midst of the burning fiery furnace. Then Nebuchadnezzar the king was astonished and rose up in haste and spoke and said unto his counsellors. Did we not cast three men bound into the midst of the fire? They answered and said unto the king, True, O king. He answered and said, Lo I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire and they have no hurt and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God" - Vs. 19-25.

Herein is a marvelous record. The reason of man would refuse to believe this inspired account. These three captives of Judah are on exhibition. The attention of the whole Babylonish court is centered upon them. Even the image appears to be set aside. Nebuchadnezzar was powerless in the presence of such courage and he shows his weakness when he yields to the fury within him. It changes his visage. He heats the furnace seven times hotter to vent his anger upon these captives; but God overrules and the mighty men that cast them in are themselves devoured by the flames. And more, a greater marvel is manifest; no vision now, but an actual fact. In the midst of the furnace was a sight that astonished that infuriated, defeated world-ruler. The men are seen walking around loose in the fire; and marvel of marvels, there are four instead of three. He rises up in haste and asks, Did we not cast three men in the midst of the fire? He cannot believe the sight of his eyes. He says, Lo, I see four men. Ah the presence of the fourth was the secret of the preservation of the others. The fire had no power over their bodies. It only worked good for them, burning away all their bands and setting them free. Nebuchadnezzar, furthermore is the one that names the fourth man, "as like unto the Son of God."

Where was the vaunted power of that world-emperor now? What ails all the strength of his mighty army and the force of his great combined empire when pitted against God? Just a few moments prior these men appeared the most pitiable men of his realm. They did not seem to have the slightest chance in the world. Everything was against them; defenseless, alone as to the visible, yet true to Jehovah. They yielded up their bodies to the flames rather than be false to their God. And He did not forsake them. No, indeed; they "quenched the violence of fire," by His power. Poor puny man; he is taken in his own craftiness. In the very act of exalting himself as God he is

found to be only a man. He is humbled to the dust. God has poured contempt upon all his pride and shown Himself to be the real sovereign, master of Nebuchadnezzar and all his confederated empire.

### **Significant Typical Teaching**

Oh, what a marvelous portrayal of end time scenes we have in this account, as has been intimated. Nebuchadnezzar stands here as a type of antichrist; who, devil-controlled, devil-inspired and devil-filled, will make a decree that all men shall worship his image. Furthermore all those that refuse will be summarily dealt with, even as was intended in the case of the three Hebrew captives. It will be the time of the "great tribulation." "Jacob's trouble" is truly figured here - Jer. 30:7. The last great Gentile king will employ all the authority of his government to enforce what man will call the religion of the day. But God will be upon the scene, even as here, and miraculously deliver His people; tho there will be some that will be killed. Yet in some cases their resurrection will follow immediately - Rev. 11. And the reason that Daniel is missing in this chapter here, figuring the Church, the heavenly people who, at the time figured, will be absent from the earth and present with the Lord.

"Then Nebuchadnezzar spoke and said, Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, who hath sent His angel and delivered His servants that trusted in Him and have changed the king's word and yielded their bodies that they might not serve nor worship any god except their own God. Therefore I make a decree, that every people, nation and language which speak anything against the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, shall be cut in pieces and their houses shall be a dunghill; deliver after this sort" - Vs. 28, 29.

Oh, what a victory! And what a change has been wrought in Nebuchadnezzar. Here he is no type of antichrist (he never repents), but rather of the other national leaders who will be on earth when Jesus Christ, the Son of God appears to the help of His people. Notice the language of the great king. How different from his words to the Jewish captives before they were cast into the furnace. How quickly is man brought down when God lifts up Himself. He is made to acknowledge the God of these sons of Judah, as being very God indeed. Remember he really challenged their God, by his previous words; "Who is that God that shall deliver you out of my hands?" Jehovah showed him; and he is convinced that He is supreme. He is contrite. He eulogizes the God of these consecrated boys, the faithful God that came to their help because they trusted in Him. And this manifested power of Jehovah in behalf of His people is taken as the ground for a decree that the Jews shall have absolute religious freedom. They are not obliged to worship any other God; and more, other folks are forbidden to mock or decry in any measure their God. The king had made one decree without the sanction of the court of heaven and had to break it; but now he makes one in accord with this higher court, and it still abides. Religious toleration for Israel has obtained during Gentile times, to a great extent, especially in the time of Christ (when they rejected their king); but even since that time, tho' Jewish worship ceased, any nation persecuting the Jew and mocking his religion has soon found God's hand against them. The nations even down to the end will be judged according to their treatment of the Jew - Matt. 25:31-46. God is for this people of destiny and no man can be against them and prosper. Nebuchadnezzar's decree is in force as long as Gentile times obtain.

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HOLY IS HIS NAME

A. S. Copley

My soul doth magnify the Lord,  
My spirit hath rejoiced in God my Savior.  
This low estate of mine He saw,  
And raised me up into His highest favor,  
And holy is His name,  
And worthy is His fame.  
All generations call me blest,  
The Mighty One His grace to me is showing.  
His mercy reaches all mankind -  
To nations everywhere, His love overflowing,  
And holy is His name,  
And worthy is His fame.

And strength Jehovah's arm has shown;  
Proud heart imaginations He has scattered,  
And hurled the mighty from their seats,  
He lifts the lowly; human schemes are shattered.  
And holy is His name,  
And worthy is His fame.  
He filled the hungry with good things,  
The rich He could not feed; they wanted nothing,  
Tho' starving, naked, sad their state,  
And wretched, poor and blind, and needing something,  
Yet holy is His name,  
And worthy is His fame.

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## **THE DREAM OF THE TREE**

### **Chapter Four**

"Nebuchadnezzar the king, unto all people, nations and languages that dwell in all the earth. Peace be multiplied unto you. I thought it good to show the signs and wonders that the Most High God hath wrought toward me" - Verses 1, 2.

Our present lesson is another remarkable one in more ways than one. The first impressive fact that stands out in bold relief is that it is the personal testimony of the greatest monarch of his day. Word for word it is the experience of Nebuchadnezzar, the first emperor of the times of the Gentile. He himself is a witness of God's marvelous dealing with him. It is a notable testimony, powerful and pertinent for men of all time; but especially for the kings and national Gentile rulers. They ought to take heed to the words of this man who because of his exalted position, royal authority and world-wide dominion, has left an effective report. He himself wanted to give publicity to Jehovah's marvelous condescension toward him and his acknowledgment and admiration of Jehovah, the Most High God. He had proved Himself the Supreme One, able to conquer and subdue the greatest among men. Nebuchadnezzar desires to pay Him tribute and honor. He desired that the name of the first king of Gentile times should go on record as acknowledging and worshipping the true and living God, the God of the Jew. He boldly testified that it was He that had given him dominion, authority and power. He fully owned what God had done for him. He took no glory to himself as being king of the great kingdom of Babylon, but gave all the glory to God. But remember that this was his attitude after he had been humbled in the dust - conquered and subdued by Jehovah.

And thus will it be with all the wise and great and mighty of the earth. All the rulers will have to come, as Nebuchadnezzar did, to the feet of the Lord; for his strange experience for seven years was but a sample of the manner in which God beholds the national and religious rulers of the end time - even as beasts; because they will have no consciousness of Him and their dependence upon His will for their tenure of office. Furthermore it is a prophecy of the last king of the Gentiles, the head of the confederated nations. He is actually called a beast - Revelation 13.

"I Nebuchadnezzar was at rest in my house and flourishing in my palace. I saw a dream which made me afraid, and the thoughts upon my bed and the visions of my head troubled me. Therefore made I a decree to bring in all the wise men of Babylon before me that they might make known to me the interpretation of the dream. Then came in the magicians, the astrologers, and I told the dream before them; but they did not make known to me the interpretation thereof. But at the last Daniel came before me whose name was Belteshazzar according to the name of my god and in whom is the spirit of the holy gods; and before him I told the dream, saying, O Belteshazzar, master of the magicians, because I know that the spirit of the holy gods is in thee and no secret troubleth thee, tell me the visions of my dream that I have seen and the interpretation thereof" - Verses 4-9.

In our previous lesson, we had a vision of Nebuchadnezzar humbled and repentant, acknowledging the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, commanding that all men everywhere should honor Him; but already in this chapter there is a change. He admits the failure, confesses the whole thing himself. As we said, this is his testimony. We have it from his own lips. He was at rest in his own house and flourishing in his own palace. All things were going good with him. His kingdom was growing and prospering. He was a great ruler of a great empire.

He was feeling big. He put in his thumb, as the little boy in the nursery rhyme, and pulled out a plum and said, "What a good boy am I." He took to himself all the glory of his exalted place as head of the world empire, and monarch of all that he surveyed. He forgot Daniel's God. And the Lord was displeased with his pride and arrogance. The proverb says, "Pride goeth before a fall," therefore the latter is due. God sends him a terrible dream. It makes him afraid, but he cannot interpret it, tho' he does not forget as in the former instance. He commands all the wise men of his realm to appear and interpret his dream; but they fail. Then he sends for Daniel. We are surprised after his experience that he did not send for the Jewish prophet immediately. He was the only one that could interpret Nebuchadnezzar's dreams. Even today this is still the case. That is, all Gentile rulers are dependent upon Daniel for the understanding of Gentile times and their end. If the powers that be would only humble themselves and seek for guidance from Daniel, they would escape the abasement which is the sure follower of the haughty, lifted up spirit which they are displaying. If they would only call for God's prophet instead of Babylon's wise men, how much knowledge of the signs of the times they would possess and how greatly they would prosper. But, no, they will not heed the dream nor believe the interpretation; therefore, like Nebuchadnezzar, they will reap even as they have sown. "He that exalteth himself shall be humbled." Let us note the dream.

### **Ruler And Reason Dethroned**

"Thus were the visions of mine head in my bed; I saw and behold a tree in the midst of the earth and the height thereof was great. The tree grew and was strong and the height thereof reached unto heaven and the sight thereof to the end of the earth. The leaves thereof were fair and the fruit thereof much and it was meat for all. The beasts of the field had shadow under it and the fowls of the heaven dwelt in the boughs thereof and all flesh was fed on it. I saw in the visions of my head upon my bed and behold a watcher and an holy one came down from heaven. He cried aloud and said, Hew down the tree and cut off his branches, shake off his leaves and scatter his fruit. Let the beasts get away from under it and the fowls from its branches. Nevertheless leave the stump of his roots in the earth with a band of iron in the tender grass of the field, and let it be wet with the dew of heaven and let his portion be with the beasts in the grass of the earth. Let his heart be changed from man's and let a beast's heart be given unto him; and let seven years pass over him" - Verses 10-16.

"Then Daniel, whose name was Belteshazzar, was astonished for one hour and his thoughts troubled him. The king spake and said, Belteshazzar let not the dream or the interpretation thereof trouble thee. Belteshazzar answered and said, My lord, the dream be to them that hate thee and the interpretation thereof to thine enemies. The tree that thou sawest, which grew and was strong, whose height reached unto the heaven and the sight thereof to all the earth .... It is thou, O king, that art grown and become strong; for thy greatness is become grown and reacheth unto heaven and thy dominion to the ends of the earth. And whereas the king saw a watcher and a holy one coming down from heaven and saying, Hew the tree down and destroy it; yet leave the stump of the roots even with a band of iron and brass in the tender grass of the field and let it be wet with the dew of heaven and let his portion be with the beasts of the earth. This is the interpretation, O king, and this is the decree of the Most High which is come upon my lord the king. That they shall drive thee from men and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field and they shall make thee eat grass like the oxen and they shall wet thee with the dew of heaven and seven times shall pass over thee, till thou know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men and giveth it to whomsoever He will. And whereas they commanded to leave the stump of the tree - roots; thy kingdom shall be sure unto thee after thou shalt have known that the heavens do rule - Verses 19-26.

### **The Explanation of The Dream**

Daniel is deeply troubled as the truth of the matter of the dream dawns upon him. His affection and respect for Nebuchadnezzar, his earthly sovereign and friend, are shown by his hesitation in unfolding the vision. He waited an hour after he heard the dream. The king himself urged him to proceed with the interpretation; but Daniel was grieved. The application to the king hurt him and he wished he might refer it to Jehovah forbade his dissembling in the very least detail. The fearless, faithful servant of the Lord must be true and declare the decree of heaven even if it wrings his heart. So with men of like caliber today. They must declare all the counsel of God even if it cuts their own hearts and they stand alone. And yet the words of the Lord are gracious as

they fall from Daniel's mouth. The punishment of Nebuchadnezzar is only for a time, lasting "until the king shall know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men and giveth it to whomsoever He will and setteth up over it the basest of men" - Vs. 17. The latter part of this verse explains what has often been asked, Do you think that the Lord is in the affairs of the earth? or do you believe He has anything to do with national affairs? If so, why does He not put good men in office, or at least at the head of the government? Daniel answers all these questions. Jehovah has foreordained purposes to work out: He has lessons to teach men; even wicked men must learn some things Daniel plainly instructs us. He says God is not only cognizant of earthly affairs, but that He rules over the national map. Furthermore He not only sets men of His choice on thrones; but sometimes they are wicked men. The antichrist, the basest of men, cannot be manifested as the head of the confederated nations until the due time, God's set time has come - II Thess. 2:7. Jehovah orders his coming and limits his stay. Jehovah is over all.

"Wherefore, O king, let my counsel be acceptable unto thee and break off thy sins by righteousness and thy iniquities by showing mercy to the poor; if it may be a lengthening of thy tranquility - V. 27. Daniel urges the king to change his ways and humble himself under the hand of God and thus he may yet escape the judgment which is coming on him, as symbolized by the dream. He exhorts Nebuchadnezzar to works of righteousness and benevolence. It is clearly implied that the decree may be set aside if there is corresponding repentance. God is longsuffering and waits, ready to turn away his wrath, and forgive, as witness the case of Nineveh's repentance at the preaching of Jonah. But Nebuchadnezzar was not persuaded by Daniel's exhortation; therefore the judgment was not averted. It fell upon him as it was revealed by the seer. All came to pass after a probation of a year's time.

#### **The King's Folly**

"At the end of twelve months, as he walked in the palace of the kingdom of Babylon; the king spake and said, Is not this great Babylon that I have built for the house of the kingdom by the might of my power and for the honor of my majesty?" - Verses 29, 30.

In the prophecy of Ezekiel, we have a little side-light thrown upon Nebuchadnezzar that elucidates some things and gives us the reason for the dream. This latter prophet was contemporary with Daniel, being also of the captivity, tho' taken down to Babylon at the time of Jehoiachin's exile, B. C. 597. It was from this captivity that he invariably dated his visions. For instance in the beginning of his prophecy, we read, "In the fifth day of the month, the fifth year of King Jehoiachin's captivity" - Ezek. 1:2. Later he says, "And it came to pass in the twelfth year of our captivity in the tenth month in the fifth day of the month, that one who had escaped out of Jerusalem, came unto me saying, The city is smitten" - Ezek. 33:21. The date of this vision is thus fixed as being one year after Zedekiah's captivity and eleven years from Jehoiachin's surrender. The latter was the last king whom Jehovah really acknowledged - Jer. 22:28-30. He is there called Coniah. Zedekiah was a usurper on the throne of Judah.

It is plainly evident therefore that the prophet Ezekiel was also deeply interested in all these things with which Daniel was concerned. He gives us some useful information at this point regarding Nebuchadnezzar and his achievements. Note the following, "And it came to pass in the seven and twentieth year, in the first month in the first day of the month, that the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of man, Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, caused his army to serve a great service against Tyrus: every head was made bald and every shoulder was peeled, yet he had no wages, nor his army, for Tyrus, for the service that he had served against it. Therefore thus saith the Lord God, Behold I will give the land of Egypt unto Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, and he shall take her multitude and take her spoil and take her prey, and it shall be the wages for his army. I have given him the land of Egypt for his labor wherewith he served against it because they wrought for me, saith the Lord God" - Ezek. 29:17-20.

The above report of Nebuchadnezzar's doings was given 27 years after Ezekiel had been taken captive, B. C. 570; for as we have said, he always counted time from the date of Jehoiachin's exile. We thus learn that the king had performed a "great service" for Jehovah in subjugating Tyrus; but he got no wages for his labor, for as we learn from history, everything was destroyed in the dreadful siege which lasted thirteen years. Nebuchadnezzar was in the will of God in its destruction and He paid him well for his service. He is thus viewed as going forth conquering and to conquer, and the time no doubt corresponds with the time of his dream. He was at the height of his career; unlimited and undisputed possession of the earth was his heritage. And he was

taking to himself all the honor of its subjugation, whereas God had given to him the worldrulership for an appointed period.

### **A Magnificent City**

And it was not only his kingdom that was famous and unsurpassed; but the city of Babylon itself was the wonder of the ancient world and has never had its equal since in some respects. It was a vast four-square city (imitation of Jehovah's city) 56 miles in length. Nebuchadnezzar sought to rival the Pharaohs in the erection of immense temples and palaces of great beauty and architectural skill; but its wall was one of his greatest achievements and boast. It was 350 feet high and 87 feet broad. Six chariots abreast could race across its top. And the Hanging Gardens, which were counted one of the Seven Wonders of the World, have never been equaled by anything of their kind. They were constructed by the king to please his wife, Amytis, who became tired of the Babylonian plains and longed for the mountain scenery of her native land, Media. The gardens were built in the form of tower temples, in successive stages, each one being covered with earth and beautified with rare plants and trees so as to simulate the appearance of a mountain rising in cultivated terraces away up in the sky. They were surpassingly wonderful, but as we meditate and see that they are a shadow, tho' a slight one, of a great reality; we may well be amazed and ponder these things in our heart.

### **The Glorious Holy City**

Nebuchadnezzar may not have had the slightest inkling that he was building his city (with all that went with it) somewhat of a pattern of heavenly things. It was a reflection of Jerusalem, the coming city of God, the center of all activities of heaven upon the earth. As Babylon was the capital city of the Chaldean empire, so likewise Jerusalem will be the capital city of the world. Yet it is the Hanging Gardens of Babylon that impress us most deeply as to their significance of spiritual things; for after the Lord has built His city on the earth, with its massive walls and multiplied, wonderful gates, He will also have those sky gardens in the air. Amos the prophet gives us some valuable information on this line. He tells us that it is Jehovah that builds "His stories" (or spheres, or ascensions) in the heaven, and hath founded His troop (or bundle) in the earth" - Chap. 9:6. Therefore Nebuchadnezzar in building those beautiful gardens in the sky for the wife whom he loved was acting out on a small scale what Christ will do for His people. He will have a number of spheres or stories, we may say, where each rank may enter into his respective service and ruler ship over the earth. It is only a hint, but precious to the opened heart.

### **The King's Egregious Fall**

The above was a slight digression from Nebuchadnezzar. We must return to him. He was lifted up, as we saw, because of the unparalleled conquest and grandeur of his kingdom. The dream made little impression on his unregenerate, self-loving heart. He had reached the zenith and he was assured that he could not fall; but God had warned him. His time of probation was ended. "While the word was in the king's mouth, there fell a voice from heaven, saying, O king Nebuchadnezzar, to thee it is spoken. The kingdom is departed from thee. And they shall drive thee from men and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field and they shall make thee eat grass as oxen and seven times shall pass over thee until thou knowest that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men and giveth it to whomsoever He will. The same hour was the thing fulfilled upon Nebuchadnezzar. He was driven from men and did eat grass as the oxen and his body was wet with the dew of heaven till his hair was grown like eagle's feathers and his nails as bird's claws" - Vs. 31-33. How exactly God fulfills His word.

Who dare say that God does not see? that He does not hear? that He cannot know? While the words of pride and self-congratulation were in the month of Nebuchadnezzar, God spoke, and lo, his day was done; his sun had set. From the pinnacle of triumph, he fell to the lowest rung of ignominy; from power to weakness; from the acme of honor to the abyss of despair. In a moment came the change. His intelligence left him in a flash. He literally became a beast and acted bestial. His reason was dethroned; hence he was dethroned. The fields were his kingdom; the oxen and asses his friends; the green ground his soft, silken couch and the herbs of the land produced his banquet of delicacies. Yet the judgment was but for an appointed purpose, "Until thou knowest that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men and giveth it to whomsoever He will" - Verse 32.

### **The King Reinstated**

"And at the end of the days, I Nebuchadnezzar lifted up mine eyes to heaven and my

understanding returned unto me and I blessed the Most High and I praised and honored Him that liveth forever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and His kingdom is from generation to generation: and all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing, and He doeth according to His will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay His hand or say unto Him, What doest thou? At the same time my reason returned unto me, and my counselors and lords sought unto me, and I was established in my kingdom, and excellent majesty was added unto me. Now I Nebuchadnezzar praise and extol and honor the king of heaven, all whose works are truth and His ways are judgment, and those that walk in pride He is able to abase - Verses 34-37.

Nebuchadnezzar learned his lesson. His unusual, humiliating experience worked good for him and brought honor to God. The purpose for which it was allowed was accomplished. He acknowledged the sovereignty of the Lord in the earth; he admitted that the heavens do rule. The emperor of the world frankly confessed that he is nothing and that God is everything. He testified to the mighty change that had taken place in his thoughts as to the Lord and His supreme place in the universe. And this is the great lesson which the world has yet to learn. God will teach it to the nations before He is through with them. Nebuchadnezzar is a sign to them. He is a figure, an example of what must happen to them; for they are in the same state of pride and self-will as was the first monarch of Gentile times and must of necessity have the same abasement. They will all be brought down until they acknowledge that God rules over the kingdom of men and giveth it to whomsoever He wills.

As we said, Nebuchadnezzar is a typical man and these days in which his reason is dethroned are figurative also. Here are seven times or 2520 literal days spent by the first king of Gentile times as a beast. And that will be the same length of time, seven years, of supremacy of the last king of the end phase of the fourth world-empire. He, the antichrist, will rule (but not in the will of God) seven years beyond the ordained time allotted to the Gentiles, hence will be the beast of scripture fame - Rev. 13 and 17. We read "that he shall confirm the covenant with the many for one week and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease" - Dan. 9:27. In the first half of the seven years the antichrist reigns, but his reign is not absolute; during this time he is a counterfeit of Christ in his first advent. During the latter half of the seven years his reign will be absolute, the counterfeit of Christ in His second advent. As a man he will be the servant of Satan who will offer him all the kingdoms of the world even as he did to Jesus. But unlike Jesus he will accept that offer and reign as absolute despot for 42 months.

The above word week signifies a seven of days; but we see from the sequel that a year for a day was intended. It is plainly stated that this same prophetic period, to which Daniel alludes, is divided in the midst and one half of this week is three times spoken of as "a time, times, and a half" - Dan. 12:7 and 7:25 and Rev. 12:14. Twice three times and a half, is seven times. Again, one half of this seven is twice spoken of as 1260 days - Rev. 11:3 and 12:6. Twice 1260 is 2520 days. And again this half week is twice spoken of as 42 months. Twice 42 months is 84 months or seven years. Therefore we conclude that these last prophetic days, which Nebuchadnezzar in his day of madness figures, are a most eventful period. They really span the time when not only Satan, but all mankind, will be found in utter rebellion against the Creator of the universe and the Sovereign of the earth; therefore the conclusion that man will be a beast. His intelligence will depart, is the conclusion of scripture. The devil will have cast a spell upon men. They will be mad and unite in a confederacy to dethrone God Himself: but that will be just before the end.

But we believe there is also another prophetic signification to this great tree of Nebuchadnezzar's vision. It symbolizes the Babylonish empire which was deposed from its supremacy (as well as its king) and will continue in this humbled condition "bound with a band of brass and iron until Seven Times pass over it." We see no connection of the iron and brass with Nebuchadnezzar personally, but rather with the empire which he represented. These are the metals of Greece and Rome as we have learned from the great image dream of the second chapter. Nebuchadnezzar was not dominated in any measure by these two empires as he and his successors were dead long before they came into view, but the kingdom he represented was held down (bound) by Greece and later by Rome. And these two nations will again be in evidence in the last week of Daniel and occupy a leading part in the marvelous earth drama of the seven years of usurpation.

## OVERCOMERS THRU CHRIST

A. S. Copley

I have paid thy debt upon the cruel tree;  
From thy sin and sickness thou hast been made free;  
Under Satan's thralldom thou shalt never be;

I have overcome for thee.

Thou art under grace; let ev'rybody see,  
From the law of condemnation thou art free;  
Sin shall never have dominion over thee;

I have overcome for thee.

Thou shalt overcome thru faith alone in me,  
Resting on my promise, effortless and free;  
Satan aye resisting, he must surely flee;

I have overcome for thee.

Thou shalt wear a crown in glory-land with me,  
Having overcome, and from all bondage free,  
All my wealth of glory thou shalt surely see;

I have overcome for thee.

Belshazzar's Great Feast

### Chapter Five

"Belshazzar the king made a great feast to a thousand of his lords and drank wine before the thousand" - Verse 1.

According to chronology, more than thirty years have passed since the wonderful incident recorded in our previous chapter. Nebuchadnezzar reigned forty four years. His son, Evil-Merodach,

followed him upon the throne. He appears to have been kindly disposed toward Jehoiachin. History informs us that he himself had once been shut up in prison by his father where he probably made the acquaintance of the royal Hebrew captive. He, unlike the ungrateful butler who out of prison "forgot Joseph," remembered his companion in distress. He may also have been affected religiously by the experiences of Nebuchadnezzar after his reason was restored and he was converted; and later he may have become a worshipper of the true and living God, the God of the Jew. We cannot say whether his son followed him in this respect; but we read of his kindness to the people of Jehovah.

"And it came to pass in the seven and thirtieth year of the captivity of Jehoiachin, king of Judah, .... that Evil-Merodach, king of Babylon, in the year that he began to reign did lift up the head of Jehoiachin, king of Judah out of prison. And he spake kindly unto him and set his throne above the thrones of the kings that were with him in Babylon, and changed his prison garments, and he did eat bread before him all the days of his life" - II kings 25:27-30. The same report is recorded in Jeremiah 52:31-35.

Evil-Merodach performed this magnanimous deed in the very first year of his reign, B. C. 562; and it may have been that it was at the request of his father, Nebuchadnezzar, who had just passed away after a long and eventful career, which was in sharp contrast with the remainder of his line. They were all weak kings and reigned only a short time. Evil-Merodach, the father of Belshazzar began to rule over the whole of the Babylonish empire, B. C. 556. He was still the lawful monarch when the Medes and Persians entered the capital city, Babylon, and took possession of the throne - B. C. 536. Belshazzar was reigning over Babylon as subject to his father. He was (thru his mother) a grandson of Nebuchadnezzar.

"Belshazzar, while he tasted the wine, commanded to bring the golden vessels which his father Nebuchadnezzar had taken out of the temple which was in Jerusalem ..... Then they brought the golden vessels that were taken out of the temple of the house of God which was at Jerusalem, and the king and his princes and his wives and his concubines drank in them. They drank wine and praised the gods of gold and silver, of brass, of iron, of wood and of stone" - Vs. 2-4.

History informs us that the above feast of Belshazzar's was an annual event and that a loose rein was held over the city at that time. We would call it "carnival time," when law and order were not enforced. Thus it furnished a favorable opportunity for the besiegement of the city by the Medes.

The king was wrapped in false security. He was intent only upon the pleasure of the moment. The end for him had come; but he knew it not. Rash and blind, he stumbled on to his ruin and death.

### **Belshazzar's Great Feast**

The fact that Jehovah had given the dominion of the world to Nebuchadnezzar, his grandfather, because of the dereliction of the Jew, was a matter of supreme indifference to him. He cared nothing for the past; he was interested in the present and his own enjoyment of life. We might say, he was a profane person, who like Esau, sold his birthright for one mess of pottage. He has many followers today among the high and mighty who are not only ignorant of God and His purposes, but careless and indifferent to divine things, knowing not that they are fulfilling Scripture and hastening on to their destruction even as was Belshazzar.

Nebuchadnezzar in all the pride of successful ambition had never been so foolish as Belshazzar. He had bowed to the God of Daniel and respected him who had given a revelation of His divine purposes. And later, he had owned Jehovah to be the God of gods and a Lord of lords as well as the Revealer of secrets. Nebuchadnezzar for a time had been proud and self-complacent, not heeding the divine warning; but later he acknowledged his sin and testified to the power and sovereignty of the God of heaven. But even before his wonderful conversion, even in his reckless days when all trembled before him, for whom he would he slew and whom he would he kept alive and whom he would he set up and whom he would he put down, never had he been guilty of such contemptuous profanity as was now evident in his grandson. It is the end. The sentence of instant inevitable judgment is at hand. Babylon's cup of iniquity is full. Yet even so the stroke does not fall without a sign. While they are yet feasting, ungodly Babylonish profligates, eating and drinking from the holy priceless vessels of Jehovah, there comes the handwriting on the wall.

#### **The sacrilegious orgy is stopped.**

"In the same hour came forth fingers of a man's hand and wrote over against the candle-stick upon the plaister of the wall of the king's palace; and the king saw the part of the hand that wrote. Then the king's countenance was changed and his thoughts troubled him so that the joints of his loins were loosed and his knees smote one against the other. The king cried aloud to bring in the astrologers, the Chaldeans, and the soothsayers. And the king spoke and said to the wise men of Babylon, Whosoever shall read this writing and shew me the interpretation thereof shall be clothed with scarlet and have a chain of gold about his neck and shall be the third ruler in the kingdom. Then came the wise men; but they could not read the writing nor make known the interpretation thereof. Then was king Belshazzar greatly troubled and his countenance was changed in him and his lords were astonished" - Vs. 5-9.

Ah, this was no dream of the night, but a silent awful omen in the midst of wild revelry and impious defiance of God. The long-suffering of Jehovah is at an end. The gods of Babylon whom they were praising must be brought down. "Bel and Nebo stoopeth", (Isaiah 46:1) before the indignation of the outraged God of Judah. They are found as nothing when compared to Him. The king needs no further intimation of his coming doom. His conscience, corroded with depravity, trembles before he knows a word of that which has been written. Forgetful of his dignity in his great consternation, he cries aloud for the wise men to come and read the writing, The highest rewards are offered, but in vain. There are none of Babylons star-gazers or soothsayers that can make known to the king the interpretation.

"Now the queen, by reason of the words of the king and his lords, came into the banquet house and the queen spake and said, O king, live forever; let not thy thoughts trouble thee nor let thy countenance be changed. There is a man in thy kingdom in whom is the spirit of the holy gods, and in the days of thy father, light and understanding and wisdom, like the wisdom of the gods was found in him; whom the king, Nebuchadnezzar thy father, the king, I say, thy father made master of the magicians, astrologers, Chaldeans, and soothsayers. Forasmuch as an excellent spirit and knowledge and understanding, interpreting of dreams and showing of hard sentences and dissolving of doubts were found in the same Daniel whom the king called Belteshazzar; now let Daniel be called and he will show the interpretation" - Verses 10-12.

The very fact that Belshazzar is not acquainted with Daniel is full of instruction for us. He who had sat at the gate of king Nebuchadnezzar and who had been honored above all the men of his kingdom is a stranger to this degenerate descendant and his courtiers and court. Only the queen knew him and she probably would not have given him a thought if it had not been because of the

trouble. Ah, yes, the Daniels are good to have around when the understanding of the times are needed and the writing upon the wall is to be explained.

"Then was Daniel brought in before the king and the king spake and said unto Daniel, Art thou that Daniel which art of the children of the captivity of Judah, whom the king, my father brought out of Jewry? I have even heard of thee, that the spirit of the gods is in thee, and that light and understanding and excellent wisdom is found in thee. And now the wise men, the astrologers, have been brought in before me that they should read this writing, and make known unto me the interpretation thereof: but they could not show the interpretation of the thing: and I have heard of thee, that thou canst make the interpretations, and dissolve doubts: now if thou canst read the writing, and make known to me the interpretation thereof, thou shalt be clothed with scarlet, and have a chain of gold about thy neck, and shalt be the third ruler in the kingdom" - Verses 13-16. Daniel is again in demand as an interpreter, tho' he now is an old man, for the 70 years captivity of Judah is about ended and he was probably 15 years of age or more at the beginning. Belshazzar is glad to avail himself of Daniel's skill, tho' he has been in apparent ignorance of his existence until this very moment. And he is willing to reward him handsomely for his services. The king speaks as tho' the wisdom which the prophet displayed was his own possession. Jehovah's name is not mentioned by him. It is Daniel who can make interpretations and dissolve doubts according to Belshazzar's understanding. How similar the attitude of folks today toward the instruments whom God deigns to use. They give the tool the honor and glory rather than Him who held it steady and made its work effective. And many servants of Jehovah are snared in this manner. They become lifted up because of the praise of men and the Lord is necessitated to humble them and sometimes set them aside because of the adulation and worship that men give them. But not so Daniel, tho' he was offered the highest reward within the power of Belshazzar to give, that of third place in the kingdom of which he had the second place, being subject to his father; he does not lose his head.

#### **Belshazzar Accused.**

"Then Daniel answered and said before the king, Let thy gifts be to thyself and give thy rewards to another; yet I will read the writing unto the king and make known to him the interpretation thereof. O thou king, the most High God gave Nebuchadnezzar thy father a kingdom an majesty and glory and honor. And for the majesty that he gave him all people, nations and languages trembled and feared before him. Whom he would he slew and whom he would he kept alive and whom he would he set up and whom he would he put down. But when his heart was lifted up and his mind hardened in pride, he was deposed from his kingly throne and they took his glory from him. And he was driven from the sons of men and his dwelling was with the wild asses. They fed him with grass like oxen and his body was wet with dew of heaven until he knew that the most high God ruled in the kingdom of men and that he appointed over it whomsoever he will. And thou, his son, O Belshazzar, hast not humbled thine heart, "tho' thou knewest all this. But thou hast lifted up thyself against the Lord of heaven and they have brought the vessels of his house before thee and thou and thy lords and thy wives and thy concubines have drunk wine in them and thou hast praised the gods of silver, and gold, of brass, iron, wood and stone, that see not nor hear nor know; and the God in whose hand thy breath is, and whose are all thy ways, hast thou not glorified. Then was the part of the hand sent from him; and this writing was written" - Vs. 17-23.

Daniel calls Belshazzar in question as to his attitude to God in view of the light and privileges that had been granted to him. He appears to have no sympathy for him as he pronounces his doom. And this is a decided contrast with the feeling he manifested in the case of Nebuchadnezzar when the judgment of God was about to fall on him. He speaks of the latter's case and reviews Jehovah's gracious dealings with him in his arraignment of Belshazzar. He cites his humbling as a striking illustration, a sufficient and enduring example and lesson for all the kings of Gentile times. We say again that the book of Daniel has a divine message, as well as a warning for all rulers, which would keep them humble if they would heed it. But, alas, we fear the sequel will prove that they have no ears to hear, hence will go on to their ordained judgment.

Belshazzar is accused by Daniel of having gone against light given him, because he had been aware of the experience of his grandfather. He had refused to humble himself and walk softly before the Lord, and more, he had profaned the holy vessels of the temple in Jerusalem, defied the God of the Jews and mocked the God of heaven whom Nebuchadnezzar had witnessed was

the living and true God. Daniel plainly sees that this man must be put down and out; for he gives no hope of being in sympathy with Daniel's people and the prophet knows by the Scriptures that the year of their release has come. Furthermore he stands in this Babylonish kingdom, a witness in its court, that the Jew shall triumph, and that they are captives for an ordained purpose and an appointed time. He is a prophet speaking to the world-kings and telling them what they may expect; what will most certainly come to pass when God's clock strikes the hour of doom. The writing is forever settled in heaven. Nothing can change the divine decree. Men cannot blaspheme God, mock at His Son, trample under foot His blood that was shed for them and expect to escape the judgment of heaven. "Fools make a mock of sin; but among the righteous there is favor" - Prov. 14:9. No indeed, the part of the hand sent from God gave forth this verdict upon Babylon's great kingdom, which speedily came to pass.

"And this is the writing that was written. Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin. This is the interpretation of the thing: Mene, God hath numbered thy kingdom and finished it. Tekel, Thou art weighed in the balance and found wanting. Peres, Thy kingdom is divided and given to the Medes and Persians. Then commanded Belshazzar and they clothed Daniel with scarlet and put a chain of gold about his neck and made a proclamation concerning him that he should be the third ruler in the kingdom. In that night was Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans slain. And Darius of Median took the kingdom, being about three-score and two years old" - Vs. 25-31.

The decree of God against Babylon was given in sentences, but they were positive, pregnant and powerful. They read thus: Numbered, Weighed, Divided. The word Peres is just another word for Persia which was a divided kingdom, being jointly shared by the Medes. This judgment decree of Jehovah has a threefold compass. First, God had numbered the exact years of the Babylonish empire. It could stand exactly seventy years and no more. The Lord was now about to terminate its existence which was according to His Word. Second, the first Gentile kingdom had been weighed in the balances of divine justice and had been found of short measure. Third, the kingdom is dissolved and divided between the Medes and the Persians.

And the marvelous fact that stands out in sharp relief is that it had all been prophesied. Isaiah and Jeremiah, as well as Daniel, inform us repeatedly of Babylon's downfall. Whole chapters have been devoted to her collapse and ruin, which emphasizes the crisis that it marks in history. Babylon's overthrow is proof positive that the Scriptures must be fulfilled. God continually points to the fulfillment of prophecy as the acid test of the truth of His word. Listen: "Produce your cause, saith the Lord, bring forth your strong reasons, saith the God of Jacob. Let them bring them forth and show us what shall happen. Let them show the former things, what they be, that we may consider them and know the latter end of them, or declare us things for to come. Show the things that are to come hereafter that we may know ye are gods" - Isa. 42:21-22. Christ based all His claims, as the Messiah of Israel, upon the correctness of prophecy. Hence Babylon's downfall was and is the powerful, positive witness that the Bible is the Word of God. The prophecies concerning Babylon were spoken by Isaiah when she was the invincible, golden city, dominating and irresistible in her haughty beauty; apparently imperishable, unconquerable, eternal. He saw her, I say in this impregnable, exalted place and yet looking upon all that greatness said, "Howl ye; for the day of the Lord is at hand. It shall come as a destruction from the Almighty .... Behold I will stir up the Medes against them, which will not regard silver; and as for gold they shall not delight in it (that is, Babylon will not be able to buy them off at any price). And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of Chaldea's excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah" - Isaiah 13:6, 17, 19.

And this same prophet assures us that the ruin of Babylon, and its possession by the besiegers, was all due to the sovereign ruling of God. He says, "Go up, O Elam, (another word for Persia); besiege, O Media" - Chap. 21:2. And later in this same chapter we have a vivid description of the happening of that eventful night which began in revelry and forgetfulness of God; but ended in fear and anguish. Hear the prophet speaking in anticipation, "My heart panted; fearfulness affrighted me; the night of my pleasure hath He turned into fear unto me; prepare the table; watch in the watchtower; eat, drink; arise ye princes and anoint the shield" - Vs. 4, 5. Daniel's account of the fall of Babylon has also the witness of history as to its authenticity. It happened at night, just as Isaiah prophesied, when a great national feast was in progress and there was not the slightest opportunity for resistance. Cyrus, the captain of the combined forces of the Medes and the Persians, changed the course of the great river Euphrates (which flowed thru the city) into

another channel, thus making a way thru the dry river bed into the city. And there were two deserters from the Chaldean army who guided the way, thus gaining access into Babylon thru the great brass gates along the river front. These latter had been left carelessly open and unguarded; which apparently seemed accidental, but was in harmony with prophecy. Isaiah had written two centuries previously, "And behold, here cometh a chariot of men with a couple of horsemen. And he answered and said, Babylon is fallen, is fallen" - Isaiah 21:9.

And later, Jeremiah, in a most impressive and graphic manner, announced the fall of Babylon, an extended report of which is found in chapters 50 and 51 of his prophecy. Listen: "Declare ye among the heathen and publish and set up a standard; publish and conceal not; say Babylon is taken; Bel is confounded; Merodach is broken in pieces; her idols are confounded; her images are broken in pieces" - Jer. 50:2.

"Make bright the arrows; gather the shields; the Lord hath raised up the spirit of the Medes, for His device is against Babylon to destroy it; because it is the vengeance of the Lord, the vengeance of His temple. Thus saith the Lord, The broad walls of Babylon shall be utterly broken and her high gates shall be burned with fire and the people shall labor in vain. And Babylon shall become heaps, a dwelling place for dragons, an astonishment and a hissing without an inhabitant. One post shall run to meet another, and one messenger to meet another to show the king of Babylon that his city is taken at one end. Babylon hath been a golden cup in the Lord's hand that made all the earth drunken; the nations have drunken of her wine; therefore the nations are mad; Babylon is suddenly fallen and destroyed" - Jer. 51:11, 58, 37, 31, 7, 8. The above invasion and destruction of Babylon were most perfectly fulfilled in the days of Belshazzar; but that was only typical of a later fulfillment of the downfall of religious Babylon.

In the fourth chapter of Daniel, we gazed at the figure of the national failure; here is figured religious failure. Laodicea will be spued out. The feast which Belshazzar and his people were enjoying represents religious gatherings, Babylonish services that are seen in our midst today. The drunken feast of the Chaldean court is a most realistic figure of the last phase of Christendom. The old Harlot has made all nations drunk with her wine of fornication. That is, religious Babylon is linked up, joined with political Babylon in a world conquest. And God says that the harlot is the cause of the unbelief of such an undertaking. She is guiding the nations at the end, as is plainly taught in the book of Revelation, chapter 17. The religious feasts of such people are counted nothing else, but blasphemous, drunken orgies. And the writing on the wall proclaims their doom which is as sure to come as was Belshazzar's. They are "lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God," which latter is said of religious people. It would not be amiss for the man who did not profess to love God, to love pleasure more, but for people who profess to be Christians and act like heathen, ah, that is the sin. Iniquity and wickedness are of far greater degree when manifested in those that profess to be of God; therefore their judgment is sure and certain. The writing on the wall, the writing that is facing Christendom today, tells them that they have been found wanting. The Word of God declares, with no uncertain sound, the fall of religious as well as political Babylon. There is no doubt about it. The hour of doom will come when the world, religious and otherwise, are feasting, forgetting the handwriting against them. They will be saying, "Peace and safety when sudden destruction will come upon them as travail upon a woman with child and they shall not escape" - I Thess. 5:3. Oh, that men were wise and would take heed to the prophetic Word and thereby escape the terrible judgments that are coming. "Kiss the Son lest He be angry and ye perish from the way when His wrath is kindled but a little" - Ps. 2:12.

Belshazzar accepted the interpretation of Daniel apparently without a question. He fulfilled his word to Daniel and rewarded him immediately even tho' he did not live to see the honor conferred upon him. The same night the judgment fell; for God's due time had come. Babylon's glory was about to be shifted upon the shoulders and arms of silver. The Medo-Persian dynasty was coming into view because of the sure, resistless, powerful stepplings of Jehovah; for so had Daniel interpreted the symbol. "And Darius the Median took the kingdom being about three score and two years old."

Did you notice the particular kind of man to whom the mystery was revealed and the handwriting made plain? To the man who was outside the wild revelry, a stranger at the court of Belshazzar, in the world, but not of it. Daniel, "the one judging as God" was standing aloof from all the feasting and blasphemous orgy in the night that Babylon was judged. Likewise in the antitype.

Who is it that can read the handwriting on the wall? The man that is walking with God, dwelling in the presence of light, is the only one that can understand the writing, the only one that can read the doom of Babylon.

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**LAND BEYOND THE BLUE**

Onward, Christian; do not falter, tho' the cross be hard to bear.  
Christ will be your strength and psalter; all His vict'ry you may share.  
Jesus will illumine your pathway, all the darksome journey thru;  
A reward will come hereafter, in the land beyond the blue.  
Onward, Christian; be not faithless, but believe what God has said,  
And a crown will be your portion, on to vict'ry you'll be led.  
God the Father's eye is watching, noting all the deeds you do.  
Your reward is just and certain, in the land beyond the blue.  
Onward, Christian, warring ever, looking to the Lord alone.  
He is faithful, He will lead you, always in the vict'ry zone.  
Moving onward, upward, Godward, ever keep the crown in view;  
Soon you'll be with Christ forever, in the land beyond the blue.  
Onward, Christian, hoping, running, for the Prize you'll surely gain,  
Work and war, and wait the summing, faith is never, never vain.  
All the Father's will and purpose ever faithfully pursue.  
Then enjoy the heav'nly Bridehood, in the land beyond the blue.

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**DANIEL IN THE LION'S DEN**

**Chapter Six**

"It pleased Darius to set over the kingdom an hundred and twenty princes which should be over the whole Kingdom, and over these three presidents, of whom Daniel was preferred above the presidents and princes because an excellent spirit was in him and the king thought to set him over the whole realm" - Chap. 6:3.

This chapter is closely connected in its typical import with the preceding one, tho' to the casual reader this is not so manifest. It appears rather divergent in every respect and so it is as to its historical and actual happening. Babylon the great and wonderful city, the excellency of the Chaldean Empire, had fallen into the hands of the conquering Medes and Persians who are now pushing to the front. One dynasty has ended; but another is being born. And so it was prophesied, and symbolized in the great image. The arm and shoulders of silver are coming into view.

To the east of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers, an Aryan kingdom had been growing up, the Medo-Persian, which at the time we have now reached in our study of Daniel had become a strong imperial power. At the head of this new dynasty was Cyrus, a strong, energetic and ambitious sovereign. Coming into collision with the Babylonish king, Nabonidus, he defeated his army in the open field; and the great city of Babylon was shortly after entered and taken by the Median king, Darius, of whom we have been reading.

The kinship of the Medes and Persians was from remote times. They were related, both belonging to the Aryan family, a division of the Caucasian Race. They were always closely associated as in the familiar saying, "The law of the Medes and Persians which altereth not." The Medes were first the leading race; but the Persians were destined to dominate as the Scriptures of truth plainly indicate - Chap. 8:5. Cyrus the Great, founded a marvelous empire. The leadership of the Median kings was of short duration. He quickly put them down and built up an Empire more extended than any over which the sceptre had ever yet been swayed by an oriental monarch, or indeed, as far as we have any knowledge, by any ruler before his time.

History gives the date of the fall of Babylon as 536 B. C. Daniel must have been close to 90 years of age, and the strength that he displays is wonderful. His natural force does not appear one whit abated, even as was the case with another great prophet, Moses - Deut. 34:7. But we need not be surprised, for they were both drawing from the same source, the eternal fountain of youth, God Himself. Darius confers great honor and official responsibility upon Daniel, making him the head over the other princes and presidents. And he planned further exaltation for this man of

such excellent spirit; but his enemies defeated it for awhile. They were filled with envy because of the prestige accorded him; therefore we read,

"Then the presidents and princes sought to find occasion against Daniel concerning the kingdom; but they could find none occasion or fault, forasmuch as he was found faithful; neither was there any error or fault found in him. Then said these men, We shall not find any occasion against this Daniel except we find it against him concerning the law of his God. Then these presidents and princes assembled together to the king and said unto him, King Darius, live forever. All the presidents of the kingdom, the governors, the princes, the counsellors and the captains, have consulted together to establish a royal statute and to make a firm decree that whosoever shall ask a petition of any god or man for thirty days shall be cast into the den of lions. Now, O king, establish the decree and sign the writing that it be not changed according to the Law of the Medes and Persians which altereth not. Wherefore king Darius signed the writing and the decree" - Verses 4-9.

What a eulogy of Daniel. Even his enemies, those selfseeking conspirators, could find no fault in his character nor in his faithfulness to the kingdom. They had to acknowledge this fact and perforce admit that only in the things pertaining to his God could they be able to bring one accusation against him; and they had to concoct a scheme to get him into trouble in this manner. We are certainly impressed with the sterling worth of this able statesman. He is an intrepid, fearless representative of the God of Judah, whom he served. And his God is not ashamed of him. He bears testimony to this bright and shining light, whose witness shone the clearer for the darkness in which it was manifested.

Many contend that Daniel's presence in the court of the Medes and Persians, as one of the men of the administration, proves that God endorses the public office and the political field for His people today. But with this conclusion we cannot agree, for such deductions are not in harmony with the Word of God. Paul's epistles are our court of appeal in all such cases. He tells us that no soldier of Jesus Christ should entangle himself with the affairs of this life; otherwise he will not please his captain - II Tim. 2:4. He is called to "fight the good fight of faith," not to engage in any carnal combat even if it is a bloodless battle. His country and citizenship are heavenly; therefore he is only interested in its politics. He lets the men of this world run its business; for he is simply a pilgrim and a stranger here. Daniel is not our pattern in this respect. We must always remember that the Jews were an earthly people, called to an earthly kingdom and place; therefore they are interested in the affairs of the world. The national hope is strong in them for they have been chosen to be not only a blessing to the world, but actually to rule over the world. And Daniel in the court of the Gentile powers is representative of the Jew in the foremost places of the world in Gentile times. He is in his proper place; but the Christian is out of order in imitating him in this respect. The principles that he manifests, his consistency and faithfulness to his convictions, we do well to pattern after, but not after his political place. But we would not say that the Lord never leads a man to act otherwise. He may do so. He may have a certain work for a certain man and may sovereignly equip and use him in a high position of State; but that is the exception to the rule. We had far better surrender our rights in this world and let the Lord qualify us for places of trust in His coming kingdom and get others interested therein.

#### **Daniel Unmoved by Threats**

"Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house and his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day and gave thanks before his God as he did aforetime. Then these men assembled and found Daniel praying and making supplication before his God. Then they came near and spoke before the king concerning the king's decree. Hast thou not signed a decree, that every one that shall ask a petition of any God or man within thirty days, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions? The king answered and said, The thing is true according to the law of the Medes and Persians which altereth not. Then answered they and said before the king, That Daniel, which is of the children of the captivity of Judah, regardeth not thee, O king, nor the decree that thou hast signed; but maketh his petition three times a day. Then the king, when he had heard these words, was sore displeased with himself and set his heart on Daniel to deliver him and he labored until the going down of the sun to deliver him" - Vs. 10-14.

Here we may well mark the beautiful conduct of Daniel. There is no intimation that things were a secret to him, rather he knew what had passed into law. But he could not compromise on any

terms. His course was absolutely marked out for him and he could not deviate from that beaten track upon which he had walked from his youth, for anything or anybody. Therefore tho' he knew that all was signed, sealed and settled, as far as man's power was concerned; for that inflexible law of the Medes and Persians demanded that no knee of man should bow to any God for thirty days; yet he went to his chamber and made no change in his daily devotions. There was no ostentatious display, no daring of the devil, neither was there any hiding of his actions. With his windows wide open as usual toward Jerusalem (which was Scriptural - II Chron. 6:38, 39), he knelt and addressed himself to God. He did not flinch or quail before his enemies, even as they knew he would not. He did not close his windows and pray secretly as many would say "was the better part of valor." No indeed. If ever his windows needed to be open toward Jerusalem it was at that very juncture in his career. He needed God more than at any time, so he came right in to Him and claimed His protection. He knew that only God could undertake for him, as these men were determined upon his downfall. If they failed in this instance, they would try something else. And it was right there in that secret place (tho' his troublers knew of it) that Daniel prevailed with God. It was there that he really closed the mouths of the lions. They were bound by the hand of Jero vah from the moment that Daniel knelt and prayed to his God. Oh marvelous power of faith! The victory was won when the battle was fought with Daniel on his knees in that place of prayer. "Then the king commanded and they brought Daniel and cast him into the den of lions. Now the king spoke and said unto Daniel, Thy God whom thou servest continually, he will deliver thee. And a stone was brought and laid upon the mouth of the den and the king sealed it with his own signet and with the signet of his lords, that the purpose might not be changed concerning Daniel. Then the king went to his palace and spent the night fasting; neither were instruments of music brought before him; and his sleep went from him. Then the king arose very early in the morning and went in haste to the den of lions. And .... he cried with a lamentable voice unto Daniel, and said, O Daniel, servant of the living God, is thy God, whom thou servest continually able to deliver thee from the lions?" - Vs. 15-20.

What a eulogy of this man of God. Even that heathen king had to admit that Daniel served his God continually. He must have been impressed and encouraged with the faith of this man of God before he was cast into the den. It appears as tho' he expected that Daniel would be preserved. He reasoned that no God could fail such a devoted, courageous, faithful servant. And he was right, as regards the true and living God whom Daniel trusted. He cannot fail His people in any age or any trial. God is faithful, not simply was or will be, but is faithful.

"Then said Daniel unto the king, O king, live forever. My God hath sent His angel and hath shut the lions' mouths that they have not hurt me; forasmuch as before him innocency was found in me; and also before thee, O king, have I done no hurt. Then was the king exceeding glad for him and commanded that they should take Daniel up out of the den. So Daniel was taken up out of the den and no manner of hurt was found upon him because he believed in His God" - Verses 21-23.

The gladness of Darius at the wonderful deliverance of Daniel is emphasized rather than that of the prophet himself, because the king had been so miserable that the contrast is extremely apparent. Daniel, on the contrary, was glad beforehand. The outcome was what he expected; but even if it had been otherwise, he would have been full of joy. The will of God was heaven to him. His faith made the den of lions not only a safe place for him, but a sanctuary, a house of God. He could have a meeting there with the Lord and be as blessed as tho' he were at home. God was his dwelling place. He "served his God continually," Darius was made to observe that Daniel had faith - "believed in his God" in the face of death, and proved, not only to his own satisfaction, that God was living, but more, he made Darius know it.

"Then the king commanded and they brought those men which had accused Daniel and they cast them into the den of lions, them, and their children and their wives; and the lions had the mastery over them and brake all their bones in pieces or ever they came at the bottom of the den. Then Darius wrote unto all people, nations and languages that dwell in all the earth, Peace be multiplied unto you. I make a decree, That in every dominion of my kingdom men tremble and fear before the God of Daniel; for He is the living God and steadfast forever and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed and his dominion shall be even unto the end. He delivereth and rescueth and he worketh signs and wonders in heaven and in earth, who hath delivered Daniel from the power of the lions. So this Daniel prospered in the reign of Cyrus the Persian" - Verses

24-28.

The first striking thing here is the fact of the retribution meted out to the enemies of Daniel. They had sought his downfall - digged a pit for him, and they fell into it themselves. "God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap" - Gal. 6:7. On the surface it was Darius who thus so quickly dealt with those men; but back of him was the living God, the God of Daniel, who summarily took vengeance upon these conspirators. "The heathen are sunk down in the pit that they made; in the net which they hid is their own foot taken. Jehovah is known by the judgment which He executeth; the wicked is snared by the work of his own hands"- Psalm 9:15, 16.

Darius made another decree, signed the writing (and according to the law of the Medes and Persians, it altereth not) that all his subjects "should tremble and fear before the God of Daniel." He is also made to acknowledge the eternity of His counsel and everlastingness of His kingdom, as well as His faithfulness and power. The king's panegyric of Jehovah is a mighty testimony to all Gentile powers to leave hands off the Jews. It is the voice of God to them. Nebuchadnezzar made a similar edict in his after years and the world powers will do well if they heed these men's words.

The last verse gives us the concluding record as to Daniel's official career. He prospered, as we read, in the reign of Darius and Cyrus, being chief president under the dual monarchy even at the great age of almost a centenarian.

#### **TYPICAL IMPORT**

We have another and striking type of Gentile powers in our present lesson. Darius, sitting as God, and no petition to be made to any god but to him for thirty days on pain of death, most vividly portrays the antichrist who will set himself up as God and demand worship of all the world - Rev 13.

Now, in looking at types, we must bear in mind that the question is not as to the personal character of him that affords a type. Darius appears to be a worthy man; but he is a fugure, nevertheless, of an unworthy one. He foreshadows the usurpation by man of Christ's kingdom. This is manifested in the very first verse. "It pleased Darius to set over the kingdom an hundred and twenty princes which should be over the whole kingdom. Does that not forcibly remind us of the day of Pentecost with its 120 disciples sitting in that upper room (on thrones, as it were), ready to reign, clothed with power from on high? That was a miniature portrait of the millennial kingdom which would have come immediately had the nation responded to the overtures of Jehovah. But alas, they rejected all His offers of grace and blessing at that time; hence the coming kingdom of God has been delayed and the way left open for the counterfeit king and kingdom, figured here by Darius and his princely court.

Daniel at that place, and having part in those affairs, represents some of the mighty men of the Jewish nation of the end time that will refuse to bow to the king of the revived Roman empire or worship his image. They will of necessity be men of the "upper ten" as we would say, statesmen, high up in affairs of state, and the world emperor will hesitate to destroy them; but his convictions will be overruled by others. It may be that "the two witnesses" of John's revelation may be foreshadowed here; for we read that "if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed" - Rev. 11:5. And those men that sought the death of Daniel and had him cast into the den of lions were themselves killed in this manner.

Therefore we have in this sixth chapter, combined with the three previous chapters, some typical happenings of the last week of Daniel's great prophecy - Chap. 9:27. There are so many phases of that seven years of unparalleled week of marvels that not any one man, nor any chapter could do justice to or figure the whole sphere of truth.

With this lesson we conclude the first division of the book of Daniel. The greater part of this portion (beginning with verse 4 of chapter 2 and ending with chapter 7) was written in the Chaldean language, which fact is most significant. It is this part of the book which most closely concerns the people among whom he lived and to whom a prophecy written in Hebrew would have been unintelligible. The language is again the Hebrew in the greater part of the second division which has to do more with the future of the Jews, the people of Daniel. And all of this only further enhances the Word of our God and causes us to appreciate and value it more than ever. It is the only infallible Book in the world.

## THE VISION OF THE FOUR BEASTS

### Chapter Seven

"IN THE FIRST YEAR OF BELSHAZZAR, KING OF BABYLON, DANIEL HAD A DREAM AND VISIONS OF HIS HEAD UPON HIS BED, AND HE WROTE THE DREAM AND TOLD THE SUM OF THE MATTER" - V. 1.

With the above striking vision, the second part of Daniel opens. This was the first of four remarkable symbolic dreams concerning national affairs that were vouchsafed to the prophet in the latter years of his life and which occupy the greater part of the second division of his prophecy.

Daniel wrote the vision word for word, as he saw and heard; and he has handed it down to us that we may see and hear and understand. In the setting of the stage in this chapter we are taken back some years. Belshazzar was in the first year of his reign at the time of this vision. No doubt Daniel was left somewhat to oblivion during the few years of this dissolute young man's rulership. We noted the fact of the king's ignorance of the prophet's very existence. Someone else had reminded him that there was such a wise man in his court. All the latter's previous interpretations and dissolving of doubts were unknown to Belshazzar. What did he care for old men and their wisdom? He was young and life was before him; so he figured. But suddenly he was halted in his madness. Another King took charge; a greater Sovereign stepped upon the scene. His little soul shriveled in the presence of that unseen hand which wrote upon the wall. Ah, how little are the greatest; how weak the strongest; how awed the boldest when the majesty of God is sensed in even the slightest measure. Why, when even the comeliness of a Daniel is turned to corruption in the presence of Deity (Chap. 10:8), what effect must it have upon the one that forgets God and His prophets?

But the retirement of Daniel at this point in his career only worked good for him. It gave him the opportunity he needed, the leisure that was necessary for him to qualify for the most important ministry of his varied career, namely prophet of the "times of the Gentiles." God was in every circumstance of this man's life, from the cradle to the coffin and nothing that occurred in his life was trifling or unimportant. Here he was almost at the century mark, as to his age, and yet the greatest epoch, as to his usefulness, had not been reached. He had not yet entered into all the good works to which he had been ordained. All that had gone before was only making him ready for the apex. He was in school, as it were, preparing, by self-denial, faithfulness, purpose of heart, etc., for the better place, on the program of the ages.

God's great men are not made in a day. They are born in a moment, it is true; but they grow into greatness and favor with God, by years of overcoming. Oh, yes, some people argue that there are no full overcomers. Well, how about Daniel, the man called "greatly desired?" We admit there are few such, because the process is slow and the majority seek their own things. They will not be his captives, his prisoners and let Him work in them and make them weighty and powerful. There is so much chaff flying around today and calling itself wheat and thinking because it is so light and foolish that everyone else is the same.

We say again, Daniel came to the zenith of his place and power when he was an old man. His hoary head was indeed a crown of glory. He entered into a prophetic ministry, foretelling actual future events, in which he has no peer except probably the Apostle John, of apocalyptic fame. And the two stand side by side, in spirit on the Lord's day, as to their revelations, gazing at the same things, but from different viewpoints. End-time scenes are the subject of both their writings; but Daniel is revealing the exaltation of the earthly people, the Jew, in the kingdom and under the sway of their glorious Messiah, while John is entrancing as with the exaltation of the Church, the heavenly company in the kingdom and under the Headship of the Lord Jesus Christ.

#### Old Men Shall Dream Dreams

"Daniel spake and said, I saw in my vision by night and behold the four winds of the heaven strove upon the great sea. And four great beasts came up from the sea, diverse one from another. The first was like a lion and had eagle's wings. I beheld until the wings thereof were plucked and it was lifted up from the earth and made to stand upon the feet as a man and a man's heart was given to it. And behold another beast, a second, like unto a bear and it raised up itself on one side and it had three ribs in the mouth of it between the teeth of it and they said unto it, Arise, destroy much flesh. After this I beheld and lo, another like a leopard which had upon the back of it four wings of a fowl; the beast also had four heads and dominion was given to it. After

this I saw in the night visions and behold a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible and strong exceedingly, and it had great iron teeth. It devoured and broke in pieces and stamped the residue with the feet of it; and it had ten horns. I considered the ten horns and behold there came up among them another little horn before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots; and behold in this horn were eyes like unto the eyes of a man and a mouth speaking great things" - Vs. 2-8.

The first impression we get, after reading and meditating on the above block of Scripture, is the "multum in parvo", (*Latin*; "much in little"), of the message in symbol. It is immense in its bearings and yet couched in such few words. How different if men had indited its wonders. This vision, as well as the succeeding ones, being presented to Daniel in symbols, required interpretation, which was also given to the prophet; therefore we need be in no doubt as to the meaning of them. We of course have the advantage over Daniel in the fact that we may read and investigate his visions after much that is written has become history. But we would add, that the fact of Daniel's revelations being fulfilled does not prove the interpretation correct, but only makes us to marvel at the truth of the interpretation as given to him; for the latter is not beclouded and obscure, needing history to make it plain and clear. We are assured that the prophet understood the symbolic visions. And tho' we may read his book with the light afforded by earlier and contemporaneous prophets as well as with that which later revelations afford, yet Daniel was not left in the dark. He knew what Jehovah was telling him; for some of the truth which he learned of the sorrows and exile of years that were coming to his people almost broke his heart - Ch. 8:27. Therefore we say, Daniel is his own interpreter, not history nor developments of the last days, nor any key of interpretation, but the writing itself is sufficient.

"I beheld till the thrones were cast down and the Ancient of Days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of His head like the pure wool; His throne was like the fiery flame, and His wheels as burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before Him; thousand thousands ministered unto Him and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him; the judgment was set and the books were opened. I beheld then because of the great words that the horn spoke; I beheld even till the beast was slain and his body destroyed and given to the burning flame. As concerning the rest of the beasts, they had their dominion taken away, yet their lives were prolonged for a season and a time. I saw in the night visions and behold one like the Son of Man came with the clouds of heaven and came to the Ancient of Days and they brought him near before Him. And there was given Him dominion and glory and a kingdom that all people, nations and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion which shall not pass away and His kingdom that which shall not be destroyed" - Verses 9, 14.

Observe that the moving pictures, if we may so call them, were given in two reels, namely a terrestrial scene and a celestial one. The former was a procession of four beast, moving one after the other upon the screen before the prophet's eyes, symbolizing earthly Gentile rule; the latter scene symbolizing the heavenly rule of the Son of Man. The whole panorama must have been somewhat familiar to Daniel. He had interpreted Nebuchadnezzar's dream of the Great Image with which much of this may be easily identified. There are several points of similarity. First, they were both presented in symbol, requiring interpretation for their unfolding. Second, in the first case, the symbols, representative of earth dominion, are suddenly terminated by the entrance of an entirely different order of picture, representative of the everlasting kingdom from the skies. Third, the succession of beasts in the moving picture presented to Daniel are four, the same number of the metals constituting the image of Nebuchadnezzar. Also there is the same deterioration visible in regard to quality, as well as to unity, as was manifested in the description of the image. The lion is the king of beasts and he is seen as one; the bear is second in skill and strength and as seen in Daniel's vision, he held three ribs in his mouth; the leopard is slighter and weaker than the two former beasts and had four wings upon its back, finally the fourth, the terrible, unnamable beast, though strong exceedingly, yet is of lesser rank, for he had no name, and also he had ten horns. Finally, the fourth point resemblance is the emphasis placed upon the latest stages of the vision and especially the utter destruction of all earth dominion by the coming in of the heavenly kingdom, as was seen in the symbolic image.

#### **The Inspired Interpretation**

"I, Daniel, was grieved in the midst of my body and the visions of my head troubled me. I came

near unto one of them that stood by and asked him the truth of all this. So he told me and made me to know the interpretation of the things" - Vs. 15, 16.

The marvelous drama which passed before the eyes of Daniel, not only amazed him, but saddened his spirit because there was much that he already understood which boded no good for his people. He was one with them. Their sorrows were his sorrows; their joy his joy; therefore he was grieved with anxious concern as to their welfare. What does it all signify? was the query put to one of his heavenly visitants. And the angel gave him the interpretation of the entire vision, but not in detail.

"These great beasts, which are four, are four great kingdoms which shall arise out of the earth. But the Saints of the Most High shall take and possess the kingdom forever, even forever and forever" - Vs. 17, 18.

The bare outline of the symbolic dream was given to Daniel, for that was all that was necessary. He partly understood the matter, because of its correspondence with the Great Image dream, which we also have noted, and of which he himself was the interpreter. As in this connection we would again call attention to the fact, before intimating, that the word king, may be used also for kingdom or empire, even covering the whole period of its duration, as we learned in chapter two. It was said to Nebuchadnezzar, "Thou art this head of gold. And after thee shall arise another kingdom." Here in our present lesson we read, "And the fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom upon the earth" - V. 23. King and kingdom were employed in both cases to designate the one thing; therefore we say we do not think the prophet was very much in the dark as to the identity of the four beasts. He is only made aware in this manner of the character of these as viewed with anointed eyes and in this aspect differing from the image, which was manifested as man would see them.

The prophet gazes upon these ferocious wild beasts, arising out of waters, troubled by the winds of heaven. He is naturally and supernaturally curious to learn what this agitated water as well as these winds signify. The answer is clear and plain and is found in this book itself. By comparing with chapter 10, verses 13 and 20, we learn that the winds represent powerful angelic forces, wicked spirits in control of earthly nations, which are plainly referred to there, as "the prince of Persia" and "the prince of Grecia." And this also agrees with Eph. 6:12 - "wicked spirits in the heavenlies;" while Satan himself is called "the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience" - Ephesians 2:2.

The natural map of the world has its spiritual counterpart in the heavens where all national affairs have their inception and their execution, Satan himself being the source and advance agent of all of them. John, the seer of the New Testament, views an empire arising out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns (Rev. 13) which has its corresponding wicked spiritual kingdom of darkness, the dragon himself being king - Revelation 12:3.

The sea, out of which these beasts, or world empires arise, symbolizes the great mass of people. Isaiah informs us, "The wicked are like the troubled sea when it cannot rest" - Isa. 57:20. (Winds or evil spirits moving upon the sea or nations trouble them). John corroborates Isaiah's testimony by saying, "The waters .... are peoples and multitudes and nations and tongues" - Rev. 17:15.

And out of these waters or people, came forth four empires which these four beasts symbolize. There is weakness and deterioration noticeable in them as they follow one another which would indicate that in the divine view of these four world kingdoms descended in the scale as to governmental qualities.

The lion, the first on the screen, is representative of Babylon. The most nearly perfect empire is thus symbolized by the king of beast; for it more nearly resembled God's ideal of rulership. It was an undivided kingdom, ruled over by one sovereign, Nebuchadnezzar. His conquest of the nation is likened to the majestic swoop of an eagle, the king of birds. Most striking too in this connection, is the fact recorded, that "the wings thereof were plucked," his flying checked, emphasizing on the one hand, his abasement even to the level of a beast at the very apex of his career of pride; and of his elevation and restoration on the other hand, in that the beast was finally made to stand upon his feet and a man's heart given unto him.

The bear, a most realistic figure of Medo-Persia, shows deterioration in that it was a dual empire; which fact was shown in the vision in that the bear raised itself up on one side, the Persian. Its conquest is shown to be slower, clumsier and of a grosser type than that of its predecessor, as witness the three ribs crunched in its massive jaw, representing Babylon, Lydia and Egypt, the

three great kingdoms that became one with it.

The leopard, the third in the procession, fitly represents the Grecian empire. In contrast with the slow and ponderous movements of the bear, it is quick and stealthy, approaching its prey warily but surely. The four wings upon its back would teach of the rapidity of the empire's conquest, unparalleled thus far in the history of the world; but notice that they are not the wings of an eagle, but of an inferior bird, therefore telling of deterioration. The latter fact is further emphasized by the division of the empire into four sections at the death of Alexander the Great, renowned first emperor of Greece.

The monster which follows, the fourth in line, is the one which gives the prophet the gravest concern. He was not able to classify him; for he had never seen his like before. The description of the beast is indescribably hideous. The ferocity and greed it displays are revolting. It had "great iron teeth" with which it devoured everything in its pathway. It ruthlessly broke in pieces everything that withstood its onward march. What it did not make its own, it crushed beneath its feet and thus spoiled it for others. This beast figures the Roman empire which Daniel described as "dreadful and terrible and strong exceedingly." It was the most powerful of the world kingdoms and the one that stamped upon the Jew, breaking his power and dominion to the uttermost. Remember that Daniel was gazing upon the empires from the standpoint of his own people, seeing them thru Jewish eyes; for no doubt they liked and acted beastly to the Jew, especially so did this unnamable beast. The worst is yet to come in the last phase of the Roman empire; for it is plainly evident from Scripture that there are two stages in its course. The latter end stage of the deterioration in quality as well as unity is most marked in the dream as witness its divided condition; "it had ten horns," figurative of separate kingdoms.

The Roman empire did not possess these ten kingdoms in its beginning, tho' some expositors have tried to make them fit in to prove that all these things are passed; but that is foolish. Scripture does not so instruct and neither does history. Had that been the case, the ten horns would have been on the beast when Daniel first looked upon it, coming up from the sea. Furthermore it proved to be all that is therein described without the ten-horn phase. It was "strong and fierce; it stamped the residue with its feet; it was diverse from all others." Rome was all this during the days of its ascendancy under the Caesars. But it never could be said to have been so featured as having ten horns before its dissolution (for the Roman empire has ceased to exist); therefore we rightly conclude that it must rise again in the united kingdom stage which Daniel saw symbolized. He saw a wild-beast at the first, without horns, figuring imperial unity. Then later he gazed on the same beast with the ten horns, which speaks of a divided kingdom; and he carefully considered these later developments. They interested him; and then he saw something else. "Another little horn" makes its appearance. What does this signify? we may almost hear the prophet ask.

But before we continue to look into the signification of this later feature of the Roman empire at the end, we would call attention to an important distinction. We must not confound these "ten toes on Nebuchadnezzar's image, tho' they are generally so confounded. Here is the one point where there is a divergence between these two symbolic dreams. The "horns" emphasize the national condition of the Roman empire at the end of Gentile times when their tenure of office, according to God's ordination has run out and the Jewish times are about to begin; for the latter clock will be wound up and start to run at the very moment the Gentile clock stops. Daniel informs us that God will recognize ten nations in particular at the close of the times of the Gentiles, which have failed to qualify as to His ideal of government and He is about to take the supremacy from them. But just at this juncture, the prophet is amazed to discover "another little horn," (which was not there previously) plucking up three of the first horns by the roots, thus leaving only seven. These remaining horns are no doubt the seven kings of John's vision (Rev. 17:10) which will rule over the seven heads or mountains (that is, kingdoms) at the beginning of the seven years of unfulfilled prophecy - Dan. 9:27. John saw this seven-headed empire arising out of the troubled sea (Rev. 13) just a little later than the time that Daniel is looking upon the beast losing three of its horns. And the ten toes on Nebuchadnezzar's image have their counterpart in the "ten horns" of John's "beast" (Rev. 13), which are different from the "ten horns" that Daniel viewed on his "beast." The "ten horns" on John's "beast" will be in power only "one hour with the beast" (Rev. 17:12), that is, during the latter part of the reign of anti-Christ.

Daniel is deeply impressed with the new-comer among the horns. He is no ordinary horn, tho'

smaller than the others. Intelligence, wisdom, excellency of speech are most strikingly portrayed by the language employed in his description. We would judge that he arrived at this vantage stage of his career by prowess of mind rather than strength or skill in battle. Anyway he has control of the situation to a great extent at the point of time that is figured here. And the prophet is amazed at the turn of events, we would say; for according to God's decree, the end has come for the Roman empire and all earthly rule as the prophecy here indicates. Therefore, the rising kingdom of which the "little horn" is the chief actor, will be as a fifth world empire, because it is a counterfeit of Christ's kingdom, which rightly is the fifth empire.

### **The Heavenly Kingdom**

"I beheld till," speaks of a change on the program. The first reel of the moving picture drama has almost run its course; the terrestrial scene is passing away. Man's day is closing. The second reel is about to be put on; the celestial scene is due. The Lord's Day is at hand. As Daniel observes, he looked "till the thrones were cast down or placed, and the Ancient of Days did sit." We learn from the interpretation (V. 18) that earthly dominion is being transferred from beasts to saints, which is certainly some change. The Gentile nations are set aside; their "times" are over. Israel, the chosen nation, is coming into her place of supremacy over the earth, with the Lord Himself on the throne as their King. "The Ancient of Days" is none other than Christ, but viewed as God Almighty. We have the same scene described for our instruction and edification as viewed by John, the New Testament seer. He shows us the same thrones placed in the heavens, and the same majestic Personage, Jehovah Himself, the Creator, crowned with glory and honor - Rev. 4. These two visions are prophetic of the same time. They both figure the end of Gentile rule. Christ as God will take His seat upon His own throne (He is now sitting upon His Father's throne) - Rev. 3:21.

But here is the marvelous and unthinkable thing which the majority of true Bible expositors have failed to see, that from the moment that Christ's throne is set in the heavens, man's rule on the earth is a usurpation; and the seven years that must be fulfilled afterward are a time beyond the order of God's appointment for the Gentile nations. The old man, energized by Satan, will refuse to abdicate in favor of God's Man. Satan's man will not let go the reins of government in favor of God's Man without a struggle. The last week of Daniel is a time of struggle between these opposing forces. The earth is the battlefield. And it is in this book we have this very situation symbolized and its consummation foretold.

"I beheld then because of the voice of the great words which the horn spoke." The above statement figures the fact

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that the Roman empire will seemingly be a factor in the world after the Lord has been seated upon His throne in the heavens. And observe at this point in the second stage of its career (which is a very significant item) the "little horn" appears to be the whole empire. Where are the other horns which Daniel first saw upon the beast? Ah, they are of such slight importance that they barely are mentioned now. The newcomer appears to have the preeminence, which is exactly what prophecy declares concerning this man of ill-fame, designated here as the little horn. He figures the anti-Christ who will at his first appearance occupy the role of one of the national heads or leaders in the world-court or confederacy of nations; but will gradually get control of the whole empire. In John's vision of that unparalleled week of usurpation, we are informed that he saw "one of the heads upon the beast," the united league of nations, "as tho' it were wounded to death, and his deadly wound was healed, and all the world wondered after the beast" - Rev. 13:13. It is after this resurrection (for he will be a counterfeit of Christ even as to his going down into death and coming up again), that he becomes sole ruler of the empire (See the notes on Revelation, page 73).

As Jesus Christ is declared to be the Son of God with power by His resurrection from the dead (Rom. 1:4); so the anti-Christ will presume to prove that he is God by coming back from the dead; for there are two aspects to his coming as we noted. He counterfeits the two advents of Christ as is plainly evident from Scripture. Daniel does not make these two phases of his career stand out as does John; nevertheless they are found in his prophecy. The first view he gives of him is as the "little horn," coming in among or between the "ten horns," and mastering three of them. At this juncture in the picture, tho' he does not loom so large on the program, he demonstrates his ability and leadership so that he no doubt attains to the place of one of the heads on the beast, or

counterfeit empire. He does not become the eighth head, or horn, but one of the seven heads - Rev. 13. But later, Daniel's attention is focused upon the "little horn," because of the audacity of his words. He becomes great, vaunting himself in his pride and self-will, reminding us of the "man of sin," whom Paul tells us will sit as God, showing himself that he is the supreme one (II Thes. 2); blasphemous in his attitude toward the only true and living God.

Observe at this point in the vision that Daniel identifies the "horn" and the "beast" as one - V. 11. Furthermore he is clearly distinguished from the other beasts or horns, which proves his unique place - V. 12. We have another feature of great importance added to Daniel's testimony regarding the little horn's career. He "made war with the saints and prevailed against them." But this war on the saints is limited. It only continues until the Ancient of Days makes His appearance. Then they prevailed against their former prevailer - "judgment was given to the saints of the Most High." It is this phase of the little horn's career that sorely troubles Daniel. His people's suffering touches him. He enquires more fully as to this "troubler of Israel" who was to be destroyed by the interposition of God Himself; and he gets further information. Jehovah delights to impart such knowledge to His people that are interested. He tells the prophet the following.

"The fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom upon the earth which shall be diverse from all kingdoms upon earth and shall devour the whole earth and shall tread it down and break it in pieces. The ten horns out of this kingdom are ten kings that shall arise; another shall rise after them and he shall be diverse from them and he shall subdue three kings." - Vs. 23, 24.

The above is unmistakably clear and plain. Any man it seems can understand from the answer to Daniel that God only recognizes four Gentile world empires. The above describes the fourth or last of these powers. The first stage of its rise and development is outlined in verse 23. The dissolution of this kingdom, the Roman empire, lies between verses 23 and 24. Hence when we read of the ten horns on the beast, we are reading of the beginning of the end-stage, the seven years of usurpation of the fourth kingdom. It is a most important epoch in the history of the world from the standpoint of God and His Word. It is the consummation period, the apex of man's doings. His blasphemous denial of God and his refusal to acknowledge Jehovah's sovereignty of the world are herewith symbolized. In the first stage of the fourth empire, while it was beastly and blood-thirsty in the sight of God, yet it was in divine order, but in the second stage it will be set up in defiance of God.

At the very hour when God's clock shall strike, the times of the Gentiles will be fulfilled and He will proceed to place His Son, the Seed of Abraham and the Seed of David, upon His throne in the heavens; but the nations will rebel against Jehovah's decree. "The kings of the earth will unite and the rulers will take counsel together against the Lord and against His Anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder; let us cast away their cords from us." But the Lord will have something to say as to that decision. "He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh" at their puny efforts to thwart His plans and purposes. "He shall have them in derision," and crown His King, Christ, a short time before the League of Nations, or counterfeit empire is launched; therefore we say, the latter getting together of the world powers is in rebellion against God's decree as to His Son's right to reign. Verse 25 informs us further of its anger and enmity.

"And he shall speak great words against the Most High and shall wear out the saints of the Most High and think to change times and laws and they shall be given into his hand until a time, times and the dividing of times."

The above describes the second stage of the antichrist's career in few words. The kingdom, which will arise with ten kings in coalition and equality, is now phrased as one king. He, the little horn, the terrible man of destiny, arises in symbol and is seen in control of the world; the devil having given him his place as god of this world - II Thess. 2:9. The great words he speaks are words of defiance directed especially against Christ, who is here spoken of as the Most High. He is Israel's Messiah who will be on His throne at the time figured and they are the saints that are to share the earthly kingdom. The Gentile lord will vent his ire upon them. He will wear them out, as Daniel says, and attempt to change their times, their feasts and their laws. In other words, he desires power, absolute, invincible, despotic authority over all men, over their consciences, religion and life. And he will have this period of sovereignty a short time. For three and one half years he will reign as Satan, the arch-fiend and eternal enemy of God. Jehovah will allow this defiant and malignant destroyer undisputed sway as judgment upon all men for their rebellion against Him and His King. The world will find his burden heavy, his yoke anything but easy. To

the Jewish people especially, it will be a time of unparalleled tribulation, the finishing touch, as it were to their long time of chastisement, out of which a remnant will be saved to suffer no more forever. That will be the time of suffering that is spoken of as the "great tribulation" (Matt. 25) and "Jacob's trouble" (Jer. 30), which Jesus said must be shortened or no flesh should be saved. The "destroyer" of Israel, the soon-coming Caesar, would wipe these people of destiny, the Jews, off the face of the earth; but he cannot do it.

God is for them and no one can be against them only so long as God allows the trial. The end of their enemy will come. They will cry to the living God for help, and Jesus their Messiah will arrive post-haste for their deliverance and the destruction of the anti-Christ.

"The judgment shall sit and they shall take away his dominion to consume and destroy it unto the end. And the kingdom and dominion and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven shall be given to the saints of the Most High whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom and all dominions shall serve and obey Him" - Verses 26, 27.

This surely could not be more explicit or rendered clearer. The usurpation of Gentile rulership, after God's determined times for them shall have closed, shall end in judgment and the annihilation of the counterfeit empire. After that the Messiah of Israel will be received by the holy remnant and He will bring them into the Kingdom promised to them in Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. He will place them forever in power on the earth and He will reign over all the kingdoms of the world, "the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords."

### ONE OF THESE DAYS

A. S. Copley

One of these days all earth-scenes will be changed;

All of the ways of men be disarranged.

Mighty and pompous things will then go down;

People of wealth and wisdom lose renown,

One of these days.

One of these days a stone cut not with hands,

Then will amaze the nations, break their bands.

Jesus our Lord will reign in righteousness

Over the earth, and Jews and Gentiles bless,

One of these days.

One of these days our Lord will call us home;

One of these days we'll cease on earth to roam.

All of our toils and tears will then be o'er;

Upward on wings of faith to heav'n we'll soar,

One of these days.

One of these days with Christ within the throne,

'Velloped in praise, we'll reap what we have sown.

Then we will wear a golden glory crown;

And with the Savior share His great renown,

One of these days.

### VISION OF THE RAM AND GOAT

#### Chapter Eight

"IN THE THIRD YEAR OF THE REIGN OF KING BELSHAZZAR, A VISION APPEARED UNTO ME, EVEN UNTO ME, DANIEL, AFTER THAT WHICH APPEARED UNTO ME AT THE FIRST" - V. 1.

This second panorama of future events passed before Daniel's eyes three years after the vision of the four beasts. There are several points of contrast between the two. In chapter seven, we are not given the name of the place of the vision, neither does Daniel appear to record it; but rather another person. Yet we know that such is not the case. Daniel wrote the whole book which bears his name; and in our present chapter he mentions the former vision of three years previous. But we repeat - these things are significant. The inference is that the events figured by the four beasts are so entirely Gentile, that Daniel, the Jew, does not write as tho' he was recording the vision; while on the contrary, the Ram and Goat vision is reported by Daniel, doubly emphasized,

as "me, even me, Daniel." It no doubt figures happenings relative to the Jew and his land. The scene of this vision is laid in the palace of Shushan, later the capital city of the Medo-Persian kingdom. The fact that the prophet was transported thither in the dream prepares us for a change and implies that the dynasty of Babylon was about to end. The present moving picture was thrown on the screen in the last year of Belshazzar's reign. Daniel appears to be in another kingdom, country and palace. Babylon seems entirely lost to his view; for his vision has no reference to the city of Babylon nor to the world-empire of that name.

#### The Panorama

"I lifted up mine eyes and saw and behold there stood before the river a ram which had two horns, and the two horns were high; but one was higher than the other and the higher came up last. I saw the ram pushing westward and northward and southward so that no beast might stand before him; neither was there any that could deliver out of his hand; but he did according to his own will and became great. And as I was considering, behold a he-goat came from the west on the face of the whole earth and touched not the ground; and the goat had a notable horn between his eyes. And he came to the ram that had two horns which I had seen standing before the river and ran unto him in the fury of his power. And I saw him come close unto the ram and he was moved with choler against him and smote the ram and broke his two horns; and was no power in the ram to stand before him, but he cast him down to the ground and stamped upon him; and there was none that could deliver the ram out of his hand. Therefore the he-goat waxed very great and when he was strong the great horn was broken and for it came up four notable ones toward the four winds of heaven" - Vs. 3-8.

The two outstanding figures here, the Ram and Goat, must have presented an impressive picture to Daniel. He could no doubt easily identify the first one, the ram, with the bear-kingdom of his previous vision, interpreted as that of Medo-Persia. The same dual character is indicated by the two horns; and the fact that the one of them that came up last, becomes higher, points to the later supremacy of Persia over Media. Also the fact of the ram's conquest of three countries, westward, northward, southward, agrees with the symbol of the three ribs in the mouth of the bear. The description of the second figure, the goat, while much more detailed than that of the leopard of chapter seven, yet has many of its essentialities. The same swiftness of approach and the abrupt fourfold division are parallel in each case. Daniel no doubt could easily trace its correspondence, not only with his earlier vision, but also with the symbolic dream image which he had interpreted for Nebuchadnezzar. They are all three identical thus far.

#### The Little Horn

And out of one of them came forth a little horn which waxed exceeding great toward the south and toward the east and toward the pleasant land. And it waxed great even to the host of heaven and cast down some of the host and of the stars to the ground and stamped upon them. Yea he magnified himself even to the prince of the host and by him the daily sacrifice was taken away and the place of his sanctuary was cast down. And a host was given him against the daily sacrifice by reason of transgression and it cast down the truth to the ground and it practiced and prospered" - Vs. 9-13.

From this point on Daniel must have begun to trace a difference in the moving picture drama from all that had preceded. Here we have a decided change in the reel and the latter purpose is really the occasion of this second vision of the seer. God never just simply repeats Himself. There is always some further light and instruction for us in every apparent repetition. Let us follow on here and see if we can find the difference between this vision and that of the preceding chapter and what it portends.

First note the reference to the "pleasant land" (which signifies Palestine) in connection with the activities of the "little horn." Also the expression, "the host of heaven," clearly speaking of Daniel's own people, the Jews. The latter are the only people on the earth that can be termed in any sense a heavenly host. The "stars" signify the spiritual leaders of the people who are their luminaries. Furthermore observe the dreadful condition of pride and defiance against "the prince" of the people and the desecration of the daily sacrifice and the sanctuary - V. 11. But the next verse informs us of the why of the foregoing. It is by way of judgment upon "the host of heaven." The people of Daniel will be wholly given over into the hand of this sacrilegious, godless fellow, designated here the "little horn," for a specified time.

All of the above summary of events peculiar to this second vision stamp it as altogether of a

religious character. It connects with the vision of chapter seven, but is not the same; neither are the two little horns of these two chapters synonymous. The one, the first refers to a Gentile king, the last great world emperor; while the one we are now considering applies to a Jew, we believe, a religious man. We say again that the vision here outlined is peculiarly significant of Daniel's own people and their land. Remember that this chapter, as well as the remainder of this book was written in Hebrew, as especially fitting this pilgrim race; while the preceding part was written in the Chaldean language. Also the further fact that Daniel affixes his name to this portion is significant, as we have noted before.

"Then I heard one saint speaking and another saint said unto that certain saint which spake, How long shall be the vision concerning the daily sacrifice and the transgression of desolation to give both the sanctuary and the host to be trodden under foot? And he said, Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed" - Verses 13, 14.

Now we see that there is a slight digression from the vision proper. Daniel is given to see, in his dream, the importance of the desecration occasioned by the wicked ruler (designated the little horn); and the deep concern with which the saints (the religious people) will regard the events shadowed here. The one interested saint enquires of the other the length of time in which the sanctuary and the host shall be trodden under foot - the temple and the people of Jehovah are in question. How long shall the desecration continue? How long shall the judgment of Jehovah be visited upon the people? How long until the sanctuary is cleansed? is really the uppermost thought, as the answer with its connecting appendage shows. Therefore we are in no doubt as to the meaning of this moving picture. Daniel's own people in the last days are shown upon the screen in dire trouble because of the evil doings of the "little horn." Their land and their sacred house are polluted because of his presence. It is a judgment upon them because of their transgressions; but it is only for a time. There will follow a glorious vindication. And we are brought in the vision to this happy consummation by way of the first reel showing the moving picture of the second and third world empires, down to the coming of the "vile person," the oppressor of the Jews, who shall spring out of one of the four divisions of the third empire. That is, judgment precedes blessing.

#### **Daniel's Attitude To The Vision**

"And it came to pass when I, even I, Daniel had seen the vision and sought for the meaning, then behold, there stood before me as the appearance of a man. And I heard a man's voice between the banks of Ulai which called and said, Gabriel, make this man to understand the vision. So he came near to where I stood and when he came, I was afraid and fell upon my face; but he said unto me, Understand, O son of man; for at the time of the end shall be the vision. Now as he was speaking with me, I was in a deep sleep on my face toward the ground; but he touched me and set me upright. And he said, Behold, I will make thee know what shall be in the last end of the indignation; for at the time appointed the end shall be" - Vs. 15-19.

Now as we have intimated, the first part of the vision was no mystery to Daniel. He knew its connection and identity with what had preceded; but the latter part was what interested him. Its undoubted application to his own people filled him with desire for the solution of the whole panorama. He must understand it. He sought the meaning, no doubt, calling on God for the answer. And it was not long in coming. The angel Gabriel is sent to him "to make him to understand the vision." It pleased the Lord that Daniel should be so interested and seek to know all the truth concerning the matter. We cannot be too earnest or zealous in desiring a knowledge of the purposes of God. He delights in this form of curiosity and deigns to condescend to our ignorance. The angel draws near to this man and speaks, telling him to "understand;" that is, giving him the opened ear and understanding heart. Daniel is afraid and falls upon his face; but Gabriel touches him and makes him stand upon his feet, saying, "Behold I will make thee know." Daniel was to have his heart's desire granted to him and we will also, if we seek after knowledge as men seek after fine gold. And when we get the interpretation from heaven as in the case here, we can depend upon its accuracy and inspiration. Daniel did not doubt the angel's words. He believed implicitly that he was getting the understanding of that for which his heart was crying. Let us notice at the outset the angel's procedure of instruction. He seeks to fix Daniel's attention upon the last days. The end is emphasized by three references: "the time of the end" (V. 17); "the last end;" and "at the time appointed the end shall be" - V. 19. Herein we have the key to the solution of the mystery. It relates to matters concerning Daniel's own people way down to the last

end of this age, or more properly speaking, the first seven years of the next age. The book of Daniel begins with the captivity of the Jew, as we have seen in our former study. The prophet himself, being then but a boy in his teens, was taken down to Babylon at the time of the very first siege against Jerusalem. That marked the beginning of the domination of the Gentile. Nebuchadnezzar, who was his father's general at that time, came up and made Jehoiakim, king of Judah, subject to Nabopolassar - B. C. 606. Jehovah's long-restrained indignation began to be poured out upon His rebellious people. The threatened judgment fell and they were cast out of their beautiful land which had been given to them by Jehovah. And this disrupted condition of the nation had now obtained for seventy years, which brings us up to the year of this vision - Chapter 8.

Daniel was aware of all these things which had fallen upon his people; for he was, as we said, in the first deportation of captives. He knew the people were suffering as subject to Gentile rule because of God's hand and indignation; therefore the words of the angel, "the last end of the indignation," could only have one meaning for him. He understood that the vision referred to the final and as yet unreached end of the judgment time when their expulsion from the land would be a thing of the past. He realized that Jehovah was unveiling the closing stage of this meted-out, down-treading chastisement of His people, preparatory to their restoration to their place of supremacy upon the earth; hence he fixes his attention upon the last days of the times of the Gentiles. And we are assured from his sickness, sorrow and astonishment, when he hears the sum of the matter, that he knew the end as not in sight, but was yet for "many days," as the angel informs him - V.26.

#### **The Interpretation**

"The ram which thou sawest having two horns are the kings of Media and Persia. And the rough goat is the king of Grecia; and the great horn between his eyes is the first king. Now that being broken, whereas four stood up for it, four kingdoms shall stand up out of the nation, but not in his power" - Verses 20-22.

The "ram" is a well known symbol of Persia, used in that country itself and very familiar in its monuments and public documents, as some have noted; but it is marvelous how its composite character is revealed and emphasized by its "two horns." These two kingdoms, Media and Persia, lying eastward from Babylon, were already battering at her gates; for as history informs us, the end arrived for Belshazzar in the third year of his reign. Darius is said to have reigned but a short time, when he gave up the entire rulership to his superior, Cyrus. There are several differing views of the Mede and his eclipse by the Persian, but here we have the prophecy of the fact, from which there can be no dissenting voice. This great empire, as we intimated in our last lesson, held three great kingdoms in its grasp, Babylon, Egypt and Lydia, besides many lesser powers (which were included in the first empire) and was vastly more extended in its territory than that of its predecessor, Babylon.

The "rough goat" is plainly said to be Greece, the third kingdom. Here is the first hint of the ascendancy of a western power. Hitherto the East has had it all her own way. Even in Daniel's time there was no indication of the change. Greece was plainly no formidable opponent when this prophetic vision was given to Daniel. It is this fact that makes the critics howl. They cannot dispute the future events, herein declared years before they became history. They can only deny the authenticity of Daniel's writings, claiming that they were the work of one who lived many years later; but we know differently. Inspiration breathes from every page of this book. It is marvelously divine. None but God can tell things before they come to pass. He challenges men, or their idols to do as He has done and thus prove their claim. He cites the fulfillment of prophecy as the unanswerable proof that He is God - Isaiah 41:21-26.

Furthermore, as regards the interpretation of the vision and the prophecy therein declared, Greece at that time was anything but prosperous. She had already lost her holdings in Asia Minor to Croesus, ruler of Lydia. And yet, here is this striking prophecy, it is shown as coming into prominence at the very zenith of the Persian empire when the latter without a rival, was walking upon the earth in every direction. And the marvel is, that the conquering adversary should be a Western power. From the quarter, least to be expected, comes the Victor. The Persian did not "get the goat;" but "the goat" the Grecian conqueror, went home with the spoils. And his power was marvelous. "He touched not the ground," incredible swiftness featured. The "notable horn" on the goat was the first king of Greece, as the angel revealed to Daniel - Vs. 5-8. Here is the

well-known conqueror, Alexander the Great. His amazing progress is noted as phenomenal in profane history. It is said that at the age of thirty-two he wept because there were no more worlds to conquer. He became dominant over all the then known world, and died, while still young, of fever, the result of drunken excesses at Babylon. He had no natural seed, his own brother and the latter's two sons being murdered within the space of fifteen months; and the Grecian empire was divided among Alexander's four generals who had fought and conquered with him. The eastern portion became known as "The East," or Chaldea. Its ruler was Seleucus. The western provinces were called "Greece," and had for their king, Cassander. The northern part was named "Asia Minor," and given to Lysimachus. "Egypt," in the south, had Ptolemy as ruler. The partition weakened the empire.

### **The Fierce One Of The End**

"In the latter time of their kingdom, when the transgressions are come to the full, a king of fierce countenance and understanding dark sentences shall stand up. And his power shall be mighty, but not by his own power; and he shall destroy wonderfully, and shall prosper and practice and shall destroy the mighty. And thru his policy also, he shall cause craft to prosper in his hand and he shall magnify himself in his heart and by peace shall destroy many. He shall also stand up against the Prince of princes; but be broken without hand." - Vs. 22-25.

Now that we have some positive data as to the interpretation of the vision, we must not forget the fact that "the end" is the point upon which the angel sought to focus Daniel's attention.

The "little horn" which was to arise out of one of the four notable kingdoms that succeeded the divided Grecian empire, is called by the angel, "A king of fierce countenance." We see in the first part of the moving picture, the detailed portion, that this little horn becomes powerful in "the East" (Babylon) and "in the pleasant land;" but the northern and western portions are not mentioned in this connection; therefore we conclude that the king of ill fame comes from one of these sections of the empire, that is, from either Greece or Asia Minor. And while we look to the end for this man to appear, yet we also naturally look for some character of the past from one of those kingdoms to answer in some measure to the description of this fierce one. And there was such a personage in the past, as history declares.

Antiochus Epiphanes, fits into this place most marvelously. He came from Syria, one of the countries of Asia Minor, the northern partition of the Grecian empire. His cruelty to the Jews, sacrilege to their house of worship and desecration of the Holy land are common history. Many Bible expositors insist that the "little horn's" career has been fulfilled in this Syrian king. And if we do not fix our eyes tenaciously upon the words spoken by the angel as to "the last end of the indignation," we too may be misled as to the application. And there are further points of evidence that must convince the open-hearted that the language cannot apply to Antiochus in the full sense that is here intimated. He, Antiochus, did not tread the sanctuary and host under foot for the specified time, "two thousand, three hundred days;" in other words, six years, four months and twenty days. In fact, tho they were fiercely and persistently assailed, the Jews successively withstood Antiochus, because Jehovah was with them and fought for them. They won for themselves a great name, becoming more prosperous, and independent than they had been since the disruption of the kingdom and carrying away into Babylon. That was under Maccabees, and was typical of Christ's coming kingdom.

Antiochus has been called the anti-christ of the Old Testament and he is a most striking figure of the reality which is yet to come. In many points he resembled the false prophet or second beast (Rev. 13:15-17) whom we believe is the answer to this "little horn" of Daniel. Antiochus attempted to force heathen worship upon the Jews and he put to death all those that resisted his designs until at last the Maccabees, the heroic, faithful Jewish leader, assisted by the Romans, defeated him. It is said he profaned the temple by offering a sow upon the altar of burnt-offering which effectually put an end to Jewish worship, for a short time (the temple was eventually cleansed and the ordained sacrifices and worship resumed). All this is truly significant and typical of another and far worse blasphemer, the king of fierce countenance of the last days.

The angel has put the interpretation of the latter part of the vision beyond doubt or uncertainty. "In the latter time of their kingdom when the transgressors are come to the full, a king of fierce countenance shall stand up." The time of Antiochus was the former time of these respective kingdoms; their cup of iniquity was not yet full. His day was not even in the latter time of the parted Grecian empire; for he died more than a hundred years before its dissolution. The

language here proves that there is to be a revival of those four kingdoms. They are to have a "latter time" and out of one of them this fierce fellow will arise. The inference is plain that he will not be of Chaldea or Egypt; for he seems to become strong in those quarters and in the pleasant land. All these facts imply that he conquers these portions, whether by a bloodless conquest or not, we do not say (tho' we incline to the former view); for we believe, as we intimated, that this man figures the false prophet, the second beast, companion in crime and deception with the first beast (Rev. 13), figured by the "little horn" of Daniel seven.

Observe some of the statements regarding him: "His power shall be mighty, but not by his own power" - V. 24. This implies superhuman resources; therefore it must be Satan's empowerment. And this is what we read of the false prophet; for tho' he looks gentle and guileless, as a lamb, yet "he spoke as a dragon." And we read further, "He doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men. And deceiveth those that dwell on the earth by the means of the miracles which he hath power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to those that dwell on the earth that he should make an image to the beast which had a wound by a sword and did live. And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image should speak and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed. And he causeth all, both rich and poor, free and bond to receive a mark in their right hand or in their foreheads. And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark of the beast or the number of his name" - Rev. 13:11-17.

These two men, called "beasts" by John, the Daniel of the New Testament, work "hand in glove." They are both energized and filled by Satan. The one cannot be separated from the other; for they are both anti-Christ - anti-king and anti-prophet. It takes two men to counterfeit Christ in these two offices. In His first advent, He was Messiah, the Prophet; in His second advent, He will be Messiah, the King.

The second beast works for the first and in harmony with him. They together will influence the world, nationally and religiously. The first beast will arise from the sea, the restless, troubled mass of the people, multitudes and nations. The second beast will come from the quiet, steady, apparently established, religious element, without observation or acclaim, the opposite in this respect from the first. He will seemingly be modest and weak.

We see him in John's description as a "lamb" with two horns, not a wild beast, even as Daniel also shows him coming from the "goat" kingdom; not a wild beast, as in chapter seven. The lamb speaks of sacrifice, as also the goat, this beast being an imitation of Christ as priest as well as prophet. The "two horns" upon the lamb tell us of his cosmopolitan character. He is for all men, both Jews and Gentiles. As the first beast will be the world's greatest conqueror, emperor of empires; so the second will be the world's greatest prophet. In men's eyes these two men will be great characters. They will be supreme, and the world will obey the one and worship the other. They will aptly characterize the end of man's day; for they will be giants in intellect and might. All the subtlety and craft of Satan will be epitomized in these super-beings. They will cause the world to wonder and perish; for their coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders - II Thes. 2:9, 10. While the latter is especially significant of the second beast, yet it is by the same power, that of Satan, that the first beast is given his place of authority.

These two men are mentioned and their respective offices noted by several writers and always in connection with each other, calling the first beast "a thief" and "a wolf" and the second beast, "the hireling" shepherd that flees when danger approaches, in contrast with the "good Shepherd" who dies for the sheep. Paul speaks of them also as was intimated. He terms the first beast, "the man of sin, the son of perdition," closely associating him with that "Wicked," the second beast, whom the Lord will consume with the spirit of His mouth and destroy with the brightness of His coming - II Thes. 2. Furthermore, in Job we have these two men connected again, figured by two great beasts, "behemoth," a land animal and "leviathan," a beast of the sea - Chaps. 40 and 41. David also speaks of them as "the violent man," the king or first beast, and "the evil man, the wicked, an evil speaker," the prophet or second beast. See Psalm 140:1, 4, 11.

Therefore, we rightly conclude that Daniel could not have neglected to tell us of so great a personage, as the second beast, of the end. Surely he would not prophesy of one beast (ch. 7) and not inform us of the other. The second beast is even more closely related to the Jew and his land than the first. And if the "little horn" of Dan. 8 is not the second beast of Rev. 13, where will we find him in Daniel? And why should Daniel be the only prophet who is silent concerning him?

Indeed, we have a most striking prophecy of him in our present chapter. His victories are rather religious than national as the language proves. He shall "understand dark sentences;" and "he shall destroy wonderfully and shall prosper and shall destroy the mighty and the holy people" - the Jews. All the power, that is, supernatural power, and signs and wonders are attributed to him. "He doeth great wonders," John tells us. His miracles will be in imitation of God's judgments upon the earth; they will deceive all but the very "elect." Jannes and Jambres, the magicians, false prophets of Egypt that withstood Moses, figure these two beasts with their counterfeit signs. The second "beast" of John or second "horn" of Daniel will persuade the people to make an image of the first beast (his likeness no doubt) which will be set up in the temple in Jerusalem and all men commanded to worship it. Nebuchadnezzar's great image on the plain of Dura is an illustration and forerunner of this parody. Breath, not life (see margin) will be given to the image and it will speak and demand that all those shall be put to death that refuse to fall down and worship the image. That will be the abomination that maketh desolate to which the Lord referred - Matt. 24:15 and Dan. 9:27 and 12:11.

"And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond to receive a mark in their right hand or in their foreheads" - Rev. 13:16. Whatsoever that mark will be (and there have been many suppositions), we are assured that it is a satanic counterfeit of the sealing of the people of God by the Holy Spirit - Rev. 13:17. No doubt it will be some indication by the hand or in the mind (a paper probably on which a password is written, or the knowledge of the word or words in the mind) of allegiance to the first beast and the empire over which he holds sway, that carries with it the promise of protection and favor. No one may buy or sell except he worships the beast and shows loyalty to this devil-inspired government. Remember it is the second beast that supports all the claims of the first beast, or anti-christ, by power.

Observe also that several of the characteristics of Daniel's "little horn" of our present chapter agree most perfectly with John's account of the second beast. Listen: "Thru his policy also he shall cause craft to prosper in his hand; he shall magnify himself in his heart and by peace shall destroy many" - V. 25. Here we are shown the manner in which he will accomplish his diabolical schemes, by diplomacy, craft, self-exaltation and deception. He will be the religious leader of the end; especially the Jews will hail him as prophet. He may be a Jew himself or at least of one of the tribes of Israel. Why not? They were carried down to Syria, the country from which Daniel's little thorn will probably emerge. He will have great influence with Daniel's people at the end, moving them no doubt to make the covenant (which Isaiah terms the covenant with death and with hell - Isa. 28:15) with the revived Roman empire and its emperor. The latter will no doubt stand for peace and protection for all peoples; but later it will bring sorrow, tribulation and death to the Jews.

But the pinnacle of the blasphemy of the little horn is manifested in his stand against "the Prince of princes," which is none other than Christ Himself. He is described as defying Him, and resisting His advances to take hold of what is His own. But the result of his malignancy is that "he shall be broken without hand" (V. 24), that is, by supernatural power. "He goeth into perdition" (Rev. 17:11), another has written. "And the beast was taken and the false prophet that wrought miracles before him with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast and them that worship his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone" - Rev. 19:20.

#### **The Angel's Last Words**

"And the vision of the evening and the morning which was told is true; wherefore shut thou up the vision; for it shall be for many days" - V. 26. The above must have been disconcerting and discouraging to the heart of Daniel. Here was the very end of the "Seventy Years" of the prophesied captivity (Jer. 25:12) when he was expecting the downfall of Babylon; and now he is told that the end of the indignation is not in sight. It is yet for "many days." And tho' Babylon the great city of the Chaldean empire, the boast and pride of Nebuchadnezzar did fall, as Daniel himself records (chap. 5); yet the domination of the Jew still remains a fact in the world. The times of the Gentiles have not ended regardless of the declaration of Balfour and the exit from Jerusalem of Ottoman rule. The captivity of the Jew is still a fact as conditions all about us witness.

Some expositors insist that the "many days" (v. 26) refer to the "two thousand and three hundred days," the length of time of the "desolated sanctuary" (v. 14); but we are assured that these are

two separate periods of time. The one, "many days," spoken by the angel to Daniel, in which the vision is shut up, refers to these years of the domination of the Jew by Gentile powers; while the other, the definite number of days, the answer of the one saint to the other, refers entirely to the very "end of the indignation," the seven years of unparalleled happenings yet to be fulfilled relative to the chastisement of the Jew. The inference is plain that at the point where these allotted days begin, the captivity of Daniel's people is over, for they are in their own land and are again a recognized people in the world. The "daily sacrifice" could not have been said to have been "taken away" (v. 11) if it had not been in evidence; therefore we rightly infer that the temple will have been built and their worship of Jehovah resumed same time previously.

Now here is the absolute proof that we are correct in our assumption that the last week of Daniel is a usurpation by the Gentiles of the kingdoms of this world in defiance of God. Their tenure of office ends when the captivity of the Jew ends (Luke. 21:24); hence any further sovereignty on their part is in rebellion against the edict of Jehovah. He has decreed for them four world empires, (chaps. 2 and 7), no more and no less; therefore the last world empire, which is shortly to arise will be out of divine order. The Gentile times will stop (according to God) when the Jew's clock is wound up and starts ticking again. At that very moment God has His King, a Jew, the Lord Jesus Christ, ready and He seats Him amid the declamations of heaven, if not of earth, upon His throne in the heavens (which has been placed there) and the fifth world empire begins to come into view. The Jews' times will then commence, but they as a nation will be still in unbelief as to Jesus Christ. They will not yet accept Him as their Messiah. In fact we learn from another time-date in Daniel (Dan. 12:11) that thirty days previous to the setting up of the throne of Christ in the heavens the daily burnt offering is interrupted. The latter figures Christ and His fragrant death, therefore when they let go of this sacred symbol, they are refusing their king and accepting the antichrist, the usurper. Thirty days later, at the beginning of the seven last years of Daniel, they enter into a covenant with the first beast, as we have noted before - Chap. 7. They accept him that comes in his own name as Jesus said (John 5:24); therefore they are given up to full vengeance of the antichrist until their chastisement is accomplished. Then will come the cleansing or justification of the sanctuary which the saint said should not occur until "two thousand and three hundred days." That is, six years, four months and twenty days, or 250 days less the full number of 2520 days, or the seven years, with the added 30 days where the daily burnt offering was stopped. We will have more of this in our further study.

"And I Daniel fainted and was sick certain days; afterwards I rose up and did the king's business and I was astonished at the vision; but none understood it" - Verse 27.

Daniel's condition at the close of the marvelous panorama was anything but jubilant. He was sick and faint. The disclosures were not of a character to give him joy or gladness. They presaged evil to his beloved people; hence, they meant evil for him. He felt deeply the sorrow which he was sure would come upon them. He stands here related to the remnant at the end who will actually enter into these things of which Daniel prophesied. His sympathy was keen and his sorrow crushing. His last words penned here, "I was astonished at the vision, but none understood it," have in them the thought that no one knew why he was so deeply affected. He kept the matter to himself. It was of too solemn a character to broadcast. He went about the business of his office as tho' he was tranquil and happy when his heart was nigh to breaking and his body sick. Only the Lord knew the anguish in which he was engulfed and the perplexities that assailed him. He was carrying secrets in his bosom, profound and dizzying revelations of the future, even while he was faithfully fulfilling his daily duties in the corrupt Babylonish court. What a vision his eyes beheld of Israel, dispersed and chastened of Jehovah, captive in Gentile lands, persecuted and down trodden for centuries. He knew from his vision and its interpretation that the Seventy Years, of which Jeremiah prophesied, that were even then fulfilled, was not the end of their suffering. And tho' the end was of good tidings of great joy, yet the sorrow lying in between could not be lightly passed over. He entered into the mind of God and was a true type of the greater weeping prophet who wept over Jerusalem, saying, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets and stonest them that are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings and ye would not. Behold your house is left unto you desolate" - Matthew 23:27.

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**RUN FOR THE PRIZE**

Soon comes the dawning, brother, day is at hand,  
Jesus is nearing, rouse the conquering band;  
Push past the judges, tho' the lions loudly roar,  
Strenuous the racing, brother, now almost o'er.  
Press on the pathway, brother, sound no retreat,  
Keep in the front rank, never know defeat;  
Let no man take your crown nor pass you swiftly by,  
Stepping on the gas, my brother, win tho' you die.  
Wake up the sleeping, there is no time to lose,  
Harvest is rip'ning, glorious the news;  
Bright gleams the morning, brother, upward lift the eye,  
And behold the breaking light in yon azure sky.  
Hear, hear the trumpet, brother, shout, "Saints arise,"  
Lo, now the Bride is waiting for the Prize;  
Go forth to meet Him, as His chosen One, His Dove,  
Mounting up together golden Stairway of Love.

**THE VISION OF THE SEVENTY WEEKS**

**Chapter Nine**

"IN THE FIRST YEAR OF DARIUS, THE SON OF AHASUERUS OF THE SEED OF THE MEDES, which was over the realm of the Chaldeans; in the first year of his reign, I, Daniel, understood by books the number of the years whereof the Word of the Lord came to Jeremiah, the prophet, that he would accomplish Seventy Years in the desolations of Jerusalem" - Chapter 9:1, 2.

The above chapter embraces the third of Daniel's visions. Babylon had already fallen and Darius the Median king was upon the throne of empires. We saw in chapter six that he had promoted Daniel to one of the chief places in his realm, president of the Triumvirate, and thought to set him over the whole kingdom but was hindered at first because of the envy of his associates. They sought to destroy him; but that was impossible, for he was a chosen vessel, the sentinel of his day for the house of Judah. The lions could not devour him. Jehovah was a wall of fire round about His prophet. Ezekiel, who was also a watchman for Israel (Eze. 3:17) refers to Daniel as a model of righteousness and wisdom. He is ranked with Job and Noah (Eze. 14:14-20) as examples of overcomers in the midst of degenerate times. God takes note of such worthies and writes their epitaph upon the honor roll of His illustrious men.

Ezekiel's eulogy of Daniel proves that he was held in high esteem by the captives of Judah. His exalted position, while he was still a mere youth at the court of the Jew's conqueror and king, gave them a vivid interest in their honored kinsman. His name and fame for wisdom and righteousness added luster to their race. In his exaltation, they felt themselves raised from their degradation. And it is a striking fact that Jehovah generally favored those people of destiny in this manner. In their beginning as a nation in Egypt, their kinsman, Joseph, on account of his interpretation of dreams, became the greatest man at the Egyptian court. So Daniel at the close of their history as a kingdom, was likewise prompted on the same ground. They both represented Israel's high and holy calling - a kingdom of priests among the nations and Messiah's light bearers to the whole of the Gentile world.

Daniel especially represents the covenant people in exile and in subjection to the world powers for a time, because of the edict of God. But notice, it is only external. In reality, he, the Jew, is the king, the sovereign of the world. His insight into dreams which baffled the wisdom of the Chaldeans prove him their superior. His high dignities in that heathen court figure the ultimate exaltation of those people, the saints of the Most High, when the kingdoms of this world will become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ - Rev. 11:15.

**Daniel's Prayer Life**

In our present chapter, we behold the prophet of God drawing near to his Sovereign. In spite of his responsibilities and pressing duties, promptly, conscientiously and efficiently performed, Daniel did not fail to seek the face of Jehovah. Communion with Him was his daily habit, one of

the highest privileges, I will not say duties, of his eventful life. It was his first business. Thrice daily he sought the sanctuary of God's presence; for worship and prayer were absolute essentials to him. His windows were always open toward Jerusalem; and he did not forget to read the Scriptures also.

He was thus able to discern the signs of the times which were multiplying with amazing rapidity around him, even as with us today. Babylon had fallen, and the people were about to be loosed from their captivity, as had been foretold - Jer. 25:11. Even to the minutest detail, prophecy was being fulfilled at this juncture. The exaltation of Babylon's successor, the Medes, was already beginning to be history. Cyrus the man that was named as the liberator of the Jews (Isa. 45:1) was already seated upon the throne of Persia; hence Daniel is mightily stirred in his spirit to seek the Lord for the further unfolding of His will.

The call to prayer becomes more insistent and urgent the closer we are to the time of a predicted event. Instead of the watchful servant becoming callous and indifferent, assuming that the counsels of Jehovah will be fulfilled regardless of his cooperation, it has just the opposite effect. He engages more than ever in the extraordinary avocation of prayer. And that is ever the way to get the visions of God. He is delighted with all those that are so deeply interested in His affairs, so intensely exercised that they will weep and pray. He will reveal Himself to them.

The captivity of the Jews had come to pass as it was predicted by the prophets, Isaiah and Jeremiah. They testified again and again of the wrath of God that was sure to come upon the people if they did not repent; but alas, they did not heed. The due time came for their outlasting and the predictions were fulfilled. Likewise their restoration was contemplated and predicted by Jehovah thru the same prophets. The conditions from every point were foreknown and shown by Him. Divine testimony as to these things are irrefutable. Note a few:

"Who gave Jacob for a spoil and Israel to the robbers? Did not the Lord, He against whom they had sinned? for they would not walk in His ways, neither were they obedient unto His law. Therefore He hath poured upon him the fury of his anger" - Isa. 42:24.

"Thus saith the Lord your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel; for your sakes I have sent into Babylon and have brought down all their nobles and the Chaldeans whose cry is in the ships. I am the Lord your Holy One, the Creator of Israel, your king" - Isa. 43:14, 15.

"Israel is a scattered sheep; the lions have driven him away. First the king of Assyria hath devoured him; and last this Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon hath broken his bones. Therefore I will punish the king of Babylon as I have punished the king of Assyria. And I will bring Israel again to his habitation and he shall feed on Carmel and Bashai and his soul shall be satisfied upon Mount Ephraim and Gilead" - Jer. 50:17.

Not one happening in the history of the nation of destiny was accidental. Jehovah revealed the trend of events relating to them and shaped their course in every detail. No Gentile nation should ever have ruled over them except the Lord had sold them, even as He Himself declares. He gave them up into the hands of their enemies for a specified purpose, for a specified time; but He desires them to know when their chastening is over and to call upon Him for deliverance and restoration. He will gather them out of the lands where they have been scattered when they know His will and call on Him. As He says, "Put me in remembrance; let us plead together" - Isa. 43:26. Furthermore, He declares, "I will yet be inquired of the house of Israel to do it for them. I will increase them with men like a flock" - Eze 36:37. Then again it is written, "Thus saith the Lord, the Holy One of Israel and His maker, Ask me of things to come concerning my sons; and concerning the work of my hands, command ye Me" - Isa. 45:11.

Therefore we say, Daniel was in the perfect will of God and had the mind of God in praying and fasting at this time. It was a crisis period in the history of his people. The restoration from Babylonish exile was, in a sense, dependent upon the penitence and supplication of the people. Listen: "In those days and at that time saith the Lord, the children of Israel shall come, they and the children of Judah together, going and weeping. They shall go and seek the Lord their God. They shall ask the way to Zion, with their faces thitherward, saying, Come, let us join ourselves to the Lord in a perpetual covenant that shall not be forgotten" - Jer. 50:4, 5. Daniel read this and obeyed, as he tells us, "And I set my face unto the Lord God to seek by prayer and supplication with fasting and sackcloth and ashes. And I prayed unto the Lord my God and made my confession, and said, O Lord, the great and dreadful God, keeping the covenant and mercy to them that love Him and to them that keep His commandments. We have sinned and have

committed iniquity, and have done wickedly and have rebelled; even by departing from Thy precepts and from Thy judgments. Neither have we hearkened unto Thy servants the prophets which spake in Thy Name to our kings, our princes and our fathers and to all the people of the land. O Lord, righteousness belongeth unto Thee; but unto us confusion of faces, as at this day, to the men of Judah and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem and unto all Israel that are near and that are afar off, thru all the countries whither Thou hast driven them because of their trespass which they have trespassed against Thee" - Vs. 3-7.

### **Daniel's Intercession**

The whole prayer of the prophet is given to us in outline. It is a pattern for Israel, sublime and wonderful, marked by repentance and abasement toward Jehovah, but also by a confidence in His unchanging love and faithfulness to His people whom He had cast off for a little while. Daniel's faith is inspiring and contagious. He acknowledges the justice of the Lord in all His ways with His people, but he holds fast the fact that they were His people. He resembles Moses in this respect, that, even tho' the moral condition was low and Jehovah was hindered from publicly owning them, yet he continues to plead for them as the people of the Lord. He never let slip the truth that Jerusalem was Judah's city and God was their God. The angel may call them Daniel's people and Jerusalem his city (V. 24) which was all true; but Daniel still holds fast to the precious fact, which faith declares, that, let the people be ever so faithless, God is true. He will fulfill His sure, unerring Word. They are Jehovah's people; hence for this cause they are chastened more than other folks. It is because He is what He is that they are chastened. He is holy, just and good and His people must be like Himself. And they shall be, for He has undertaken their cause and will consummate His counsel regarding them. They will be worthy of Himself when at last He has finished His working. The chastening of the present is only the means to that glorious consummation of the future.

Now Daniel knew this. He was looking at things from God's viewpoint; hence He knew that God's ways were right. He could not act otherwise and be what He was - the true and living God. Daniel was in hearty sympathy with Him in all His dealings with the people as his prayer abundantly testifies. We have sinned, but Thou art righteous, he declares. Yet this attitude of unworthiness did not hinder his approach toward Him nor his intercession. No indeed. As we intimated, he entered into the mind of God as to these things. He knew it was the due time for God to show mercy. Mercy can only be shown to the undeserving; therefore he pleads no works of merit or faithfulness even on his own part. Nay, rather otherwise, he identifies himself with the people. Their sin was his sin; their iniquity was his iniquity. He was one with them.

Ah! he was surely on the inside track with God. I say boldly, He was one of Jehovah's pets. And if we desire to have Him so regard us we will have to walk the humble way of Daniel and take upon ourselves the failures of the saints, truly identifying ourselves with them in all the ruin about us. And yet Daniel, as to his own personal life and testimony, was far beyond reproach, which is the reason Jehovah revealed Himself and His will to him regarding Israel.

He understood "by books," not by the signs of the times, tho' the latter added weight to his knowledge, that the Seventy Years of desolations were fulfilled. No doubt the fall of Babylon encouraged him; but this was not the basis of his importunity of Jehovah. He understood the times by what the Lord had said, not merely by what man had done. And he set his face to get the thing accomplished that he saw was the next act on the program. How? by human ingenuity, skill, daring science, diplomacy, force of arms, or merging? No. None of these things whatever entered into his mind. He knew the Lord had ordered Judah's captivity, or man had never chained them; hence He must order their release. See the aged warrior's mode of attack - he entered his closet, shut the door and prayed. He says, "I set my face;" that is, he was determined to get the answer he desired from the Lord. He went to headquarters, to the universal Sovereign, the absolute Ruler of the heavens and the earth, even tho' some men deny His existence while others seek to minify or nullify His right to this throne. But Daniel sought His help at the crucial time and he came to Him with intensity and zeal.

His prayer is a masterpiece in the line of intercession. There are four distinct degrees of progress indicated in the introduction: namely prayer, then "supplication (added entreaty) "with fasting" (giving up of every distraction) "and sackcloth and ashes" (utter humiliation and abhorrence of self) - V. 3. He was determined not to let Jehovah go until he had the answer. Therefore it is no marvel that God rewards him with further revelations of His purposes.

## The Conclusion

He acknowledges God's supremacy and perfection in dealing with Israel according to His covenant of mercy - V. 4. He confesses their sin as we intimated. Their rebellion toward God and His prophets is also noted. He confesses they deserve nothing at Jehovah's hands because of their attitude to His grace which compelled Him to pour out upon them His wrath which had been so long threatened. He did not impute the judgments which had fallen upon them to the wickedness of the Babylonians or the generalship of Nebuchadnezzar. It was all God's doing; therefore he has hope only in God as to their deliverance.

Upon concluding his supplication, Daniel emphasizes his people's dreadful plight, the depths of misery into which they are engulfed and makes this the basis of his plea for Jehovah's mercy. Waiving any appeal as to their deserving, he moves upon Jehovah by his fervent pleading for "Thy city Jerusalem;" "Thy holy mountain;" "Thy sanctuary;" "The city which is called by Thy Name;" "Thy people are become a reproach. Incline Thine ear," he pleads. "Open Thine eyes and behold our desolations." Then he bursts forth in anguished tones, we are assured, and cries, "O Lord, hear; O Lord, hearken and do; defer not for Thine own sake, O my God" - Vs. 16-19. And observe in this connection that Daniel in his prayer does not plead the unconditional promises made to Abraham. This is a great point; for it proves the people were still under the covenant of Moses. They went back to their land under responsibility to keep the law which carried with it a curse for disobedience - Deut. 30:1-20. Daniel with divine wisdom took his ground. Whatever restoration was to take place then, was not the complete one; for the promises made to the fathers suppose the presence of the Messiah of Israel, the true Seed of Abraham. Therefore the return after the fall of Babylon was only partial and conditional. The promises made to Abraham were absolute and unconditional, depending not upon the people's obedience for their fulfillment, but upon the sure, unfailing Word of God. How much of this Daniel knew we cannot say; but the fact stands out clear and plain: Daniel takes the true ground for the people's return.

And then what happened? Was there no answer? Were the heavens brass to this dear devoted servant of the Lord? Nay, verily. The answer came immediately and it was much more than Daniel anticipated. He received a marvelous prophecy concerning his people in answer to the humbled state of his soul and his prayer of deep anguish. It is immense in its scope and purpose; and holds in its embrace the key to all prophecy.

"And while I was speaking and praying and confessing my sin and the sin of my people, Israel, and presenting my supplication before the Lord my God for the holy mountain of my God, yea, while I was speaking in prayer; even the man, Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, touched me about the time of the evening oblation. And he informed me and talked with me and said, O Daniel, I am now come forth to give thee skill and understanding. At the beginning of thy supplications, the commandment came forth and I am come to show thee; for thou art greatly beloved; therefore, understand the matter and consider the vision" - Vs. 20, 23.

The answer to such a condition of soul and such a prayer is not long in coming. The angel brings the message at the hour of the evening burnt offering, probably three o'clock, the hour sacred to that service. He came swiftly to Daniel. Reference is made to the fact that he had appeared to the prophet "at the beginning," whether implying that he had another vision before this season of chapter eight. The latter view seems more probable; for the explanation of closely connects with the added prophecy of our present chapter. In fact we cannot understand the former without some knowledge of the latter. And now we see another reason for his deep exercise in prayer. He was profoundly concerned regarding the matter shown to him in the former visions. There was no explanation whatever of them in the book of Jeremiah. The latter tells of Judah's captivity in Babylon and fixes the time as Seventy Years, and of the restoration at the close of that time; but that is all that he tells. And tho' we, who are privileged to live now, may possibly see a double fulfillment of his writings, Daniel could not reconcile his visions with Jeremiah; for the visions prophesied of later developments. Hence, he was in distress as to these things of importance to his people and his city.

The angels words, "Consider the matter and understand the vision" (v. 23, R.V.), clearly refer to chapter 8, but connect right on to the prophecy which follows in chapter nine. The latter explains the former. And all these disclosures have absolutely no reference to the Church nor to

Christianity. They all relate to Israel and Jerusalem. There is no understanding of them apart from this viewpoint.

### **The Great Prophecy**

"Seventy weeks are determined upon Thy people and upon Thy holy city to finish the transgression and to make an end of sins and to make reconciliation for iniquity and to bring in everlasting righteousness and to seal up the vision and prophecy and to anoint the most holy. Know, therefore, and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and build Jerusalem unto Messiah, the Prince, shall be seven weeks (49 years) and three-score and two weeks (434 years); the street shall be built again and the wall even in troublous times. And after three-score and two weeks, shall Messiah be cut off, but not for Himself; and the people of the prince that shall come, shall destroy the city and the sanctuary and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end

of the war desolations are determined. And he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week, and in the midst of the week, he shall cause the sacrifice and oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations, he shall make it desolate even unto the consummation and that determined is poured upon the desolate," or desolator - Vs. 24-27.

Daniel had been exercised regarding the "Seventy Years" of prophesied captivity (Jer. 25), which was about over, endeavoring to reconcile them with his previous visions, chapter seven and eight. Now the angel shows him that there is further information to be given him concerning his city, Jerusalem, and his people, the Jews.

Seventy Weeks of years are contemplated in these latter disclosures. That we may better understand the meaning, we will paraphrase the words thus: "Seventy times seven weeks more, O Daniel, are set apart by Jehovah out of the times of the Gentiles for the further dealing with thy people and thy holy city. In that determined period, He will bring to a finish their career of stiff-necked rebellion and make an end of their sins by effectually purging their iniquity and reconciling them to Himself. He will also, within that measured off time, bring in everlasting righteousness, fulfill all vision and prophecy relative to their ultimate restoration and blessing in the land, even unto the anointing of the most holy place for their acceptable worship of Jehovah." It has been said much lately, in fact it has become a stock phrase, that prayer changes things; but we want to add, It never changes God's ordained plans. We may, and should pray; yet what is real prayer, but cooperation with Him for the fulfillment of His purposes as outlined in the written Word of God? We cannot alter those decreed counsels by any prayer or supplication. Daniel would have ended that captivity long before the seventy years if such a thing had been possible; but he knew better. He was a prophet himself, admitted into the council chamber of the Most High, and he was aware of his limitations. "Fools rush in where angels fear to tread," some one has said; likewise, do some of the saints with their prayers. They vainly imagine that they can change the infinite decrees of Jehovah, when even the finite decree of the Medes and Persians were made abject to a change. The Lord God and His purposes are joined together and no man dare sunder them. As it is written, "I am the Lord; I change not."

Daniel prayed for the liberation of Judah when it was due. And then he received an answer that amazed him, altho' he had been somewhat prepared for it by the dream image of ch. 2 and his visions of ch. 7 and 8. He is informed that his people will be allowed to return to their land at the allotted period, yet that will not end the time of Gentile supremacy. He learns that Jehovah has some further plans to perfect relative to the future of His chosen people. Furthermore, he learns that the time in which these decreed happenings will converge is not seventy years, but seventy weeks of years are marked out for definite dealings with the Jews. That is, for that length of time, Jehovah will still be in covenant relationship with Judah, tho' the Gentiles are still ruling over them. They cannot rightly be called, "Lo-ammi - ye are not my people" (Hos. 1:9) until that decreed time is past.

The beginning of these Seventy Sevens is plainly told to Daniel. It was "from the going forth of the commandment to restore and build Jerusalem" - V. 2

### **Beginning Of The Seventy Weeks**

Daniel undoubtedly understood the 69 weeks to mean exactly 483 days of 24 hours each. The Hebrew word "shabua" is rightly translated "week" in all the other scripture citations where it occurs. It cannot mean anything else there. Hence, the 69 weeks may yet have a literal fulfillment. However, history proves that those sixty-nine weeks have already had a

dispensational fulfillment. Each day of the week was a year long. Ezekiel's experience with Isreal gives us light here. God said to him "I have appointed thee a day for a year" (Ezek. 4:1-8); that is, for every day that he should lie on his side, Israel should be punished a year .... 40 years and 390 years. Other scriptures also teach the year-for-a-day reckoning. Furthermore, students of prophecy agree that the 69 "weeks" above quoted were 483 years, rather than 483 days.

When did the 483 years, or the 69 weeks, begin? Who gave "the commandment to restore and build Jerusalem?" There is only one answer. Artaxerxes gave the commandment to Nehemiah, 444 B.C. See Neh. chapter 2. Historians differ slightly as to the date of the commandment; but we accept 444 as correct. From that year to the death of Christ measures exactly 483 years of 360 days each. We say, "360 days to the "year." Otherwise, there would be an apparent discrepancy. 444 (B. C.) plus 33 (A. D.) equals only 477. That is, according to the accepted chronologies, the time between the king's command to Nehemiah and the death of Christ is six years too short. Either the king spoke seven years earlier, or Jesus died seven years later than the dates given by chronology or there was a discrepancy or difference of seven years between the Bible and Gentile calendars. Exactly so. The fault was in the Gentile calendar.

There are approximately 365 days and 6 hours in our present year, according to the Gentile calendar, which was in vogue when Christ was born. Now 365 days and 6 hours times 477 years equals 174,224 days. 360 days times 483 years equals 173,880 days. The difference between these figures is 344 days. Thus there are 21 days less than a year's difference between the Bible and Gentile calculations of the period in question. This discrepancy has been caused by the various revisions of the calendar under Gentile dominion. If we reckon exactly 360 days to a year, then there were exactly 483 years from Artaxerxes, command to the cutting off of the Messiah. The 2520 years of "Gentile Times" have each 365 days and 6 hours practically. If they were reckoned according to the Bible calendar, 360 days to a year, they would have ended and the Lord would have been here before this; for there are about 36 years difference between the Gentile and Bible calendars respecting the 2520 years. Note the following reflections.

#### **What Calendar Is Correct?**

It is said that the Roman calendar was introduced by Romulus about 738 B. C. (202 years before Daniel received the revelation of the seventy weeks), and was modified by Numa Pompilius twenty five years later. Julius Caesar reformed the calendar in 46 B. C., introducing the Julian style. He began the year with January 1<sup>st</sup>, counting 365 days to the year and adding one day more to every fourth year, which averaged 365 days and 6 hours to the year. Commencing with Jan. 1<sup>st</sup> required one long year of 445 days, which indicates that the former calendar year began about the 12<sup>th</sup> of our October.

We have wondered why the Jews have a civil year, beginning with our September. The above answers our query. Evidently the Egyptian calendar began at that time and Israel observed it till Jehovah taught them differently. When He brought them out of Egypt, He said to them, "This month (Abib) shall be unto you the beginning of months: it shall be the first month of the year to you" - Ex. 12:2. Ever since then, that has been regarded as the beginning of the Jewish sacred year. Ethanim is the seventh month (1 Kings 8:2) of the Jewish sacred year, or the first month of the Jewish civil year. On the fifteenth day of Abib, Israel came out of Egypt - Exodus 13:4. God never authorized the keeping of a civil year; yet, when Israel drew back from following the Lord they again adopted the calendar of some nation, and began their year corresponding with our September. Jehovah's calendar begins about the first of our April. It has exactly 12 months of thirty days each, or 360 days in a year. The proof of this statement is found in Genesis. Noah's flood began on the seventeenth day of the second month, and ended on the seventeenth day of the seventh month, thus covering five months. Twice it is stated that the waters continued exactly 150 days, or 5 months of 30 days each. See Genesis 7:11, 24 and 8:3, 4.

Jehovah has interfered with the calendars of men several times. For the sake of Joshua and his people, "the sun stood still in the midst of heaven and hasted not to go down about a whole day" - Josh. 10:13. God gave Hezekiah a sign, that he should recover from his death-doomed sickness, by causing the sun to return 10 degrees by which degrees it was gone down - Isa. 38:8. Thus that day was lengthened forty minutes for the king, and his life prolonged 15 years.

Men have never been able to manage the calendar. It has had to be doctored again and again. We saw in chap. 7:25, that the antichrist will "think to change times and laws." Indeed, even now (1926), the World Court is taking steps to change the calendar. If they just wait a little, the Lord

will save them that trouble.

It is evident that during the "times of the Gentiles" (which began 606 B. C.), the earth has traveled more slowly around the sun or with some irregularity. This is not strange, considering that Satan is "the prince of the power of the air" - Eph. 2:2. Grant, in his Numerical Bible on Psalm 9, intimates that the earth is out of her orbit, but will return to it again when Jesus takes the reins of government. Then again a year will comprise 12 months of 30 days each, or exactly 360 days, no more, no less; and the year will begin about the first of our April, the Jewish Abib, even as God taught Israel - Ex. 12:2. All the time measurements in the prophecy of Daniel must be calculated after this rule of 30 days to a month and 12 months to a year, each year beginning with Abib. As we saw in chap. 2:21, "the God of heaven changes times and seasons."

#### **Artaxerxes' Decree**

It may be profitable to consider the Hebrew meaning of the word "commandment" in Dan. 9:25. The Hebrew is "imrah," meaning a word, a saying, a speech. In verse 23, margin, it is word. It is translated word in Psalm 119:11 and in eighteen other verses in that Psalm. "The king's words" (Heb. *dabar*) to Nehemiah (Neh. 2:18) has about the same meaning. Nehemiah says that he was "appointed" (commanded, Heb.) to be governor in the land of Judah - Neh. 5:14. That lends weight to the orders from the king to restore and build Jerusalem; for his appointment to the governorship and the command to build were simultaneous. Let us read the account.

"Then the king said unto me, For what dost thou make request? So I prayed to the God of heaven; and I said unto the king, If it please the king and if his servant have found favor in thy sight, that thou wouldst send me unto Judah unto the city of my fathers' sepulchres that I may build it. And the king said unto me (the queen also sitting by him), For how long shall thy journey be? and when wilt thou return? So it pleased the king to send me and I set him a time. Moreover, I said unto the king, If it please the king, let letters be given me to the governors beyond the river that they may convey me over till I come into Judah. And a letter unto Asaph, the keeper of the king's forest, that he may give me timber to make beams for the gates of the palace which appertaineth to the house and for the wall of the city and for the house that I shall enter into. And the king granted me according to the good hand of my God upon me" - Nehemiah 2:1-8.

Let us note at the outset that the going up of Nehemiah is not of a religious character; but rather has an official stamp. Nehemiah himself was an officer of the Persian court, cup-bearer to the king, a place of intimacy and honor. His journey to Jerusalem was in an imposing manner. He was escorted by a regiment of soldiers, "captains of the army and horsemen," not only to protect, but to add the seal of governmental approval to the undertaking. And note also that it is "the city" and its defense, and "the wall" with which he is concerned. The unprotected condition of the remnant of his people moves him deeply and he is determined to remedy this lack. And God is with this valiant man, as the sequel proves.

The above movement under Nehemiah was about 92 years later than that of the remnant under Ezra in his first going up, B. C. 636. Cyrus, the Persian, immediately on his accession to the throne, issued a decree of liberty to the captive Jews in his domain. We have this exodus recorded in Ezra, chapter 1, and must not confound it with the going up of Nehemiah. The first movement was purely of a religious character, "to build the house of the Lord God of Israel (He is the God), which is in Jerusalem." But the latter movement under Nehemiah, was for the purpose of reconstruction and restoration of Jerusalem to the condition of an independent and self governing city. The final expression, "even in troublous times," implies that the purpose of rebuilding the home of the Jews would meet with bitter opposition from their enemies. (And we cannot but feel there is quite a broad hint of another and still a future building and future "troublous time" hidden in this verse). But to return to our subject. Upon arriving at Jerusalem and privately viewing the city and its defenseless condition by night, Nehemiah assembled the priests, nobles and rulers and laid before them the proposition. "Let us build up the wall that we be no more a reproach" - Verse 17. Forthwith the political enemies, Sanballat, the Horonite and Tobiah the servant, the Ammonite, who "were grieved exceedingly" when they heard there was come a man to seek the welfare of the children of Israel, now joined by Geshem the Arabian, scornfully enquired, "What is this thing that you do? Will you rebel against the king?" Later, when the work was actually in operation, Sanballat was wrathful and spoke before his brethren and the army of Samaria, asking, "What do these feeble Jews? Will they fortify themselves?"

All of the above emphasizes the fact that this was a political move in favor of the Jews and was

so regarded by their enemies; and tho' the troublous times were not lacking, the building went on quickly. When it was finished, Nehemiah set everything in strong, defensive order, outwardly and good governmental order inwardly. And for this happy consummation, he was absent from the Persian court and his place there twelve years. He stayed not only until the city was set in order politically, but the people revived and reformed according to the teaching of the law of Moses. But let us retrace our steps and see what was the reason of this ardent desire in the heart of Nehemiah for his city, after being somewhat lax heretofore as we might infer. There surely must have been a cause for the sudden anxiety and interest which he displayed and we believe we have the solution. Let us read his own words of the beginning of his enterprise, and the cause of it.

"It came to pass in the month of Chisleu, in the twentieth year, as I was in Shushan the palace, that Hanani, one of my brethren came, he and certain men of Judah, and I asked them concerning the Jews that had escaped which were left of the captivity, and concerning Jerusalem. And they said unto me, The remnant that are left of the captivity there in the provinces are in great affliction and reproach; the wall of Jerusalem is also broken down and the gates thereof are burned with fire. And it came to pass when I heard these words that I sat down and wept and mourned certain days and fasted and prayed before the God of heaven" - Nehemiah 1:1-4. Observe Nehemiah's question, What of the Jews that had escaped? Surely he is not speaking of the escape from Babylon. That was an old story. He is enquiring as to those that are left of the captivity in Jerusalem and we are thereby let into the secret of Nehemiah's concern and sorrow for Jerusalem. Just prior to this time, there must have been a great happening which was of dire import to the Jews and whereby many of them perished. A little parenthetical clause, "the queen sitting by him," gives us a clue to the secret. It was no doubt her pleading eye and nod of approval that turned the tide in Nehemiah's favor: for immediately we read, "So it pleased the king to send me" - Neh. 2:6. Who was this queen? Was it Esther?

It is generally held that Ahasuerus of the book of Esther was the Persian Emperor Xerxes who reigned B. C. 484 - 464 and was the father of this Artaxerxes of Nehemiah's day; but there is really no proof of this belief. Ahasuerus is simply an official title, meaning, "venerable king" and is equally applicable to Artaxerxes. Furthermore, there is no proof that Esther was the wife of Xerxes. In fact, rather the proof is against this thought. He is said to have had as his wife, "Amestris," who, according to secular history, was his consort from the beginning of his reign until the end. If this be so, where would Esther come in? And Vashti remains unaccounted for in this event. However, the consensus of opinion seems to be in favor of Artaxerxes being the king Ahasuerus mentioned in the book of Esther, the latter being "the queen sitting by him." The Jewish historian, Josephus, states emphatically that Artaxerxes Longimanus (called so because of his long arms) of the book of Nehemiah, is the king Ahasuerus of the book of Esther. This would account for his long continued favor toward the Jews.

And with this hypothesis, the chronological and historical array of facts fall into beautiful harmony. Esther became queen in the tenth Jewish month, Tebeth (which is the first of our calendar year) and the seventh year of the king, B.C. 457 - Esther 2:16. And it is just like the marvels of Jehovah's providences that He should have Esther, a Jewess, seated on the throne of empires at this crucial period, not only to protect the Jews, but to win favor of the government in the building up and restoration of their city.

It was five years after her marriage, B. C. 452, that Haman had his little play all staged, for the ruin of not only Mordecai, but of all the Jewish race. Haman was all ready for the first act. He began to cast the lot for a suitable day on the first month (Nisan, of their civil year; Abib, of the Jewish) in the twelfth year of the king's reign. And this casting of the lot continued for a year, for it was not until the twelfth month (Adar of the Jewish year) that Haman settled upon the day - Esther 3:9. He then approached the king regarding the matter and an edict was published, sealed with the king's ring, "to destroy, to kill and to cause to perish all Jews, both young and old, little children and women, in one day" - the thirteenth day of the twelfth month (Adar). There was one year's respite given them; for it was not until the following year (B. C. 451) in the twelfth month that the command was to be executed - Esther 3:13.

It was at this critical time that Mordecai called upon Esther to intervene in behalf of her people. And this she was constrained to do at the risk of her life. God honored her faith. Haman was hanged upon the gallows that he had erected for Mordecai, while the latter was exalted. But this

did not change the edict of destruction against the Jews. They were still under its ban. Esther again approaches the king in humble attire, beseeching his mercy; again she is heard. The king promised to avert the tragedy to the utmost degree possible. He could not revoke the former edict; for the law of the Medes and the Persians cannot be broken (Dan. 6); but he made another decree, which latter authorized the Jews to stand for their lives and fight against their enemies on the fatal day. This counter decree was sent forth sealed with the king's seal, in the third month of the Jewish calendar (Sivan) B. C. 451 - Esther 8:9. The effect of this second decree upon the Jews was wonderful. "Shushan rejoiced and was glad. The Jews had light and gladness and joy and honor" - Verses 15-17.

On the unlucky day, the thirteenth of the twelfth month, a dreadful battle occurred thruout the Persian realm of the 127 provinces - "from India even unto Ethiopia." The Jews rose up against their enemies and withstood all attempts to kill and destroy and cause them to perish. They had authority from the king to defend themselves and they fought as supermen. God was with them. He fought for them. The number slain by the Jews in the capital city, Shushan alone, was 75,000 men. But the conclusion is obvious that the conflict cost the Jews something also. That, no doubt, was the cause of Nehemiah's desire to go up and build the wall and the city. He heard of its sorry plight from Hanani and the other brethren tho' that was eight years after the struggle, in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes' reign - Neh. 1:1-3. The reproach of the city, from which it had never recovered, evidenced by its broken down wall and "gates burned with fire," deeply moved the cup-bearer of the king. He immediately seeks the authority and commission to go up and undertake the task of restoration and separation for the Jew. The sequel tells how well he succeeded. But here is what makes this undertaking interesting, and it is the reason that we have given so much space to locate its beginning. From this going up of Nehemiah, the "Seventy Sevens" of Daniel are reckoned.

#### **Interpretation Of The Seventy Weeks**

In verse 24 of the great prophecy, we have an epitome of the whole of the blessings of the Lord that were to fall upon Daniel's people in the decreed 490 years. That was a period of time, out out of measured-off judgment, which would have shortened the latter and ended the dominance of the Gentiles almost 2000 years ago if the people had not rejected the grace of God. And even as it is, the Dispersion of the Jews was pushed forward more than 500 years; for they were kept in the land until those Seventy Weeks of Jehovah's merciful dealings with them were fulfilled. The blessings enumerated may be summed up as sevenfold. They are divided into three and four. The first item, transgression, reached its culmination and is ended: while sin is put away. Reconciliation for iniquity is made for the city and the people in the end of that consummating period. These refer to the cross.

The second array of benedictions, which are the result of the first three, follows. The first is everlasting righteousness upon all Israel, after which come the sealing up of all vision, and the fulfillment of all prophecy, relative to the Jews' restoration, even to the setting apart of the most Holy Place to the sacred and inviolate worship of Jehovah. Then the details are given.

In verse 25, we have the starting point of the whole stretch of years, as well as the outline of the doings of 69 of the sevens, or 483 years, with the objective of the whole - "Messiah .. The Prince." A division into one 7 plus 62 sevens is indicated; yet the important event that emphasized the first step, is not told us. But it is quite significant that 49 years, or seven weeks of the allotted series, cover the time exactly from when the decree went forth for the building of Jerusalem, B. C. 444, to the close of the Old Testament writings of Malachi. This, we believe, is the simple, yet divinely given solution of the first division.

The second time limit, 62 sevens, or 434 years, terminates with the advent of "Messiah, The Prince." This is not at all a beclouded point; for both the above appellations refer to the Lord Jesus Christ, especially in His relationship to the Jews. Observe that His coming is set forth as the ultimate of the 69 sevens, or 483 years. But we must settle this question: is it upon His birth, or upon His triumphal entry into Jerusalem, or upon His death, that these years focus? Observe the language of the prophecy. It concerns "The city, Jerusalem," the city of the great King: therefore, it cannot refer to His birth in Bethlehem; and it cannot speak of His death; for His "cutting off" is plainly put after the completion of the 69 sevens, just before the last seven begins - V. 26. Therefore, it must refer to His entry into the city as the King of the Jews. We speak of that day in which Jesus rode into the city, Jerusalem, according to the exact manner of the prophecy

which went before - Zechariah 9:9.

"And when they drew nigh unto Jerusalem and were come to Bethphage near the mount of Olives, then sent Jesus two of his disciples, saying unto them, Go into the village over against you and straightway ye shall find an ass tied and a colt with her. Loose them and bring them to me. And if any man say aught unto you, ye shall say, The Lord hath need of them, and straightway he will send them. All this was done that it might be fulfilled by the prophet, saying, Tell ye the daughter of Zion, "Behold thy King cometh unto thee, meek and sitting upon an ass and a colt, the foal of an ass." And the disciples went and did as Jesus commanded them and brought the ass and the colt and put on them their clothes and they set Him thereon. And a very great multitude spread their garments in the way. Others cut down branches from the trees and strawed them in the way. And the multitude that went before and that followed after, cried, Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the Highest! And when He was come to Jerusalem, all the city was moved, saying, Who is this? And the multitude said, This is Jesus, the prophet of Nazareth of Galilee" - Matt. 21:1-11. The answer of the people shows that the King is uncrowned. Their enthusiasm quickly waned and their effervescence subsided. He is but a prophet now.

The above procession and reception of Christ has wonderful typical value. It is a foreshadowing of His final appearing and entry into the city of Jerusalem as the King, but more than that, it fulfills prophecy relative to His first advent. As was intimated, here is the exact fulfillment of the second milestone of the seventy sevens. He proved Himself "Messiah the Prince," manifesting His authority over the temple and His ownership of it. He cast out all them that sold and bought, and overthrew the tables of the money-changers and the seats of them that sold doves. He said, "My house shall be called the house of prayer, but ye have made it a den of thieves." Observe that the emphasis is upon His house. He temporarily cleanses it, for as we intimated, that was a figurative scene, portraying events that will transpire at His second advent, when He will actually bring in everlasting righteousness, seal up vision and prophecy and anoint the Most Holy, the basis of which glorious consummation was laid in His death.

Therefore, as we intimated, the time of Jerusalem's visitation had come, but the people knew it not. Long ere this time the nation had rejected their King, but that was the predestined day when their choice became final. They chose rejection from God by rejecting their King. It was the fulfillment of the angel's words to Daniel relative to "Messiah the Prince," signifying the end of the 69 weeks. And the date of this momentous event is certain. God is never defeated. The Jews' rejection of Christ as their King is but His opportunity to present His Lamb of sacrifice. The triumphal entry into Jerusalem was exactly four days before the Paschal supper. God's clock is never late, neither is it too early. According to the ordinance relative to the feast, the lamb was selected from the flock the tenth day of the Jewish sacred year, Abib (or Nisan of the civil year). It was kept up ready to be killed on the fourteenth day of the same month at evening - Ex. 12. The day was reckoned from the one evening unto the next evening.

Now we know that Jesus was the ordained Lamb of sacrifice, the Anti-type of the passover lamb, the One selected from all other men as without blemish or spot, fully able to atone for sin. Hence at the exact hour, the due time, He is in the hands of the Jews as the ordained "Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world." It was the morning of the tenth day of the month Abib, or Nisan, that He entered Jerusalem riding upon the ass. According to the Julian calendar, it was the day which Christians now celebrate as Palm Sunday, four days before the death of Christ. This was A. D. 33, exactly 483 years from the going forth of the commandment to restore and build Jerusalem, B. C. 444, reckoning according to the Jewish calendar, or sacred year, 360 days to a year.

#### **A Parenthesis**

"And after three-score and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for Himself; and the people of the Prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood unto the end of the war desolations are determined" - v. 26.

Here we find an interruption in the course of events. The rejection of Messiah, the Prince, brings a cessation of the blessings which were due according to vs. 24. The Messiah was "cut off" exactly four days after He entered Jerusalem as the Prince of Daniel's prophecy, We read in the Gospel of Matthew, which is the record of the King of the Jews, that the following day after His rejection, He returned to the city, having spent the night at Bethany. That was on Monday, the

day on which He gave the marvelous disclosures recorded in chapter 21:18 to chapter 25. Then we read, "After two days, (Tuesday and Wednesday) is the passover and the Son of Man is betrayed to be crucified" - Chap. 26:2. Therefore we learn that Jesus was crucified on Thursday morning, remaining on the cross six hours, giving Him to be three nights and a part of three days in the grave, fulfilling His own prediction, "As Jonas was three days and three nights in the belly of the whale, so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth" - Matt. 12:40. A fraction of a day, according to Jewish reckoning, is counted a day. Jesus died after the third hour, that is three o'clock on Thursday, and rose before dawn on Sunday, the first day of a new week - Matt. 28:1.

It is clear therefore that there is a parenthesis couched in the language of verse 26. Judgments - war, flood, desolations - are prophesied. There were none of these found in verse 25 where we have the 70 weeks epitomized in blessing, without one hint of judgment; hence we infer that these were later developments. And the cause is not doubtful. They come in the train of the rejection of the Messiah, not His death, for all the blessings of verse 24 were dependent upon Calvary. It was there that transgression reached its climax, but God in His grace over-reached it, putting it away with all sin; and man was reconciled to God. This must be so, for Paul writes to the Hebrews (ch. 1:3), telling them that Christ Himself had purged our sins. Furthermore he informs them, that "there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin," if they reject the offering of Calvary, "but a fearful looking for of judgment "which shall devour the adversaries" - Chapter 10:26, 27. The Passover Lamb had to be sacrificed; for without the shedding of blood there is no remission; but "where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." Therefore, again we affirm, that it was not the giving over of the Messiah unto death that caused the break between the sixty-ninth and seventieth week of Daniel's prophecy, but the attitude of the nation after He was raised from the dead. The last seven of the determined period began to be fulfilled immediately. The results of Calvary were clearly in evidence, as a glance into the book of Acts will abundantly witness.

The disciples worshipped and the apostles preached in the temple - Acts 3 and 4. In chap. 3, Peter states that "the heaven must receive Jesus until the times of the restoration (R. V.) of all things," which he no doubt expected about seven years after Christ's death. Daniel's measurements gave him ground for such a hope. The year of jubilee (Lev. 25) began to be fulfilled; for "the multitude of them that believed, .... had all things common: neither was there any among them that lacked" - Acts 2:44 and 4:32-34. Doubtless that would have been the beginning of the millennium, if Israel had received Jesus. Those first chapters of Acts cover a period of about 12 years. Study for example, chaps. 2:45, 46 and 4:34-37 and 6:1 and 8:1, 5, 9 and 10. Stephen's work of serving tables must have continued several months at least. Then God sovereignty authorized and empowered him to preach and work miracles in Jesus' name. His message in chap. 7 is wonderful, especially the last ten verses. "He looked up steadfastly into heaven and saw the glory of God and Jesus standing at the right hand of God." We believe that Stephen's vision occurred in the seventh year after Pentecost. No doubt Jesus was standing up at that moment as if waiting to be welcomed by His people, the Jews; for He will be revealed to them in the seventh year of His millennial reign, according to the dates and measurements of Daniel and John. Saul's conversion, which followed Stephen's death, was typical of the conversion of the Jews which will take place at Christ's revelation from heaven. (Yes, "a nation shall be born at once.") This is his meaning in I Cor. 15:8, saying, "And last of all, He was seen of me also, as one born out of due time." Because he had just rejected Jesus and His return, as offered through Stephen's ministry, as a typical man, representative of the nation, he had no right to expect the Messiah, as he learned after he was saved, until He comes again.

We may tabulate those first days thus. Jesus' death and Pentecost, 33 A. D., with which Daniel's last week began. Stephen's career about 33 to 39 A. D. Saul's conversion, 39 A. D. Peter's visit to Cornelius, 43 A. D.

Now, of course, Israel did not receive Christ then. God knew that they would not; therefore, He gave Daniel a vision of things yet to take place. Yea more. Jacob had bowed down to Esau seven times, typical of the Jews' subjection to the Gentiles for 2520 years. The Lord gave Daniel to see his people under Gentile rule for 2520 years, beginning with Nebuchadnezzar. Hence, we have outlined in Dan. 9:27 several facts which are still future. The last seven years (or week) of Daniel's 490 years (or 70 weeks) must be covered again, because the Jews refuted their

Messiah at His first advent. Those seven years at the beginning of this age, were full of divine blessings, because those were the decreed period for that significant seventieth week, or seven years. But the next time, they will be freighted with judgment, because the Jews will accept the overtures of another, a false prince - John 5:43. The world powers also will be in rebellion against Jehovah, setting up that false prince and aiming to bring forth a millennium without Christ. Those seven years will be an "hour of trial" and "great tribulation" (Rev. 3:10 and 7:14) "a day of destruction, darkness and gloominess" (Joel 1 and 2), a time "of night and wrath" - I Thess. 5:7, 9. That will be the most terrible seven years of all the world's history. But, thank God; it also will be immediately followed by the world's most glorious day, the righteous reign of Christ. But to return to verse 26 of our prophecy and examine it still further. It is important to notice that the city and temple, or sanctuary, were to be destroyed by the people of a coming prince. Now this cannot be "Messiah the Prince." And yet the conclusion is obvious that the coming one will be a prince over the Jews. He, himself, was not to destroy the city, but the people of the prince were to do that. He would come later. Therefore as the Roman arm was the power of Jerusalem's destruction, A. D. 71, we would infer that a coming king of the Roman empire shall be prince of the Jewish Kingdom instead of the rejected Messiah. They refused Him when He was ready to be revealed, and now before they can receive Him, they must receive the usurper, the false prince. He comes in the way of judgment.

### **The Last Section**

"And he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week." These opening words of verse 27 clearly refer back to the prince that was to come. He shall make a "firm covenant," as the Revised Version translates, with the "many," or mass of the people, the Jews, in contrast with the few, the remnant that are not in harmony with the unbelief of the nation. There will be some faithful ones whose eyes will be opened to the wickedness and apostasy; but they will be in the minority. The covenant will be signed for "one week," the seven years of judgment which awaits them, because they failed to receive the blessings which would have come with the Messiah at the end of the 490 decreed times. By their attitude to Him, they have opened the way for Satan and his man, and delayed their blessings, not only for an indefinite interval, the Church age, but seven years more of terrible judgments. We are surely given to know that before Messiah again appears, another prince, the anti-christ, shall lord it over the Jew and shall be a despot indeed. A time of unparalleled suffering is before them.

As we intimated, the anti-christ will form an alliance with the apostate part of the nation that will be in the land. This assures that Gentile times will then have been fulfilled and that the Jews will again be reckoned as a nation, with their constitution, national character and king. The latter state will no doubt be all resultant from the fact of the covenant made with that final Roman Emperor and his associates of that period. The alliance with the "usurper is called "a covenant of death" and "an agreement with hell." The people are said to hide under this "refuge of lies," for their protection (Isa. 28:14); but they will find that this very alliance will be their undoing. It will be the scourge with which Jehovah will chastise them; for in the midst of the "week," or seven predestined years, the anti-prince will interfere with their religious observances. And this is undoubtedly equivalent to breaking the agreement or covenant which will have been made with them. That will leave three and a half more of the decreed time of seven years. It is the "time, times and half a time" of which we read in chap. 7:25. The "horn," symbolic of the same wicked prince, is there seen waging a war against the Jews. They are said to be given into his hand for the above length of time. The description of the dreadful condition then obtaining agrees with that of chapter 9:27. The prince shall make the place desolate, and according to the Revised Version, that will happen when he comes "upon the wing of abominations." There is a suggestion here of the supernatural. And it is at this point, the midst of the week, that we read in the Apocalypse of the second coming of the anti-christ. His first advent continues for three and a half years (a counterfeit of Christ's first advent as Prophet and King); then he receives a deadly wound which is healed later - Rev. 13:3. It is after this resurrection, if we may call it such, that all the world wonders after "the beast," as John designates him. That will be his second advent, a devilish masquerade of Christ's appearing. It is at that juncture that he will annul the covenant with the Jews, by restraining religious liberty. He will institute another religion, the worship of himself and set up his image in the temple, probably in the holy place, where the shekinah glory of Jehovah formerly dwelt. Now whether "the wing of abominations" refers to the image or the man himself, is

not clear; but it has been inferred that because the image has life and speaks the doom of all those that refuse to worship it (Rev. 13:15), that it will come flying into the temple, apparently from heaven, even as was said of the image of Diana whom the Ephesians worshipped - Acts 19:35. And we would not be surprised at anything that we might hear of the supernatural happenings of those eventful days. We read that "God shall send them strong delusion that they should believe the lie, because they received not the love of the Truth" - II Thess. 2:11, 12. It will be retributive judgment. They will not only deny the Truth, but believe the lie. The one is set over against the other. It is not only a refusal of the claims of Christ, but an actual acknowledgment and bowing down to the claims of Satan.

But the special phase of divine revelation that we desire to emphasize in this connection is that the last week of Daniel, as these seven prophetic years are generally called, are a usurpation on the part of Gentiles, of time that has not been given to them. They refuse to relinquish the domination of the earth to the Jew when their appointed years will have run out, and the Lord allows them to usurp the throne and kingdom on earth for that brief period for the chastening of His chosen people. But He will judge them for their rebellion, as the above quotation from Thessalonians proves.

We saw in a previous chapter that the Lord's day commences at the very beginning of the seven years - chap. 7:8,9. He will be seated upon His throne at the very time that the Roman Empire is revived; for the latter is the result of the refusal of the Gentiles to abdicate in favor of the Jews. Jehovah holds them responsible to know the times and the seasons. They are supposedly Christian nations; but it is only a profession, as the sequel proves. And the Jews also ought to know that only the Lord could have made an end of their captivity. The prophets are unmistakably clear on the subject. Palestine belongs to them in the purpose and promise of God. Nothing can hinder their ultimate restoration as a nation; for it has been written again and again, but they will not believe Moses and the prophets, nor Jesus that rose from the dead. The greater part of the Jews as well as Christendom will be in an apostate condition at that time. The Scriptures will mean nothing, or worse, to them, as some declare at the present writing. Even ministers of orthodox denominations say that the Old Testament with its doctrine of the favored race, the Jew, stands in the way of peace and harmony among the nations. Yes, the Jew is the bone of contention, the fly in the ointment of their ambitious schemes for the world. He is like Jonah in the whale's belly and like Christ in the heart of the earth, out of His God-appointed place. When he gets into the will of God, the harmony and peace of the world will be assured. The Gentiles are jealous of them and will endeavor to hinder their progress and their hopes from becoming actualities as long as they can. But, thank God, He is moving on, regardless of their envy. He is using men, movements and multitudes to do His will and help His ancient people. And yet they, the Jews, do not see His mighty arm in their defense. They refuse to give Him the glory of what has been done. The mighty miracle of the deliverance of Jerusalem from the jurisdiction of the Turk is credited to, Great Britain instead of to God. They praise the "Allies" now for having given them the right to return to their own land; and later they will still louder boast in the greater League of Nations and accept the false prince as their Messiah because of the treaty of religious liberty which he will make with them. But he will break the covenant, sweep away every vestige of their worship and cruelly torture and scourge them. They will find the anti-christ a curse, rather than a blessing. The end will be in such tribulation for them as never has been heretofore and never will be again - Matthew 24:21. Jeremiah calls special attention to that appalling day, "Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it. It is even the time of Jacob's trouble; but he shall be saved out of it. Ask ye now and see whether a man doth travail with child? Wherefore do I see every man with his hands on his loins as a woman in travail and all faces are turned into paleness" - Jer. 30:6, 7. That short, but dreadful time of sorrow suddenly will be ended by the appearing of the Lord Jesus Christ in flaming fire taking vengeance on the anti-christ - Rev. 17:14. The whole consummation, or that which God has decreed against the Jew, must take its course. "That determined shall be poured upon the desolate" - Dan. 9:27

#### THE FORGOTTEN MAN

He went to Golgotha, 'neath an eastern sky,  
Rejected, unhonored, unsung -  
This soldier from glory amidst rabble cry.

On Calvary's mountain He hung,  
 And yet as Creator from heaven had flung  
 Stars in their courses, the moon and the sun;  
 But walked as a Man, last mile of the run.  
 Myst'ry of Ages! Sweet Wonder of earth,  
 From the bosom of Deity came,  
 Down to a scene of pain, sadness and dearth,  
 Born of a virgin - Jesus His name.  
 A Man of great sorrow, illustrious in fame,  
 Greatest of heroes, world ever has known,  
 Came from the grave and to heaven has flown.  
 He's coming again from His palace fair,  
 Sovereign of seas, Despot divine.  
 With swirl of an eagle, He'll swoop thru the air,  
 And gather His loved ones to dine.  
 In His banqueting house, they'll ever shine  
 As jewels most rare, adoring the King,  
 For ever and ever His glory will sing.

**THE PROPHET'S LAST VISION**  
**Chapters Ten, Eleven and Twelve**

"IN THE THIRD YEAR OF CYRUS, KING OF PERSIA, A THING WAS REVEALED UNTO DANIEL whose name was called Belteshazzar and the thing was true, but the time was long and he understood the thing and had understanding of the vision" - Chapter 10:1.

The date of Daniel's last, and in some respects, greatest vision, was B. C. 533. It was given Daniel in the third year of Cyrus three years after the vision of the Seventy Weeks which was in the first year of Darius, the Mede, who was jointly associated with Cyrus in the kingdom of the Medes and the Persians. We have in this vision a further revelation of matters pertaining to the end, a continuation and elucidation of what has already been revealed.

The fact of the verity of the revelation is emphatically affirmed by the prophet at the outset; and in the Revised Version we have the subject of the vision also given in the first verse. It is said to be, "even a great warfare;" and is so found in the Hebrew. This translation agrees with all that follows. For the substance of the whole matter appears to be a war between opposing nations; and the prophet is let into the secret. He informs us that the war was not to be in his days, but was a marvelous prophecy of future days, a long time ahead. Yet he did not need history to make the vision plain to him; for he tells us that he had understanding of the subject. And tho' much of his vision has now become history, yet the prophecy is only verified. The history does not prove the prophecy correct, but vice versa: the history is made clear and plain. Prophecy is a "light in a dark place" which is only enhanced and brightened by the fulfillment - II Peter 1:19.

The vision is in three parts. The first section is mainly introductory. It is confined to chapter 10 with the exception of one verse in chapter 11. We will take up each part separately, tho they are one continuous whole. The second part, chapter 11:2-35, gives us the necessary background for the important part of the vision - the end-time events. It relates to things that were future to Daniel, but are now history, being most accurately fulfilled in every particular. The third section, chapters 11:36-12:13, is clearly a vision of the last days, informing us again, in different words and ways, of the same things that have been symbolized in the earlier visions given in chapters 7 and 8.

"In those days, I Daniel was mourning three full weeks. I ate no pleasant bread; neither came flesh, nor wine into my mouth; neither did I anoint myself at all till three whole weeks were fulfilled" - Verses 2 and 3.

We are not at all in doubt as to the reason of the aged saint's deep perplexity and mourning. And remember his abstinence and fasting for three weeks was no little undertaking for a man of his age, near to 100 years; but he is in trouble. He cannot solve some puzzling events and he goes again to headquarters for the elucidation of his problems. It is now three years since Cyrus gave permission for the Jews to return to Jerusalem and Judea, and so few of the people, compared with the multitudes taken captive, have availed themselves of the opportunity; hence, Daniel's

heart is crushed. He cannot understand the reason that the fatherland has lost its power to move the Jews. It was a great surprise and disappointment that the hope of the restoration awoke so little enthusiasm. Also, news of the small proportions of the temple foundations, which had just been laid, had probably reached him, as also the fact of the many hindrances and difficulties confronting the people. So he again sought the sanctuary, not for a few moments, but day after day he waited before Jehovah. He was not entirely satisfied with the results of the restoration and he wanted to hear from heaven. And yet the real reason of this time of abstinence and supplication is the fact that Daniel is a typical character. He figures the remnant of Judah at the end who will turn to the Lord for the understanding of conditions at that time.

The prophet stayed right in this attitude of prayer, with a broken and contrite spirit, for three full weeks before any word from the Lord came. He was so intensely in earnest, his soul in such deep travail, that he forgot to eat his meals. He even forgot all the needs of his physical being. The little attentions to cleanliness, dress etc., were forgotten in the deeper need of his spirit. He would not be denied. He kept asking, seeking, knocking, and finally the aged warrior was rewarded. He got more than he asked or thought, which is always the way of our God in His dealing in infinite grace. He appreciates the faith that will not be turned aside. The vision easily falls into three sections.

### **The First Part, Chapter 10**

"And in the four and twentieth day of the first month I was by the side of the great river which is Hiddekel. Then I lifted up mine eyes and looked and behold a certain man clothed in linen whose loins were girded with fine gold of Uphaz. His body was also like the beryl and his face as the appearance of lightning and his eyes as lamps of fire and his arms and feet like in color to polished brass and the voice of his words like the voice of a multitude. And I, Daniel, alone saw the vision, for the men that were with me saw not the vision; but a great quaking fell upon them, so that they fled to hide themselves. Therefore I was left alone and saw this great vision and there remained no strength in me; for my comeliness was turned in me to corruption and I retained no strength. Yet I heard the voice of his words, then was I in a deep sleep on my face and my face toward the ground. And behold a hand touched me and set me upon my knees and upon the palms of my hands. And he said unto me, O Daniel, a man greatly beloved, understand the words that I speak unto thee and stand upright; for unto you am I now sent. And when he had spoken this word unto me I stood trembling. Then said he unto me, Fear not Daniel; for from the first day that thou didst set thine heart to understand and to chasten thyself before thy God, thy words were heard and I am come for thy words. But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me one and twenty days; but lo, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me and I remained there with the kings of Persia. Now I am come to make thee to understand what shall befall thy people in the latter days, for yet the vision is for many days. And when he had spoken such words unto me, I set my face toward the ground and I became dumb. And behold one like the similitude of the sons of men touched my lips; then I opened my mouth and spake and said unto him that stood before me, O my Lord, by the vision my sorrows are turned upon me and I have retained no strength. For how can the servant of this my Lord talk to this my Lord; for as for me, straightway there remained no strength in me, neither is there breath left in me. Then there came again and touched me one like the appearance of a man and he strengthened me, and said, O man, greatly beloved, fear not; peace be unto thee; be strong, yea be strong. And when he had spoken unto me I was strengthened and said, Let my Lord speak; for thou hast strengthened me" - Chap. 10:4-19.

This first section of the vision, as was said, is almost entirely introductory. We behold a marvelous, heavenly visitant which Daniel was privileged to see and talked with him. The description of the personage agrees so well with that of Christ as He appeared to John (Rev. 1) that it forbids the supposition that he is an angel. The same eyes as "lamps of fire" are noted, with "feet like polished brass" and a "voice as of a multitude" in both cases. Compare the two: note the effect upon the prophets by the visions. They both are overcome. John falls as tho' dead, while Daniel acknowledges that his comeliness was turned to corruption and that he retained no strength, nor breath. He too fell as tho' dead. The men that were with Daniel did not see the heavenly One, but nevertheless they were so awed that they ran to hide themselves. Daniel was alone. And regardless of all his faithful conduct and the love and favor in which he stood before God, he was found upon his face before the glory of the Man from heaven.

We believe we have here a most striking representative scene. Daniel undoubtedly portrays the remnant of the end time who will actually gaze upon the Lord, not in vision, but with physical eyes. They will see the same One that John saw, coming in the clouds of heaven; for both of these prophets had visions of the same time. They were both representative men. John, more as figuring the Church at the end and Daniel, more as illustrative of the Jew. Some of the latter's people will be in the very condition of the prophet in this scene - fasting and praying, with tears. They will realize the need of repentance for the nation; and they will take this place before the Lord. Jehovah will appear to them, even as He did to Daniel, and make them understand the things that are taking place; while others of the nation will simply run away from the vision. They will not be in the proper condition of spirit to understand. God cannot reveal Himself to them. Oh how folks miss the best by not humbling themselves and seeking God with a whole heart. What lessons of whole-hearted loyalty to Jehovah and wholesale surrender to His will we learn from Daniel and these Old Testament worthies of faith.

As was intimated, Daniel in this place is a representative man. He is beholding the vision, but he is also in the picture himself as one of the actors on the stage. We see the same thing portrayed in chapter 8. In verse 13, the prophet informs us that he heard a saint, or "Wonderful Numberer" (margin) speaking, and another holy one asks a question of the first named one; but in verse 14, we learn from the words, "And he said unto me," etc., that Daniel himself was the questioner. The prophecy of that vision, even as all the prophet's dreams, has special reference to the end-time. The Lord Himself is the "Wonderful Numberer," or certain Holy One mentioned there. He is seen later, in verse 16, as the Man between the banks of the river Ulai which called to Gabriel that he should further instruct Daniel. This is all most interesting and significant, agreeing perfectly with the prophet's last vision. We behold the very same Man in chapter 12 upon the waters of the river. And He is again in the role of the "Wonderful Numberer;" for one of the men on one side of the bank of the river asked him a question as to the length of time of these wonders? Daniel hears the answer; but this time he does not state that it is spoken to him. The Man on the river is easily identified as the Lord from heaven. He lifts up His two hands and "swears by Him that liveth forever that it shall be for a time, times, and a half" - v. 7. We are assured that no angel, neither Gabriel, nor Michael, would dare to so presume to swear to the length of the climacteric period, the apex of man's doings, and give the years of the unprecedented suffering of the Jew, and the exact time when the antichrist shall rule the world. No one but God could do that, and this is what the messenger did.

Some have thought that the heavenly visitor of chapter 10 cannot possibly be the Lord because of the nature of His ministry. He represents Himself to be a messenger, sent to give Daniel intelligence of that of which he was to be the prophet; but we cannot see that this would be derogatory to Christ, or His place. Furthermore, there were more than one messenger on the scene in these visions, as notice chapter 12. Gabriel obeyed the voice of the Man on the river. Then another thing that makes it difficult for some to reconcile the person mentioned here with Christ, is that he was detained on his journey three weeks by "the prince of Persia." But this is not a difficulty when we bear in mind that these are especially end-time scenes that are in view in Daniel's visions. He is in the same relationship to his environment here as John in the last book of the Bible. Daniel too, is carried away in spirit to the Lord's day and beholds conditions from that standpoint. We know that in that great day men will be taking the place that was formerly relegated to angels - Heb. 2:5. The Man, Christ Jesus, with His body of redeemed men, will assume the reins of government. These events are all portrayed in Revelation. Christ is seen here continually, often symbolized as a mighty angel. Note especially chapter 10. He is there viewed as taking control of all things on the earth - putting His feet on the land and on the sea. He lifts up His hand and swears by Him that liveth forever, that there shall be no longer any delay to the consummation of prophecy - v. 6. In both cases, He confirmed His statement with an oath. Observe the correspondence here with Daniel, chapter 12, and the messenger there. They are surely the same Person. The angels or messengers of the whole book of Revelation are redeemed men joined to Christ. We see proof of this statement in chapters 19:10 and 22:9. The angel in both cases refuses the worship of John, declaring that he is one of his brethren a fellow servant and prophet. But he appeared so marvelous, so divine that John was impressed to worship him. When we understand that these visions of Daniel have to do with the day of the Lord, we are not surprised to read of the difficulties in the way of the heavenly messenger and we

can readily understand its significance. The devil will be aroused and enraged to the uttermost at that day, for he will know that his time is short. His kingdom will be tottering. Christ will take His throne in the heavens and reign seven years before there is a visible enthronement on earth. Satan will use the nations to resist His claims. His principalities and powers in the heavens, all organized forces of wickedness, will contest His every move to gain possession of His inheritance. The world will be the battlefield. No wonder that we read of a great warfare prophesied for that time - Ch. 10:1, R. V. Those mighty forces of evil, dominions of darkness, have their counterpart in the nations of the earth. There is no doubt that a wicked spirit is set over every nation, and he, in a sense, sways the affairs of men. These princes are all subject to the great prince of wickedness, Satan; hence there will be a time when all the earth nations will get together as one united empire under one head. It will be an exact copy of the seven-headed empire in the sky - Rev. 13.

In the scene herein versioned, we are given a marvelous glimpse into these hidden things. The prince of Persia withstanding the messenger is a sample of the manner in which the evil spirits will set themselves to prevent Christ from taking His throne. At the time of Daniel, these things had a slight reference to national affairs. The kingdom of Persia had just come into its splendor and the Grecian was to follow. Both princes of these kingdoms are mentioned by the messenger in his conversation with Daniel. But that was only an earnest of her greater realities to which these refer. At the end, the remnant will have their answers to prayer delayed because of wicked spirits. The remnant of faithful Jews will be fasting and praying, as was Daniel, because of sorrow; but the Lord will appear to their joy and discomfiture of their enemy.

We have these same wicked angels to withstand today. And the closer we are to the end of the age the more strenuous is the conflict. They are against us taking our place in the heavenlies in Christ. The place of the throne is the objective of the overcomer; to reign jointly with the King as His Queen is the goal set before the Church; and to win, means that we put on the whole armor of God and overcome the foe. We are taking the place of these wicked spirits, the world rulers of the darkness. To defeat them, we must step out upon the battlefield and learn to resist their every move. And we will find, after we have taken our stand for victory, that this is no playground. We have some mighty competitors arrayed against us; but as we stand by faith, God will battle for us. He is counting on our winning in the wrestling match. He has decreed that those who overcome shall sit with Christ upon His throne as He overcame and sat with His Father upon His throne. We can command them to get out of our way because of the triumph of Calvary. Christ spoiled these principalities and powers in the heavenlies and carried them in His triumphal train, showing Himself their Master and Conqueror when He ascended into heaven. Hence, they are under our feet too, in the measure that we take hold of our victory in Christ, stand our ground and refuse to turn and flee from them. The enemy will surely prevail if we run away; for there is no armor provided for the back. Like Napoleon's drummer boy, we must never learn to "beat a retreat." Some folks are inclined to scoff at these things. They do not give much credence to the fact that there are organized forces of Satan in the heavenlies, nor that we have any warfare. They rather believe, like most of us were taught, that the devil is in hell. But the Scriptures do not so teach. Hell will be his home for one thousand years; but he is not yet cast down from his habitation in the upper regions. That waits for Christ to take His throne there.

We have many passages in the Bible which prove the existence of marvelous systems of diplomacy and strategic operations, both good and bad, constantly at war in the skies, whereby earth affairs are vitally affected and controlled. Deborah, in her song of victory, chants the praises of angelic forces that were against Sisera the enemy of Israel. She sings, "They fought from heaven; the stars in their courses fought against Sisera" - Judges 5. Many think these things are merely poetic rhapsody; but they are literal truths.

Elisha, when surrounded with the Syrian hosts at Dothan inspired and controlled by demon forces, assured his trembling servant that he had nothing to fear; for "they that are with us are more than they that be with them." Then he prayed that the Lord would open his servant's eyes that he might behold the invisible host that environed them. And behold the mountains were full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha - II Kings 2:6. At the critical time of the approach of the Syrians, the prophet calmly prayed the Lord to smite them with blindness. The answer came immediately and Elisha, single-handed, led the sightless multitude right into Samaria, the capitol of Israel. God could have wiped them off the earth with one stroke without man having any part in

the fray; but this is not His will. He desires His people to be identified with Himself in this great war against Satan.

Those two instances were the interventions of good angels; but there are many hints given of satanic interference in earthly affairs. Note for instance the case of Job. He was a patriarch before Moses' time, and yet there was Satan ready to destroy him if he were allowed. He was given permission to plague, persecute and tempt Job in every way except to kill him. It is said that it was leprosy with which he was afflicted, tho our version translates the trouble, boils. Anyway, that was real suffering inflicted by the devil. (We see who is the author of sickness). And the Lord gave Job into the enemy's hand for a short time; but he was gloriously blessed later.

And such workings of Satan may be, and generally are, just ordinary happenings, as far as man can see. We read, "And Satan stood up against Israel and provoked David to number Israel - I Chron. 21:1. David actually did the numbering; but the devil was back of it. A further case is that of Ahab, the wicked king of Israel. He desired sanction for his ill-fated expedition against Syria, and Jehovah, purposing to delude the evil prince, accepted an offer of a demon that said, "I will go and be a lying spirit in the mouth of his prophets." By this means, Ahab was enticed to his ruin and death - II Chron. 18:19-34.

Then the New Testament abounds in testimony to the fact that there are unseen forces of evil as well as of good. We see demons cast out, evil religious spirits investing natural men, demons that knew Jesus and His power - Mark 5:1-9. Also demons that knew Paul and his power - Acts 16 and 19:13-16. Therefore we should not think it strange that the messenger should be delayed in coming to Daniel. He was hindered by Satan's forces of wicked spirits until Michael, one of the chief princes of Jehovah, came to his help. This is the same great angel that will finally have the privilege of ridding heaven of these wicked powers - Rev. 12. He will come to the Lord's help then, even as he did at that earlier date.

#### **The Purpose Of The Vision**

The reason of these marvelous experiences of Daniel was, as we noted, that he might understand some things relative to the future. The heavenly visitant says to the prophet, "I am come to make thee understand," etc. With Michael's aid, he had overcome the opposition. And having strengthened the prophet for the further revelation, He says, "Knowest thou wherefore I come unto thee? and now I will return to fight with the prince of Persia, and when I am gone forth, lo, the prince of Grecia shall come. But I will show thee what is noted in the scripture of truth, and there is none that holdeth with me in these things, but Michael your prince. Also, I, in the first year of Darius the Mede, even I stood to confirm and strengthen him" - Chaps. 10:20, 21 and 11:1.

The words, "the prince of Persia," do not refer to Cyrus, the visible ruler of the empire, but to a mighty, unseen prince, having rulership over the heavenly principality corresponding to Persia. Those called "kings of Persia" were not the officials of the earthly realm of that name, but the invisible rulers having power over lesser provinces under sway of the greater prince just mentioned. That this latter potentate was an appointee of Satan, the master despot over all, is easily verified from the fact that he opposed the journey of the Son of God on His way to Daniel. It is evident that he was directly against the delivery of this message; because it was a decree of greatest import to Israel. The satanic powers knew that it involved prophecy of infinite proportions which, if given to the prophet, would ensure its fulfillment; for thus it became a part of the Word of God which cannot fail. It is interesting to see how closely the people of God are bound up with the Lord in a bundle of life. And even if Israel are under the displeasure of God; yet His eye is ever upon His ancient people; for His counsel concerning them must have a fulfillment.

But there are also good angels, mighty beings, which have a jurisdiction in some sense over the affairs of the world. In this connection, note what the glorified Man says about Michael. He calls him, "one of the chief princes" (V. 13), and "Michael your prince" - the immediate heavenly prince over Israel. He informs Daniel that this Michael holds with himself in behalf of Israel, the people of destiny; and further adds, that He Himself stood up to his help in the first year of Darius the Mede. The inference is clear in this connection that at that time when the Babylonian Empire which held Israel captive, was overthrown, there was a mighty conflict in the skies. We little realize what momentous events are taking place continually in the heavenly sphere, events which have marvelous bearing on earthly affairs. At the time, to which the heavenly Man alludes, the

battle of evil was against the setting up of the Medo-Persian Empire, because that was the signal for the release of the Jews from captivity and of their restoration to statehood. And even the great angel Michael had such opposition against him at that point that the Lord Himself had to come "to confirm and strengthen him." Probably the partial lifting of the curtain of the firmament to Daniel's gaze in that instance was that he might better comprehend the stupendous issues involved in those last revelations that Jehovah was giving to him.

When we take into account that the full reality of those disclosures has not yet been fulfilled, we too begin to realize something of their magnitude. It fills us with awe as we contemplate their importance. Our amazement and interest deepens as we realize that we are almost at the portals of their fulfillment. And we do not doubt in the slightest degree that there is a great battle at this present time in the aerial regions between the forges of good and evil. No doubt the late terrible war on earth was brought to pass because of the war above. The Jew and his land were involved in this struggle; for Satan is against these people coming into their rights. He knows when they are in, he will be out; therefore he is waging a desperate battle. And all the world will feel the conflict of these mighty principalities in the skies more and more as the days advance. The unrest and upheaval of the present time are due to satanic influences. Jehovah, with the aid of the good angels, is about to seat His Man upon His throne of Empires, while at the same time, Satan is contesting this event and working to seat his man on the throne of empires on the earth. It is just like two powers in this world, each with its several candidates fighting for his man, because he stands for their principles.

We are living now in these momentous days. The shifting sands upon the Gentile sea prove this fact. There is no stability in Europe. All is in chaotic condition. No one is able to understand the situation or stem the tide of discontent and national fever. They are simply waiting, tho they do not understand the further developments in the skies. Earthly affairs are dependent upon the heavenly issues. Something marvelous, of unparalleled significance as to eternal counsels, is transpiring. Could we but gaze behind the curtain and see the drama unfolding, I am sure we would all be awed by the vision and silenced into subjection and yieldedness to God. How little would the things of this world or its puny men move us. How spiritual and powerful would be our prayers, if we could pierce the starry heavens, and how poised and stable would be our lives. We are deeply assured that we are close to the transition period when the Church, the heavenly people, shall be taken home and the Jews, the earthly host of Jehovah, Daniel's people, again be the dominant people of the world. And we are glad that we are so close to the last days of "the latter times."

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#### GRACE ANTHEM

"Faith triumphant! Blessed victory!  
Every barrier swept away.  
Heaven descending; joy and fulness;  
Dawn of everlasting Day!  
Jesus Only -  
Him to love and Him obey.

#### THE PROPHET'S LAST VISION CONTINUED

##### The Second Part, Chapter 11:1 to 35.

##### "AND NOW WILL I SHOW THEE THE TRUTH" - Chapter 11:2.

In the above words, Daniel was given the positive assurance, by the Messenger, that he was to understand the vision. Therefore we too may rejoice that we have the truth of the matter contained in what follows. The Lord desires us to know His purposes regarding these hidden things, or else He would not have revealed them to the prophet. It pleases the Lord that we study His word.

#### The Rise of Greece

"Behold there shall stand up yet three kings in Persia; and the fourth shall be far richer than they all; and by his strength thru his riches he shall stir up all against the realm of Grecia. And a mighty king shall stand up that shall rule with great dominion and do according to his own will. And when he shall stand up his kingdom shall be broken and shall be divided toward the four winds of heaven, and not to his posterity nor according to his dominion which he ruled; for his

kingdom shall be plucked up even for others beside those" - vs. 2-4. In the first verse of chap. 10, we have the year from which the Messenger starts his revelation - "the third year of Cyrus" - B.C. 533. He introduces three successive Persian kings for the purpose of leading up to the fourth who is far richer than all those other kings. He must have the necessary background for his introduction to the one that is distinguished by his impressive invasion of Greece. The latter is followed no doubt by a retaliation campaign in which a mighty king from Greece stands up against the king from Persia and overcomes that emperor as the sequel proves; for we read that he rules with great power and "does according to his own will." He conquers the hitherto invincible Persian kingdom, makes a complete and undisputed conquest of the enemy's territory, and lo, the Grecian empire is launched. But this mighty conqueror enjoys it only a short time; for we read of his sudden and untimely cutting off - his kingdom is broken and falls into four divisions - eastern, western, southern and northern. These four had each its separate ruler; but none was of the natural seed of the first ruler. The empire was sadly weakened by the disruption. The above is the essence of the Messenger's words down to verse four.

When we recall the vision of chapter 8, we see that Daniel had already been shown that Greece was to follow Medo-Persia in the line of the four great world empires. The prophet no doubt, even as we, must have readily understood the Angel's portrayal of the rise of the future Grecian empire. The words of the Angel, "And now I will return to fight with the prince of Persia, and when I am gone forth, lo, the prince of Grecia shall come" (ch. 10:20), shed light on the scene. As we intimated, the world empires coming into view, in the will of God, was in some way objected to by the devil. He instigated and moved his realm of wicked powers against every purpose of God. No doubt the return of the Jew to his land at the beginning of the Persian dynasty would account for his ire against that realm; but why his objection to Grecia's rise to power? It may be simply because it was the order of Jehovah. Anyway we know that the wicked princes in the aerial regions withstood the Messenger and sought to hinder his movements and counteract God's work in national affairs. But he did not, and cannot succeed in his self-willed endeavors to resist God. His ordained will shall prosper as it ever has done. What God says shall be done. And we, who are here on the scene at the present time, know that much of this last vision of Daniel has become history.

The three Persian kings, that Daniel is told shall succeed Cyrus who was the reigning monarch at the time of the vision, are easily ascertained now. They were in the order named: Cambyses, ruling from B.C. 529-622; Pseudo-Smerdis, 522-521, barely a year. He was an imposter. He personated the rightful heir who had been put to death privately. Third, was Darius Hystaspes who reigned from 521-485, a long period; after which came Xerxes, the rich king, 485-465. The latter emperor enrolled an army of one million men, besides a navy of 1200 ships with which he went against Greece, where the Persians sought to gain an opening. It was here where the brave Leonidas and his army of 300 Spartans met their death as they were resisting Xerxes. The naval battle at Salamis followed B.C. 580. It resulted in a decisive defeat for the Persian king who retreated in fear and disappointment to his own country. Several other kings followed him on the throne of Persia. Greece continued to increase in prestige, but no retaliatory blow was struck, tho the Persian Empire continued in existence for half a century after Xerxes' death. Then Alexander the Great began to show himself great, as his name indicates. He took revenge on Persia for the onslaught of Xerxes, as it was prophesied by the Messenger.

The great Alexander began a lightning-like conquest of Asia at the age of twenty years. In about a dozen years, he had swept the east to the confines of India, inflicting the final and decisive blow to Persia, B. C. 331. He wept over other kingdoms to conquer - when yet in his youth - a worldwide conqueror at 30. Then as suddenly as he came into prominence and fame, so suddenly was his light put out. He died at the early age of thirty-three at the end of an excessive drunken, carousal. His empire was left in confusion, out of which, after twenty years, emerged the four kingdoms of prophecy - Egypt, Syria, Chaldea and Greece. It never regained its former glory nor power and none of Alexander's family ruled. His four generals divided the spoils.

We have far the better of Daniel as to the understanding of the Messenger's words; for all that He has uttered so far has long been history. The prophet knew nothing of the territories nor the persons as we know them. But as we have said, this knowledge is not necessary to understand prophecy. The latter consists in being itself a clear revelation of coming, predestined events. It was not necessary that Daniel be acquainted with dates, or geographical and personal names;

neither is it for us. The historical events are not the interpretation, nor the revelation. The history is simply made sure and certain by the prophecy; not the prophecy by the history.

"And the king of the south shall be strong, and one of his princes; and he shall be strong above him, and have dominion; his dominion shall be a great dominion" - V. 5.

The king of the south - one of the four divisions of the Grecian Empire, is here singled out for special emphasis. This king was Ptolemy Soter. He was the first of Alexander's generals to gain control of a part of the Grecian Empire. Seleucus Nicator, "one of his princes," was given the rulership over Babylonia, but under Ptolemy. He finally became so strong that he acquired absolute control of that dominion. Stretching out westward, he founded for himself the great kingdom of Syria.

"And in the end of the years, they shall join themselves together; for the king's daughter of the south shall come to the king of the north to make an agreement; but she shall not retain the power of the arm; neither shall he stand, nor his arm; but she shall be given up and they that bought her and he that begat her and he that strengthened her in those times" - V. 6. It is marvelous how minutely the history of all this portion can be traced and how perfectly it is in agreement with the prophecy. It is so true and perfect that it makes the higher critic squirm. He endeavors to deny the authenticity of Daniel's prophecy and brand the fact that he wrote it, as a lie; but here it stands and makes the critic the liar.

The fulfillment of the above citation was that the two kingdoms referred to in verse 5, Egypt and Syria, sought to establish a union by means of a marriage of Berenice, the daughter of Ptolemy Philadelphus, the second king of Egypt, with Antiochus Theos, king of Syria. The latter put away his wife Laodice for this purpose, but the result was bloody, and ceaseless conflict. Berenice finally lost her place. She was poisoned, as well as her child, and Laodice was reinstated on the throne.

"But out of a branch of her roots shall one stand up in his estate which shall come with an army and shall enter into the fortress of the king of the north; and shall deal against them and shall prevail. And shall also carry captives into Egypt, their gods, with their precious vessels of silver and gold; and he shall continue more years than the king of the north" - Vs. 7, 8.

A successor to the Egyptian throne, Ptolemy Eurgetes, brother of Berenice, took vengeance upon the king of the north for the treatment accorded his sister. He invaded the royal fortress, prevailed everywhere, carrying away 4,000 talents of gold, 40,000 talents of silver and 2,500 idols and idolatrous vessels. After this bloody war, the conflict ceased for a while. "So the king of the south shall come into his kingdom and shall return into his own land" - V. 9.

After the death of the king of Syria, his sons are stirred up to retaliate upon Egypt for the great loss that their kingdom experienced at their hand. The Scriptures announce the fray.

"But his sons shall be stirred up and shall assemble a multitude of great forces and one shall certainly come and overflow and pass thru; then shall he return and be stirred up even to his fortress. And the king of the south shall be moved with choler and shall come forth and fight with him, even with the king of the north; and he shall set forth a great multitude; but the multitude shall be given into his hand. And when he hath taken away the multitude, his heart shall be lifted up and he shall cast down many thousands; but he shall not be strengthened by it. For the king of the north shall return and shall set forth a multitude greater than the former and shall certainly come after certain years with a great army and with much riches" - Vs. 10-13.

The northern kingdom seeks to prey upon Egypt for their great loss at her hands. One of the sons of Seleucus, having attained great power, succeeds in assailing Gaza. At last, Philopater, the easy-going king of Egypt, is aroused to indignation. A momentous engagement ensued near Gaza, between him and the king of Syria, Antiochus III, called the "Great," with signal defeat for the latter. But Philopater did not follow up his advantage. After some years of progress in the north, but decline in the south, Antiochus made another and more formidable invasion of Egypt. He was assisted by general revolts against Egypt as well as by the help of seditious Jews, as the next verse indicates.

"And in those times there shall stand up many against the king of the south: also the robbers of thy people shall exalt themselves to establish the vision: but they shall fail. So the king of the north shall come and cast up a mound and take the most fenced cities and the arms of the south shall not withstand, neither his chosen people, neither shall there be any strength to withstand. But he that cometh against him shall do according to his own will and none shall stand before him

and he shall stand in the glorious holy land which by his hand shall be consumed. He shall also set his face to enter with the strength of his whole kingdom and upright ones with him: thus shall he do. And he shall give him the daughter of women corrupting her; but she shall not stand on his side, neither be for him" - Vs. 14-17.

In this second part of the vision proper, we are gazing upon a war between Egypt and Syria. We saw in the beginning of chapter 10 that this last revelation was said by the Messenger to relate to "a great warfare." Hence the present portion. Antiochus, the Great, is seen here in vision continuing his invasion of Egypt and the surrounding countries. Palestine, being wedged in between the warring countries, feels some of the results of the struggle; hence the history. The vision did not concern the affairs, or warfare of the other partitions of the Grecian Empire. It is these two, Egypt and Syria, that have to do with the Jews. The latter endeavor to conciliate Antiochus, but without success. They infer that he will make Judea independent, but God blows on their maneuvers. Instead of winning Antiochus, it seemed to have the opposite effect. God doomed it to failure.

The Syrian monarch then successfully besieged Sidon, tho they put up a valiant fight for some time. This was Egypt's most prized, northern stronghold - V. 15. After this successful coup, Antiochus sweeps on southward. He follows up the advantage which he has gained. They welcomed him in the Holy Land; but he had a javelin concealed in his hand for the punishment of the people of God. He devastated their land and destroyed the people - V. 16. The following year, he renews his conquest of Egypt with increased preparation and extra success. The conditions appear to be ripe for the siege; but there was a change. The Roman tribes who were even then manifesting some strength, interfered, changing his war-like purpose to that of conciliation. He endeavors to effect a union with Egypt for the purpose of more successfully getting the dominion. He offers his young daughter Cleopatra in marriage to the new Ptolemy, a mere boy in years. The object of this crafty alliance was really in favor of Syria. Antiochus supposed his daughter would prove false to her husband and seek his downfall and that of Egypt; but she failed her father. She refused to be a tool in his hand. He could not corrupt her and he was disappointed - "She did not stand on his side" V. 17.

Antiochus then turned his attention in another direction. He takes many, but he is stopped by a vigorous resistance from Rome. An able general, Scipio Asiaticus, defended them and brought defeat to the impudent monarch. He routed him at Magnesia, 190 B. C. He fled from one fortress to another; but he was finally brought to a halt and put under heavy terms of tribute. In attempting to plunder Jupiter's temple at Elymas to get money to pay his fine, he was slain. As the words here explain, "He shall stumble and fall and not be found" - V. 19. What an ignominious defeat for a conqueror - a great man - dying as a thief. Truly we can say with David, "How are the mighty fallen" - II Sam. 1.

His successor, Seleucus Philopater, inherited the heavy burden of the tribute as well as the throne. To get the necessary money he sends "a raiser of taxes" to confiscate the treasures of the Jewish temple if the people do not give tribute; but he was suddenly destroyed and mysteriously put out of the way, "neither in anker, nor in battle," as we read - V. 20. His successor was not the lawful heir, but a vile person, a usurper; for there was a son of Seleucus Philopater, as well as a son of Cleopatra and grandson of Antiochus the Great, both of whom were strongly supported as claimants to the throne. But, owing to the intrigue and political chicanery, the younger brother of Seleucus was seated as the ruler. "He shall come in peacably and obtain the kingdom by flatteries" -V. 21. His

name has come down to us as Antioehus Epiphanes - "Illustrious," tho history denominates him as the "Contemptible." He did not live up to his name, "illustrious," tho he has made it famous, or rather infamous. He was really called the "madman."

He reigned B.C. 175-164. He was given up to the basest, the most degraded passions. History records the fact that he was cruel and unscrupulous in his character, and of a savage temper, delighting in the lowest, the most beastly company and the most foolish acts. He was noted for such unkindly, childish freaks as bathing in public and throwing stones at passersby. He was not true, nor dependable, tho by no means deficient in brains. Because of his craftily supplanting the rightful heir, he is called in the vision, a "vile person." He swept all that resisted his power out of his way; brooked no interference to his self-willed plans.

"And the overwhelming forces shall be overwhelmed from before his eyes and shall be broken;

yea even the prince of the covenant" - V. 22, R. V.

Very early in his career, Antiochus showed the malignity of his spirit toward the Jews. He deposed the true high priest, Onias, a good and honest man (who later was murdered) and put in his place, a mercenary, ungodly fellow, Menelaus by name. The latter was hand in glove with his master, working for his interest and against the people of God. These two men, Antiochus and Menelaus, are marvelous types of the two beasts of Revelation 13.

"And after the league made with him, he shall work deceitfully; for he shall become strong with a small people" - V. 23. Antiochus, the madman, is still the subject here. He came into the kingdom by flattery. With his flood-like hosts, the Egyptian king, Ptolemy Philometer, "the prince of the covenant," went against him, but they were swept away. Philometer was in a covenant with him by right, being the son of Cleopatra, sister of Antiochus, to whom the father, Antiochus the Great, had promised in dowry Ceolo-Syria and Palestine. Philometer's generals, in endeavoring to obtain these covenanted promises, were defeated. Antiochus worked deceitfully, feigning friendship toward the young king, Philometer, who was really his nephew. And with a small people, or army, be "peaceably," that is on pretense of doing something else, took Memphis and the fattest places of Egyptian colonies, and then seized Philometer. Thus he did that which neither his father nor his fathers had done. He went further than they in his high-handed usurpation of the rights of others. He gained Egypt and scattered the prey. He advanced his own cause without consideration for the rights of the people. He was a truce breaker as the word declares, and as history adds its witness. He went on appropriating the neighboring provinces by exhibiting an unprecedented generosity in dispensing his easily-gotten, as well as ill-gotten gains. And always he was after getting control of the strongholds of his Egyptian rival, even as was declared.

"He shall stir up his power and his courage against the king of the south with a great army; and the king of the south shall be stirred up to battle with a very great and mighty army; but he shall not stand; for they shall forecast devices against him. Many shall fall down slain" - Vs. 25, 26. The Egyptian was overcome by the duplicity of his own nobles. They forecast devices against him. At last Antiochus was checked at Alexandria, but he now used strategy, apparently making friends with Philometer. The latter met him on his own ground and they both spoke lies at one table, trying to deceive each other - V. 27.

"Then shall he return to his own land with great riches; and his heart shall be against the holy covenant: and he shall do exploits and return to his own land." On his way to Syria, laden with the spoils of conquest, he turned aside on some pretext and assailed Jerusalem, slaying 40,000 of the inhabitants and selling as many more as slaves. He also plundered the temple, carrying off treasure to the value of 1800 talents. Then he completed his homeward journey, but was not satisfied. He returned to the attack upon Egypt and this second time he openly invaded the premises; but he was not successful as at the former time. Having arrived without hindrance within four miles of the city of Alexandria, his objective, disappointment awaited him. He was met by a Roman fleet and forced to retire. These were "the ships of Chittim" (V. 30), that we read came against him and forced him to return, B. C. 168. Antiochus had to own and bow before the advance of a new empire of the world, the fourth of Daniel's series. And tho it was more than a century before the dream had been consummated and Rome became the mistress of the world, yet the tokens were present at the time of Antiochus.

Returning north again, Antiochus vents his disappointed rage upon Jerusalem. He left in Palestine armed forces to massacre, humiliate, and torture the Jews. He had issued an edict to his whole kingdom that all his subjects were one people; therefore there should be the same laws for all and only one religion. And now he finds that the Jews restored the worship of Jehovah in Jerusalem and "he had indignation against the holy covenant." He heard from some apostate Jews that had forsaken the religion of their fathers, cast off circumcision, etc., that the people were not obedient to his decree; hence his anger against them.

"He shall even return and have intelligence with them that forsake the holy covenant. And arms shall stand on his part, and they shall pollute the sanctuary of strength and shall take away the daily sacrifice and they shall place the abomination that maketh desolate. And such as do wickedly against the covenant shall he corrupt by flatteries; but the people that do know their God shall be strong and do exploits. And they that understand among the people shall instruct many; yet they shall fall by the sword and by flame and by spoil many days. Now when they shall fall,

they shall be holpen with a little help; but many shall cleave to them with flatteries. And some of them of understanding shall fall to try them and to purge and to make them white even to the time of the end, because it is yet for a time appointed" - Vs. 30-35.

In order to enforce his false religion upon the people, Antiochus profaned their sanctuary, while their sacrifices and offerings were forbidden. He took away the golden altar with other priceless vessels of Jehovah; and swine's flesh was sacrificed and burned upon the altar of burnt offering, presumably unto an image placed in the sanctuary. So it will be at the end - Rev. 13. This was the abomination of desolation, the sign of the great wrath of the Lord being upon the children of Israel; otherwise he would not have allowed their enemies to profane their holy place. Antiochus' general, Apollonius, dismantled Jerusalem and from a high fortress slew all that were found to be Jehovah's worshippers. Idol chapels were set up in all the cities of Judea and the inhabitants were commanded to burn incense and worship the gods of Greece, upon pain of death. Whoever was found with any part of the Scriptures, or even seeking in any measure to obey its precepts, was punished with death.

The evil and blasphemous king also consecrated the temple in Jerusalem to Jupiter Olympius, "the god of forces," identifying himself with that god, "whom his fathers knew not." He imported this worship from Rome, accommodated himself to it, as he wished to have one universal religion in his empire. The Jews were constrained to profane the Sabbath, and, on certain holidays, to eat of the idol sacrifices and go in procession to Bacchus, another false idol, carrying ivy to decorate his image. That time was the greatest desecration and profanation that ever befell the theocratic nation, the people of Jehovah. No marvel that the Messenger gave such an accurate prediction regarding the grave peril of those days. Many critics of prophecy and enemies of the truth are baffled and dumb with the accuracy of the fulfillment of this part of Daniel's vision. But they attempt to explain it away by alleging that the Book of Daniel was written after the events occurred. And yet how foolish to think that the Jews, enemies of Christ, would forget these writings that confirm His claims to the throne; for Messianic events are plainly prophesied in Daniel.

All the above caused a great falling away among the Jews; but it also was the occasion of the rise of some of the greatest heroes of faith the world has ever seen. The abject degradation of the land really led to a fuller liberation of the people and a love for Jehovah and His worship. It really became the means to a long period of independence of greater power and freedom than had been enjoyed since Nebuchadnezzar's first consignment of captives to Babylon - B. C. 606. The Maccabees, "who knew their God," were the aggressors in this struggle for independence. Matthias, an old man of the priestly house of Asmon, contemptuously rejected splendid offers of Antiochus that he join the apostasy and get in line with the government. The brave patriot flew at a renegade Jew who dared to approach the false altar to offer sacrifice. He slew both the Jew and the king's officer who was present and pulled down the altar. As he fled, he raised the standard of revolt with the cry, "Let all that love the Law follow me." The deeds of this old warrior and his five sons, are worthy of emulation. They deserve a place upon the tablets of undying fame. They knew their God and were strong in their determination to worship no false idol, and "did exploits."

Judas, one of the sons of the old hero, took as his motto for life "Who is like unto thee among the gods?" and he proved that there is none like unto Jehovah. He became the leader of the defenders of Judea at his father's death and proved himself a hero indeed. Allusion is made to that time of conflict, daring and suffering among the worthies of faith recorded in Hebrews, chapter 11. "Others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection." Seven brothers with their mother, submitted to a terrible torturing death, cut up into pieces, rather than deny the faith of the fathers. The third said, "Thou canst take us out of this present life, but the King of the world will raise us up (who have died for His Law) unto everlasting life." Even the Old Testament believers understood something of the eternal reward which is the portion of the faithful. Two women who were seen to circumcise their infant sons were cast headlong down a precipice with them. Eleazar, when forced to put swine's flesh in his mouth, spit it out, choosing death rather than to swallow what was an abomination to a Jew. Some were roasted alive in caves whither they had fled to keep the Sabbath. The dreadful persecution lasted three years (significant number, type of the last great tribulation); then, by the Maccabees, who defeated Antiochus' troops under Lysias, the Jews were "holpen with a little help," that is, saved

from extinction until the Roman Empire came into being. But besides these daring men of war, there was something more important needed to maintain the religious vitality of the nation. This was found in a class of devout and learned men, Maskilim - "the understanding ones." These spiritually understood and taught the Scriptures. Prophecy was then indeed a light in a dark place. Danid's visions especially comforted and strengthened the people. These teachers also brought to light the great Messianic promises and by them, there was kept a seed in Judea who were waiting for the consolation of Israel, like Simeon and Anna, at the time of the birth of Christ. It is the illustrious ministry and success of these luminaries of those times of declension and tribulation that these verses, 33 to 35, eulogize. They are shown to be the connecting link with the latter days - the time of the end; for Antiochus Epiphanes is but a type of another "king of fierce countenance," of whom we read in chapter 8. He was to arise "in the latter time of their kingdom" out of one of the four partitions of the Grecian Empire. And God's use of the last persecutor of the Jew, in sifting out the final remnant, was wonderfully illustrated at that time. It resulted in the creation of a class of believers of those former days who were purged by suffering from all alloy, and who were forged into the finest metal, pure gold, upon the anvil of Jehovah's own purpose and plan for them. Antiochus was stricken with a loathsome disease and died in great agony.

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**KINGDOM OF GOD**

Behold! the Mountain of the Lord  
 In latter days shall rise  
 Above the "mountains" round about,  
 And cause folks great surprise,  
 As they gaze with wond'ring eyes.  
 To this, the nations which remain,  
 All tribes and tongues shall flow.  
 "Come to the Hill of God," they'll call,  
 "Up to His House, let's go,  
 And worship here below."  
 The light from that fair Mount of God  
 Shall lighten every land,  
 When Jesus, King of kings, shall reign  
 And all the world command,  
 With iron rod in Hand.  
 Among the nations, He shall judge,  
 As Shepherd o'er the fold.  
 His sceptre shall protect the just  
 And quell the sinner bold.  
 His throne shall be all gold.

**THE PROPHET'S LAST VISION CONCLUDED**

**Third Part, chapters 11:36 to 12:13**

"AND THE KING SHALL DO ACCORDING TO HIS WILL; AND HE SHALL EXALT HIMSELF and magnify himself above every god and shall speak marvelous things against the God of gods and shall prosper until the indignation is accomplished; for that which is determined shall be done Chapter 11:36.

With the above citation, we begin the vision proper. The former two parts were but the necessary background, leading up to the third section, which refers wholly to the "latter end." This, we remember, was Daniel's paramount theme. And yet, a careless reading of the chapter would detect no allusion in verse 35 to the last days and no parenthesis between it and verse 36. The expression, "the king," would simply appear to be a continuation of the history relating to the king of the north, "the vile person," to whom we were introduced in verse 21. But as we note carefully the language following the above quotation (verse 36), we are plainly instructed as to the identity of "the king." He is the final persecutor of Israel, the man of evil destiny, with whom we have become familiar in our study of the former visions of the prophet. The vile person, Antiochus, of whom we have been reading, is simply a type of the greater and more devilish blasphemer of the

last days, the anti-christ. But his biography blends most marvelously with that of his anti-type who comes upon the scene over two thousand years later. In fact, all the history outlined in part two of Daniel's last vision is a most striking panorama of future events. The last great battle for supremacy of the nations, the tribulation, and the powerfully energized remnant of the end time are all portrayed in type.

The Messenger's words at the beginning of the vision furnish us the key to the interpretation of the essence of the revelation. "I am come to make thee know what shall befall thy people in the latter days." All that has preceded has been a preparation, or leading up to the subject proper, as we intimated. The evil king has certainly more and more reminded us of the anti-christ. And we must remember that there are two men in the end time which constitute, we may say, "the antichrist."

One is the anti-king; the other the anti-prophet. Antiochus figures both of these. In the vision of chapter 8, we saw him as "the little horn." We noted that he waxed great toward the "pleasant land," Palestine, which signified the religious activities of the anti-christ; therefore, thus he a type of the false prophet. But now in our present vision, we view the anti-king portrayed by the same man. And in a way there is perfection in this; for the Antiochus figures two men of the future, yet these men are the antithesis of one man, the Man, Christ Jesus. Furthermore, Antiochus had an ally in Jerusalem, the false high priest, Menelaus, who worked with him against the interests of the people of God. The evil king of Syria deposed the rightful high priest, Onias, and sold the office to Menelaus, who is said later to have murdered Onias and then was executed by Antiochus for this crime. He was thru with him, he having served his purpose.

And as we said, all this is a most striking portrayal of end time events. The end is the objective of this last vision as we are sure no one will deny. We have not only the two evil usurping kings of the latter days figured, but also the godly Jewish remnant. The latter mighty company has been announced again and again in Hebrew prophecy as well as figured by Old Testament worthies of faith. They will be supernaturally endued and endowed. God will demonstrate the heavenly dynamics thru them in a more powerful way than has ever been done. At the beginning of the age, there were many mighty deeds accomplished by the saints; but they were only a hint of the powers of the age to come - Heb. 6:5. But to return to the vision:

The king that shall come, shall do what he wills to do. He shall exalt himself, which is the essence of the devil. He will put himself above every one and every thing. There will be none in the world greater than he. And more, he will show himself as God Almighty. And he will be allowed of the Lord to so magnify himself, and go to the uttermost lengths in his self-willed exaltation of himself, and his persecution of Israel. Prior to his coming, no man ever had, or ever will have, the power in his hand to do all his will. Christ did His Father's will. Even Satan has not been given a free rein to accomplish all his will; but for a few years there will be a change. God will say, as it were, to this devil-filled man, "Go ahead; accomplish all your desire. Wreak your anger upon my people. Exalt yourself. Pull down all that dare oppose your onward march. Persecute, flay and torture all that stand in your way. I give you the privilege of doing your own will." The Jews in Palestine will be the special target for the anti-christ. He will vent all his ire upon those of the nation who refuse his claims to be the Messiah, the King of the Jews. We have become so familiar with him in our study of his self-exaltation and blasphemous assumption of Deity, as well as his unparalleled persecution of the Jew, that we can easily trace his lineaments in the present vision. We cannot think of ascribing the description to any but the antichrist. And the special point emphasized here is that he shall prosper "till the indignation be accomplished." That is, as we intimated, permission will be given to this man to do all that is in his will until God's wrath upon his impenitent people shall be satisfied. His doings will prosper until that determined time has arrived when all God's purposes, relative to Israel's punishment, shall have been accomplished. The king is but the instrument of the people's chastening. And when that is past, Jehovah speedily throws away His rod, destroys the destroyer, whips the whipper, casts him down into the lake of fire to be tormented forever and forever. But note further

"Neither shall he regard the God of his fathers, nor the desire of women, nor regard any god; for he shall magnify himself. But in his estate, he shall honor the god of forces, and a god whom his fathers knew not, shall he honor with gold and with silver and with precious stones and with pleasant things. Thus shall he do in the most strong holds with a strange god whom he shall acknowledge and increase with glory, and he shall cause them to rule over many and shall divide

the land for gain" - Verses 37-39.

We need not repeat again the New Testament citations relative to this man's character. We have quoted them before in the study of chapter 7. But here, we have some expressions which are peculiar to our present chapter. The evil king is said to be an unbeliever, whether, as some would have it, atheistic as regards the Jewish religion, or as others say, he is an apostate Christian, rather than a Jew. But the real issue is this, that he refuses allegiance to the God of the Bible whether as revealed in the Old Testament, or the New Testament. He regards not the Father, "the God of his fathers;" neither Christ, the Redeemer, "the desire of women" (that is, all women before His birth desired to be the Redeemer's mother), neither the Holy Spirit, "any God." He regards the god of force only. He wants power and authority; therefore he bows at the shrine of the god who will give him unparalleled success upon this line. The Scriptures plainly indicate that Satan is the one so specified - Satan who offered all this earthly power and authority to Christ and was rebuked (Matt. 4:8-10), and has been waiting ever since for a competent man who shall, on condition of worshipping him, receive all the glory and honor of being the supreme ruler upon the earth. He will literally be the god of gods and lord of lords (usurping the office of Christ for three and one half years), because he falls down and worships the invisible god of this world, even Satan himself.

John describes him in the above character when he says, "And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard and his feet were as the feet of a bear and his mouth as the mouth of a lion and the dragon gave him his seat and great authority" - Rev. 13:2. Also Paul refers to him in this devilish guise as having been authorized by Satan, to be the supreme and only ruler - II Thess. 2:4, 9. Furthermore Daniel informs us of his great power, "And he shall deal with the strongest fortresses by the help of a foreign God." - V 39, R. V. Nothing will be impossible to him. His god will help him and overcome the mightiest obstacles for him. In fact this man will be the incarnation of the devil. He will be a striking parody of Christ, the incarnation of the Father. He will duplicate the works of Christ at His second coming as God Almighty. All people will yield to his mighty sweep of authority; if not gracefully, then by force. Moreover others besides himself will be enriched, as the next verse intimates.

"He will divide the land for gain." Those that most quickly surrender to his despotic sway and best serve his purpose and interest, will be rewarded with a place of rulership in his kingdom. They will share his authority on the throne, in a measure, even as Christ's people are to share in His kingdom and its honors at His coming. "Them that honor Me, I will honor," is a principle of Jehovah's dealings with men, which the cruel tyrant of earth will imitate. Note also that it is the land of Palestine which will be divided and portioned out to his vassals. The rulership of the Holy Land will be given to disloyal and apostate Jews. But there will come trouble and opposition to the usurping ruler.

#### **Battle Blasts**

"At the time of the end shall the king of the south push at him and the king of the north shall come against him with a whirlwind, with chariots and with many ships and he shall enter into the countries and shall overflow and pass over" - V. 40. We must constantly bear in mind that there are at least two thousand years of history, of which the Scripture makes no mention, between verses 35 and 36. The connection seems to be perfect; but in the one verse, the type, Antiochus, is on the stage; while in the other, the anti-type comes on and begins to play his great part. And now in the citation above, we have three kings mentioned, the king of the south, the king of the north, and "the king," the antichrist. And tho Antiochus was the king of the north (Syria) when he was on the scene, yet his antitype, the antichrist, will not be the king of the north, as is plainly evident here. The king of the north could not be said to push at himself; hence we are forced to the conclusion that the anti-christ will come from the west. That is the only one of the partitions of the former Grecian empire that has not been accounted for in Daniel's prophecy; but whether it is Greece that will give rise to the man of evil destiny we cannot say. The revived Roman empire may increase her territory to a far greater extent than it was in its former estate. The whole world is viewed as a part of that last world kingdom in some sense - Rev. 17:13. If that is so, why may not the western power of the end be a far greater political power than the former kingdom? Is this not suggestive?

We noted earlier (See lessons on chapter 7), that shortly after the antichrist makes his first appearance upon the world stage, as a public, political figure, "he shall subdue three kings." In

the beginning of the vision therein reported, Daniel views an unnameable beast with "ten horns." These latter represent ten kings, heads of their respective kingdoms, which together constitute the beginning of the revived Roman empire, as Daniel, representative of the godly Jew of the latter days, viewed it. While he gazes in amazement upon the scene, another little horn makes its appearance among the ten horns. He puts down three of the first kings, thus leaving seven remaining, representative of the seven kings, rulers over the seven heads, or mountains, that is, nations, which John informs us that he saw upon the beast in his vision relative to the same scene - Rev. 13:1. He is gazing upon the world empire of the end at a later stage of its career than Daniel. But even after this time of its first launching, trouble will arise. The Peace and Safety slogan will not be heard very long. We are informed by Paul that when they so cry, then "sudden destruction" - I Thess. 5:3. War will again break out and greater will be the awful effects of the devastation and horror upon the earth than before. John, the New Testament Daniel, informs us of this time of woe. It is detailed by him as he viewed in symbol that dreadful day - Rev. 8:1 - 9:21. The united world empire with its treaty of peace is no doubt found a failure. The results of the carnage, as we find, is this, "There are seven kings: five are fallen, one is, and the other is not yet come; and when he cometh, he must continue a short space. And the beast that was and is not, even he is the eighth and is of the seven; and goeth into perdition" - Rev. 17:10, 11. Five of the seven original kings will be dethroned - "have fallen" - one king is killed, while the other must be the victorious one - "he is." But the one that has been killed - "the one that had the wound by the sword" - still lives. His deadly wound is healed and all the world wonders after the beast - Rev. 13:3 and 14. He is raised from the dead, a counterfeit of Christ's resurrection, and becomes the supreme ruler, the antichrist. He quickly assumes the leadership over all. Empowered by the devil, he puts down all rule, authority and power. It is at this stage of his miraculous career that verse 40 (of our present lesson) treats. He is portrayed as showing his authority, demonstrating his prowess. He overcomes the world. The famed conquest of Alexander fades into insignificance before the onward sweep of this giant. Napoleon's rapid rise and marvelous leadership has been likened to that of the antichrist; he is a foreshadow; but as to the reality, he is an ant beside an elephant when compared with this despot. There has never yet been any man like this man of devilish origin. Satanic skill, added to consummate nerve, diplomacy, cunning and generalship will characterize his every move. He will be unique, distinct, irresistible, unconquerable for 1260 days, 42 months, a time, times and half a time, or three and one half years, a destined marked-off period of time. And tho at the beginning of his reign, many of the nations are against his supremacy; yet at the end, he is victorious over all, tho there is a hint that three countries escape, Edom, Moab and Ammon.

The description given of the terrible conflict (verse 40) is suggestive of an engagement of aerial, naval and land forces - whirlwind, ships and chariots. All the combined forces of the world's devastating artillery are used to halt the onward conquering tread of this superman. But it is in vain. He shall overflow and pass over all lands, subduing and conquering everywhere. Furthermore, we read, "He shall enter also into the glorious land" - V. 41. Palestine will not escape his dominating influence. This country was also the objective of Antiochus. He sought to bring the Jews a new religion. He wanted to force upon them his choice of a god and make them worship at his shrine; likewise the great usurping, counterfeit Christ. He will enter the land of delight and overcome the people, forcing the Jews to worship his image under threat of death. He will stop all worship of the true and living God, taking away all that reminds men of the true Christ and the cross - "causing all sacrifice and oblation to cease" - Chap. 9:27. The latter edict is different from that of taking away the daily sacrifice - Chap. 8:11. The latter refers to the burnt offering

(Lev. 6:9-13) which was to be burning continually upon the altar. The Jews upon being reinstated to their land and acknowledged as a nation, having their own religious worship, will immediately commence the Old Testament ordinances relating to the worship of Jehovah. The Mosaic ritual will be restored with its multitudinous shedding of blood and offering up of sacrifices. But when the nations make a covenant with the Jews, the daily burnt-offering ceases. It is taken away 30 days before the beginning of the seven years of usurpation (See chart). This surrender of the offering, which speaks more emphatically of Christ and His intrinsic holiness than all of the other offerings, is the signal for God's surrender of them. They turn to the antichrist, accepting him and his protection rather than Christ, preferring to lean upon the arm of flesh, rather than the

divine arm. We say that is the reason they are given up into the hands of this world despot, because they gave up the daily burnt offering. And later on, when the satanic monster has come into his place of exaltation, setting himself up as God, he forbids all sacrifices. In other words, the Jewish religion is set aside. Everyone is commanded to worship this man and his image which he sets up in some miraculous manner in the temple. That will be the fulfillment of Daniel's prophecy (chap. 12:11) of which Jesus warns - Matt. 24:15.

"But he shall have power over the treasures of gold and silver and over all the precious things of Egypt: and the Libyans and the Ethiopians shall be at his steps" - V. 4. Not only is all the national power at his command; but all the wealth of the world. He can draw upon all the banks; all the money in the vaults is at his disposal. All the precious things of the earth are given into his hands for these three and one half years of his undisputed sway. Yet there comes a change. His time is short.

"Tidings out of the east and north shall trouble him. Therefore he shall go forth with great fury to destroy and utterly to make away many" - V. 44.

Startling news reaches the antichrist when he appears secure and at ease, having accomplished all that he has hoped and planned. Trouble in the north and east arise and it rouses the beast to ferocious fury. He appears to vent his wrath upon the people, "destroys many;" but whether the Jews are meant is not clear, tho the next verse might incline to this, inference. Anyway there is trouble on the scene. The north, Syria, and the east, Chaldea, seem to be the storm centers tho we believe that these countries will be otherwise known at the end. A larger view of all these countries in the vicinity of Palestine is demanded by the marvelous statements of Scriptures of later writers. And the world has grown since Daniel's time. But be this as it may, we are confronted here with the fact that the false ruler of the end will brook no interference from friend or foe. He resists every attack that is against his purposes. His objective now is the Holy Land and to reign there as God Almighty. Therefore we read,

"And he shall plant the tabernacle of his palace between the seas in the glorious holy mountain and he shall come to his end and none shall help him" - V. 45.

We saw from verse 43 that the king of the south and the king of the north were not in league against "the king," but were rather antagonistic towards each other (but both against the antichrist); for he conquers Egypt. There he is very materially enriched not only in honor, but in wealth and worship. The Libyans and the Ethiopians yield to him. But all are not yet in perfect submission to him. He hastens to put down all rule and authority and power. He is wrathful that any should be in rebellion against him. He goes "to destroy and utterly to make away many," referring no doubt to Israel. Verse 45 further enlightens us as to the above citation. It describes the final enthronement of the antichrist in a few words. His palace is planted between the seas in the Holy Land, Jerusalem no doubt being the capital of his kingdom. There he meets his doom. The Apostle John on the isle of Patmos gives us a graphic view of that time of conflict. "And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue, Armageddon" - Rev. 16:16. The meaning of the above word is "hill of slaughter." It is from the Hebrew, Harmageddon, a compound word, composed of Har and Megiddo. The latter mount lies on the southern edge of the plain of Esdraelon, or the valley of Jehoshaphat, otherwise known as "the valley of Jezreel." It is here where many historic battles were fought and many victories won. The last great onslaught upon Israel is a mustering of the Gentile nations in a common purpose to destroy Israel and get possession of the land of destiny, the homeland of the Jew. The poor people will not be able to take the field against the combined forces of antichrist, but will resist the armies of the Gentiles and stand against them in the Holy City. It is then that the final assault will be made and it is then that the Lord will fight for His people. The antichrist, the final destroyer of Israel, will come to his end and none shall help him. Many prophetic glimpses of that time and scene may be found.

#### **THE MIRACULOUS DELIVERANCE**

"And at the time of the end shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people; and there shall be a time of trouble such as there 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" - Chap. 12:1.

We are plainly taught by these opening words of the above chapter that this is simply the continuation of the words of the divine Messenger to Daniel. He is still instructing him as to the final issue. The time of trouble is not a happening, long and distinct from the conflicts described in

the end of the preceding chapter, but is said, "at that time." He is speaking of the end, the objective of all the prophecies vouchsafed to Daniel, as we have noted time and again. Daniel does not disclose to us much of the Messiah's reign of glory, but brings us right up to that point. He shows us that which will introduce it, gives us the execution of judgment that precedes the setting up of the Kingdom without furnishing much of the details. Other prophets emphasize the latter.

At that time, that crisis time in the history of Daniel's people, they shall be given supernatural help. The Angel is encouraging the prophet. In view of all the calamities that have been disclosed to him, he needs these final words. He is informed that God will fight for these people of destiny, when they shall have come to their wit's end. Michael, the great prince, shall stand up to their help. There will come a turning point in their history. It will not be just a little victory, a providential temporary deliverance, but a complete and perfect and miraculous overthrow of all the enemies of Daniel's people. Michael, the great angelic warrior, will stand up for them, undertaking their case and definitely putting down all their adversaries. It will be the greatest battle that was ever fought; nothing equal to it has ever been known.

Michael is said to be "their prince." He was the habitual defender of Israel, their guardian angel, as it were, but now he arises with all the combined celestian army to complete the purpose of God concerning their deliverance. It is an unparalleled hour in the history of Israel. It is their triumph hour. After centuries of defeat, oblivion, and misfortune, they shall come into victory, fame and fortune. The tide will turn, the dawn will break, their ship will come home, laden with all blessings for them. It will be their hour of conquest of which their prophets have written, their singers have sung. Never again will they be the hunted, the tossed-about, the downtrodden, the exiled nation without a country. No indeed! The clock will strike the hour of their insurrection. The dry bones will then begin to shake and there will be a great awakening - Ezek. 37. Israel will arise from the ashes, put off her garments of heaviness, put on her garments of salvation and praise, and with joy shall sing as she never sang before.

Michael shall stand up to their help and he will not sheathe his sword, nor sit down until Israel has been vindicated and revenged upon the devil, for all the wrong which has been inflicted upon them for centuries. John gives us the parallel of this great battle in his symbolic inspired drama of the end. "And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon and the dragon fought and his angels and prevailed not, neither was there place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the devil and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world; he was cast out and his angels with him" - Rev. 12:7-9.

The war described in the above citation is in heaven; not in the immediate presence of God, but somewhere in the vast expanse above the earth. There are spheres of vast extent, stories in the heavens, builded by the Great Creator (Amos 9:6), some of which have been ruled over by Satan and his organized forces of wicked spirits. These spirits must all be overthrown and hurled down, before Christ can have absolute sway there. And this war in heaven precedes the one on earth. It is that which leads up to it. When Satan is cast down, he is wrathful indeed. His power is waning. He must make one last desperate effort to control the situation and hold his ground, and his power over men on the earth. It is he that stirs up the nations in a combined struggle to exterminate the Jew for it is thru them that Christ shall reign over the earth. He is the King of the Jews. Men have forgotten this and have sought their downfall and ruin, as instigated by the devil, but they shall ultimately triumph. Their King shall reign supreme when Satan has been bound a thousand years. But he fights hard; resists with all his mighty power, and refuses to surrender. Hence, there is trouble which has never had a precedent. Jeremiah describes it in emphatic language. "Alas for that day is great, so that none is like it; it is even the time of Jacob's trouble: but he shall be saved out of it" - Chap. 30:7. It is the travail time of Israel. Her birth pangs, as it were, from which will come forth a nation new-born; a nation purged and glorious, to reign, a kingdom of priests that shall bring blessing to the whole world. The prophets marvelled at their visions of the miraculous happenings of those days. Isaiah exclaimed, "Who hath heard such a thing? Shall the earth bring forth in a day? or shall a nation be born at once? for as soon as Zion travailed she brought forth her children" - Ch. 66.

"And at that time every one shall be delivered whose names are found written in the book." This positive affirmation by the Angel forbids the teaching that is prevalent in some quarters that all the natural lineage of Abraham, living and dead, good or bad, shall be saved. That teaching is a

travesty of God's justice. It would make Him weaker and more pusillanimous in His judgment than the most feeble of men. The deliverance and resurrection is for those that believe, as in the case of every individual. God cannot save any rebel. The nation will all be new-born, but as for the people, they will be contrite and humbled beforehand. They will be a new creation, a holy seed, a spiritual people. The following verse amplifies and elucidates the subject.

"Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life and some to shame and everlasting contempt" - V. 2. The above is a Scripture statement of immense scope. There is a millennium in its embrace. The "many" of Israel, that awaken to everlasting life precede the "many" that awaken to shame and contempt by a thousand years. We have a parallel of the above in the Gospel by John. The Lord states the fact of the resurrection, saying, "Marvel not at this, for the hour is coming in the which all that are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of God. And shall come forth; they that have done good unto the resurrection of life, (the beginning of the millennium) and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation" (the end of the millennium). The latter must appear before the great white throne when all the wicked of the world, Jew and Gentile, will come into judgment.

But the point that stands out is the fact that there is going to be a resurrection. That was comforting to Daniel; for his heart was torn with conflicting thoughts as he heard the Messenger's revelation of the trouble and sorrow, added to the terrible war which would sweep thousands of his people into their graves. The news must have overwhelmed him. He needed the comforting message of the resurrection. Israel's faithful dead shall come forth out of their graves and participate in the glorious kingdom of the Son of Man; but these shall not be part of the earthly population. They will have their glorified bodies and may visit and reign over the earth, but this will not be their abiding place. The Savior declared that the twelve apostles shall sit on twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of restored Israel in the millennium - Matt. 19:28. He also stated that "many shall come from the east and from the west and shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the Kingdom of God" - Matt. 8:11.

The earthly people will not enjoy their glorified bodies until the end of the millennium; therefore we see that there are ranks in the resurrection of Israel. Some of the worthies of faith of Old Testament fame were raised up when Christ tore the bars of death away and rose from the dead. Those have been in heaven for almost two millenniums already. They constitute the first rank, the full overcomers of their day. They obtained "a better resurrection" - Heb. 11:35. The second rank will arise when Christ will appear and call them out of their graves; but the restored nation will not enjoy their resurrection bodies until the end of the thousand years reign.

The duration of life will be extended in that halcyon period upon the earth. The obedient people of Jehovah will live right thru to the end of the beneficent and righteous reign of Messiah, but the unruly and rebellious will find an early grave. There will be no toleration of wickedness. Judgment will be summarily meted out upon the offender. Righteousness instead of Grace will be the manifestation of that throne. There will be no unjust judges, no taking of bribes, no covering up of crime and lawlessness in that day. Laws will be made; and they will be enforced by all. The rich cannot break them and get away with the consequences any more than the poor. And if men obey and yield, there will be no death, no sorrow, and no tears. These are not our thoughts on the subject. We read, that there shall be no more the death of an infant of days, nor of an old man who has not filled up his days, unless he has transgressed the laws of the Kingdom. "For the child shall die an hundred years old, but the sinner being an hundred years old shall be accursed" - Isa. 65:20. That is, in the renewed earth no one shall die as the result of Adam's sin. Babes, that are not responsible, die now, but then no child will fall into an untimely grave. Death will only come upon the individual that is responsible for his own transgressions; and it will be the sign of his eternal judgment. One hundred years seems to be the limit of their probation. If they fail after that they will find no mercy here nor hereafter.

Shining Ones

"And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars forever and ever. But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words and seal the book even to the time of the end. Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased" - Vs. 3, 4.

These "wise ones," refer exclusively to Daniel's people, for that is all that he understands. He knows nothing of the Church and the wisdom of Christ that is accorded her; therefore we must

look at these things from the prophet's standpoint. There will be some men of understanding that shall instruct others. There were some in those former days, "men that had understanding of the times to know what Israel ought to do." And also in the days of the Maccabees, the "understanding" ones did instruct many - chap. 11:33. And there will be some "wise ones" in the still darker days of the apostasy when the Lord's hand will be against Israel, and He will allow the superhuman atrocities and tribulation which the antichrist will mete out to them. It will be these loyal, shining souls, these spiritual teachers, that will instruct, exhort and stay the believing remnant of that end time. They shall shine amidst the darkness, as a beacon light, and later their glory and light will be manifested to the whole world. They will be the adornment of the nation whether in the celestial sphere, or the terrestrial, is not so clear or pertinent. The fact that they shine in the dark night of Israel's apostasy is the principal thing. Many ignorant, tempted, weak and wavering Israelites they will "turn to righteousness." And this is the case at any time and in every age, yet the application here is to the crisis time in Israel's history - their hour of crucial testing just before the Lord's return. The command to Daniel, "Shut up the words and seal the book even to the time of the end," refers also to the same trying period. And Daniel obeyed. His prophecy was sealed until the present century. The nation did not understand the prophecy. The veil was upon their heart; but in their hour of need, they shall understand. "Many shall run to and fro." They shall run thru the pages of Daniel; search the Scriptures to find the deep things. Ah, when once the Jews' eyes are open, there will come some such rich findings of hidden treasure, such illumination as few Christians have never found. They will not sit listless and inattentive as the Word is given out. We can imagine with what interest they will run thru the Book of books, and with what shouts and deep exclamations of praise, they will punctuate their findings. No dry, theoretical study for those interested Hebrews. They will besiege those that are enlightened as to the Scriptures, not to ascertain which theory of Daniel is correct, but to know the Truth. What does the prophet teach as to the end? will be the cry of their hearts. There will be no question as to what Professor Deepman said, or Dr. Wiseman understands, but what has Daniel to say? It will be too late "to run to and fro" thru all the books on Daniel, but the one Book they will search. And "knowledge shall be increased." Yes, indeed! Wisdom and knowledge are truly increased and built up by a learning of the Scriptures. The Jews will understand the situation. They will find that the end is at hand, and they will rest in hope as to the issue.

"Then I, Daniel, looked, and behold there stood other two, the one on this side of the bank, and the other on that side of the bank of the river. And one said to the Man clothed in linen which was upon the waters of the river, How long shall it be to the end of these wonders? And I heard the Man clothed in linen which was upon the waters of the river, when he held up his left hand unto heaven and swore by Him that liveth forever, that it shall be for a time, times and a half, and when he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished. And I heard, but understood not, and I said, O my Lord, what shall be the end of these things? - Vs. 5-7.

### **The Closing Wonders**

Daniel at this point in his vision (verses 5 to 7) appears simply as an auditor on the scene. There are two other persons present beside the Glorious Man that has been with Daniel since the beginning of the vision - Chap. 10:5. The latter Personage appears above, or on the bosom of the river, Hiddekel or Tigris, as it is now called. The other two men are standing on the bank of the river, one on the right, the other on the left side. One of these visitants calls to the Man upon the waters, How long unto the end of these wonders? Observe the answer. It is given by the One addressed, in the most solemn, authoritative manner, clearly impressing us with the majesty and dignity of the speaker. None but the Lord, the Son of God, could so speak. And tho He had not yet become incarnate, yet He is seen here as the Man of wondrous destiny, ordained to the fullest sovereignty over land and sea. We have a like scene, symbolic of the same Person and same time to which Daniel's vision points - the end - Rev. 10:1-7.

The Man in both instances lifts up His hands, but only Daniel tells us that He swears by Him that liveth forever, that three and one half years shall be the exact time in which these closing wonders shall be consummated. This period is already familiar to Daniel, for he has heard it emphasized before, but it is recorded here as the answer to the Man's question. The time agrees exactly in length and purpose with the inspired statements of chapters 7:25 and 9:27. It refers to the time when the antichrist shall have absolute power in his hands and shall destroy, devastate,

and scatter the people of the Lord, the Jews. He will have a loose rein for that length of time as we have noted. God will allow it for the chastening of His people; but when His purpose is accomplished, He will suddenly put an end to the false despot and his kingdom. The Jews, for that determined time, three and one half years, will be at their wits' end, utterly and absolutely helpless, shut up to the mercy of God. It surely will be evident in that case, that "Man's extremity is God's opportunity." Grace alone will be their hope in that terrible time. They will learn the hopelessness of trusting the flesh, not only their own, but all flesh. Their will-power, self-righteousness,

wealth and wisdom shall be seen to be valueless in the face of the despotic tyranny of the oppressor. No might of man of whatever character can save them. God alone will be found able to extricate them from their dilemma. They will do some calling upon the Lord then, not with their mouth only, but with their heart. No more will they approach Him in a formal, lifeless manner, but their whole being will be moved with travail and tears. They will cry, even as Daniel cried, "O Lord; hear; O Lord, forgive; O Lord, hearken and do; defer not, for Thine own sake, O my God; for Thy city and Thy people are called by Thy name" - Chap. 9:19. The whole of this prayer is the cry of the humbled, contrite remnant of that time. Listen to the broken spirit, the weakness and the confession of failure expressed therein.

"And I set my face to seek by prayer and supplication with fasting and sackcloth and ashes." That will be the character of their approach to Jehovah. Then notice the words, "We have sinned. .... We have not heartened to the prophets. .... O Lord, righteousness belongeth unto Thee, but unto us confusion of faces as at this day. .... We have not obeyed the voice of the Lord our God. ... Yea, all Israel have transgressed Thy law; therefore the curse is poured out upon us, the oath that is written in the law of Moses, because we have sinned against Him. .... He has confirmed His words which He spake against us. .... The Lord watched upon the evil and brought it upon us, for the Lord is righteous in all His works" - Vs. 3-14. There is not one word of pride in any form in that prayer. It speaks of the abased and humbled condition of the remnant of the Jews at the end. The Lord will preserve a third part of the nation thru the tribulation and plant them as a seed in the renewed earth when He is King. Their cry to Him, "Oh that Thou wouldest rend the heavens, that Thou wouldest come down, that the mountains might flow down at thy presence" (Isa. 64:1), will be answered. He will come down and deliver them forever from the hand of the enemy. "And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for Him, and He will save us: .... we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation" ..... Isa. 25:9.

The Lord will graciously lend His ear to such pleading. He hath declared that they should not see Him henceforth, until they should say, "Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord" - Matt. 23:39. But when they humble themselves, He will look upon them in grace. "To this man will I look, even to him that is of a poor and contrite spirit and trembleth at My Word" - Isa. 66:2. Daniel heard the conversation between the heavenly visitors, but he did not understand the meaning of the answer. He cried out to be enlightened. "O my Lord, what shall be the end of these things?" he asked. But the Messenger does not endeavor to make it any clearer for him. It was not the time for him to understand. He would not be on earth when these wonders would transpire; hence it was not necessary for him to understand everything. But for the people of the end, of which he is the type, there will come the opening of the prophecy, even as unto us at the present time. But to Daniel there was given these parting words.

"Go thy way Daniel; for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end. Many shall be purified and made white and tried; but the wicked shall do wickedly and none of the wicked shall understand, but the wise shall understand. And from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away and the abomination of desolation set up, there shall be a thousand, two hundred and ninety days. Blessed is he that waiteth and cometh to the thousand, three hundred and five and thirty days. But go thy way till the end be, for thou shalt rest and stand in thy lot at the end of the days" - Vs. 9-13.

Daniel is assured by the Messenger that he is a prophet. His words shall stand till the time of the end. They were sealed up for the many centuries. The Jews did not understand the prophecy, even as Daniel himself. It relates altogether to the time of the end, as to its revelation. And the positive guarantee of the Messenger is given, with uplifted hand, that all that is declared to Daniel shall be fulfilled. Then he reiterates the substance of the last vision and emphasizes it by repetition. Many of the people shall suffer, and their faith shall be tried in the furnace of affliction;

even as the three Hebrew lads, the little earnest of this latter fiery trial. And they too shall come forth in victory, restored to God; separated, conquered, and purified by the fanning mill. They will be the nucleus of the Kingdom of Christ upon the earth. But there will be others that will not come forth. It is a question of the heart - none of the wicked shall understand. With the heart man believeth, and God searches the heart. None of the wicked shall understand. The signs of the times, as well as the Scriptures, will be hidden from them. There will be "no fear of the Lord" before their face. It is the lack of wisdom that darkens men's hearts. The fiery trial which will melt the wise and prudent will only harden the heart of the foolish. Pharaoh of Egypt is a figure of those that refuse to heed the voice of the Lord. The Word they hear, but do not heed, has the effect of deadening their consciences as well as hardening their heart and stiffening their necks and knees. They will not repent, tho the judgments will be falling fast.

The following verses give us two more measurements, as to end-time events. They are not introduced here haphazardly, but are a part of the vision proper, that was interrupted for a little space, as it were. We have had special measurements before. These are just further signposts on the last day's stretch.

"And from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, there shall be a thousand, two hundred and ninety days. Blessed is he that waiteth and cometh to the thousand, three hundred and five and thirty days. But go thy way, Daniel, till the end be; for thou shalt rest and stand in thy lot at the end of the days" - Vs. 11-13. The first of these time dates, 1290 days, is the most important measuring line. Without it, we can hardly get any starting point to these last day happenings. It is therefore a most necessary measurement. The Angel says that there will elapse 1290 days between the date that "the daily sacrifice" is interrupted and the abomination of desolation is set up. Now we have an earlier revelation concerning the latter fact - Chap. 9:27. We are informed as to exactly when it is set up - in the midst of the week, or seven years. Therefore, reckoning backward from that time, brings us to 30 days before the beginning of the seven prophetic years, or 1260 days. It is absolutely necessary that we get our starting point correct; then the remainder of our study of these time dates will be simplified.

The fact that the basic offering, the daily burnt offering, is taken away, is in itself of deep significance; but, that it happens just thirty days before the covenant with the false prince is ratified, is also of great import. The reason that it ceases is not told us; but we easily surmise that the Jews are over-ruled in the matter, for this offering was always had in great reverence by them. It was considered the principal offering in the Mosaic ritual. It was a continual offering. Day and night there was always a sacrifice burning upon the altar and the fire was never to be put out, or allowed to go out - Lev. 6:9, 13. It figures Christ in the excellency of His own perfect character, given up to do the will of God. "Lo I come to do Thy will, O God," is the essence of the burnt offering. Hence, for the Jews to give it up, was equivalent to the letting go of their faith in the Messiah. It proved that the nation was not believing in the God of their fathers. Yea more, it was the sign of their apostate condition. According to a principle with God, when men give up their faith in Him, and refuse obedience to His commands, He gives them up to their desires and the retribution which follows is the due reward of their own evil deeds - Rom. 1:21-25. They can then blame no one but themselves when the trouble comes. Their agreement to stop the burnt offering is no doubt the signal that they are no longer under the protection of Jehovah but have been given up to their own way. The Lord steps out as it were, and allows the antichrist to step in with all that this signifies to them. The Gentiles will again have the supremacy because the Jews will again reject their Messiah. They will reap what they have sown. But this time the treading down of Jerusalem will only continue 42 months, or 1260 days. God will intervene for the sake of the elect; otherwise no flesh should be saved - Matt. 24:22.

Jesus said, speaking to the nation when they rejected His claims, "Another shall come in his own name; him you will receive" - John 5:43. The latter, as one of the heads of the confederacy of nations, will make a covenant with them for seven years; but there will be no stability to this alliance. It will shortly be broken. The usurper will assume great authority, showing himself off as God, after his deadly wound has been healed - II Thess. 2. His image will be set up in the temple, and worship of it demanded upon the threat of death - Rev. 13. The latter we have seen is the abomination of desolation, of which Jesus warned - Matt. 24:15. It marks the beginning of "the great tribulation," which latter will never be allowed to come upon them until they reject God's

way of salvation by giving up the burnt offering, type of sacrifice and blood.

### **Second Measuring Line**

The above point, 1335 days, gives us the very day of Christ's appearing to the Jew. Beginning at the very same time as the tribulation and counting 75 days after its close, the Lord will be revealed to a waiting, humbled people. From the moment that the antichrist and his false prophet will have been dispatched, the remnant of the Jews that have survived the terrible onslaught of the devil, will be in mourning and supplication - Zech. 12:10. They will call for the One whom they have rejected and say, "Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord," and then He will appear to their delight and everlasting joy. That will happen just 75 days after the antichrist and false prophet will have been cast alive into the lake of fire - Rev. 19:20. The Lord at that point will have been seated upon His throne in the heavens for seven years, waiting to be revealed to His chosen people. Thus by their unbelief, they will lose that much of the millennium, and invite instead the terrible chastisement of the 1260 days, or rather the 1010 days, for the allotted time will be shortened 250 days. The Jews that will "endure to the end " of the tribulation, will be blessed indeed; for the Lord will appear and take vengeance on their enemies. In His Olivet discourse, Jesus intimates the blessedness awaiting their enduring.

Then the Messenger, as He takes leave of Daniel, graciously gives him a word of comfort concerning his own interests at that day of blessing for his people. "Go thy way," he says. It has the sound of a discharge from life-service, and so it was. His wonderful, consecrated life, so full of stirring events and great deeds for his God, was at its close. He might well have said, as another aged servant at a later day, "Now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace." He had visioned the sorrow and trial that was coming upon his people, but more, he had caught the vision also of the coming of the Lord to deliver them from sin, transgression and iniquity, and bring in everlasting righteousness, seal up the vision and anoint the most Holy - Chap. 9:24. Hence, his discharge from service is only temporary. He shall stand in his lot, and promptly respond at the end of the days to the service call; but in glorified activity he will then be associated with his beloved people. So we leave him happy in the anticipation of that coming day. He has been faithful in his ordained place here, in a little place, comparatively, we might say. How much greater shall his service be in that glorified plane in the Kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ. He will then be rewarded for the things done in his mortal body, even as you and I shall be.

But we are loath to leave him. How we have enjoyed running to and fro thru his writings, learning him as we learned to understand his visions. What a man to imitate, and his faith to follow! No equivocation; no compromise; no subterfuge. He was clear as the sun, fair as the moon, terrible as an army with banners. His intrepid, burning, fiery zeal moves others to dare to believe the Word of God even in the face of grossest unbelief and darkest night. He overcame in his day and has left us an example which we will all do well to imitate. He lives again in others.

**The End**