

STUDY NOTES
on the prophecy of
DANIEL



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The verse by verse notes herein have been compiled largely from *Verse by Verse Study of the Prophecy of Daniel* by M.D. Stewart, whose work has its basis in *Exposition of Daniel* by John Thomas. The Introduction is from a little work by Robert Roberts entitled, *Daniel and his Great Fulfilled Prophecy of Chapter Eleven* containing a section, "A Brief Demonstration of the Authenticity of the Book of Daniel". The evidence set forth is as valid now as when it was first written. A comparison of Daniel's prophecy and the book of Revelation reveals a great similarity in purpose and form. Even more striking are the definite thought links between them. L. G. Sargent has shown that the Apocalypse is actually a sequel to Daniel, and that whatever principles are applied to the interpretation of Daniel must also be applied to the book of Revelation. The Appendix is an extract from the three part article "Daniel and the Apocalypse, a Short Comparative Study", published in *The Christadelphian* 1960 - pages 10, 53 and 102.

INTRODUCTION

Those who wish Daniel to be untrue, or who cannot distinguish between assertion and proof, are easily enough carried away by it. But there is nothing in it. It originated with the professed opinion of Porphyry, the Syrian of Bashan, who lived in the third century, about 400 years after the time that he thought the forgery had been perpetrated, and who, therefore, is no authority in any sense. Porphyry was an enemy of divine truth in general, and his opinion will have no weight with those who can weigh evidence as against prejudice. There is not a single sound argument against the authenticity of Daniel. In support of it, the evidence is overpowering.

The Evidence in Support of Daniel.

The evidence of the authenticity of Daniel can be put into brief compass.

- (1) Jesus mentions the book as the work of Daniel, and describes Daniel as a prophet, and refers to it in a way that assumes the disciples were familiar with it as a current and a true writing: When ye shall see the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the prophet (whoso readeth let him understand) (Matt. 14:15). This, of itself, is decisive with those who believe in Jesus.
- (2) The book of Daniel was received by the Jews in general in the time of Christ as a prophecy written in Babylon by a captive of that name. The testimony of Josephus is decisive as to this. If the Jews in general received it as the writing of Daniel produced in Babylon, it is proof that it is so, for they knew that they were the custodians of the scriptures. They carefully excluded the apocryphal writings, such as the books of the Maccabees, Esdras, and other books, and if Daniel had been a spurious writing of the Maccabean age, it must have been known and rejected as such.
- (3) The first book of the Maccabees uses the prophecy of Daniel as a well-known and recognised prophetic book, and describes the

sufferings of Israel during the Maccabean period as having been the greatest since “the time that no prophet appeared among them”, recognising the Maccabean period as one where there was no prophet.

(4) The dissensions between Pharisees and Sadducees sprang up during the Maccabean age - and were a guarantee against either party successfully introducing any new book as part of scripture. Both recognised Daniel, which is proof that Daniel had been known to them both from the time of captivity.

(5) In a speech before his death (recorded in the first book of Maccabees, written at the very time Porphyry suggests Daniel was written), Mattathias, father of Judas Maccabeus, in recounting examples of faithfulness to the law of God, refers to the book of Daniel as thus: “Ananias, Azarius, and Misael (known in Babylon as Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego), believing, were saved from the flame; Daniel in his simplicity, was delivered from the mouth of the lions” (2:59).

(6) The book of Daniel was not only received at the time of the Maccabees by the Jews that returned from Babylon, but by the community of Jews that remained behind in that city: which is proof that it could not have been written by a spurious author in either country: for if first published spuriously in Babylon, it would have been rejected by the Jewish community there, who knew the facts connected with Daniel; and if first at Jerusalem, the opposition of the Jews of Babylon would have been still stronger. There is an example of how the book would have been treated in the case of the apocryphal book, Baruch. This was professedly written by the companion of Jeremiah, but it was rejected as a forgery at the time of its introduction, and was never afterwards received as genuine by the Jews.

(7) The book of Ezekiel (written during the captivity) recognises Daniel as the name of a person well-known and eminent among the Jews: Though these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in the land, they should but deliver their own souls by their righteousness (Ezek. 14:14,20). So also in 22:3 -same book - “Behold thou art wiser than Daniel.” There is no trace in Ezekiel’s age of any

Daniel but the Daniel of the captivity; and a Daniel comparable with Noah and Job must have been known to all the Jews before he could thus be spoken of; and he must have been known as Noah and Job were known, viz., by scripture. Where was this scripture if not in the book which, according to Porphyry, was not written until 400 years after Ezekiel's day? The book of Daniel was received by the body of Jews long before as the work of Daniel mentioned in Ezekiel. Placed as they were, they must have known whether it was his work or not.

(8) The book of Daniel appears in the Septuagint Version of the Old Testament, which (whatever obscurity rests on the origin of this version), was demonstrably commenced in Greek, B.C. 285, and when completed, was received by all the Jews in Jerusalem and Alexandria. Although there are imperfections in the Septuagint, the occurrence of Daniel in it, even in a mutilated form, is proof that Daniel was recognised as part of Scripture long before the Maccabean exploits. The very defects of the Greek version is proof of its antiquity; for had Daniel been a product of the Maccabean age, its real character could not have been so soon forgotten.

(9) Josephus, writing in the first century, records (in *Apion against the Jews*, book 11, sections 1-8), that Jaddua, the high priest, in the lifetime of Alexander the Great, showed him the prophecy of Daniel, which foretold the overthrow of Persia by him. Even if it could be proved that this statement of Josephus's was historically doubtful (of which there is not the least evidence), the writing of this statement by Josephus is proof that in the first century the Jews believed that the book of Daniel existed in the days of Alexander, a belief which, placed as they were, amounts to proof, for the days of Alexander were, at that time, only a little over three hundred years off.

(10) And if the book of Daniel was shown to Alexander by Jaddua, the high priest, then is the genuineness of Daniel proved, for there was an unbroken succession of Biblically-recognised high priests down to Jaddua (Neh. 12:22). The reception of a spurious Daniel by the official high priest of the nation, to whom "was committed

the oracles of God,” is an impossible supposition. Christ received Daniel: that is enough.

The Objections to Daniel

The arguments against Daniel are of the slimmest character.

(a) The author of *Ecclesiasticus*, enumerating the great men of Scripture, does not mention Daniel. Therefore, Daniel was not in the Scriptures as known to that author (Jesus, son of Sirach). This is the argument: it might be of some weight if he had been giving a list of the books of scripture. As he merely recounts the famous men, the omission of Daniel might be a mere act of forgetfulness or literary fatigue, or sense of superfluity, like Paul in Hebrews 11, who, enumerating Bible instances of faith, says time would fail to tell all. If it insisted on proof against Daniel, then it is proof against Ezra, for the same author is silent as to Ezra. But the opponents have nothing to say against the historic reality of Ezra, on the contrary, they build greatly on Ezra, and attribute the authorship of much of Moses to him! This is proof that they do not really think the silence of the son of Sirach, if he does not mention Daniel, mentions Ezekiel and so is bound to admit Daniel, for Ezekiel mentions Daniel, and Ezekiel was inspired, which it is admitted the son of Sirach was not.

(b) Daniel, in the Hebrew Bible, is not placed among the prophets, but in that section which commences with the Psalms and ends with Chronicles. What then? The enemy think it shows that Daniel was a book of whose authority they were in doubt. How can this be made out? Who knows on what principle the holy writings were arranged? It is the nature of each writing by itself that is the important consideration; and as for Daniel, it is settled by Christ's estimate of it, even if there were not the other powerful considerations already noticed.

(c) The miracles recorded in Daniel are considered evidence of an apocryphal character. If there is any weight in this, it would be an argument against Christ and against Moses, and against any Bible at all. But there is no weight in it. The miracles in Daniel are very different from the childish Jewish fables and legends to which Paul

deprecatingly refers They are dignified and reasonable and congruous to the situation of which they form a part. They are on a par in this respect with the miracles of Moses and Christ, which are guaranteed to us by testimony that cannot be set aside.

(d) The book is said to contain historical errors and contradictions that could only have been fallen into by a late writer. This is attempted to be proved by ancient histories of Babylon that do not agree among themselves. When the instances are examined in detail, they all disappear one by one. This is not the place to enter upon the process. Let the single case of Herodotus suffice. He does not mention Nebuchadnezzar in his history. But the discovery of Babylon in our day, with public buildings bearing his name, has proved Daniel right and Herodotus wrong. This is a fair illustration of the emptiness of the argument which would set up the mere silence of ancient history by profane writers against the Bible.

(e) Daniel contains Greek names for some of the musical instruments used at the worship of the golden image. What then? It proves, says the enemy, that Daniel was written after the establishment of the empire of the Greeks. How so? If there had been no Greeks and no instruments before the Greek empire, there might have been some force in the objection; but, in point of fact, the Greeks were not only the sculptors, but the instrumentalists of the world, long before they came to political power.

(f) The Hebrew of Daniel is not so pure as the Hebrew of Isaiah. What then? It would be imagined that this is rather a proof of genuineness of a Hebrew book written in Babylon, than an evidence against it. A Hebrew mixing with Chaldeans and daily speaking the Chaldean language would be liable to have his Hebrew a little corrupted.

Such are the chief grounds on which it has been attempted to establish objection to Daniel as an authentic and a divine writing. We have glanced at them merely to complete the purview of the subject. They look formidable when drawn out in formal array; but when subjected to individual examination, they disappear as mist before the noon-day sun. The book of Daniel stands out before us as the great prophetic chart of the earth's history - proved, not only

by the technical considerations rehearsed in the foregoing, but by the actual realisation of its extended forecast in the leading lines of history for over thirty centuries. See notes on chapter 11:1-40.

VERSE BY VERSE STUDY OF THE PROPHECY OF DANIEL

Time of this prophecy: 3397 years after creation; 1741 years after the flood; 603 years before the birth of Christ; 114 years after the destruction of the Kingdom of Israel by Shalmaneser, king of Assyria; Writer: Daniel - signifies the judgement of God - Chaldean name - Belteshazzar. He was of the tribe of Judah, and was eminent for wisdom and piety. His wisdom was recognised by his contemporary, Ezekiel, as he upbraids the king of Tyre - Ezekiel 28:3. His piety is recognised in Ezekiel 14:4. Josephus speaks of him as the greatest of the prophets. He lived in the ruling courts of three of the world's greatest monarchs: Nebuchadnezzar, Cyrus and Darius - note Job 5:3; Proverbs 29:16. Daniel was taken captive in the first invasion of Nebuchadnezzar in the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim, which was about 606 B. C. 2 Kings 24. Message: Daniel is the prophet of the "times of the Gentiles," because of the fact that the major portion of his prophecies were directly concerned with the Gentile nations, and the day that they would be consumed by the Kingdom of God - Daniel 2:44. We might say the theme of Daniel is prophecy interwoven with history to show that God is overruling the idolatry, blasphemy, self will and intolerance of the Gentiles.

VERSE BY VERSE EXPOSITION

CHAPTER 1

VERSE 1

“In the third year of Jehoiakim” - This king was raised to the throne of Judea in the place of his brother Jehoahaz by Pharaoh-Necho, king of Egypt - 2 Kings 23:34-36, and continued tributary to him during the first three years of his reign. The fourth year of Jehoiakim was the first year of Nebuchadnezzar - Jeremiah 25:1. Nebuchadnezzar completely defeated the Egyptian army near the Euphrates - Jeremiah 46:2. This victory put the neighbouring countries of Syria, among which Judea was chief, under the Chaldean government. By this action Jehoiakim who had been forced to bow before Pharaoh-Necho for three years, now became the vassal of the king of Babylon - 2 Kings 24:1. At the end of three years Jehoiakim rebelled against Nebuchadnezzar, who was then occupied with other wars, and did not proceed against Jerusalem until three years later which was the eleventh and last of Jehoiakim - 2 Kings 23:36.

Note: Nebuchadnezzar set out in the third year, but was delayed by fighting the battle of Charchemish with Pharaoh-Necho - Jeremiah 46:2, and thus did not come against Jerusalem until the fourth year - thus Nebuchadnezzar unwittingly became the tool by which God fulfilled His purpose with Israel - Jeremiah 25:9-11. Isaiah 39:6, 7 was also fulfilled. Jehoiakim reigned from 608 - 597 B.C., so the third year of his reign would be 606 B.C.

VERSE 2

“LORD” - Should be Yahweh. God was controlling - Daniel 5:21; 2:28.

“part of the vessels of the house of God” - He took the finest of them for the service of his god, Bel, and left what were necessary for carrying on the public worship of Jehovah; he did not attempt to alter the civil or religious constitution of Judea. Jehoiakim was

still on the throne. Nebuchadnezzar had only laid the land under tribute. The balance of the vessels had probably been left as a test for those remaining in Judea - Jeremiah 27:17, 18. The carrying away of these vessels was a fulfilment of Isaiah's prophecy to Hezekiah - 2 Kings 20:14-18. The Chaldeans carried away the sacred vessels at three different times:

1. In the war of which we are now speaking.
2. In the taking of Jerusalem and Jeconiah a few months later - 2 Kings 24:13.
3. Eleven years later under the reign of Zedekiah when the city and temple were totally destroyed and the land ruined - 2 Kings 25:8-15.

This taking of the vessels into the temple of Bel was to illustrate the superiority of the gods of Babylon over Yahweh the God of Israel. The Babylonians fought in the name of their gods - Isa. 36:19-20. Nebuchadnezzar desecrated the temple of Yahweh in Jerusalem, but Babylon suffered the vengeance of God - Jeremiah 50:28 - just as all will who desecrate the Holy Name of Yahweh. gods of Babylon: Bel - Enlil or Ellil - The greatest of all Babylonian gods - Lord of the world and king of the land - Tutelar (guardian) god of the city and empire. Anu - The god of the heavens Ea - The god of wisdom Sin - The moon god Shamash - The sun god Ishtar - goddess of fruitfulness and love Ninbib - god of healing Ramman - god of storms and thunder Asshur - god of war Marduk - The city god of Babylon responsible for the success of Babylon. Nebo - god of evergreen vegetation, and in the latter times was identified with the planet Mercury. Nergal - god of the underworld. Tammuz - god of vegetation which is revived by spring rains.

“the land of Shinar” - This is an archaism - name for Babylonia used in Genesis 10:10; 11:2; 14:9; Isaiah 11:11; Zechariah 5:11. Land of the arch rebel, Nimrod, and the tower of Babel, signifying rebellion against God; Hebrew “enemy's tooth.”

VERSE 3

“children of Israel - King's seed - of the princes” - They were of

noble birth, selected of the king's seed. Daniel was a probable descendent of king Hezekiah - compare 2 Kings 20:17,18 with Isaiah 29:6,7 - therefore of the tribe of Judah.

VERSE 4

“children” - Comes from *yeladim*, and means youths. Daniel was a young man at the time of the captivity.

“in whom was no blemish” - It was a sad day in Jerusalem when the most promising of the young nobility was carried away. The oriental connected a handsome form with mental power.

“skilful in all wisdom” - Nebuchadnezzar was a keen politician, and at the beginning of his reign was looking for top material to run his nation. Note the qualifications:

1. Not deformed in body, but comely and well favoured - whose countenances were that of ingenuity.

2. Skilful in wisdom and cunning and understanding of science - quick, sharp.

3. Young so that they would be pliable, easy to mould into the Chaldean way of thinking. Nebuchadnezzar discounted the fact that Jewish young people with this background would be doubly schooled in the things of God which were first in the Jew's life.

“the Chaldeans” - The most influential class in the nation. They had a monopoly of national learning, and members of their order took a leading part in the affairs of the state. In brief they were the wise men of Babylon.

VERSE 5

“a daily provision” - The kings of Persia who succeeded the kings of Babylon were accustomed to order the food left on their own tables to be delivered to their courtiers. Not only were these Jewish youths to live in a heathen land, but they were to live at the court in the very centre of ungodliness where unclean food such as the heathen eat, was to be their daily ration from the king's own table where they would learn heathen wisdom, given heathen names, and made attendants or advisors to one who was the very personification of heathenism. It is not what we eat, but what we

digest that nourishes the body. It is not what we read, but what we comprehend that strengthens the mind. The road to eminence is through the gate of self denial. The king now takes his next downward step by giving these four princes heathen names.

VERSE 6

Josephus says that all these youths are of the tribe of Judah. Probably of the royal family of Zedekiah:

“Daniel” - Hebrew - God is my judge; occurs as the name of one of David’s sons 1 Chronicles 3:1; and of a Levite who was contemporary with Ezra, Ezra 8:2; Nehemiah 10:6. In Ezekiel 14:14, 20; 28:3 it occurs as the name of a sage of the patriarchal period.

“Hananiah” - Hebrew - God has been gracious. Also a name of a contemporary of Ezra - Nehemiah 10:23.

“Mishael” - Hebrew - Who is what God is. Also a name of a cousin of Moses - Exodus 6:22; Leviticus 10:4; Contemporary of Ezra - Nehemiah 8:4.

“Azariah” - Hebrew - Helped of God. Same name given to a contemporary of Ezra - Nehemiah 10:2. The number four is used throughout scripture to describe God’s creation and nations. Four is the number of the great elements: earth, air, fire, and water. Four are the regions of the earth: north, south, east and west. Four divisions of the day : morning, noon, evening, and night - Mark 13:35, evening, midnight, cock crowing, or in the morning. Four seasons of the year: spring, summer autumn and winter. Four divisions of Israel: Judah, Reuben, Ephraim and Dan. Four young princes of Judea: Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah. Four metals of the image: Four universal empires. Four living creatures - Ezekiel 1:5-12.

VERSE 7

“Unto whom the prince of the eunuchs gave names” - This change of names was a mark of dominion and authority. It was customary for masters to impose new names on their slaves and assistants upon ascending the throne. In Numbers 6:27 God says

“And they shall put my name upon the children of Israel; and I will bless them”. So it became common to incorporate the names and titles of deity into the names of children born in Israel.

“**Beltshazzar**” - Dedicated to Bel the chief God. Nebuchadnezzar now anxious to exalt his heathen gods above the God of Israel, employs the same procedure. He changed Daniel’s name to Beltshazzar which means “keeper of the hid treasures of Bel” - Daniel 4:8. Nebuchadnezzar now begins to use force to bring these faithful princes of Judea into the Babylonian camp.

“**Shadrach**” - Dedicated to the sun God. Nebuchadnezzar changes Hananiah - God has been gracious - to Shadrach - Inspiration of the sun - which had its roots in Baal worship in the days of Nimrod.

“**Meshach**” - Dedicated to the earth God - In Israel Mishael’s name meant “who is what God is”, but under Nebuchadnezzar Meshach means “He who belongs to the goddess Shaca” - the Venus of Babylon.

“**Abednego**” - Dedicated to the fire God. This was the name given to Azariah - Helped of God. It means in Chaldee “The servant of Nego”, or “the servant of the shining fire.” Probably referring to either Jupiter or Venus. Even in captivity the four princes of Judah now live in luxury and are in position to enjoy the pleasures of sin if they will but yield to the flesh. The Real Test - Flesh *versus* Spirit.

VERSE 8

“**But Daniel would not defile himself with the portion of the king’s meat**” - There were probably three reasons why Daniel would not eat meat from the royal table:

1. Because they ate unclean beasts that were forbidden by Jewish law.
2. Because they ate beasts which had not been properly killed according to Mosaic law.
3. Because the animals that were eaten were first offered as victims to their gods - Bel, Merodach. Nebuchadnezzar had changed their names, but they could not change their nature. Let us remember the

exhortation that even though we dwell in Babylon let us not partake of their food. Dare to be a Daniel - no man ever had faith without trials. No man ever built his house upon a rock without the rains descending. "nor with the wine - Before wine was offered to the kings house it was usually dedicated to the gods, part of it being poured out in oblation. Here begins Daniel's first great trial against the flesh.

VERSE 9

"now God brought Daniel into favour" - Peter declares, "the eyes of the LORD are over the righteous and his ears are open to their prayers" - 1 Peter 3:12. He brings us into trials that we might be tested, that our characters might be developed, and that we might prove ourselves worthy of a place in his glorious kingdom. He never leaves us nor forsakes us, though at times we might question his purpose. Ultimately Romans 8:28 will prove true: "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to his purpose." In Daniel's case we have a splendid example of Solomon's words. When a man's ways please Yahweh, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him - Proverbs 16:7.

VERSE 10

"I fear my lord the king, who hath appointed your meat and drink" - Human nature has never changed, the natural man has always served and feared flesh in direct contrast to God's precious word. Psalm 146:3, 4; "Put not your trust in princes nor in the son of man in whom there is no help."

"faces worse liking" - Your faces sorrowful looking - Matthew 6:16.

"endanger my head" - Literally, make guilty my head. Not fear of decapitation, but rather loss of rank.

VERSE 11

"Then Daniel said to Melzar" - Melzar was an officer unto Ashpenaz whose office it was to attend to the food, clothing, etc.,

of these royal captives. This word “Melzar” or “Melcar” occurs only here in the Old Testament, and has been variously interpreted. Josephus and Greek interpreters felt that it was a personal name. Other authorities feel that it is a title meaning “master of the cellar.” The general and most accepted rendering however, is guard or warden.

VERSE 12

“Prove thy servants . . . ten days “ - Ten signifies the perfection of divine order. It implies that nothing is wanting, that the number and order are perfect. It implies that the whole cycle is complete.

Examples:

- (a) Noah completed the antediluvian age in the tenth generation from God.
- (b) The ten commandments contain all that is necessary.
- (c) The Lord’s prayer is completed in ten clauses:
 - 1. God’s sovereignty.
 - 2. Yahweh’s manifested name.
 - 3. The realisation of God’s kingdom.
 - 4. First mention of the earth.
 - 5. Gift of grace supplying our need.
 - 6. Speaks of man’s sin.
 - 7. Pleads for spiritual guidance.
 - 8. Pleads for final deliverance.
 - 9. Sums up the Divine glory.
 - 10. Completion of the eternal cycles.
- (d) The tithe - This represented the whole that was due from man to God.
- (e) Ten Plagues - Representative of God’s complete cycle of judgements on Egypt.
- (f) Ten toes of the image and ten horns of the fourth beast - Symbol of the ten kingdoms that constitute the anti-christ; Daniel 7:7,20,24; Revelation 12:3; 13:1; 17:3,7, 12.
- (g) The ten nations imply the nations of the whole world - Genesis 15:19.
- (h) Israel rebelled against God ten times - Numbers 14:22.

(i) The tenth generation - Completed and represented the whole existence of the family or nation - Deuteronomy 23:3-5; Nehemiah 13:1.

(j) The ten “I am’s” of Jesus in John: 6:35; 6:41; 6:51;8:12; 8:18; 10:7,9; 10:14; 14:6; 14:6; 15:1,5.

“give us pulse to eat” - Hebrew *hazzeraim*, seeds or grain, barley, wheat, rye, peas, etc. Septuagint - “Let them give us vegetables to eat, and water to drink.” Daniel and his three friends knew that to eat meat would be taking a chance of partaking of that which had been offered to idols. They would eat and drink only of that food which had been provided of God, that is, the bread and water of life.

VERSE 13

“Then let our countenances be looked upon before thee” - There is a day coming when the “ten cycle” of our pilgrimage is over when we too must stand before the king, and have our countenance examined. If we have feasted upon the food of Babylon, we will be cast out; but if we have feasted on pulse, the food of God, spirit, we shall be saved. Carefully and prayerfully note Galatians 5:16- 26.

VERSE 15

“at the end of ten days” - The “fatter in flesh” refers to them as a whole, i.e. they were healthier. It is the same phrase as used in Pharaoh’s dream - Gen. 41:2, 18. The reason for this of course was not the vegetarian diet, but strict obedience to God. Even so now, those who give their life in full devotion to God, experience joy, peace, and spiritual riches that surpasses man’s fondest dreams. Pay particular attention to Mark 10:30.

VERSE 16

“took away” - The original Hebrew does not imply that the steward forced the Babylonian youths who were in training to adopt this vegetarian diet. It is an inspiring picture of God’s children in the midst of Babylon, partaking only of God’s food. Let

us heed the dynamic exhortation. Let us dare to be a Daniel.

VERSE 17

“As for these four children” - Literally young men or youths. Our translation gives entirely the wrong impression. “God gave them knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom” - There is no suggestion here that the vegetarian diet made the youths more mentally alert than those who ate meat and drank wine. Their knowledge and skill was a gift from God - a reward for their faithfulness. They had followed the admonition of Psalm 37; Ezekiel 18; Ezekiel 33; James 1:5-6; Romans 10:17; Matthew 7:7. All four mastered the learning of the Babylonian court as Joseph and Moses had mastered that of Egypt, but to Daniel was given the extra endowment of skill in the interpretation of visions and dreams. In Egypt Joseph was given a similar skill in dream interpretation.

VERSE 18

“now at the end of the days” - That is, at the end of three years - verse 5. Three in scripture stands for that which is solid, real, substantial, complete, and entire. Daniel and his three friends had completed their probationary trials, and now stand to be judged.

Number Three in Scripture

- A. God’s attributes are three: Omniscience, Omnipresence and Omnipotence.
- B. Three great divisions of time: past, present, and future.
- C. Thought, word, and deed complete the sum of human capability.
- D. Three kingdoms embrace our ideas of matter: mineral, vegetable, and animal.
- E. Three is the first of our four perfect numbers
 - 1. Three denotes divine perfection.
 - 2. Seven denotes spiritual perfection.
 - 3. Ten denotes ordinal perfection.
 - 4. Twelve denotes governmental perfection.

F. The third day the earth rose out of the water - symbol of resurrection. Jonah three days in the belly of the great fish, Matthew 12:39,40; Luke 11:29; Jonah 1:17. It was of the third day Jesus was perfected, Luke 13:32. It was the third hour he was crucified. It was for three hours, 6th to 9th, that darkness covered the land. At the end of this series of three hours darkness was obliterated for those who put their trust in him. The three years of his seeking fruit testifies to the completeness of Israel's failure, Luke 13:7. The divine testimony concerning him was complete in the threefold voice from heaven, Matthew 3:17; 17:5; John 12:28. His three-fold "it is written" shows that the word of God is the perfection of all ministry, Matthew 4. He raised three persons from the dead. The inscriptions on the cross were written in three languages, showing his complete rejection by man. The perfection of his office is emphasised in the three: prophet, priest, and king. The Divine completeness in his shepherd care is seen in his revelation as:

1. The good shepherd in death, John 10:14.
2. The great shepherd in resurrection, Hebrews 13:20.
3. The chief shepherd in glory, 1 Peter 4:5.

Three appearances of Christ:

1. In the end of the age to put away sin, Hebrews 9:26,28.
2. Now to appear in the presence of God for us, Hebrews 9:24.
3. His second coming to those who look for him, Hebrews 9:28.

- G. Abraham's covenant: Three animals - heifer, she goat, ram - each of three years old, were used as covenant sacrifices.
- H. Complete separation of Israel was marked by three days journey into the wilderness, Exodus 5:3.
- I. The spies brought back three items to show the divine perfection of the land: grapes, figs, and pomegranates, Numbers 13:23.
- J. At the giving of the law, three times Israel said all that the LORD hath spoken we will do, Exodus 19:8; 24:3, 7
- K. Israel had three great feasts:

1. Unleavened bread - Passover;
 2. Feast of weeks;
 3. Feast of tabernacles, Deuteronomy 16:16.
- L. The sheet was let down three times to Peter, Acts 10:16.
- M. Old Testament has a three-fold division:
1. Law;
 2. Psalms;
 3. Prophets - Luke 24:44.
- N. Notable three:
1. Shem, Ham, and Japheth;
 2. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob;
 3. Gershom, Kohath, and Merari;
 4. Saul, David, and Solomon.
- O. Completeness of divine judgement: Mene, Tekel, and Peres.
- P. The three requirements for grace:
1. Faith;
 2. Hope;
 3. Love.
- Q. Three-fold nature of temptation:
1. Lust of eye;
 2. Lust of flesh;
 3. Pride of life.

VERSE 19

“and among them all” - All the young noble captives from different nations. Truly a real testimony to the great God of Israel over the heathen Gods of the surrounding nations.

VERSE 20

“inquired of them” - It was the custom of kings in the ancient world to consult the celestial powers through the skills of their professional wise men before undertaking any matter of great importance.

“ten times better” - Ten again signifies perfection of Divine order, for God had given His children perfection in the

understanding of the court.

“magicians and astrologers” - Probably the same as philosophers and astronomers of our day.

VERSE 21

“first year of king Cyrus” - That is to the end of the Chaldean Empire, and we find Daniel alive in the third year of Cyrus; approximately 537 B.C. Some seventy years after he had been carried captive. This first chapter of Daniel illustrates the inner conflict which must be conquered in self before we face the challenge of the world. Notable examples: Moses, forty years in the wilderness of Midian; Christ’s forty days in the wilderness.

CHAPTER 2

VERSE 1

“the second year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar” - This refers to the second year of his reigning alone. He was king two years before his father’s death. Technically it could be said that this was the fifth year of his reign and the fourth of Daniel’s captivity. Nabopolassar, the father of Nebuchadnezzar, had placed some of his lords as governors of Coele-Syria and Phoenicia, but they had revolted and joined forces with Egypt against Babylon. Thereupon Nabopolassar, gave Nebuchadnezzar the title of king, and sent him to reduce the rebellious provinces. Nebuchadnezzar was thus king of Babylon jointly with his father for two years, and when he came against Jerusalem - Chapter 1:1, and then afterwards on his own account. In 2nd chapter, Daniel, a captive in Babylon, follows Babylonish reckoning. The 2nd of Nebuchadnezzar - of his sole reign - according to Babylonish reckoning is the fourth according to Jewish reckoning which includes the joint reign with his father - Jeremiah 25:1. Thus Daniel could be taken captive by King Nebuchadnezzar, be in Babylon three years - Chapter 1:1, 5, and yet later, in the second year of his sole reign enact the events of chapter 2. (HPM) We are confronted here now with another number 2. Two affirms that there is a difference - that there is another in contrast to number one that affirms there is none other. It is the first number by which we can divide another, and thus indicates division or difference - good and evil - day and night. Nearly every word has an antonym which of course is the exact opposite. A few scriptural examples are as follows: On the second day of creation the firmament divided the waters from the waters. The first statement of the Bible “In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.” This speaks of perfection and order. The second statement - “And the earth was, or rather became, without form and void” - the second speaks of ruin and desolation. Life and death - difference: Old and New Testaments. First Adam - second Adam. Flesh and spirit. Mortality and immortality. Corruption and

incorruption. Same principle represented in Cain and Abel; Abraham and Lot; Isaac and Ishmael; Esau and Jacob; Elijah and Ahab; Judas and Peter; also the old covenant and new covenant - Hebrews 8:7-8, 13; 10:9. See Jeremiah 18:1-4 - the potter's two vessels. Ordinances of the law - the gospel of grace; Hebrews 7:18; 10:6-9. The first man marred - Genesis 2:7; 3:19 - of the earth earthy. The second man - the LORD from heaven. Old creation marred because of sin, Genesis 3:19. New creation established in righteousness, Revelation 21:22. The difference however, may not be in opposites. It is also used in association and co-operation for mutual help. Death and resurrection - Saviour and mighty deliverer, Psalm 89:19. The law hung on two commandments - Matthew 22:40. God's revelation is two-fold - the two covenants, law and grace, faith and works. The testimony of the two spies was alone true. It is extremely interesting that words that have special reference to the testimony of the word occur only twice in Scripture. Greek - *aletheuo* - to tell the truth, Galatians 4:16; to speak the truth, Ephesians 4:15. Greek - *ametathetos* - Immutable, Hebrews 6:18; Immutability, Hebrews 6:17. Greek - *anakephalaion* - Comprehend, Romans 13:9; gather together in one, Ephesians 1:10. Greek - *bebaisios* - Confirmation, Philippians 1:7; Hebrews 6:16. Greek - *kerasia* - Tittle, Matthew 5:18; Luke 16:7.

“his spirit was troubled” - Compare with Pharaoh - Genesis 41:8; Psalm 77:4; Judges 13:25. The dream had made a deep and solid impression upon his mind, and he was distressed, feeling that this dream carried an important message. The original Hebrew implies that Nebuchadnezzar remembered the details of this dream, and was now calling upon his wise men to re-enact the vision so that he might be sure of their interpretation - that it was genuine.

VERSE 2

The contest between the wisdom of this world, and the wisdom of God.

“The magicians” - Hebrew - *chartomim* - Writers of abstruse and difficult subjects, and especially Egyptian hieroglyphics, an art

which is now entirely lost.

“the astrologers” - Hebrew - *ashshaphim* from *nashaph*, to breathe - because they laid claim to divine inspiration. Most likely these were the philosophers and astronomers among the Babylonians - counterpart in horoscopes today.

“the sorcerers” - Hebrew - *chashshephim* - These were those who endeavoured to find out futurity by auguries, casting lots etc. They inspected the entrails of beasts, the flight of birds, etc., and endeavoured to predict the future from a foundation of this nature. They practised ventriloquism.

“the Chaldeans” - The Chaldeans were the most ancient philosophers of the world. It is thought that they were a college of learned men where all the arts and sciences were professed and taught. Herein is a fitting representation of the finest wisdom this world can offer. In the proof that is to follow, we will see how true the first chapter “none of the court of the wise men could compare with Daniel and his friends.” Paul, with all his secular education, tells Timothy, “preach the word” - 2 Timothy 4:2. See also 1 Corinthians 2:1-2. The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom - Psalm 111:10. The wisdom of this world is foolishness with God - 1 Corinthians 3:19. Daniel was skilled in the wisdom of Israel and this wisdom was despised by the Babylonians.

VERSE 3

“my spirit was troubled” -The original carries the thought that the disturbing dream awakened him, and he could not sleep again.

VERSE 4

“then spake the Chaldeans to the king in Syriac” - Hebrew *Aramith* - Aramaic - the language of Aram or Syria. This prophecy is in this language instead of pure Hebrew from verse 4 to the end of chapter 7. The fact that Daniel wrote this book in Chaldaic language shows that he was in Babylon at the time. In this section we have that subject matter which pertains to the course, character and crisis of Gentile power.

“O king live forever” - With this introduction we have the

beginning of the Chaldee part of Daniel which continues to the end of chapter seven. This kind of greeting is still in use in the East Indies. A superior gives a blessing to an inferior by saying, "long life to thee" - same thought, Daniel 3:9; 5:10; 6:6,21.

"tell thy servants the dream" - Hebrew *peshar* (interpretation). From a verb whose primary significance seems to refer to the disentangling of knotted yarn. Its derivative in this instance has to do with the unriddling of dreams. The wise men seek the data of the dream imagery so that they may consult their books and work out the interpretation. The spade of the archaeologist has unearthed Babylonian tablets giving formulas for the interpretation of dreams from the elements contained therein. Our first reaction to this incident is that it belongs to a superstitious past that is now ended. Let us not be fooled - fortune-telling is big business today. Around every city are the Chaldeans who for a price will reveal the future. Every book stand is full of magazines that will foretell the future through the horoscope. In this supposedly scientific age, these occult mysteries flourish today even though every intelligent man knows that it is magical nonsense. When man is frightened he will turn to any so-called source of information, but like the king of Babylon, they listen, but are not comforted - Psalm 146:3,4.

VERSE 5

"the thing has gone from me" - Gesenius translates from the Aramaic verb '*azadh* - to go forth, and makes the sentence read, "the decree is gone forth from me." RSV - "The word from me is sure."

"If ye will not make known unto me the dream" - It was a simple matter to consult their dream books, but if they could recall the dream then he could have faith in their interpretation.

"ye shall be cut in pieces" - Not just dismissal, not just death, but dismemberment. This was a very common punishment among the Orientals - 1 Samuel 15:33; See Daniel 3:29; 2 Kings 10:27; Ezra 6:11. This was arbitrary and tyrannical in the extreme, but in the order of God's providence, it was over-ruled to serve the most important purpose.

“your houses shall be made a dung hill” - That is, to become the lowest form of disgrace. The Babylonian houses were built of sun-dried bricks; when demolished, the rain dissolved the whole into a mass of mire in the wet land near the river.

VERSE 6

“gifts and rewards” - Literal interpretation - Persian word *nebhizbah* - presents poured out in lavish profusion.

VERSE 7

“show the dream and we will tell the interpretation of it” - This was not true - see Daniel 4:7; 5:8. They could not interpret when they knew not the purpose of Yahweh. Same applies to the clergy of today as they endeavour to explain the deep truths of God without knowing His eternal plan of salvation.

VERSE 8

“to gain time” - Literally “to buy time” - Ephesians 5:16; Colossians 4:5. The king here suggests they are thinking that given a little more time, the monarch’s attention may be distracted by something else - possibly that they also might have time to escape.

VERSE 9

“there is but one decree for you” - Literally, your decree is one - there can be no second one reversing the first - Esther 4:11. This is the same as that appearing in verse 13 - from the old Persian law - “a judicial sentence”.

“ye have prepared lying and corrupt words to speak before me” - This crisis in Babylon revealed the weakness of the clergy, just as the present crisis reveals the weakness of the clergy today, Jeremiah 16:19; Zechariah 10:2.

VERSE 10

“there is not a man upon the earth” - That is, the thing is utterly impossible to man. Unknowingly they give the glory to God and the position He rightly deserves. God makes the heathen, out of their own mouth condemn their impotent pretensions to

supernatural knowledge. Note how the foundation is being laid for God's revelation to Daniel to outshine the greatest wisdom Babylon - flesh - could produce.

VERSE 11

“gods, whose dwelling is not with the flesh” - There was a prevalent belief in Babylon that there were deified men in heaven such as Nimrod who could have solved this difficulty, but these gods did not communicate with men, and the lesser gods that dwelt in the courts of Babylon were unable to give the interpretation.

VERSE 12

“wise men of Babylon” - It is interesting to note that Daniel and his three friends were not numbered among the wise men of Babylon. This was for a divine reason, namely, that the frail weak wisdom of mortal man might be exposed in all its foolishness before being put to shame by the wisdom of the Eternal.

VERSE 13

“they sought Daniel and his fellows” - As the decree stated that all the wise men of Babylon should be slain, the four young Hebrews, being reputed among the wisest, were scheduled to die also.

VERSE 14

“the captain of the guard” - Literally translated “chief of the butchers” or chief of the executioners. It was Herod's chief butcher that brought the head of John the Baptist in a dish.

“Daniel answered with counsel and wisdom” - RSV, “replied with prudence and discretion.” The word for discretion is sometimes used for the discreet answer. It denotes the art of finding the right word at the right time.

VERSE 15

“why is the decree so hasty” - Literally, why is the decree so severe. The root denotes harshness or stiffness. It is plain that Daniel till now was ignorant of the whole matter.

VERSE 16

“Daniel went in” - Perhaps not in person but by the mediation of some courtier who had access to him. Daniel’s first direct interview seems to have been in verse 25. “that he would give him time” - For the purpose of seeking unto God for the revelation of the dream. The wise men of Babylon dared not to promise such a thing. They would only pledge interpretation upon revelation of the dream. Daniel seeks both the revelation and the interpretation. The exhortation to us is our constant and vigilant seeking of God in prayer for the answer to our difficult and perplexing problems.

VERSE 17

“then Daniel went into his house” - Here is the reason Daniel sought time. He desired the opportunity to enter into his closet with his three brethren in the LORD, to pray unto his Father in secret. See Matthew 6:6.

VERSE 18

“that they would desire mercies of the God of heaven” - The original implies that they prayed incessantly until God gave the wished for revelation. What a fervent prayer this must have been, knowing their life depended upon its success. Whether it was given that same night we do not know. God is always pleased to answer the prayers of those who fear and seek him - James 5:16; Psalm 25:14; Matthew 7:7; 18:19; Acts 12:5-12.

VERSE 19

“then was the secret revealed...in a night vision”- We are not told as to the exact *modus operandi* of the revelation, whether it was by dream or immediate inspiration. God spoke to Jacob in a night vision - Genesis 46:2, also Job 33:14-16.

VERSE 20

“Blessed be the name of God for ever and ever” - Here Daniel acknowledged God as the basis of all power. There is a great example for us contained in Daniel’s words. Our prayers should never be limited to cries for help or thanks for answered prayers,

but should also be dedicated to the praise of the great name of Yahweh. The Lord's prayer is a wonderful example of this. We see this feature emphasised in the verses which follow. The zeal and fervour of this prayer springs from the fact that their life had been saved. We have the same inspiration for our prayers, for our life has also been saved through God's plan of salvation revealed through His Son Jesus Christ. Note Jeremiah 32:17-19.

"wisdom and might are his" - He knows all things and can do all things.

VERSE 21

"He changeth the times and seasons" - Time, duration, succession are His and under His dominion. He controls the rise and fall of rulers and nations in much the same way that puppets are manipulated by their operators - Hebrews 11:3; Psalm 102:13. Jesus the Christ was born on time; ascended to heaven on time; **HE WILL COME AGAIN - ON TIME** - Acts 1:11; John 14:3; Revelation 22:12-20. Exhortation: Mark 13:35-37. Daniel here gives us our first clue that the dream concerned more than the Babylonian Empire - that there was to be a succession of kingdoms. The times are the phases and periods of duration or empires, chapter 7:25; 1 Chronicles 12:32; 29:30 - "The seasons" the fitting times for their culmination, decline and fall, Ecclesiastes 3:1; Acts 1:7; 1 Thessalonians 5:1. This is further emphasised by the next thought:

"He removeth kings and setteth up kings" - God's Holy word gives the best possible interpretation of this thought, 1 Samuel 2:7-8; Job 12:16-21; Psalm 75:6-7; Psalm 113:7-8; Proverbs 8:15-16; Luke 1:51,52; Acts 13:21-22; Jeremiah 27:5.

"He giveth wisdom" - Particularly does this apply to divine things. In this direction there is no scope for boasting. He gave Bezaleel wisdom to work in metals in order that the Tabernacle might be beautified - Exodus 31:2-3, He gave Solomon wisdom to righteously govern the people of Israel - 1 Kings 4:29; Proverbs 2:6-7. Notice the instructions given to the kings of Israel. As soon as they ascend the throne they had to personally write a copy of the

law and read from it every day - Deut. 17:18-21. They were not to delegate this work to some scribe; it was the king's personal responsibility. This would give him wisdom, for God would bless the effort put into understanding His Word. It would prevent the king from becoming conceited - notice verse 20 - and bring prosperity to himself, his family, and his kingdom. In our case, this wisdom will come by "comparing spiritual things with spiritual" - 1 Corinthians 2:13, that is, by studying the Word of God. James gives us some very practical advice to aid us in our search - James 1:5, 17, and we need to put this advice into effect, for the wisdom we seek is "from above" - James 3:15-17. - H.P.M. See also 1 Kings 3:9-12; 1 Corinthians 1:18-31; 2:1-2; 2 Timothy 4:2; 1 Timothy 6:20.

VERSE 22

"He revealeth the deep and secret things" - We read in Amos 3:6, 7, "Shall a trumpet be blown in the city, and the people not be afraid? Shall there be evil in a city, and the LORD hath not done it? Surely the LORD God will do nothing, but he revealeth His secret unto His servants the prophets." He revealed the secrets to the faithful in the past - Genesis 41:16,25,28. He will do the same for those who approach Him according to His standards today - Psalm 25:14. See Job 12:22; Ephesians 1:17, 18.

"He knoweth what is in the darkness" - sin or flesh - and the light - righteousness - spirit - "dwelleth with him". See 2 Corinthians 14:6, where the two wisdoms are distinguished. Also 2 Corinthians 4:5, 6; Revelation 1:10; 4:2. The book of the Revelation is an apocalyptic revelation. The rending of the veil - Christ's mortal body - of the temple from top to bottom at the time of Christ's death was an apocalyptic revelation of the new creation. The apocalyptic revelation to Daniel is now revealed by gradual steps. Each revelation preparing him for the succeeding one. In chapters two and four he is but an interpreter of Nebuchadnezzar's dreams. In chapter 7:1,2, he has a dream of the night. In chapter 8:1-3, he has a vision in a waking state. Lastly in the two final revelations, chapters 9, 10, 12, he is carried into the final

consummation.

VERSE 23

“I thank thee and praise thee” - Not only does this prayer reflect praise and thankfulness to Yahweh for deliverance from certain death but now will be given opportunity to vindicate the God of Israel. Daniel ascribes all the glory to God.

“God of my fathers” - Thou hast shown thyself the same God of mercy to me, a captive exile, as thou didst to Israel of old. Thou hast not forgotten the covenant made with our fathers, Luke 1:54, 55; Psalm 106:45.

“hast given me wisdom and might” - Direct reference to verse 20. Whatever ability I have to stay the king’s cruel decree is thy gift.

“me - we - us” - The revelation was given to Daniel as “me” implies - modestly however, he acknowledges his three friends, for the answer was from their united prayers.

“Hast made known the king’s matter” - verse 10, “not a man on earth can show the king’s matter”. Impostors are compelled by the God of Truth to eat up their own words.

VERSE 24

“Therefore” - Because of having received divine communication.

“destroy not the wise men of Babylon” - The decree was suspended till it was established that Daniel’s - God’s - interpretation was authentic.

“bring me in before the king” - Implying that he had not previously been in before the king in person. Daniel’s approaching Arioch with the request with an audience was in complete accord with oriental court etiquette, and would be with the customary ceremony. Esther 4:11 correctly states that none might enter the king’s presence without being summoned. This of course refers to Persian kings, but Herodotus makes it clear that this had its beginning in Babylon - Herodotus III 140.

VERSE 25

“I have found a man” - Here is outstanding evidence of human nature. Arioch ascribes the merit of discovery to himself.

VERSE 26

“Belteshazzar” - This was Daniel’s Babylonian name. Keeper of the hid treasure of Bel.

“art thou able to make known unto me the dream” - Here was a real challenge to Daniel’s ego, but he emptied himself and gave God the glory.

VERSE 27

“cannot the wise men” - Fleshly, human, inadequate, earthly wisdom now is defeated, and if the answer is to come, it must be from God the ruler and sustainer of the universe - Isaiah 47:11-15.

“astrologers” - From the root, “to cut off,” referring to their cutting of the heavens into divisions, and so guessing at man’s destinies from the positions of the stars. All of this adds up to show Nebuchadnezzar the utter folly of placing any confidence in the flesh.

“soothsayers” - Hebrew *gazerin* to cut and determine, that is practitioners in the art of hepatoscopy - Ezekiel 21:21 - the study of the liver. Refers to the art of cutting open animals, and making a study of the entrails to determine the future.

VERSE 28

“there is a God in heaven” - In contrast to the folly of the Babylonian wise men we now turn to the true wisdom of the universe. This distinguishes Him from the idols and false Gods in which the Chaldeans trusted.

“revealeth secrets” - Amos 3:7; 4:13; Genesis 41:45 *Zaphnathpaaneah* - revealer of secrets - the title given to Joseph.

“the latter days” - The days just prior to the establishment of God’s kingdom on earth: Isa. 2:2; Jeremiah 23:20; Ezek. 38:16; 2 Tim. 3: 1; 2 Pet. 3:3. This speaks to us of the fact that the image would be existent in the last days, but inactive. Figuratively the

image has fallen due to the clay, weakening the feet of the image, and causing it to become top heavy. The 38th of Ezekiel shows that in the latter days a great power (Russia) will strengthen and solidify the image so that it will stand up again ready to be destroyed by the stone power - Christ and the saints. Note that all the metals are broken together - verse 35, Ezekiel 38:19-23; Zechariah 14:1-4; Isaiah 13:6-11; 24:19-23.

“visions of thy head”- Conceptions formed in the brain. The heart is the seat of intelligence, Jeremiah 5:2.3-2.4; Hosea 7:11.

VERSE 29

“thy thoughts came into thy mind upon thy bed” - This vision came on the king while he was meditating upon the future greatness of his kingdom. Babylon was among the greatest of antiquity; its hanging gardens were among the seven wonders of the world. The city was set in a square, and measured fifteen miles each way. It was enclosed by walls eighty-seven feet thick, and 350 feet high. In each of the four sides were twenty-five solid brass gates leading to streets which divided the city into squares. The river Euphrates ran through the city, its banks being formed into a solid quay - solid artificial landing place - on which was continued the wall with its gates, Isaiah 45:1; Daniel 4:30.

“what should come to pass hereafter” - Nebuchadnezzar, putting all trust and hope in the flesh, thought that his kingdom would endure forever. He discounted the power of God, however - Isa. 13:19; Jeremiah 51:37, 43, 58.

VERSE 30

“not...for any wisdom that I have” - Not on account of any previous wisdom that I may have manifested, 1:17-2.0. The specially favoured servants of God have always disclaimed any credit or merit for themselves. They gave God all the glory - Genesis 41:16; Acts 8: 12. Note the contrast: Daniel - as for me - meek, lowly of heart. As for thee - King of Babylon - high, mighty, arrogant, proud and haughty. Daniel’s wisdom is our wisdom, and makes us wiser than our foes - Psalm 119:98. This exhortation

should be firmly implanted in our mind. Let God be first in our heart and mind. The revelation was two-fold. First, for their sakes - it saved the lives of the wise men. Second, that the king might know the thoughts of his heart, that he might see that he was nothing but dust and ashes. "Not revealed to me for any wisdom that I have" - Like Joseph of old and Jesus Christ of the future, Daniel disclaims any skill of his own - Psalm 119:98. Revelation was made first for their sakes, secondly that the king might know that there was a God in heaven.

"the thoughts of thy heart" - Literally - thoughts of the mind, seat of intelligence - Jeremiah 5:23, 24; Hosea 7:11.

VERSE 31

"Thou O king, sawest, and behold a great image" - This great image may have been suggested by the colossal statues so common in the art of the Near East. Each of these exalted the glory of man, and supposedly represented his power. Even though the metals were different, yet essentially the image represented one power, that is, the kingdoms of men - a warlike figure - symbol of Gentile military power - luminous in its glory - great outward show.

"the form thereof was terrible" - The kingdom of men in its various phases built of bloodshed and violence - Habakkuk 1:7; Isaiah 13:17, 18.

VERSE 32

"head of fine gold" - Babylonish Empire, the first and the greatest.

"breast and arms of silver" - Medo Persian Empire under Cyrus.

"belly and thighs of brass" - Greece, Alexander the great.

"legs of iron" - Rome. Two legs - East and Western.

"feet part of iron and part of clay" - Decline of Rome. Rise of Europe out of the ten toed Roman remnant.

NOTE:

1. The metals lessen in specific gravity as they go downward. Silver lighter than gold; brass lighter than silver; iron lighter than brass. Image top- heavy - typical of flesh - unstable.

2. The kingdoms deteriorate in authority - power, morals.

A. Nebuchadnezzar derived his authority from God, not from man, neither was he responsible to man. He was an absolute monarch - his word was law.

B. The Persian king was so dependant of others that he could not deliver Daniel from the princes - Daniel 6:14, 15 contrast 5:18, 19. As to Nebuchadnezzar's power from God - "whom he would he slew, and whom he would he kept alive". Also Ezra 7:14; Esther 1:13-16.

C. We see deterioration in Greece by its divisions - Greece was not united like Babylon and Persia.

D. Iron is stronger than brass, but inferior in other respects - very appropriate to Rome. hardy and strong to tread down the nations but less kingly leaning more to the animal instincts of the flesh as manifest in the first two centuries.

1. Nebuchadnezzar's power was of God - verses 37, 38.

2. Autocracy in Persia, predicated on his nobility of person and birth.

3. In Greece not of birth, but individual influence. Greece - two thighs - a dual rule at the bottom of Greece's history over Egypt and Syria into which Greece was finally divided.

4. In Rome, lowest of all, dependent entirely on popular choice as the emperor was appointed by military election.

VERSE 33

"legs of iron" - Beastly, iron rule of Rome.

"feet part of iron and part of clay" - Refers to dissolution of Roman Empire - Alaric and Goths, 395 A. D. Rhadagastus king of the confederate Germans under the first trumpet. See Revelation 8:7. Under the second trumpet the vandals under Genseric. After a long series of conquests took Rome in A. D. 455. Also supported by the bravest of the moors and Vandals destroyed the Roman navy of 1113 ships - Revelation 8:8,9. The third trumpet - Attilia

and the Huns - In 20 years from 436-456 Attila stormed over the country of France, Italy, and the rich plains of Lombardy. Gibbon said that "Grass never grew on the spot where his horse had trod" - Revelation 8:10-11.

VERSE 34

"stone cut out without hands" - That is, not a product of human intervention. The stone here refers to the kingdom of God, and of course the nucleus of that kingdom was and is the Lord Jesus - Luke 17:20; 1 Peter 2:1-10. Altars, typifying the Lord Jesus Christ, were made out of stone, Exodus 20:22- 24; Deuteronomy 27:5 - Type of Christ - Hebrews 13:10; Romans 12:6; Destruction of the Gogian host represented as a great sacrifice which will be offered on the Christ altar - Ezekiel 39:17. Contrast the glory of the image with the humble stone - Isaiah 53:2. But because the power of God is revealed in the stone it will triumph - Zechariah 4:6.

VERSE 35

"Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver and the gold broken to pieces together" - In the metals of the image we have the pride, pomp, power and wealth of man brought low by the simple creation of God - a stone - 1 Sam. 17 - David and Goliath. This verse is a prophetic picture of the complete demolition of the leadership of Russia - Ezekiel 38, 39 and ecclesiastical Babylon under the helm of the pope of Rome - Revelation 14; Matthew 21:42-44. In the last 400 years we have seen Russia rise to a power that controls 350 million people. In the course of this time of almost continuous expansion, Moscow's rule has come to cover an area 15 times greater than 16th century Russia. A power big and strong enough to weld all of Europe together and cause the image to stand again. The fall of Communism and the dissolution of the USSR might seem to be a setback, but Gogue, prince of Rosh, Meshech and Tubal will play his role when the time comes.

"like the chaff of the summer threshing floors" - Chaff is used in scripture as a symbol of that which is worthless, inflammable and that which shall be destroyed - Job 21:18; Psalm 1:4; 35:5;

Isaiah 5:24; 29:5; Matthew 3:12; Luke 3:17. In this then we have a graphic description of how completely this present civilisation will be removed from the earth, Micah 4:11-13; Joel 3:12- 14. Grain was winnowed in the East on an elevated place in the open air by throwing it with a shovel so that the wind would carry away the chaff. Note: There is no preliminary movement of the stone. It is not gradual but immediate. There is no slow conquest of the world through the preaching of the gospel.

“the wind carried them away” - Just as the flood carried the civilisation of Noah’s day away, so this language is descriptive of that time when all of man’s buildings constructed by the hands of sin shall be removed in preparation for the fifth universal empire, 2 Peter 3:10-14.

“the stone” - Jesus Christ, the very nucleus of the kingdom of God; Matthew 21:42-44. Christ as the chief cornerstone and constituting the temple of God, 1 Peter 2:4-8. The image was composed of metals held together by mechanical force just as nations who have no affinity are held by force. The stone, however, is one with elements of mutual cohesion and chemical affinity. The image was limited to human boundaries for expansion. The stone knows no limitations.

“became a great mountain and filled the whole earth” - From a stone to a mountain indicates growth beginning with the conquest of the king of the north, Ezekiel 38:39; the last call to a wicked world for repentance, Revelation 14:6-7; and finally the complete world-wide conquest and rule of Christ and the saints, Zechariah 14; Isa. 2; 11; 35; Psalm 72; etc.

VERSE 36

“This is the dream” - No guess work - not possibly, or probable, but this is - you can depend on it Nebuchadnezzar, for this is from Yahweh. This same definite characteristic is in all of God’s prophecies and promises. See Isaiah 9:69; Luke 1:32; Acts 1:11; 15:16; John 14:1-2.

“we will tell the interpretation” - Same great truth. We will tell, and you can depend upon the interpretation because it is not of

man, but of God. We - Daniel and his three friends.

VERSE 37

“Thou O king art a king of kings” - Even though God had given the power, it was Nebuchadnezzar who had built Babylon. He was statesman, warrior, and monarch. He did not rule every point of the globe with a rule of iron, but God had given him dominion in any direction in which his ambition had led him, whether it was Egypt, Nineveh, Arabia, Syria or Tyre with its Phoenician colonies - Jeremiah 27:5-8. But the same power could and would take this power from him when He willed, just as He had previously taken the power from the Assyrian - Isaiah 10:12-15.

“for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom” - It has not been given by thine own gods, neither has it been acquired by your own skill, it has been given by God Himself and no other.

“power” - It is not your own strength - it is strength that God has given you.

“and strength” - It is not your strength, Nebuchadnezzar, but strength God has given you to defend this kingdom against your foes.

“and glory” - God has also given you honour and dignity, but you have acclaimed this for yourself.

VERSE 38

“men - beasts - fowls” - This was the dominion originally designated for man, Genesis 1:28; 2:19,20. It had, however been forfeited by sin. Temporarily it had been delegated to Nebuchadnezzar, but the warning was the same, that sin would again force it to be forfeited to another.

“thou art this head of gold” - This seems to be very flattering to the king, but this comfort is dashed to the ground as Daniel speaks of a kingdom that shall rise after him. Babylon was the city of gold - Isaiah 13:9; 14:3 - undoubtedly the richest and most refined of the four universal empires. The kingdom of Babylon existed for approximately 70 years, 606 B.C. to 536 B.C. It actually began, however with Nimrod, B.C. 2233. The prophets of God spoke of

the kingdom uppermost in their mind - the kingdom of God. Nebuchadnezzar dreamed of the kingdom which occupied all of his thoughts, his own great empires which he was building. Babylon: All the glory that was Nebuchadnezzar's shone in the head of gold. His idea of impressing his subjects was to make a great display of wealth, and thus he built altars of solid gold to Merodach, the patron god of Babylonia. Medo-Persia: At the height of Babylon's glory this kingdom was growing by means of excessive taxation. They believed not in the outward show, but in secret hoarded treasure to be used in war when necessary. Their standard of currency was silver! Greece: The Greeks worshipped Ea, the god of brass. The Javan people mentioned in Ezekiel 27:13 were Asiatic Greeks, who made the brass from copper and tin. The brass musical instruments mentioned in Daniel 3:5-7 were imported from Greece. Rome: Ninib, the god of iron, was the same as Saturn, the God of war, worshipped by the Romans. The Romans had discovered the strength of iron, and considered the brass of the Greeks out of date. The change, however, was gradual as shown by the teeth of iron and the claws of brass of the fourth beast of Daniel's seven. The Chaldean Empire, called the Assyrian in its commencement - was called the Chaldean because of the country - Chaldea. It was referred to as being Babylonish because of its chief city, Babylon. In the time of Nebuchadnezzar it extended over Chaldea, Assyria, Arabia, and Syria.

VERSE 39

“And after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee” - This was the Medo-Persian dynasty established during the life of Cyrus who marched through the earth with resistless armies, melting the nations as the sun melts structures of snow. It was to this man that the writing on the wall was directed, “thy kingdom is divided and given to the Medes and Persians” - According to Herodotus, the taxation and tribute demanded by Persia of those she conquered, was paid in silver talents. The empire lasted nearly 207 years. It was inferior to Babylon in wealth, luxury and magnificence - not in extent: 538 B.C. to 334 B.C.

“and another third kingdom of brass” - B.C. 334 - B.C. 67. This has reference to the Grecian kingdom under the leadership of Alexander the Great. This leader overthrew Persia in B. C. 301. Greece was known for its trading in brass. The Grecian soldiers had armour of brass and were known as the brazen coated Greeks.

VERSE 40

“and the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron” - This has reference to the iron rule of Rome. Their soldiers had iron swords, iron breastplates in contrast to that of the Greeks. Gibbon in *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* refers to these four universal empires in the same terminology as that of Daniel - gold, silver, brass, and iron - monarchy of Rome.

VERSE 41

“the kingdom shall be divided” - This has reference to the two divisions of Rome, represented by the two legs. From 312 A.D. to 324 A.D. in the sixth seal, Constantine established the Eastern Division of the Roman Empire.

VERSE 42

“toes of the feet part of iron and part of clay” - This weakening of the foundation of that which symbolises the kingdoms of men points with unmistakable accuracy to the decline and fall of the Roman Empire as outlined by Gibbon. This was fulfilled in the fourth fifth, and sixth centuries when the Goths, Vandals, Huns, Ostrogoths, etc. under the leadership of Genseric, Alaric, Attila, and others attacked and systematically disintegrated the Roman Empire, under the first, second and third trumpets of the Revelation.

VERSE 43

“iron mixed with miry clay” - Out of this ten-toed phase has come Europe. The iron and clay is a very fitting symbol as we can see by reviewing Europe’s history. Truly as Daniel has said - the iron and the clay shall not cleave to one another. In ancient times, iron was produced by subjecting the ore to intense heat, and

afterwards driving out the clay by beating. When the latter was done imperfectly, the result was slag in which the iron and clay was mixed, and revealed the imperfection of the product. The symbol thus speaks of the imperfect efforts of man to bring unity and peace - H.P.M.

VERSE 44

“in the days of these kings” - Not just one kingdom such as Babylon, or Medo- Persia, or Greece, or Rome, but in a time when all these kingdoms would be represented morally and politically in one unit.

“shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom” - This is the great and final purpose of God for this earth - Numbers 14:21; Isaiah 2:9; Habakkuk 2:14.

“which shall never be destroyed” - This is in contrast to kingdoms that have come and gone, because of the fleshly instincts of hate, jealousy, greed, fear, etc.

“and the kingdom shall not be left to other people” - The reason being that its rulers shall be immortal and all-powerful.

“but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms” - This speaks of both phases of Armageddon - Ezekiel 38:39; Zechariah 14:1-4; Joel 3; Revelation 14:8-20.

“and it shall stand forever” - The ultimate purpose of God - Genesis 3:15; 13:14-17; 15:18; 2 Samuel 7:12-16; Psalm 89:34-37; Revelation 21.

VERSE 45

“the stone cut out of the mountain without hands” - The stone is the same as that of verse 34; the mountain is the kingdom of God; the stone is the nucleus of that kingdom, Luke 17:21.

“the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter” - In the destruction of the kingdoms of men, that which is opposed to God, His great and glorious purpose with this earth will finally be realised - Numbers 14:21; Isaiah 11:9; Habakkuk 2:14.

“the dream is certain and the interpretation thereof sure” - The

zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this - Isaiah 9:7; Hebrews 6:17-19.

VERSE 46

“then the king Nebuchadnezzar fell on his face and worshipped Daniel” - A picture of that day when the remaining kingdoms of men will give obeisance to Jesus Christ as king, Psalm 72:11; Zech. 9:10; 8:20-22; Isa. 2:2-4; Psalm 32:8- 11.

VERSE 47

“your God is a God of gods and a Lord of kings” - A true preview of the humble submission of the world that will follow the outpouring of God’s judgements upon the world in the period of the seven vials of the revelation.

VERSE 48

“then the king made Daniel a great man” - This finds its grand counterpart in the exaltation of Christ as king of kings and lord of lords, Revelation 11:15.

VERSE 49

“and he set Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego over the affairs of the province of Babylon” - The saints will be co-rulers with our Lord and Christ - Rev. 5:10; Matt. 25:14-24; 19:28-29 - when we shall be one with him - John 17: Revelation 10.

“but Daniel sat in the gate of the king” - Our master shall possess the gate of his enemies - Gen. 22:17.

CHAPTER 3

VERSE 1

“Nebuchadnezzar the king made an image of gold” - There is a difference of opinion concerning this image, because of its proportions - 60 cubits (90 feet) high, and 6 cubits (9 feet) wide. Due to this fact, some feel that this image was not in the form of a man. Others advance the thought that these measurements include the pedestal on which the image stood. Another thought is that this was an image of Bel, and that the six cubits has reference to the thickness (chest to back) which would be about the right proportion. Such images were not unusual in these times, and Herodotus confirms this by mentioning a similar image 40 feet high in the temple of Belus at Babylon. The colossus of Nero was one hundred and ten feet high. The colossus of Rhodes was seventy cubits high, and was considered one of the seven wonders of the world. The interval between the dream of Chapter two, and this event is approximately 19 years. Nebuchadnezzar had just returned from finishing the Jewish and Syrian wars, the spoils of which would furnish the material for such a colossal statue.

“of gold” - In all probability this image was not of solid gold, but gold-plated. A column of gold of these proportions would weigh more than 4,000 tons!

“the plain of Dura” - The situation is not exactly known. There was a city called Dura in Mesopotamia. Dura means wall or rampart. Thus the image was set up at a place where Babylonish power was walled in. And here was established the source of all Gentile power which has in its roots Babylonish error. From this place Abraham was called to separate himself - Genesis 13:1 - HPM.

“sent to gather together the princes” - Private counsellors who had free access to the presence of the king.

“the governors” - Lieutenants or viceroys.

“the captains” - These captains were placed over the extended provinces that had been conquered by Nebuchadnezzar.

“the judges” - These were nobles, the assistants to the king in making laws, statutes, etc.

“the treasurers” - Those who kept the current coin or were in charge of the mint.

“the counsellors” - A group of men comparable in duty to the Supreme Court.

“the sheriffs” - Probably civil magistrates.

“and all the rulers of the provinces” - All other state or civil officers that were to maintain order.

VERSE 3

“stood before the image” - Stood in an attitude of devotion. They stood and acted like puppets. Whatever the king approved of, they approved of. There is no stability of principle in the ungodly.

VERSE 4

“then a herald cried aloud” - The decrees are much the same as those which proceed from dictators of today - Turn or Burn!

VERSE 5

“the sound of the cornet” - The common blowing horn.

“flute” - A wind instrument which made a strong and shrill noise.

“harp” - Some kind of stringed instrument.

“sackbut” - It was most likely a species of a harp.

“psaltery” - This was a large triangle with about twenty catguts of different sizes. It was the ancient psalterium and most probably the same as David's harp.

“dulcimer” - Probably a kind of tambourine or tom-tom drum. Some scholars say that this was similar to a bagpipe.

“and all kinds of music” - The entire band.

VERSE 6

“whoso falleth not down” - This edict would affect only those to whom God had said thou shalt not. This of course would be the Jews. The literal image of Nebuchadnezzar is the same as the image of the beast, Rev. 13:10-18. During the dark ages all were commanded to worship the pope under the penalty of death.

“shall the same hour” - This is the first instance in the Old Testament where we find the division of time into hours. The Greeks say that a man by the name of Anaximander was the inventor, and that he had received it from the Chaldeans who were using the sun dial long before Anaximander was ever born.

“be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace” - This was the ancient mode of punishment among the Chaldeans - Jeremiah 29:22.

VERSE 7

“All the people fell down and worshipped” - A sad commentary of a man’s fear of the power of the flesh -

“put not your trust in princes” - Psalm 146:3-4.

VERSE 8

“certain Chaldeans” - The elevation of Daniel and his friends was probably at the expense of certain Chaldeans who now took opportunity to accuse them, jealousy being the motive - HPM.

“accused the Jews” - For some reason they were especially antagonistic against Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. Daniel was either too high up for them to reach or possibly away in another part of the Empire. We may certainly rest assured that he was not among the idolaters.

VERSE 9

“O king live for ever” - It has been truly said, “A preface of flattery is closely akin to the cruelty that follows.” A good example of this is found in Acts 24:2, 3 where Tertullus accuses Paul before Felix. See Psalm 5:9; 36:2; Proverbs 2:16; 7:5; 28:23; 29:5; Daniel 11:21; 11:32,34.

VERSE 10

“Thou O king hast made a decree” - Force can be very effective in human circles, but force never made a convert to Christ. “My ways are not your ways” says Yahweh. God’s basis is that of love. God looks to the individual who serves through a desire to serve. Nebuchadnezzar would feel that his procedure was absolutely

necessary for a great part of his Empire had been newly acquired. It was composed of many nations: Jews, Egyptians, Ammonites, Syrians, Edomites. For these to be amalgamated into one Empire there must not be a diversity of opinions, and from a purely natural viewpoint we can see Nebuchadnezzar's wisdom. We can see Nebuchadnezzar's pride rising on the plains of Dura that day as the music rose to a high crescendo and he received the plaudits of his many subjects. Amidst this scene the news of non-compliance would strike like a thunder bolt.

VERSE 12

“certain Jews” - It was not all the Jews, but only those spiritually minded that were accused, and these followed the law of the land as far as they could without violating the laws of God by assembling as requested - Romans 13:1 - HPM.

“serve not thy gods” - Note the plural. Not only the golden image, but none of the multiplicity of gods in Babylon. They remembered well the command, “Thou shalt not bow down to any idol gods or worship them.” This king had showed them much kindness and had heaped honours upon them, but their duty to God was stronger than gratitude to the king. “He that loveth father or mother more than me cannot be my disciple.” Exhortation: If we do not fill our minds with things which are spiritual, they will be filled with that which can only bring death.

VERSE 13

“Nebuchadnezzar in his rage” - A very sad but true commentary on human nature. Nineteen years of fleshly conquests had caused Nebuchadnezzar to forget the great lesson of Daniel 2. The deceitfulness of sin can do the same to us.

“bring” - In this one word we can again see the mark of divinity. Instead of commanding their immediate execution as in the case of the wise men - chapter 2: 12 - Yahweh guided His children before the king that their testimony - Matthew 10:18 - might be on exhibition for an example to all who would follow in later years.

“in his rage” - Literally, in hot rage and wrath. The matter might

seem to us as nothing, but the fury of potentates was a stock feature in stories of this type. See Esther 1:12; 7:7.

VERSE 14

“is it true” - Margin, is it on purpose - is it a deliberate act - do you know what you are doing? We can see a certain amount of fear and respect in these words of the king. He gives them a chance to answer, and our minds go to Jesus before Pilate. The golden image that I have set up - This is important - only man sets up the golden image. This creation of a duality in God’s universe is the first step to eternal destruction.

VERSE 15

“Who is that God” - This vain boasting reminds us of the speech of Pharaoh to Moses, “Who is Jehovah that I should obey His voice to let Israel go?” - Exodus 5:2. Also the defiant proclamation of Sennacherib to Hezekiah and Jerusalem, “Who are they among all the gods of the countries that have delivered Jerusalem out of mine hand” - 2 Kings 18:35. And yet God destroyed Pharaoh, and put a hook into Sennacherib’s nose by which he led him in ignominy, back to his own city to perish miserably at the hands of his sons. How empty the boasts. How unbounded the folly of men who challenge Yahweh to conflict. See Mark 15:29-32.

VERSE 16

“We are not careful to answer thee” - There is only one course to follow and that is to obey God. “Our minds are as determined to follow spirit as yours is to obey flesh. No amount of persuasion will change our course.” Hesitation or parleying with sin is fatal; unhesitating decision is the only safe path - Matthew 10:19-28. Our path in God’s service must be all or nothing. We cannot serve God and mammon.

VERSE 17

“If it be so” - Regardless of the consequence, our God is able to deliver us - if not from death, then he will deliver us out of death. Here was faith coupled with courage - Hebrews 11:34. There is not

the slightest indication that they expected a miraculous deliverance. Their language implies no more than faithful obedience. See Isaiah 43:2.

“is able” - They did not question His power to deliver. They did not know whether He would exercise this power or not. Compare Genesis 19:22.

VERSE 18

“But if not” - “Our course is clear. We are so saturated with the word of God that we walk with complete faith in Him. Our God can save eternally. Your gods are only temporal and false.” Rom.2:14-15; Matt.25:32-40.

VERSE 19

“full of fury” - Here we see what nineteen years of conquest has done to Nebuchadnezzar. He had been the victim of God’s contempt when he had challenged these Hebrews before, but now he will try once more. How infatuated is man.

“heat the furnace” - Points to the day that is to come. The furnace of nations is today being heated for war, and just as the fire destroyed the mighty men of Babylon’s court, so the coming fire will destroy the mighty powers of today. Faithful Israel shall be saved, Isaiah 26:20; 48:10.

“seven times” - Completeness. Hot as it could possibly be heated. It is interesting to note that the seven times - 2520 years - beginning with Nebuchadnezzar, brings us to 1914; the date when the furnace of the last day had its beginning. This furnace heat is growing in intensity, and will continue until it breaks forth into a time of trouble such as never was - Daniel 12:1; Jeremiah 15:31; 2 Peter 3:10; Joel 3; Ezekiel 38,39. According to Babylonian mythology there were seven demons named Maskim, who were the most formidable of the heathen powers. Possibly the overheating was in reference to these seven demons.

“than it was wont” - Literally than it was fitting. It was this overheating of the furnace that consumed his mighty men. Nebuchadnezzar defeated his own purpose. The hotter the fire, the

sooner they would be destroyed.

VERSE 20

“the most mighty men” - Generals and chiefs of Nebuchadnezzar’s army - Joel 3:9.

VERSE 21

“these men were bound in their coats...” - It was customary to strip criminals before their execution, and their clothes given to the executioners - Matt. 27:35; Psalm 22:18. Casting them in clothed made the miracle that much more spectacular. Herodotus, who lived about 100 years after Daniel says, “The dress of the Babylonians consisted of a tunic of linen reaching down to the feet; over this a tunic of woollen; and over all a white short cloak or mantle, and on their heads they wore turbans.”

VERSE 22

“because the king’s commandment was urgent” - R.S.V. “Because the king’s order was strict.” This same word is translated “severe” in Daniel 2:15 - R.S.V. The attendants had to carry the victims up to drop them in from the top, and because of the added fuel the flames were pouring out, so that the attendants were burned to death before they could get down. In so many instances, the tormentors of the righteous suffer the very penalty they propose for their victims. The lions devour Daniel’s accusers, Daniel 6:24. Haman was hanged on the gallows he prepared for Mordecai, Esther 7:10. The death of the executioners forms a very real contrast with the deliverance of those who had been sentenced to die. This scene will be duplicated when the northern hordes come into the land to slay God’s elect - Isaiah 45:17; 66:15, 16.

VERSE 23

“fell down” - Not cast down, for those who brought the three men to the furnace perished by the flames themselves, and so could not cast them in. The vulgate is interesting - “An angel of the Lord went down with Azariah and his companions into the furnace, and drove out the flame of fire from the furnace; and they walked in

the midst of the furnace.”

VERSE 24

“was astonished” - Petrified as he saw these three not only preserved, but in the custody of God - Psalms 23; 91.

“true O king” - God extracts this confession from their mouth just as He did in Chapter 2:11. See also Gen. 21:17; 22:11.

VERSE 25

“I see four men, and the fourth is like the son of God” - Nebuchadnezzar saw an angel - verse 28. Idolatrous Nebuchadnezzar had no conception of Christ. A single angel was sufficient just as one was all that was needed to stop the lions mouth. Nebuchadnezzar saw this spectacle watching through the mouth or the opening in the side of the furnace. He here is typical of those who will see deliverance of spiritual Israel through the Lord Jesus Christ - Luke 21:27; Jeremiah 19; Isa. 25:7.

“walking in the midst of the fire” - A picture of God’s children walking in the fire of affliction - that which burns off the dross, making us acceptable before God - John 8:36; Psalm 138:7; 23:3-4; walking and waiting for deliverance - Acts 2:26, 27; 2 Cor. 12:8, 9; Gen. 8:12-18; Gen. 15:17.

VERSE 26

“mouth” - A gate or door from which the ashes were removed.

“the most high God” - Does not denounce his gods, but places Yahweh above them all - 2:47. He had probably become intoxicated with his victory over Jerusalem, and felt that Yahweh had been unable to defend it. Laban expresses the same duality of obeisance in Genesis 31:53.

VERSE 27

“princes, governors, captains, kings, councillors” - Dignitaries of the court. These things were not done in a corner.

“fire had no power” - Fulfilling Isa. 43:2; Hebrews 11:34. God alone is a consuming fire - Hebrews 12:29.

“the smell of fire had not passed on them” - This will be the

experience of all who put their implicit trust in Yahweh - Luke 21:27; Jeremiah 16:19; Isaiah 25:7; 1 Peter 1:7. There were trick fire-walkers, but this was of such a supernatural manifestation there could be no doubt. So will be the great and dreadful manifestation of God's might in the last days - Ezek. 38, 39; Zech. 14; Joel 3. See Luke 12:7; 21:18.

VERSE 28

“then Nebuchadnezzar spake” - This recognition and obeisance is typical of the day described in Psalm 72:11, when all kings shall fall down before him. See also Hebrews 8:11.

“blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego” - Same as queen of Sheba - 1 Kings 10:9, and Hiram king of Tyre - 2 Chronicles 2:12. Truly a noble testimony from a heathen king. They had demonstrated the principles of gaining eternal salvation in the showplace of the then known world. Nebuchadnezzar did have a few good qualities - Jeremiah 39:11; 42:12.

“changed the king's word” - Nebuchadnezzar now admits that God's word should be obeyed rather than man's - Acts 5:29.

“yielded their bodies” - Romans 6:6; Galatians 2:20; Matthew 27:44 - not in heathen sacrifices or bowing to man, see Proverbs 16:7.

VERSE 29

“every people, nation, and language” - Typical of the day when all shall know and recognise God - Isaiah 60:12; Psalm 72; Zechariah 14:16-21; Psalm 2:9 - shall dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel. This decree had much to do with keeping the Jews from completely turning to idolatry in the captivity and afterwards - Psalm 76:10. Another example of the way God works in the kingdoms of men, to accomplish His purpose.

VERSE 30

“the king promoted Shadrach” - Points to the day when the redeemed shall become kings and priests and reign on the earth - Revelation 5:10; Matthew 19:28.

CHAPTER 4

VERSE 1

“Nebuchadnezzar the king, unto all people” - This is a regular decree, and is one of the most ancient on record. No doubt this was copied from the state papers of Babylon. Further proof of the authenticity of God’s word.

“Peace” - The usual salutation in the East. It has its foundation in the hope of the coming prince of peace promised in Genesis 3:15.

VERSE 2

“I thought it was good to show” - It was seemly or pleasant before me, Psalm 107:2-8. A part of the decree was a recital of the true wonders wrought by the hand of the true God in His kingdom, and on His person. God had given this kingdom to Nebuchadnezzar - Jeremiah 27:5-8.

VERSE 3

“How great are his signs” - Tokens significant of God’s omnipotent agency. They leave no doubt - they are supernatural - to wit, the flood; the ten plagues; dividing of the Red Sea; etc., with the greatest and most terrifying yet to come.

VERSE 4

“I was at rest” - Wars were over, my kingdom was at peace - I was sole monarch of the world with Syria, Phoenicia, Judea, Egypt, and Arabia under my feet. As I laid at rest in my pride, I had a dream that troubled me (It was probably these victories that fed his ego).

“flourishing” - Green - imagery of a tree - Jeremiah 17:8; Psalm 1; prosperous - Job 15:32. The entire chapter is an exhortation against pride. Blessed are the meek. The Lord requires us to do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with our God.

VERSE 5

“I saw a dream which made me afraid” - This was no ordinary

dream, but like the dream of chapter 2, was a supernatural revelation.

VERSE 6

“bring in all the wise men of Babylon” - It might seem strange that Daniel was not brought in first, but herein we have an act of Divine providence. Flesh must first show its insufficiency to reveal the mysteries that belong to God alone - same situation we find in chapter 2.

VERSE 7

“they did not make known the interpretation” - Flesh in its weakness is utterly incapable to discern or interpret the things which belong to God - Daniel 2:27; 5:8.

VERSE 8

“Belteshazzar” - Keeper of the hid treasures of Bel. Daniel would come in last on account of his position as chief of the governors of the wise men.

“name of my god” - Nebuchadnezzar makes it very clear that his hope is centred entirely in the god of flesh.

“in whom is the spirit of the holy gods” - He credited Daniel’s wisdom to the heathen gods. He may have recognised Yahweh, but certainly he gave Him no pre-eminence above his heathen gods - Genesis 31:53.

VERSE 9

“master of the magicians” - This conclusion unquestionably came from his previous experiences.

“spirit of the holy gods” - The plurality here speaks of their belief in many gods, and also includes Yahweh. This is clear from the word holy. The heathen gods made no claim to purity.

VERSE 10

“I saw and behold” - This dream concerns Nebuchadnezzar himself, and the things that he was about to undergo; and like the rest of Daniel’s prophecies had a dual fulfilment.

“a tree” - Representative of Babylon. Trees are often used to represent nations - Ezek. 31:3. The fig tree is representative of Israel.

VERSE 11

“the tree grew and was strong” - Growth and strength of Babylon.

“reached unto heaven” - Scope and power of its rule.

“to the end of the earth” - Speaks of the universality of its rule.

VERSE 12

“the beasts shadowed under it, the fowls dwelt in the branches, its leaves were fair, its fruit great” - Symbol of glory and power of Babylon - beasts and fowls representative of conquered nations.

“fruit thereof much” - Prosperity of the land.

VERSE 13

“watcher and holy” - Called a watcher because of his ever being on the alert to do God’s bidding, Psalm 103:20; Revelation 4:8; full of eyes - they rest not day or night, Psalm 34:7; Hebrews 1:14; see also Jeremiah 4:16, 17 - Sodom and Gomorrah, Genesis 18:19.

VERSE 14

“Hew down the tree” - Overthrow of Babylon.

VERSE 15

“leave the stump of its roots in the earth” - Even though Babylon was destroyed, yet its roots, idolatry and false doctrines remain until this day. Immortal soul, personal devil, etc., impregnates the so-called religious world today. This is what we are commanded to come out of, Revelation 7:14; 18:4,7.

“a band of iron and brass” - Rome and Greece of Daniel 2. The two main churches of divided Rome were the Roman Catholic church and the Greek Catholic church. As brother Mansfield points out, these two bands keep mankind chained in the superstitions and errors of Babylon the great.

VERSE 16

“Let his heart be changed” - Let him consider himself to be a beast, and even act as such, herding himself among the beasts of the field.

“be changed” - A verb indicating mental derangement.

“let a beast’s heart be given unto him” - Illustrates the brutal, beastly, inhuman rule of mankind through the centuries. See Ecclesiastes 3:18-21. Daniel 2 gives us a man’s conception of himself, illustrated in the beautiful, valuable, metals of the image. Daniel chapter 7 portrays a man as God sees him - an animal. Man must be humbled - Proverbs 16:5.

“let seven times pass over him” - From the Jewish vantage point, a time is a Jewish year of 360 days. From the prophetic standpoint a day is a year - Ezekiel 4:6. 7×360 gives us 2520 years. The overthrow of Jerusalem took place from 603 - 606 B.C. 603 - 606 BC. from 2520 years 1914 - 1917 - the time that Jerusalem was freed from the oppressive rule of the Turk. We have been in a state of war ever since. This was without question a clear indication of the beginning of the end, and should warn us of the nearness of Christ’s return.

VERSE 17

“by the decree of the watchers, and the holy ones” - The watchers are the Elohim that do God’s bidding today - Hebrews 1:14; Psalm 103:20; Exodus 23:20; Genesis 18:21; 48:16; Jeremiah 27:4-5. the Most High rules in the kingdom of men - God never leaves the decision to men - the so-called rulers are only God’s agents.

“giveth it to whomsoever he will” - God rules in the kingdoms of men. He is guiding all events to His final purpose - Jeremiah 27:5; Psalm 75:6,7; 113:7,8.

“setteth up over it the basest of men” - Septuagint, “And will set over it him who is set at nought by men.” This refers to the Lord Jesus Christ - 1 Cor. 1:26-30; Ezek. 21:27. God is actually saying that at the end of 2520 years, dating from the Babylonian reign that He will set Jesus Christ over the nations - 1 Cor. 1:26-30;

Ezek.21:27.

VERSE 18

“O Belteshazzar declare the interpretation thereof” - Here Nebuchadnezzar expresses full confidence in Daniel.

VERSE 19

“Daniel... was astonished for one hour” - Daniel was not puzzled as to the meaning of the dream, but his feeling for the king and for the nation made him reluctant to give the interpretation thereof. It is not easy to deliver judgement against any man wicked or righteous.

VERSE 22

“it is thou O king” - From verse 22 through 27, we have a picture of Gentile rule being humbled in recognition of God. Nebuchadnezzar had now arrived at the zenith of his power. Northwards he possessed Armenia and a considerable portion of Asia minor. In the west Syria, and at one time Egypt; southward his power reached the Persian Gulf; while in the east the Medes and the Elamites were subject to him. Possessing the Mediterranean and Persian Gulf, all the treasures of the then known world were at his command. In his first vision, Nebuchadnezzar saw himself as the golden head of the image. In his pride, on the plains of Dura, he desired the whole image to be of gold, and himself to be that image.

VERSE 25

“they shall drive thee” - Thou shalt be driven - you shall be humbled.

“till thou know the Most High ruleth in the kingdoms of men”

- This is the truth that all men and nations must come to know. God is and will be supreme in all the earth - Numbers 14:21; Isaiah 11:9; Habakkuk 2:14; Daniel 2:44.

VERSE 26

“they commanded” - The watchers - plural - in contrast to the

singular of verse 13

“shall be sure unto thee” - Lit., no successor shall be appointed during his life - Evil-Merodach his son was regent during his father's insanity.

“the heavens do rule” - Yahweh in heaven rules the kingdoms of men. Yahweh and the host of Angels - Ephesians 1:20,21; 3:10; Colossians 1:16.

VERSE 27

“break off thy sins” - Daniel counsels Nebuchadnezzar to repent of his sins of pride, harshness and cruelty. The metaphor is taken from a beast casting off the yoke - Genesis 27:40; Matthew 11:28. Repent and bring forth fruits meet for repentance.

“if it may be” - If Nebuchadnezzar will repent his prosperity and peace will be prolonged.

VERSE 29

“twelve months” - Twelve is a perfect number - signifies governmental perfection - 12 tribes of Israel, 12 Apostles, 12 foundations of the New Jerusalem, etc. Here was certainly sufficient time for repentance.

“in the palace of the kingdom of Babylon” - Nebuchadnezzar had palaces in other towns, but here he was in Babylon - in his own proud capital.

VERSE 30

“is not this great Babylon which I have built” - This is in accordance with the language of the king as recorded on inscriptions dug up by archaeologists today. One such inscription records Nebuchadnezzar as saying, “I finished the great twofold wall of Babylon. I made strong the city of bricks burnt hard as stones, and piled high in huge masses as mountains. Behold, beside the Imgoul-Bel, the impregnable fortifications of Babylon. I made inside Babylon on the eastern bank of the river, such a fortification as no king before me had ever made. I excavated the ditch; with bricks and mortar, I bound its bed; I built above it a strong rampart;

I adorned its gates. The portals and pillars, I plated with bronze. Against presumptuous enemies, the foes of Babylon I made use of great waters like those of the seas. Thus I made strong the defences of Babylon. May it last forever; Babylon the city which is the delight of my eyes, which I have made gracious”.

In this we see the pride of man that was brought low in Babylon, and points to the day when the pride of all mankind will be laid low. The area of Babylon was approximately 200 Square miles. It was surrounded by walls 85 feet wide 335 feet high. Within the walls the city was laid out in smaller towns, separated from each other by parks, plantations, and gardens. It is stated that corn sufficient for the whole population could be grown within the walls. He had completed eight temples, beside the huge temple of Merodach, immediately across the Euphrates facing the royal palace. Instead of repenting like Daniel had counselled, after the allotted twelve months, he now looks out and exclaims, Is this not the great Babylon that I have built. Adam grasped to become as God, and fell, and such has been true of everyone who has made that mistake.

VERSE 31

“A voice” - By this he would be reminded of the declaration of verse 14. History repeats itself - Elijah, Naboth, Ahab, 1 Kings 21:15-22; David and Nathan, 2 Sam. 12:7. Thy kingdom is departed from thee. All thy goods and thy gods are gone in a moment of time.

VERSE 32

“seven times” - Verses 16, 23, 25, 32. 2520 years of animal rule over the nations. 7×360 2520 years. 603-606 + 2520 1914-1917, when Jerusalem was freed from the Turk and the Jews were permitted to return. Nebuchadnezzar’s case was similar to the maniac who dwelt among the tombs in the time of Christ.

VERSE 33

“the thing was fulfilled” - It is generally agreed that the disease

which came upon Nebuchadnezzar was lycanthropy - a form of insanity in which the patient imagines himself to be an animal.

“he did eat grass as oxen” - God looks upon the nations as animals - Daniel 7:4; Ecclesiastes 3:18-21; Proverbs 28:15.

VERSE 34

“At the end of ten days” - The head of Babylon turning to the praise of God types the day soon to come when the nations of the world shall fall down before Yahweh - Psalm 72:8-11.

“lifted up mine eyes unto heaven “ - First indication of his understanding having returned. This is the only source we can turn to for true help and guidance - see Jonah 2: 1, 2, 4.

“praised him” - Psa. 116:12, 14; Mark 5:15, 18, 19.

VERSE 35

“as nothing” - Isaiah 40:15,17.

“according to his will in heaven” - Psa. 115:3; 135:6; Matt. 6:10; Eph. 1:11.

“the army of heaven” - The Elohim.

“none can stay his hand” - Isa. 43:13; 45:9.

“what doest thou” - Job 9:12; Romans 9:20.

VERSE 36

“my reason returned” - His sanity returned - this is typical of the day when the present insanity of the nations will be transformed by worship to Yahweh - Isaiah 2:2-4. Jeremiah 25:15-16 very aptly describes the nations of the world today. Note: Cuneiform inscriptions record a period of at least four years when there was absolutely no activity on the throne of Babylon.

“my counsellors sought unto me” - Desired me to be their head as formerly.

“majesty was added” - My authority was greater than ever before - Job 42:12; Proverbs 22:4; Matt. 6:33.

VERSE 37

“the king of heaven” - How far the king progressed in a belief in God is not clear. In chapter 2:26 his belief was no higher than that

which a heathen has in his own superstitions. In chapter 2:47, Nebuchadnezzar acknowledges that Daniel's God is a God of gods, a Lord of kings and a revealer of secrets. In chapter 3:15 he is represented as setting himself above all gods, and even after the miracle of the fiery furnace he only acknowledges God on the same level as Bel-Merodach. See Revelation 15:3; 16:7; Psalm 51:4. It is supposed that Nebuchadnezzar lived 17 years after his restoration and that he never again turned to idolatry He died about 564 B.C.

CHAPTER 5

VERSE 1

Time: approximately 30 years after the events of chapter four. Belsazzar: Great grandson of Nebuchadnezzar. After the death of Nebuchadnezzar, his son Evil-Merodach took the throne and was succeeded by his son Belshazzar. See Jeremiah 52:31; 2 Kings 25:27; Jer.27:6-8. There is, however, a seeming contradiction in verse 11. Many Hebrew scholars feel that the repetition of the word “father” means that the queen mother has reference to his grandfather. If this is not the meaning then there would be idle repetition which the word of God cannot be guilty of. The Hebrew of father is *ab* meaning ancestor. Four kings then comprise the span of Babylon’s rule: Nabopolassar; Nebuchadnezzar; Evil Merodach; and Belshazzar.

“made a great feast” - Probably a state banquet. to a thousand of his lords - There is nothing unusual in the large number of guests. The Septuagint doubles this number. Daniel at this time would have been about 83 years old. The king placed all his confidence in flesh. He felt that the fortifications of Babylon were impregnable. The world today, modern Babylon likewise, places his trust and faith in man, but just as the Babylon of yesterday was overthrown, so will modern Babylon meet its doom, Revelation 16:15-19.. See also Jeremiah 50:24; 51:39, 57; also compare with Jeremiah 52:33.

VERSE 2

“whiles he tasted the wine” - i.e., he relished it. When the wine hit its mark then wisdom departed. Drunkenness one of the works of flesh, Galatians 5.

“the gold and Silver vessels from the temple” - Babylonians were famous for their over indulgence in drinking. The king thus mocked at God, but the temple was to have its revenge; see Jeremiah 51:6-8.

“his father Nebuchadnezzar” - Belshazzar was the grandson of Nebuchadnezzar, but the word in the Hebrew signifies “ancestor”

and is used in this sense in 1 Kings 15:11-13; Romans 9:10. Here is a brief outline of the history of Nebuchadnezzar's descendants. He was succeeded by Evil-Merodach, 2 Kings 25:27; who was slain after a reign of two years by Nergilissar, a general and son-in-law of Nebuchadnezzar. The usurper reigned four years, leaving the throne to his son, a mere child. In less than a year he was murdered and Nabonidus, a Babylonian lord, foremost in the plot, ascended the throne, marrying a daughter of Nebuchadnezzar. Cylinders found at Ur reveal that Belshazzar, a grandson of Nebuchadnezzar - Jer. 27:7 - was the eldest son of Nabonidus; that he was created regent, and ruled with his father; and that he was in Babylon, while his father was away, when Cyrus took the city. Critics of the Bible used to say that Belshazzar was a fiction, because history recorded that Nabonidus was reigning when the city fell; but the discoveries of archaeologists have confirmed the Bible story, and reveal that Belshazzar was reigning with Nabonidus his father.

VERSE 3

“vessels taken out of the temple” - See Jer. 50:20; Dan. 5:23. In the Babylonian Talmud, there is mentioned that Belshazzar gave the command because of a wrong calculation he had made. He knew the prophecy of Jeremiah of the seventy years of captivity. Nebuchadnezzar had reigned 45 years; Evil Merodach 23 years; and he himself had been reigning 2 years. The time period was up, and nothing had happened - “why store the vessels any longer” - he of course was wrong.

VERSE 4

“and praised the gods of gold” - Babylon was saturated with gods of all sorts, and of all metals - wooden and stone gods also. Belshazzar seems to be defying God's prophets who had decreed the victory of Cyrus, the 70 years captivity of Judah and the fall of Babylon.

VERSE 5

“fingers of a man's hand” - The fingers were collected around

the writing instrument as in the act of writing. The hand was that of an angel. The inference is that the hand remained until Daniel came in, verse 24. The achievements of the king were written on these walls, see Proverbs 16:18; Acts 12:21-23. Robert Koldewey's excavations at Babylon have uncovered just such a large banqueting hall with walls of white plaster.

“over against the candlestick” - It is not without significance that the lampstand in the Scripture is the symbol of God's truth, and that this is the medium that exposes coming judgement. Barnes says it was the actual lampstand taken from the temple.

VERSE 6

“the king's countenance was changed” - Lit, his colour or brightness was changed, Job 14:2.0 - changing of the face in death. Here is a very natural description of fear that is easily imagined.

1. The face would grow pale;
2. His mind would become greatly agitated;
3. Extreme fear usually causes severe pain in the lower part of the back and kidneys;
4. His entire body would tremble so that his knees would shake;
5. As a great and final climax,

“the king cried aloud” for help - Literally called with strength, see Daniel 3:4; 4:14; 6.

“Joints and loins” - from *harch*, that is, the lower part of the back, see Psalm 69:2.3; Nahum 2:10. Where has the king's bravery gone? There is such a thing as conscience. It is like a policeman entering a crowded room - the guilty become uncomfortable.

VERSE 7

“astrologers, the Chaldeans, and the soothsayers” - Explained in the previous verses. In brief this was the cream of Babylon's wise men comparable to the president's cabinet and the supreme court. See Isa. 47:13. He bypasses the wisdom of God, just as does the world of today.

“he shall be the third ruler in the kingdom” - Probably because Nabonidus would be the first and Belshazzar as his regent, second.

“whosoever shall read this writing” - He knew that this was out of the ordinary. That its message of necessity would be vital.

“clothed with scarlet” - More properly translated purple. It was a sign of royal dignity among the Persians, Esther 8:15.

“the chain of gold” - Another sign of princely dignity, Genesis 41:42.

VERSE 8

“they could not read the writing” - The reason they could not read this writing was that it was written in pure Hebrew instead of the Chaldean character. The pagan wise men must fall so that God’s name may be exalted, Genesis 41:8; Daniel 2:3-12. It of course is like the day when the haughtiness of man shall be brought low, Psalm 72; Isaiah 2. The only true explanation of the course lies in the supernatural character of the inscription and the inspiration of Daniel.

VERSE 9

“greatly alarmed” - Same verb is used in verse 6; 4:5:19. There was room for alarm when professional wise men failed to interpret writings. His courtiers were likewise thrown into confusion.

VERSE 10

“the queen came” - This is generally conceded to be the widow of Nebuchadnezzar, that is, Belshazzar’s grandmother. If this be true she would be queen Amiyt, daughter of Astyages, sister of Darius the Mede. This is according to Polyhistor, and Calmet. There is another school of thought that says she was Nitocris a lady of eminent wisdom and discretion, she was said to have been queen when Cyrus took the city. She was the chief direction of public affairs. She also was the mother of Labynithus; who many think was the same as Belshazzar. Another school of thought places this queen as the daughter of Nebuchadnezzar, wife of Nabonidus, mother of Belshazzar, who would remember Daniel’s sensational activities in the courts of Babylon.

VERSE 11

“there is a man in thy kingdom” - Daniel had been forgotten. Usually when a king changed thrones there was also a change in the courts of the wise men, just as it is today in the cabinet and governmental posts. The eminence Daniel once enjoyed - Daniel 2:48 - had been taken from him by the elevation of ungodly kings, and he had been forgotten. In similar manner the influence of the truth will be more and more lose its appeal as the end draws nearer.

“in whom is the spirit of the holy gods” - The queen mother remembers and repeats Nebuchadnezzar’s language, Daniel 4:8, 9, 18. As Daniel was probably, according to the oriental custom, deprived of the office to which Nebuchadnezzar had promoted him as “master of the magicians” - chapter 4:9 - at the king’s death, Belshazzar might easily be ignorant of his services.

“the king...thy father the king...thy father” - This repetition of Nebuchadnezzar’s name in relation to Daniel emphasises the respect Nebuchadnezzar had for Daniel. When all hope is lost man turns to God and the Bible in desperation.

VERSE 12

“dissolving of doubts” - Literally a dissolver or unraveller of knots.

VERSE 13

“Art thou that Daniel” - He calls him by his Hebrew name, probably because his Chaldean name is so nearly that of his. Daniel would now be nearly ninety years old.

“the captivity of Judah” - Captive Jews residing in Babylon. This shows that Belshazzar did now remember him after having been reminded.

VERSE 15

“of the thing” - The whole of this miraculous transaction.

VERSE 16

“dissolve doubts” - Untie knots.

VERSE 17

“let thy gifts to be thyself” - Daniel refused the king’s offer of reward at first, but afterwards accepted it. In this way he demonstrated truth without respect to a possible bribe. These gifts could be of little use for the city in just a few hours was to be taken and pillaged.

VERSE 18

“the most high God” - Compare verses 18-21 with chapter 4:16, 17, 22-25.

“God gave” - It was not his own birth or talents which gave him the vast empire as he thought - the object of God’s visit was to humble him.

“majesty” - This majesty was in the eyes of his subjects only, not God. To this man will I look, says Jehovah. To him that is of an humble and contrite spirit and trembleth at my word.

“glory” - From his fleshly victories.

“honour” - From the enlargement and decoration of the city.

VERSE 19

“whom he would he slew” - A picture of an absolute monarchy - a world dictator. The genuine character of a despot whose will is the only rule of conduct.

VERSE 20

“but when his heart was lifted up” - Despite his power or any ruler’s position, it is God that rules in the kingdoms of men, Daniel 4:17; 5:21.

VERSE 21

“his heart was made like the beasts” - That is, he desired to dwell with them.

VERSE 22

“hast not humbled thine heart” - You have not erred through ignorance, but through deliberate contempt of God, even though you had all the warnings in the time of your grandfather. These

things were not done in a corner.

VERSE 23

“gods of Silver” - The Israelites were his subjects but he had no right to blaspheme their God. For similar instances of men exceeding their limits of authority see Isaiah 10:5-18; Jeremiah 51:20-25; Hosea 1:4, 5.

“whose are all thy ways” - Jeremiah 10:23.

“not glorified” - Dishonoured.

“the God in whose hand thy breath is” - Without God we cannot live, Acts 17:28.

VERSE 24

“Then” - Not only that time, but because of this - also when thou liftedst up thyself against the Lord.

“the part of thy hand” - The fore part of the fingers.

“sent from him” - From God. The hand is removed, and the writing made clear for Daniel to see.

VERSE 25

“Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin” - Literally, numbered, weighed and divided. Mene repeated for emphasis - see Genesis 41:32.

VERSE 26

“Mene” - God hath fixed the number of years of thine empire, and that number is now complete. “finished it” - Brought it to an end. The original the idea of handing it over. It is used in Ezra 7:19, “to deliver.”

VERSE 27

“Tekel” - Weighed in the balances. The Egyptians thought that Osiris weighed the actions of the dead in a literal balance. The Babylonians may have had the same notion. See Job 6:2-3; 31:6; Proverbs 24:12; Psa. 62:9.

“found wanting” - Too light before God, the weigher of actions - 1 Samuel 2:3; Psalm 62:9. Like spurious gold or silver - Jeremiah 6:30.

VERSE 28

“Peres” - Lit., dividers. Alludes to the division by the Medes and Persians - lit., severed from thee. Not only was Babylon to be divided, but it would be given to the Persians. It also means “to break”.

VERSE 29

“clothed Daniel with scarlet” - Daniel was thus restored to a similar rank to what he had held under Nebuchadnezzar, chapter 2:48. The king had promised and could not go back on his word. He may also have chosen this way to despise the prophecy of his doom as an idle threat. In verse 17 he declined this offer. This insignia of honour would be witness of God’s glory to the world of his having by God’s aid interpreted the mystic characters. The cause of his elevation would also secure the favour of the new dynasty (chapter 6:2). For both Daniel and his captive countrymen the capture of the city was imminent as Herodotus confirms. Cyrus diverted the Euphrates into a new channel and guided by two deserters, marched by the dry bed into the city whilst the Babylonians were carousing at an annual feast to their gods, Isaiah 21:5; 41:27; Jeremiah 50:38, 39; 51:36. As to Belshazzar’s being slain see Isaiah 14:18-20; 21:2-9; Jeremiah 50:29-35; 51:57. The scarlet here was most likely purple. The gold chain about the neck, an emblem of magisterial authority - pointing to the day when those who remain faithful shall be exalted to places of honour when modern Babylon is destroyed.

VERSE 30

“Belshazzar was slain” - Profane records agree with this - Nabonidus was spared. Jeremiah’s prophecy was thus fulfilled, Jeremiah 51:29-32,39,57; Isa. 48: 14.

VERSE 31

“Darius the Median” - This was Cyaxares II, the son and successor of Astyages, B.C. 569-536. Although Cyrus was leader of the assault, yet all was done under the name of Darius. This is

the reason he is mentioned here. In chapter 6:28 we see the Daniel was not ignorant of Cyrus' share in the capture of Babylon. Isaiah 13:17; 21:2, confirms Daniel's account in making the Medes the leading nation destroying Babylon. Also see Jeremiah 51:11,28. Darius was not a name, but a title commonly used by the rulers of Medo-Persia, and signified ruler. It was similar to the title Caesar assumed by the rulers of Rome.

CHAPTER 6

VERSE 1

“Darius” - Not the name of a man, but a title.

“one hundred and twenty princes” - A chief for every province which belonged to the Medo-Persian Empire. After the victories of Cambyses and Darius Hystaspes, this area was enlarged to 127 Provinces - Esther 1:1.

VERSE 2

“three presidents” - Thus each would have jurisdiction over forty of these chiefs.

“Daniel was first” - We can see how Daniel’s character and ability was recognised in Nebuchadnezzar’s court.

VERSE 3

“was preferred” - Literally he outshone the others. The pronoun “this” is prefixed to Daniel’s name so as to point him out as the favoured one already mentioned.

“the king thought to set him over the whole realm” - Make him second only to the king on the throne. This would automatically create jealousy in the hearts of the other rulers, and dignitaries in the courts of Babylon.

VERSE 4

“sought to find occasion against Daniel” - They could find no accusation against Daniel He was faithful to the king, but he was also faithful to his God. It was from this vantage point that they would now strike.

“concerning the kingdom” - That is in his official capacity. The plan of his conspirators was to place Daniel in such a position that his civil and religious duties would clash with each other. We can certainly see the spirit of jealousy at work.

VERSE 5

“except we find it against him concerning the law of his God” -

How wonderful it will be if this is the only accusation against us in the day of judgement.

VERSE 6

“Then these presidents and princes assembled together” - Here we are reminded of those rulers who conferred to put Christ to death - Matthew 26:3,4

“assembled together” - Margin, or “came tumultuously” - Such conduct was very unusual in eastern courts where as a rule strictest order was observed. This breach of etiquette must have prepared the king to expect some terrible crisis in the state. Had they not rushed the king, their request probably would not have been granted.

“King Darius live forever” - A hypocritical salutation from flesh.

VERSE 7

“All the presidents” - This was not true, for Daniel was the chief president - verse 2, 24 - and he certainly had not agreed to such a law. By consenting to this proposition, Darius would acknowledge the Babylonian system of theology which made the king the living manifestation of all the gods while at the same time his subjects would give him homage. Thus his ego would be fed, and any plot against Daniel would be overlooked.

“whosoever shall ask a petition” - Psychology now enters the picture. Through flattery and false pretences, the trap is now being baited in an all-out effort to have Daniel removed. Note the similarity to the betrayal of our Master. First of all they had lied, for all the presidents of whom Daniel was chief, had not consulted and agreed to this matter. Daniel had nothing to do with it.

“den of lions” - Ancient monarchs were fond of menageries. This was so well known in fact that a caging of a lion is used as imagery - Ezekiel 19:1-9.

VERSE 8

“sign the writing” - Literally, record the decree so that there can be no possibility of its being recalled, compare with Esther 8:8.

“according to the law of the Medes and Persians “ - Under the Medes and Persians, once a law was passed with the usual formalities the king could not change them at his own will. After Darius’ death the order is the Persians and the Medes - Esther 1:14, 19.

VERSE 10

“When Daniel knew the writing was signed” - Daniel could well see the trap that was being laid for him, but Daniel also knew whom he served. He did not lean on the arm of flesh.

“toward Jerusalem” - 1 Kings 8:33-35; Psalm 5:7; 27:2. His mind was closed to Babylon, but open to Jerusalem - Matthew 6:6. Daniel was close to 90 years old, but his faith was still secure.

“upon his knees” - A position of humility.

“three times a day” - Psalm 55:17. The third, sixth, and ninth hour - our nine, twelve, and three o’clock.

“as he did aforetime” - Daniel’s God came first. He cared not who was present or what obstacle might be in the way. See Acts 4:15-21. Daniel was satisfied to leave the consequences in the hands of God, Heb. 11:33.

VERSE 11

“These men assembled” - Or ran hastily so as to come upon Daniel suddenly and detect him in the act.

VERSE 12

“shall be cast into the den of lions” - This den could have either been a royal menagerie where wild beasts were kept for the king’s pleasure and public amusement; or as in many cases it could have been a means of capital punishment.

VERSE 13

“Daniel, which is of the children of the captivity of Judah” - This was a deliberate attempt to turn the king against a people so universally disliked.

VERSE 14

“the king was sore displeased with himself” - He had every reason to be sorely displeased, having been carried away by flattery.

“till the going down of the sun” - Darius utilised every possible bit of time in a valiant effort to deliver Daniel.

VERSE 15

“Then these men assembled” - In the original it seems to indicate that Darius had called this meeting in desperation, and now these presidents and their supporters move in, to urge the execution of the law, and so prevent its repeal.

VERSE 16

“Then the king commanded” - With a heavy heart Darius must now carry out this murderous plot completely against his will.

“they brought Daniel” - According to eastern custom, the sentence was generally executed on the day it was pronounced.

“thy God whom thou servest continually, He will deliver thee” - What a tremendous tribute - for 70 years in the courts of Babylon, Daniel’s record was that he served God continually. He may not save his children from dying, but he will save them out of death. Daniel now had the same kind of opportunity to show his fidelity to God as his three companions had exhibited before. The lions were not less terrible than the fiery furnace.

VERSE 17

“a stone was brought” - All this precaution served the purposes of the divine providence. There could be no trick or illusion here. If Daniel was preserved it would be by the power of God. Note the similarity of the burial of our Master and the sealing of the tomb by the soldiers which thing has served as one of the strongest proofs of the certainty of his resurrection.

“the king sealed it with his own signet” - This would prevent Darius delivering Daniel, but it also guarded Daniel’s life should he escape the lion’s den.

VERSE 18

“passed the night fasting “ - He neither ate nor drank, he had no music to comfort him, he passed the night without sleep. All of this points out his great sincerity and when it is considered that Darius could not have been less than sixty-two years of age at this time, it shows more fully the depth of his concern.

VERSE 19

“the king arose very early” - By the break of day.

VERSE 20

“he cried with a lamentable voice” - His heart full of grief affected his speech.

“servant of the living God” - The king was convinced that unless his God saved him, his destruction was inevitable. The phrase “living God” is remarkable coming as it does from a heathen king - 1 Samuel 17:36.

VERSE 22

“my God hath sent his angel” - The same overshadowing protection that had been given to Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego in the fiery furnace - the same that was given to our Lord, and is given to us - 1 Cor. 10:13.

“before Him innocency was found in me” - Because I was innocent God has preserved me. This types the Lord Jesus Christ - Acts 2:27; Psalm 16:10. It also speaks of those who have obtained this same innocence through the Lord Jesus Christ, and thus will be preserved - Colossians 3:3,4.

VERSE 23

“no manner of hurt was found upon him” - Here is another example of the faith that is pleasing to God - Hebrews 11:33. Here is another type of Christ - John 19:36. “A bone of him shall not be broken” - Psa. 34:20; Exod. 12:46; Num. 9:12. Paul was also delivered from symbolic lions - the powers that be - 2 Tim.4:17.

VERSE 24

“they brought those men” - This is a picture of what happened to those who crucified our Lord - “his blood be on us and our children” -Matt. 27:25. The destroyers of the earth will be destroyed - Revelation 11:18; 18:24. The fact that they were devoured immediately shows that the lions were hungry and only the providence of God saved Daniel.

“their children and their wives” - This was in accordance with the ideas of the ancient world and the Old Testament - 2 Samuel 21:5-9; Esther 9:13.

VERSE 25

“then king Darius wrote unto all nations people and languages in all the earth.” - Darius, thoroughly humbled by the power of God’s revelation, typifies the day when all kings shall fall down before Messiah, Psalm 72:10, 11; Isaiah 2:17. Note similarity of the decree - Daniel 3:29.

VERSE 26

“I make a decree that...men tremble and fear before the God of Daniel” - Just as in the case of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego - Daniel 3:29 - God was exalted.

VERSES 26 & 27

“for he is the living God... “ - Note Darius’ tenfold description of Yahweh:

1. **“He is the living God”** - The author and giver of life - all others are dead gods.
2. **“He is steadfast forever”** - All things change, but he is unchangeable.
3. **“And his kingdom”** - He has made all things, so he governs all things.
4. **“his kingdom shall not be destroyed”** - No human power can prevail against it, because it is upheld by his omnipotence.
5. **“his dominion is without end”**- It is an everlasting dominion under an everlasting rule, by an everlasting God.

6. **“he delivereth”** - He delivers them that are in danger and bondage.
7. **“he rescueth”** - He rescues those who have fallen into the hands of their enemies.
8. **“he worketh signs in the heavens”** - The most high rules in the kingdoms of men - Daniel 2:28; 4:17,32.
9. **“and wonders upon earth”** - Showing that both the ruling powers and the inhabitants of this earth are under his sway.
10. **“he hath delivered Daniel”** - Before our own eyes he has given the fullest proof of his power and goodness.

VERSE 28

“so this Daniel prospered” - Daniel had served five kings: Nebuchadnezzar, Evil Merodach, Belshazzar, Darius and Cyrus. Few courtiers have had so long a reign, served so many masters, been more successful in their management of public affairs, more faithful to God, or have left such a sterling example to posterity. The Septuagint has an addition: “And king Darius was gathered to his fathers and Cyrus the Persian received his kingdom.” This final verse links chapter 1:21 with 10:1.

DARE TO BE A DANIEL

Chapter 6 brings us to the end of the first part of the prophecy of Daniel. Chapter 7 begins part 2.

CHAPTER 7

VERSE 1

“In the first year of Belshazzar” - This is the same Belshazzar who was slain at the taking of Babylon - see chapter 5. Chronologically, chapter five should have followed this. It has been suggested that the reason for its position was so that all historic parts might be put together and the prophetic be by themselves.

“told the sum of the matter” - That Daniel might not forget this extraordinary dream, he wrote down the leading particulars when he arose. This took place approximately 48 years after Nebuchadnezzar’s vision of the image.

VERSE 2

“visions by night” - In scripture night or darkness speaks of Gentile times - descriptive of humanity outside the gospel hope - Eph.2:11, 12; Isa. 5:20; 9:2; 29:18; 42:7; 60:2; John 1:5; 8:12; 12:35; 1 John 1:5; 2:8; 9:11.

“Four winds of heaven strove upon the great sea” - Wind in scripture sometimes refers to armies, and the judgements of God - Jeremiah 4:11-13. The winds were not all blowing at once, but successively, and at long intervals; and with each blowing we have a resulting change in the kingdoms represented by the beasts.

“of heaven” - Heaven here is used of ruling powers, just as it is in so many other places in scripture - 2 Pet.3:5,7, 12, 13; Isaiah 1:2; 34:4-6; 65:17; Acts 2:19,20.

“upon the great sea” - The Mediterranean sea is the one referred to here, and deals in particular with those kingdoms which surrounded this body of water. This will also be the scene of

mortal man's last great stand. Sea in scripture is representative many times of people and nations - Isa. 57:20; Rev. 17:15.

VERSE 3

“four great beasts” - Beasts used in a prophetic sense in Scripture refer to nations - Proverbs 28:15; Jeremiah 12:9. Nebuchadnezzar saw the kingdoms of this world through the eye of flesh, and as such they were pictured as a luminous warrior - Daniel 2:31. In this seventh chapter they are revealed as God sees the kingdoms of men - as wild beasts tearing each other to pieces - Daniel 7:17. Israel is compared to sheep in their midst - Matthew 10:16.

“came up from the sea” - From the general area of the Mediterranean. It is interesting to note that all five universal empires have and will come from this area of the world's surface.

“diverse one from another” - Just as the metals of the image were completely different, so were the kingdoms which they represented.

VERSE 4

“The first was like a lion” - The lion was the symbol of the Chaldean powers of Assyria, and Babylon - Jeremiah 50:17. The spade of the archaeologist has unearthed many huge images of lions at both Nineveh and Babylon.

“eagle's wings” - The huge outstretched eagle's wings symbolised the territory over which the kingdom of the Ninevite-Assyrian ruled - Jeremiah 50:17 - “Israel is a scattered sheep; the lions have driven him away: first the king of Assyria hath devoured



“THE FIRST WAS LIKE A LION” - DANIEL 7:4

him; and last this Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon hath broken his bones." Wings are used in Scripture as a symbol of overshadowing protection - Psalm 91:4; Luke 13:34.

"the wings were plucked" - As the central administration of Syria weakened, the provinces of its empire revolted against the domination of Nineveh, the capital of Assyria, and with the downfall of this city the power passed to Babylon. Many years before the Deity had punished the king of Assyria, and his land for scattering the ten tribes by transferring the dominion over the Nimrod empire from Nineveh to Babylon - Isaiah 37; Nahum 1,2,3.

"make to stand upon its feet like a man" - This Chaldean power rose again, but instead of the capital being Nineveh it was now in Babylon.

"A man's heart was given to it" - This speaks of the humane rule that emanated from Babylon in contrast to the cruel rule that was characteristic of Nineveh.

VERSE 5

"Behold another beast" - This second beast is comparable to the silver of the image in Daniel 2. The transfer of world power from Babylon to the Medes and Persians took place about B.C. 542. Its mission was to restore Judah's commonwealth and extend the boundary of the kingdom of men.

"a bear" - Just as the lion symbolised Babylon, now the bear becomes the symbol of Medo-Persia. Its dominion extended from India to Ethiopia over a hundred and



"A SECOND, LIKE TO A BEAR" - DANIEL 7:5

twenty-seven provinces. The ancient Persians represented themselves by the ram - Daniel 8:3. Why are they represented here by a bear? Dr. Thomas suggested that at the time of the end the Persians will lose sovereignty over their territory to the Russian bear, when they join Gog's invasion - Ezekiel 38-39. The bear will be the Persian component of the image in the latter days.

“it raised up itself on one side” - The reign of the bear began under a Mede and in two years passed by inheritance to Cyrus, a Persian. This change in rule was represented to Daniel by the words that “it raised up itself on one side”. Darius was the only Mede to rule and he ruled two years while the Persians ruled for 206 years, and nine months.

“three ribs in its mouth” - This takes us to Daniel 6:1-4 - the three divisions of the empire ruled over by three presidents of whom Daniel was chief. The ram in the eighth chapter with horns of unequal height, is another symbol for the same government: the unequal elevation of the sides of the bear, and the different altitude of the ram's horns are conditions representative of the same dynastic peculiarity. “The higher horn came up last” - Daniel 8:3.

VERSE 6

“Another like a leopard” - We come now to the third universal empire analogous to the brass of the image. This kingdom was of the brazen-coated Greeks. Just as the leopard was swift to the prey, so were the conquests of Alexander the Great. In 334 B.C. he defeated the power of Persia, and Greece became the universal world empire. It answers to the goat with the



"ANOTHER, LIKE A LEOPARD" - DANIEL 7:6

four horns pointing to the four winds in the eighth chapter. The body of the leopard represents the Grecian empire before it was divided: and each head one of the subsequent divisions.

“upon the back four wings” - Answering to the four-fold divisions of Alexander’s forces, by which his conquests were completed with such rapidity. From Macedonia he rapidly spread his conquests east dominating the then known world and extending further until a portion of India was brought under his control. Then at the height of his power, and when only a young man, he died in a drunken orgy, and so his power came to an end.

“four heads” - Upon the death of Alexander, a long period of war ensued which resulted in the Grecian empire being divided by his generals into four divisions - Daniel 11:4. This took place in B.C. 301. These four divisions were as follows:

1. **First head** - The kingdom of the south which included Egypt, Libya, Arabia, Cele - Syria and Palestine under the Ptolemies - the name of a line of Graeco- Egyptian kings who ruled from the death of Alexander the Great till the Roman subjugation of Egypt in 31 B.C. There were thirteen Ptolemy kings.

2. **Second head** - The kingdom of the north-west, including Thrace, Bythinia, etc., or the Thracio-Macedonian.

3. **Third head** - The kingdom of the Northeast, comprehending the rest of Asia inclusive of Babylon and its province; and extending beyond the Euphrates to the Indus. India beyond that great river, though under this head revolted; so that the Indus became its boundary. This was the Macedo-Babylonish kingdom of the Seleucidae.

4. **Fourth head** - The kingdom of the west embracing Macedonia and Greece. The lion, the bear, the leopard, and its third head or kingdom of the north, all established themselves in the city of Babylon where Alexander held as it were, the states-general of the world and which he had resolved to make the throne of his empire, but the decree of heaven was against this city. See Isaiah 14:22,23; 13:19,22. The purpose of Alexander was frustrated by death; and by B.C. 293, Babylon became an uninhabited desert by the inundation of the Euphrates, and the building of Seleucia on the

banks of the Tigris about 40 miles above, to which its citizens removed. Thus Daniel 4:14, 15 was fulfilled. The tree of Babylon was hewn down, its branches lopped, its leaves shaken off, and its fruit scattered; so that the nations got away from under it and their rulers from its branches. Daniel 4:15 tells us that regardless of this the stump of his roots would remain in the earth. This it did under the sovereignty of the third head of the leopard for almost 250 years until it was taken over by the Roman empire in B.C. 65. There are four heads of the leopard and four horns of the goat, but only two figure in the prophecy of Daniel. This is indicated in the two thighs of brass. The Bible is only interested in those two powers which pertain to Judah, the Holy land, and the saints in the time of the end, i.e. the king of the north and the king of the south - Exposition of Daniel.

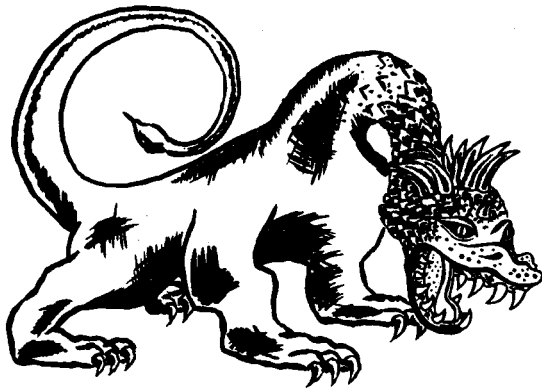
VERSE 7

“After this I saw in the night visions” - See note on verse two.

“it was dreadful and terrible and strong exceedingly, and it had great iron teeth” - The teeth connect this beast with the iron legs and iron element of the iron-clay feet and toes. Its claws were of brass - verse 19. This relates the beast to the power represented by the brazen parts of the image.

“it devoured and brake in pieces” - The destruction by the mouth of Rome has been seen in the dark ages as the saints of God were martyred.

“and stamped the residue with the feet of it” - The feet of the image and the feet of the dragon - two legs of the



“A FOURTH BEAST, DREADFUL AND TERRIBLE” - DANIEL 7:7

image, Eastern and Western Rome, Rome and Constantinople. This stamping will occur in the events that take place as the image - indicative and representative of the kingdoms of men walks to Armageddon - man's last stand. So just as this power destroyed at first with his mouth so he will in the future try to destroy with his feet and claws.

“it had ten horns” - Both the horns of the dragon and the toes of the image represent kingly powers or actually the ten divisions from which came Europe today. They are the kingdoms of men that will exist until they are destroyed by Christ and his immortalised saints.

VERSE 8

“there came up among them another little horn” - There were already ten horns. This makes eleven, and Daniel characterises it as a “little horn”.

“before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots”- Before Rome was divided in ten parts, it was divided in two as seen by the legs of the image. The headquarters of these two divisions were Rome in the west - headquarters of the holy Roman Catholic - and Constantinople in the east - head-quarters of the Greek Catholic church. Roman Catholicism was forced upon the peoples of Europe, and when they resisted the supremacy of the Pope, they were compelled by military might to accept his control. Gibbon, in his history of the decline and fall of the Roman Empire records how the emperor of the Franks - Pepin - in the year 758 A.D. gave to the Pope the states of the church, viz., three kingdoms in Italy: the Exarchate of Ravenna, the kingdom of Lombards, and the State of Rome. These were confirmed by his son, the Emperor Charlemagne, and represented by the triple crown worn by the Pope. Charlemagne did more than anybody else to establish the supremacy of the Pope, and he used his army constantly to this end. In his conquests three powers - or horns - were completely overthrown:

1. the Heruli,
2. the Ostrogoths, and

3. the Vandals.

In order to make room for itself, it subdued three of the ten horns and incorporated their territories into its own dominion. This made seven divisions with the eighth power standing over it as an Emperor. This is shown by the description.

“behold in this horn were eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking great things “ - This power is further identified in verse 25 in that it spake great words against the most high, thinking to change times and laws. Its connection with high ones, times and laws shows that the horn, eyes and mouth are emblematic of civil, military and ecclesiastical power. The power manifested itself in Rome in A. D, 800, and was known as the Holy Roman Empire - the horn has remained in Rome, but the eyes and the mouth have gone throughout the earth. The eyes and mouth represent the organization of Papal Rome. Through the priests reporting back to headquarters, the Pope’s eyes are everywhere. The mouth issuing the decrees through this network from Rome holds millions in bondage.

VERSE 9

“I beheld till the thrones were cast down” - RSV, “Thrones were placed” - The thrones were made ready for the judgements of God that were about to be poured upon the earth, Psalm 149.

“the ancient of days” - This is Yahweh. In verse 13, the Son of Man - the Lord Jesus Christ - is said to come before Him. When this prophecy was originally given, Yahweh had not been manifested in flesh. He has since been born - he has ascended to heaven to receive a kingdom and to return, Luke 19:1-15. When Christ rules in Jerusalem, it will be a manifestation of God ruling for he will be one with God, John 17; Isa. 9:6-9.

“whose garment was white as snow” - This is a symbol of righteousness - Isa. 1:18; Rev. 19:8.

“hair like wool” - White - speaks of righteousness.

“his throne like the fiery flame” - A manifestation of the Spirit of God.

“his wheels are burning fire “ - The significance of these wheels

is revealed to us in Ezekiel chapters 1 and 10. They represent the same as the living creatures of Revelation 5:8-10. God as the hub - the source of immortality manifested in the host of the redeemed which no man can number.

VERSE 10

“A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him” - This speaks of the coming judgements of God that are to be poured out on the kingdoms of men - Ezekiel 38:19-23; Joel 3:9-16; Isaiah 2:11-22; Zechariah 14:1-5. The multitudinous host are referred to as the name of Yahweh - Isaiah 30:26, 27. They are a people of the name of Yahweh - Acts 15:14. How Yahweh will use this immortalised host is called out in Psalm 149:4-9.

“thousand thousands... and ten thousand times ten thousand” - The host which no man can number - Revelation 7:9-17. A cloud of witnesses, Heb. 12:1.

“the judgement was set and the books were opened” - This is the day in which those found in the Lamb's book of life awake to everlasting life, and to a participation in the judgement upon the kingdoms of men. This is the day when those that are not found in this book of life are cast into the burning flame that destroys the body of the dragon - Revelation 20:15; 21:27.

VERSE 11

“I beheld” - These words speak to us of the one from which nothing is hidden, that is, the all seeing Yahweh of Israel who neither slumbers or sleeps - Psalm 121:3, 4. To those who sin against him, this is a frightening thought. To those who place their trust in him, it is comfort in the greatest degree.

“the horn” - This is the Pope or the power we saw in verse eight. This is the iniquitous system denounced throughout God's holy word. This horn will speak against Christ, and the immortalised saints in a desperate effort to crush them.

“I beheld even till the beast was slain” - This speaks of the combined phase of Armageddon, that is Eastern and Western Rome - two legs of the image: Rome and Constantinople. The

Constantinople - present day Istanbul - phase being the political phase which will be dominated by Russia. This will be destroyed first - Zechariah 14; Ezekiel 38; 39; Joel 3. Rome, the ecclesiastical phase will be destroyed last. In the main however, they represent the complete Armageddon picture, and will be destroyed. This will be the work of Christ and his immortalised saints - Psa. 149:5-9.

VERSE 12

“the rest of the beasts had their dominion taken away” - As we have just read the fourth beast, Rome, will have been utterly destroyed, but the nations represented by the other three beasts will remain even though their dominion or ruling power has been taken away. They will be ruled over by Christ and the saints - Revelation 5:9-10. Mortal nations shall be in the earth - Isa. 65:17- 25; 14:16; Zech. 8:1-8. This is the millennium, or one thousand years - Revelation 20:4. This will be a time of preparation for immortality. At the end of this period there will be a second resurrection, judgement and reward - Revelation 20:6-15. Those that remain will be made immortal. Death will be swallowed up in victory - 1 Cor. 15:22-28, 51-58. Yahweh’s purpose with the earth will then be complete. God will be all in all - Numbers 14:21; Isa. 11:9; Hab. 2:14.

VERSE 13

“one like the son of man” - The Lord Jesus Christ - Luke 6:5; 7:34; 9:22; 9:26,44, 56, 58.

“Came with the clouds of heaven” - Clouds of an immortalised host - Acts 1:9; Matt. 24:30; Luke 21:27; Revelation 1:7. In the natural, formation of a cloud is caused by the sun drawing up the dew from the earth, and combining the many particles into one cloud. This same beautiful symbol is given in Isa.26:19,20. Christ is the sun of righteousness - Mal.4:2.

“and came to the Ancient of days” - There is a very definite way in which Jesus has taken his saints before God - Luke 19:12-27; John 14:1-2; Col.3:3,4. In other words Christ at the present time is

taking out a people for his name by pleading before the throne of grace by guiding every step of his lively stones, moulding, grinding, polishing for a place in that eternal temple - Eph.2:20-22. When the needed quantity has been taken out, "I will come again and receive you unto myself" says Jesus - John 14:1,2. We shall be one with him even as he is one with the Father - John 17:21. We shall reign on the earth, Rev. 5:10. Christ is now our mediator - 1 Tim. 2:5. Through him we can come boldly before the throne of grace, Heb. 4:16. In this way our conversation is in heaven, Phil. 3:20. Through prayer we can penetrate into the holiest, Hebrews 10:19.

VERSE 14

"And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom that all people, nations, and languages should serve him" - This speaks of the very nucleus of the plan of God for this earth and mankind upon it - Isaiah 9:6; Daniel 2:44; Luke 19:12-15; Matthew 28:18.

"his dominion is an everlasting dominion" - It will be an everlasting dominion for it will be composed of immortals. They shall be one with Christ even as he is one with God.

VERSE 15

"I Daniel was grieved in my spirit" - The words in the original are very emphatic - "My spirit was grieved or sickened within its sheath or scabbard." This is very descriptive of Daniel's inability to comprehend the depth of God's prophecy. His comprehensive ability was fenced in so to speak.

VERSE 16

"Asked him the truth of all this" - Daniel's great desire to understand the deeper truths of God should be emulated by each of us. We should at all times heed the words of James 1:5, 6.

VERSE 17

"these great beasts which are four" - The four universal empires in Daniel chapter 2, i.e. Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece and Rome.

VERSE 18

“But the saints of the most high God shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever and ever, even for ever and ever” - This is the ultimate purpose of God. This will be the fulfilment of Christ’s prayer in John 17:20-26. See Revelation 5:10.

VERSE 19

“Teeth of iron and brass” - This corresponds with Daniel 4:15, where the stump of the tree representing Babylon was left in the earth banded with a strap of iron and a strap of brass. It corresponds with the two legs of Daniel’s image, the two divisions of the Roman empire. West in Rome representing the ecclesiastical or Roman Catholic church; east in Constantinople, and representing the military and classified as the Greek Catholic church. Both will be destroyed by the stone-power in Daniel two.

“which devoured and brake in pieces” - This was partially fulfilled in Rome’s brutal treatment of the saints of God in the dark ages, and in Rome’s opposition to God’s word since that time.

“and stamped the residue with his feet” - The greater fulfilment of this will be seen as Russia drives south to Armageddon - Ezekiel 38:8-12.

VERSE 20

“the horn that had eyes, and a mouth that spake very great things” - Verse 8 referring to the Pope.

VERSE 21

“made war with the saints” - Some of the most violent persecution in history was manifested by Roman Catholicism against those that held the truth, or who held part of the truth. In past ages no man could oppose Catholicism without endangering his life.” - H.P.M.

VERSE 22

“Until the ancient of days come” - The ancient of days here is God, who does not come to the earth in person - John 1:18; Exodus

23:20, 21. So He will be represented by His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ in the very near future. This great truth is emphasised 320 times in the New Testament alone, i.e., the second coming of Christ to the earth.

VERSE 23

“The fourth beast” - The fourth universal empire - Rome, verse 7.

VERSE 24

“ten horns are ten kings” - Repetition of the decline and fall of the Roman Empire indicated in the ten toes of the image, and the ten horns spoken of in verse 8.

VERSE 25

“He shall speak great words against the Most High” - Originally - “He shall speak as if he were God.” This certainly applies in every detail to the Popes of Rome:

1. They have assumed infallibility which belongs only to God.
2. They profess to forgive sins which power belongs only to God.
3. They profess to be higher than all the kings of the earth, which power belongs only to God.
4. The worst of all blasphemies, they go completely against God when they give indulgences for sin.

“and shall wear out the saints of the most high” - This has been fulfilled against those who have refused to submit to their idolatrous worship. The dark ages and the period of reformation speaks loud and clear against this bloody, persecuting, ruthless and impure church.

“And think to change times and laws” - i.e.,

1. Appointing fasts and feasts;
2. Canonising persons whom he chooses to call saints;
3. Granting pardons and indulgences for sins;
4. Instituting new modes of worship utterly unknown to the Christian church;
5. New articles of faith;
6. New rules of practice; etc.

“until a time, and times and the dividing of time” - A time is based upon a Jewish year, 360 days. A time singular, 360 times plural 720, a dividing of time, 180, making a total of 1260. On the principle of a day for a year - Genesis 29:27; Numbers 14:34; Ezek. 4:6. A period of 1260 years. The Pope was established as universal Bishop by the decree of the Emperor Phocas, 608-610, and for centuries the Popes exercised temporal power over the nations. That is, they not only exercised spiritual authority, but interfered in the politics of the nations, and waged war against their enemies. This came to an end in 1868 - 1870 - 1260 years after the decree of Phocas - when temporal power was taken away from the Popes. And so they have no longer the power to persecute as they had formerly. H.P.M.

VERSE 26

“But the Judgement shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end” - This speaks of the day when the false prophet shall be put down to never rise again - Revelation 14:8-11.

VERSE 27

“The kingdom. . . shall be given to the people of the saints” - We have here a very sobering reflection. Not all that are called to be saints will be chosen, but only those who have measured up to the commands of Christ.

“All dominions shall serve and obey him” - This will not be a matter of choice. They will either serve or be destroyed - Isa. 60:12. The result of this will be a fulfilment of God’s great purpose with the earth, Num. 14:21; Isa. 11:9; Hab. 2:14.

VERSE 28

“My cogitations much troubled me” - If these coming events troubled righteous Daniel, how much more should they trouble us, and be our constant inspiration to go forward in the work and service of the Lord. May this be our constant exhortation as we see the end approaching.

CHAPTER 8

Chapter 7:8 revealed the development of the little horn that appeared among the ten horns of the fourth beast and we found that this little horn represented the Holy Roman Empire. When Rome in the West - Europe - was divided into ten parts, Rome in the east with its capital in Constantinople still remained intact, and history knows it as the Byzantine Empire. But Daniel knew it as the little horn of the goat and this chapter predicted its uprising. It is important to remember that the Roman Empire was first ruled from the City of Rome, but later, in the time of Constantine, the capital was established at Constantinople in Grecian territory. Thus Rome and Constantinople were the headquarters of the little horns of Daniel chapters 7 and 8. See Daniel 7:8; 8:9. The Roman horn related to ecclesiastical power, the Constantinopolitan horn related to military power. In the Gogian confederacy both horns will be united, thus the fourth beast is shown with the elements of iron - Rome - and brass - Greece or Constantinople. See Daniel 7:19. - H.P.M.

VERSE 1

“In the third year of the reign of King Belshazzar” - We return now to the Hebrew language for those events now pertain to the people of God. The Chaldean language has been with us from Daniel 2:4 to the end of Chapter 7. The Hebrew is the tongue that God has chosen to reveal his Old Testament truths which pertain to the coming Kingdom of God.

VERSE 2

“I saw in a vision” - Daniel was at this time in Shushan which appears to have been a strong place where the kings of Persia had their summer residence. It was the capital of the province of Elam - Persia - which was probably added to the Chaldean territories by Nebuchadnezzar - Jeremiah 49:34, 35. Actually Daniel was only here in vision - he was really in Babylon - for this was in the reign of Belshazzar.

“river Ulai” - Same as river Euleus which divided Shushan, the capital, in two parts.

VERSE 3

“A ram which had two horns” - In our previous lessons we have been considering four empires, but in this chapter we have only two - the Grecian and the Persian. It will be noted that Babylon is not mentioned, its fate had now been completely sealed. The ram here is a symbol - the Medo-Persian power. We are not left to guesswork in this matter for Daniel specifically calls out this Empire in Daniel 8:20. Cyrus was the founder of that Empire. Cyrus was the son of Cambyses, king of Persia, he was the grandson of Astyages king of Media. Cyrus married Royana, the daughter and only child of his uncle Cyaxares, called in scripture Ahasuerus. In this way he succeeded to both crowns and thus united Media and Persia. A ram was the symbol of the Medes and the Persians. The Persian kings wore ram's heads made of gold instead of a crown. An interesting note is found in the ruins of Persepolis where there has been uncovered several ram's heads with two horns one higher than the other. Also a ram's head is found stamped on some ancient Persian coins.

“two horns” - This represents the dual monarchy of the Medo-Persian kingdom.

“and the two horns were high; but one was higher than the other and came up last” - Media was signified by the shorter horn and was the more ancient of the two kingdoms. Persia, the higher horn, had come but lately and was of little historic or political consequence until the time of Cyrus, but in the time of his reign and his immediate successors, Persia attained a political standard greatly superior to that possessed by the kingdom of Media. Median kings reigned for only two years whereas Persian kings reigned for 209 years.

VERSE 4

“I saw the ram pushing westward and northward and southward”- The Ram signified the Medo-Persian kingdom, the

silver dominion of the metallic image, under the leadership of Cyrus; and the language here is indicative of pushing their conquests to the north, west, and south. Calmet tells us that the principle theatre of their wars was against the Scythians northward, against the Egyptians, southward.

“he did according to his will he became great” - No other force of the day could stop the force of Cyrus the Persian. It is interesting to note that just as Cyrus after conquering Babylon went on to subdue the then known world, so Jesus after subduing Babylon the Great will likewise go forth to conquer the kingdoms of men.

VERSE 5

“Behold a he-goat” - This refers to Greece under the leadership of Alexander the Great. The goat was a very appropriate symbol of the Grecian or Macedonian people. Two hundred years before the time of Daniel the Greeks were called “Aegeadoe”, the goat’s people. Adam Clarke gives the following explanation: “Caranus, their first king, going with a multitude of Greeks to seek a new habitation in Macedonia, was advised by an oracle to take the goats for his guides; and afterwards, seeing a herd of goats flying from a violent storm, he followed them to Edessa, and there fixed the seat of his empire, and made the goats his ensigns or standards, and called the place Agea, the goat’s town and the people Aegeadoe, the goat’s people.” Alexander the Great named his son Alexander Aegus, Alexander the Goat. This is also the derivative of the Aegean sea.

“Came from the West” - Europe lies to the west of Asia.

“on the face of the whole earth” - He was carrying everything before him.

“touched not the ground” - This speaks of the rapidity of Alexander’s conquests. By the time Alexander was thirty years of age he had conquered all Asia. This speed of conquest is aptly represented by the Leopard with four wings in the seventh chapter.

“A notable horn between his eyes” - We are not left in doubt as to the identity of this horn, for the angel tells us in verse 21 that it

is the first kingdom of the Greeks in Asia and that his horn is the first king which was Alexander.

VERSE 6

“and he came to the ram that had two horns” - This brings us to the overthrow of the Persian Empire by Alexander the Great.

“and ran unto him in the fury of his power” - These words are descriptive of the severe battles that took place between the Greeks and the Persians. History tells us that Alexander first vanquished the generals of Darius at the river Granicus in Phrygia; he next attacked and totally routed Darius at the straits of Issus in Cilicia; and afterwards at the plains of Arbela in Assyria. One can hardly read these words without the image of Darius’ army standing and guarding the river Granicus, and of Alexander on the other side, with his forces plunging in swimming across the stream and rushing on the enemy, with all the fire and fury that can be conceived. The prize was world domination.

VERSE 7

“and smote the ram, and brake his two horns” - This is the complete subjugation of Media and Persia at which time the royal city of Persepolis, the capital of the Persian Empire was sacked and burned. Alexander was moved with

“choler against him” - Darius - because Darius had endeavoured to draw off his captains with bribes and had laboured to induce some of his friends to assassinate him. Alexander, even though his forces were outnumbered five to one, would listen to no proposals of peace and was determined never to rest till he had destroyed Darius and his whole empire. In Media Darius was seized and made prisoner by some of his own treacherous subjects and afterwards basely murdered.

“there was no power in the ram to stand before him” - Alexander’s victories over the Persians were as easy as they were rapid and decisive.

“he cast him down to the ground and stamped upon him” - He totally destroyed the family and over-turned the whole monarchy.

VERSE 8

“the he-goat waxed very strong” - Alexander had subdued nearly the whole of the then known world.

“the great horn was broken” - Alexander died in the height of his conquests in a drunken orgy when only 33 years of age. His brother, Philip Andaeus, and his two sons, Alexander Aegus and Hercules, kept up the show and name of the Macedonian kingdom for a time, but they were all murdered within fifteen years, and thus the great horn, the Macedonian kingdom, was broken, and Alexander's family cut off. Exhortation: Psa. 146:3,4.

“for it came up four notable ones toward the four winds of heaven” - The regal family being dead, the governors of provinces usurped the title of kings, and Anti-Gonus, one of them, being slain at the battle of Ipsus, they were reduced to four, as we have already seen in chapter seven.

(1) Seleucus, who had Syria and Babylon, from who came the Seleucidae.

(2) Lysimachus, who had Asia minor.

(3) Ptolemy, Son of Lagus who had Egypt, from whom sprang the Lagidae.

(4) Cassander, who had Greece and the neighbouring countries.

“toward the four winds of heaven” - This speaks of the universal rule being divided between the four generals:

1. Cassander had the western parts;
2. Lysimachus had the northern regions;
3. Ptolemy possessed the southern countries; and
4. Seleucus had the eastern provinces.

VERSE 9

“And out of one of them came forth a little horn” - The rise of the Roman Empire after conquering the Ptolemy kings - one of the four divisions of the Grecian Empire. Though it was very small at its beginning, yet it was very great at the zenith of its power. Some feel that this little horn was Antiochus Epiphanes.

“waxed exceeding great toward the south” - This refers to the Romans making Egypt a province of their empire.

“toward the east” - They conquered Syria and made it a province.
“toward the pleasant land” - This was Judea. It is referred to as the pleasant land - Psa. 106:24; Jer. 3:19; Daniel 11:16,41; Ezek.20:6, 15. It is a matter of record that they took Judea and scattered the Jews over the face of the earth.

VERSE 10

“The host of heaven” - This refers to the entire Jewish hierarchy. The stars probably, the priests and the Levites. In Exod. 12:41 the Jews are referred to as the “hosts of Yahweh.” This host of heaven has God as their king - 2 Chron. 13:8. This host of heaven had the angels of God as their protectors - Exod.23:20-23; Josh. 5:13-15. This host of heaven was spoken of as the kingdom of God on earth - 1 Chron.29:11, 23. This host of heaven then was nothing more than the Jewish people returned from captivity. It was this people that Rome conquered after the days of Maccabees.

“cast down some of the host and stars to the ground” - This is speaking of the overthrow of Israel’s leaders.

VERSE 11

“even to the prince of the host” - Their aggression extended to the crucifixion of Christ, verse 25. “Prince” in Hebrew means commander, but Israel refused to obey or heed the words of their commander - H.P.M.

“the daily sacrifice was taken away” - This is the symbol of Judaism being taken away in the sacrifice of Christ.

“sanctuary cast down” - This speaks to us of the temple being destroyed by Titus in A.D. 70 in the siege of Jerusalem - Matt.24:2, 15.

VERSE 12

“an host was given him” - See margin - “Or, the host was given over for the transgression against the daily sacrifice.” That is, the Jews were given over to the persecution of Rome because they completely defied the laws of Almighty God.

“it cast down the truth to the ground” - Rome destroyed and

persecuted the prophets of God. In place of the true gospel they substituted the false doctrines of Babylon.

“it practised and prospered” - This speaks of the prosperity of the Roman Catholic system of religion down through the ages.

VERSE 13

“that certain saint” - Margin *palmoni* signifies the numberer. Daniel hears two angels speaking with each other. One of these angels is Palmoni, the numberer, who undoubtedly controls the timetable of God’s plan. There is nothing left to chance in God’s universe. There is a set time to favour Zion - Psa. 102:13. There is also a set time for Christ’s second coming and the establishment of God’s kingdom in this earth. He now speaks of this intervening time and asks: “How long”? And the answer is given in verse fourteen.

VERSE 14

“Two thousand and three hundred days” - On the principle of a day for a year, this would be 2300 years. The beginning of the period is not given. Dr. Thomas pointed out that one fact is certain. The avenging would not happen before the end of the period. Did Jerusalem’s downtreading finally end in 1967? If so, there is little time left before the Gentiles feel the divine vengeance through the people of the saints of the most high God. What an exhortation of warning this is to look up, lift up our heads, for our redemption draweth nigh.

VERSE 16

“and I heard a man’s voice “ - This was the voice of an angel of God - Hebrews 13:2.

VERSE 17

“I was afraid and fell upon my face” - This fear was caused by the manifestation of Yahweh’s representative. We will know how Daniel felt for the angel of God will soon summon us to judgement.

“for at the time of the end shall be the vision” - Hebrew

rendering: "The vision shall have an end at the proper time."

VERSE 18

"I was in a deep sleep" - It is evident that Daniel received this vision as a dream just as Nebuchadnezzar in chapters two and four.
"he touched me and set me upright" - Margin: "made me stand upon my standing" that is, I was awakened and given the interpretation of this vision in person, by an angel of Yahweh. Thus we have the same authority of Isaiah 9:6, "The zeal of the Lord of hosts shall perform this."

VERSE 19

"I will make thee know what shall be in the last end of the indignation" - This promise could only be made by one of authority who is capable of seeing the end from the beginning.
"for at the time appointed the end shall be" - This speaks of the time-table of God which acts with minute precision. See verses thirteen and fourteen.

VERSE 20

"the ram which thou sawest" - Medo-Persian Kingdom.

VERSE 21

"the rough goat" - Greece - see notes on verse 5.
"the first king" - Alexander the Great - see previous notes in this chapter.

VERSE 22

"but not in his power" - That is the four kingdoms which shall arise out of the Macedonian Empire. They shall not be of Alexander's power or family, nor have his strength or dignity.

VERSE 23

"when the transgressors are come to the full" - This transgression came to its full between the time of the Testaments, reaching its full peak with Antiochus Epiphanes when he offered a sow in sacrifice upon the altar of the temple in open blasphemy

against God. The grand fulfilment is yet future, and will be fulfilled completely when the latter day Assyrian comes into the land.

“understanding dark sentences” - Very learned and skilful in all things pertaining to government and allied knowledge.

VERSE 24

“but not by his own power” - The Roman Empire drew its power from Rome and Italy. It was here the trunk of the tree grew, the branches extending over Greece, Asia, Syria, and Egypt.

“shall destroy wonderfully” - In the siege of Jerusalem by the Romans in A. D. 70; 97,000 Jews were made captive and 1,000,000 were slain. All the powers that have ever ruled in Constantinople have been hostile to the Jew, and Russia will be no exception - Ezek. 38:16.

VERSE 25

“he shall cause craft to prosper” - Just as there was a marriage of convenience between eastern and western Rome - in the same way will Russia have the blessing of the Pope as she swings south to take Jerusalem. he shall magnify himself in his heart - This has certainly been fulfilled, that is, the Pope has set himself up as God on earth.

“by peace destroy many” - Even today Russia speaks peace, but war is in her heart. When the Gogian confederacy is formed, and the Alliance between Russia and Catholicism established, people will say “peace and safety” - 1 Thess. 5:3, but sudden destruction will come. Before this however, Christ will have returned. - H.P.M.

“he shall also stand up against the prince of princes” - The first time Rome opposed Christ was at his crucifixion. This is the reference in verse 11, “the prince of the host” - singular. This time, however, reference is to the multitudinous body or host - the Yahweh Elohim - the saints with Christ - Zechariah 14:5.

“he shall be broken without hand” - This speaks of the final destruction of the kingdoms of men - Daniel 2:44; Ezekiel 38:39;

Zechariah 14; Joel 3.

VERSE 26

“vision of evening and morning” - Same as that spoken of in verse fourteen. Contrast between the evening - darkness, the things of the flesh. Morning speaks of light; things of the spirit.

VERSE 27

“I Daniel fainted and was sick” - Sorrowful for the desolation and persecution that was to come upon Israel and Judah.

“I was astonished at the vision” - See Rev. 1:17 - John was affected the same way as Daniel. Also see 1 Corinthians 2:9.

CHAPTER 9

VERSE 1

“Darius the son of Ahasuerus” - This is Darius the Mede spoken of in Daniel 5:31. Cyrus the Persian was the real conqueror of Babylon. Darius was his uncle and father-in-law, and was reigning as regent. They reigned jointly for three years.

VERSE 2

“I Daniel understood by books” - The prophecy referred to here is found in Jeremiah 25:12; 39:10. By these prophecies Daniel knew that the captivity was to last 70 years, and from his own calculations he could see that the time period was complete having had its beginning in 606 B.C. If we are alert we can see the counterpart in the days in which we live, and we should follow Daniel’s example.

VERSE 3

“I set my face” - Daniel cleanses his heart and mind of the things of the flesh - figuratively enters his closet and shuts the doors about him - Matt. 6:6 - closes his windows to Babylon and opens them to Jerusalem.

“to seek by prayer and supplications with fastings, and sackcloth, upon his body and ashes upon his head” - All of this shows his humility before God. This was the same type of prayer that Solomon prayed at the dedication of the temple - 1 Kings 8:47,48.

VERSE 4

“I prayed unto the LORD my God” - Where the words LORD or GOD appear in capitals the derivative in the Hebrew is Yahweh. This is the covenant title of Deity, proclaimed to Moses when God was about to deliver Israel, Exod. 3:14. It means “I will be” , and proclaims the fact that God not only has future plans for natural Israel, but spiritual alike. Daniel then in this prayer is looking forward to the blessed day when the righteous will become the

immortal children of God, manifest in a host which no man can number - H.P.M.

“the great and dreadful God” - God here is from Hebrew *El* - signifies might or power - Deut. 7:21,22. To those that are His He is a God of protection, but to those who oppose He is a consuming fire. Compare with Psalm 91 with Ezek. 38:18-23.

“keeping the covenant and mercy” - Even though Israel did not keep their part of the covenant with God, they could know of a certainty that God would keep His - if they obeyed - Deut. 7:9; Exod. 34:6, 7; Psalm 89:34-37; 110; Jeremiah 33:20-22.

VERSE 5

“we have sinned” - Here is a basic principle that must be manifested every day of our life if we are going to get through to Almighty God. We must acknowledge that we are unworthy, sinners, totally inadequate and undeserving before God. This is the reason for the words of the thief as found in Luke 23:40,41. Also 1 Kings 8:47-48; Nehemiah 1:6-7; 9:33-34; Psalm 106:6; Jer. 14:7.

VERSE 6

“neither have we hearkened unto thy servants the prophets” - This was not true of Daniel himself, but we have seen that he was a type of Christ and as such he was mediating for his people, making their sins his own, as Christ does those of his people, Isa. 53:6-11; Psalm 38:18 - H.P.M.

VERSE 7

“righteousness belongeth unto thee” - Here we have a man, in captivity, his beloved city of Jerusalem and the temple in ruins, the nation practically destroyed, and yet he acknowledged the righteousness of God, and had the necessary faith to see that this was a part of his overall plan. This is a very necessary lesson for us to incorporate in our daily lives - that regardless of any temporal problem, reverses, setback, or disappointment; we realise that we are the clay, He is the potter. We are being shaped and moulded for a place in the temple of God.

“to the men of Judah and unto all Israel” - Both the ten and the two tribes were guilty before God. They had transgressed His holy law - they had turned to idolatry.

VERSE 8

“to us, to our kings, to our princes and to our fathers” - The terrible condition Israel had fallen into is very pointedly described in Jeremiah 5:31. They had gone from a favoured position in the eyes of God to a moral state much lower than that of the surrounding nations.

VERSE 9

“to the Lord our God belong mercies and forgiveness” - The unlimited mercy and forgiveness exhibited in Yahweh’s love has been the sustaining power of man down through the ages. Exhortation: If we would experience this mercy, forgiveness and love from Yahweh, we must manifest the same virtues to our brethren and sisters.

VERSE 10

“neither have we obeyed the voice of the Lord our God” - Here is our first approach to God, i.e. confession of our sins, our shortcomings or complete unworthiness. An outstanding example is given us in Luke 23:41 in the thief on the cross. This is the attitude the nations of the world must assume before the kingdom is established, Isa. 2:9-22; 66:2.

VERSE 11

“therefore the curse is poured upon us” - Israel had no one to blame but themselves. The entire twelve tribes had agreed to these curses as being a just punishment in the event they transgressed God’s law. There are some fifty-five curses that were to come upon this nation and land, outlined in Deuteronomy 28. The probable reference here is to molten metal being poured upon criminals.

VERSE 12

“for under the whole heaven hath not been done as hath been done upon Jerusalem” - Just as God chose Israel in whom He would manifest His power, mercy and benevolence, in the same way through His nation He would show to the world that it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

VERSE 13

“yet made we not our prayer before the Lord our God, that we might turn from our iniquities and understand the truth” - This was the warning message of Hosea - Israel had become so steeped in sin that they had come to love it more than they loved God. In Hosea 6:1, they cry out “come and let us return unto the Lord”, however, it was only lip service. The damage was done. They were firmly entrenched - first they had walked in sin, then stood and now they sat satisfied - Psalm 1:1.

VERSE 14

“therefore hath the Lord watched upon the evil and brought it upon us” - Even though Israel was the chosen people of God they would not be protected from God’s inexorable laws - as a man soweth that shall he also reap - Galatians 6:7, 8. Also the wages of sin is death, Romans 6:23.

VERSE 15

“Thou hast brought forth thy people out of Egypt with a mighty hand” - Here is another of the great basic fundamentals of God’s precious word, out of Egypt I have called my son . Not only was Israel delivered out of the darkness of the land of sin and death, through the waters of baptism - Red Sea - 1 Cor. 10:1, 2 - into the land of Canaan, but everyone today who comes into Christ follows the same procedure. The grand and glorious climax will take place when this mortal puts on immortality. Exhortation: Just as Israel failed by turning to idolatry, so can we.

VERSE 16

“O Lord according to all thy righteousness, let thine anger be

turned away” - Note how Daniel’s very being is projected into this petition. Note also how he prays subject to God’s will. He asks his personal wants to be fulfilled only in relation to the fixed and eternal purpose of God. Let this be an example for our prayer: if it be thy will, Almighty God, and not mine, help me O Yahweh to accept thy decision, knowing that thou art the potter, and we are the clay.

VERSE 17

“cause thy face to shine” - Metaphor from the sun, which gladdens all that it beams upon - Numbers 6:25; Malachi 4:2.

VERSE 18

“not for our righteousness, but for thy great mercy” - Here Daniel shows his deep understanding of the greatness of Yahweh. The more God increases in our life the more we decrease and become aware of our sins - Romans 7:15-25.

VERSE 19

“defer not” - The seventy-year captivity is now all but complete. The time of deliverance is at hand. This should be our prayer today - even so come Lord Jesus.

“for thine own sake” - This is the strongest plea in Scripture, see Jeremiah 14:21.

VERSE 20

“confessing my sin” - Note that Daniel recognises his own weakness before that of Israel.

“for the holy mountain of God” - Daniel’s whole desire lay in the hope of the day when the law should go forth from Zion and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem - Isaiah 2:2, 3.

VERSE 21

“whiles I was speaking in prayer” - He received his answer before his prayer was concluded. This had been promised - Isa. 30:19; 65:24; also Psalm 32:5.

“the man Gabriel” - That is the angel Gabriel who appeared to

him as a man - some have entertained angels unawares - Heb. 13:2; this angel had already appeared to Daniel - chapter 8:1, 16 - by the river Ulai.

“being caused to fly swiftly” - God hears humble prayers such as this with great delight and sends the speediest answers.

“time of the evening oblation” - Daniel was praying at the time. Though the altar was in ruins, the prayers of faithful Jews continued to be offered in place of the evening sacrifice - Psalm 141:2. The evening sacrifice was a type of the sacrifice of Jesus to be offered at the evening or end of the Jewish world - Hebrews 9:26. Thus Daniel was granted an explanation of that offering and all it would accomplish. This prophecy of the seventy weeks really epitomised the whole of the New Testament - H.P.M.

VERSE 22

“I am now come forth to give thee skill and understanding” - “If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God which giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given to him. But let him ask in faith nothing wavering “ - James 1:5, 6.

VERSE 23

“greatly beloved” - Margin, a man of desires. See Ezekiel 23:6, 12 - that is the object of God’s delight. Daniel stands as the Old Testament counterpart to John the beloved disciple of our Lord - John 21:20,24.

VERSE 24

“seventy weeks”- On the principle of a day for a year as we have previously considered in Genesis 29:27; Numbers 14:34; Ezek.4:6; we would have seven times seventy or 490 years. The starting point is given in verse 25. It dates from the decree of Artaxerxes to restore Jerusalem. In Nehemiah 2:1 we are told that this was in the month Nisan, March or April, in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes, B.C. 456. 490 years later in the month Nisan, Messiah the prince was crucified. Christ was crucified in the month Nisan, A. M. 4746. 490 years subtracted from this takes us back to the month

Nisan, A.M. 4256 - the very month and year that the decree went forth from Artaxerxes.

“finish the transgression” - A more faithful rendering would be to “perfect the transgression” . In other words, the crucifixion of Christ was the culmination of their transgression against God. This was the grand climax to all their hypocrisy and self-righteousness.

“make an end of sins” - A more faithful rendering of this passage would be “to make an end of sin offerings”. This was accomplished when Christ offered himself upon the cross of Calvary.

“to make reconciliation for iniquity” - The word reconciliation should be covering. The same word as is rendered elsewhere, atonement. The death of Jesus effects a covering for sins - See Romans 4:6-7; Gal. 3:26-28. In Eden God provided a covering for Adam - Genesis 3:21 - to cover their shame - a symbol for sin - see Revelation 16:15. And this pointed forward to Jesus the Lamb of God - Revelation 13:8 - H.P.M.

“to bring in everlasting righteousness” - “Age lasting justification.” See I Corinthians 1:26-31; Philemon 3:8-14.

“to seal up the vision and prophecy” - That is to finish or complete the vision and the prophecy. In other words to put an end to the necessity for any further revelations. In Christ’s life, sacrifice, death, burial, resurrection and the revelation of the glory that should follow, the plan and purpose of God is completely revealed, and its fulfilment made sure.

“and to anoint the most holy” - The original Hebrew carries the thought of consecrating or appointing to some special office, and in this case has special reference to the appointment of Christ to the office of prophet, priest and king.

VERSE 25

“from the going forth of the commandment” - This was the decree of Artaxerxes - verse 24; Neh.2:1.

“Messiah the Prince” - The Lord Jesus Christ - the Prince of Peace.

“seven weeks” - Forty-nine years. This has reference to the

perilous, troublesome forty-nine years when Ezra and Nehemiah were attempting to rebuild and restore the wall, sacred constitutions and civil establishments of the Jews.

“threescore and two weeks” - This was the period of time that carries us between the Testaments and the rise of the Roman Empire. The Jews were looking for a leader that would come with pomp and splendour to lead them against the mighty Roman armies. The Jewish state was formed and Rome reached out to control it - Daniel 8:9. Seven weeks, sixty-two weeks equal sixty-nine weeks The one week is taken up with three and a half days - or years - of John the Baptist’s work and three and a half days - or years - of the mission of the Lord Jesus Christ.

VERSE 26

“after three score and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off” - This has direct reference to the crucifixion of the Lord Jesus Christ in A. D. 33.

“but not for himself” - Margin reads, “And shall have nothing” - he shall be cut off from the world to which he has died morally and physically, but God shall raise him gloriously from the dead to a place of power, honour and glory, 1 Corinthians 15. Also carries the idea that immediate establishment of the kingdom as the Jews expected would not be realised at his first advent.

“the people of the prince” - The prince is the Lord Jesus, the people are the Roman nation. They are here represented as doing the will of the Lord Jesus. At his resurrection, all power was given to him in heaven and earth - Matthew 28:18. It was he who brought Rome against Israel to punish the latter - Deut. 28:49; Matthew 22:7 - H.P.M. The destruction spoken of in Luke 20:16-19 took place in A. D. 70, and those that had heard, understood and believed God’s word safely escaped this destruction.

“desolations are determined” - God is telling Daniel that severe trouble lies ahead for Israel. Specifically the siege of Jerusalem by Titus in A. D. 70 is spoken of here. In our day we look for the grand counterpart of the time of Jacob’s trouble just ahead. This has been determined by God’s decree - Isa. 10:23; 28:22.

VERSE 27

“He - God confirm the covenant” - Beautifully explained in Romans 15:8, “Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers.”

“with many” - This refers to that group that hearkened to the message of God’s word - Daniel 12:2.

“for one week” - This speaks of three and a half years of the work of John the Baptist and the three and a half years of the work of Christ.

“in the midst of the week” - Septuagint reads, “in the latter half of the week” - The crucifixion occurred at the end of the week.

“sacrifice and oblation to cease” - When the body is come there is no further need for the shadow. Jesus’ sacrifice superseded all sacrifice.

“make it desolate” - Not forever, for God has placed a time limit with the word “until” - Ezekiel 21:25-27; Acts 3:21; Luke 21:24.

“until the consummation” - That is until the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, Acts 15:14-17.

“that determined shall be poured upon the desolator” - Rome desolated Israel in A.D. 70, but the grand sequel will take place when Christ with his immortalised host pours desolation upon the anti-christ in the time of the end - Daniel 2:44; Ezekiel 38:19-23; Zechariah 14:1-4; Joel 3:9-17; Isaiah 2:10- 22.

CHAPTER 10

VERSE 1

“In the third year of Cyrus “ - Cyrus had reigned jointly with Darius for two years. This third year was the first year of the sole reign of Cyrus. This time period finds Daniel 90 years old.

“the thing was true” - God had revealed the vision to him so that the whole picture was plain and readily discerned by Daniel.

“the time appointed was long” - In this Daniel saw that he must die, and that before the fulfilment of this vision could become a reality he must rise again from the dead. Like David of old - 2 Sam. 17:19 - “Thou hast spoken also of thy servant’s house for a great while to come.”

“he understood the thing” - The Septuagint renders this: “Great power and understanding in the vision that was given him.” God wanted Daniel to understand this vision, and He wants us to do likewise. James 1:5, “If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him... But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering.”

VERSE 2

“I was mourning three weeks” - We get some insight into the meaning of this verse from verse 13.

VERSE 3

“I ate no pleasant bread” - Possibly a period of fasting in which Daniel, praying for an answer, would live on coarse and unsavoury food. He would drink nothing but water. This would be done to subdue any fleshly interference in his thinking before God.

VERSE 4

“the river Hiddekel” - The river Tigris. The great river of Assyria.

VERSE 5

“a certain man” - Marginal rendering one man. This is a picture

of the multitudinous body of Christ incorporated in one - 1 Cor. 12:12; Eph. 2:20-22; 4:3,4, 15, 16; Rev. 1:12, 13; 1 Pet. 2:1-10; Rev. 10:1-4; Isa. 26:19-21; John 17:9-12; 18:26.

“clothed in linen” - Fine linen is the righteousness of the saints - Revelation 19:8. The priests were clothed in linen - Exod.28:39. By nature man is naked just as Adam in the garden of Eden; and in this state he is in need of being covered. We are figuratively clothed upon with Christ - Gal. 3:26. Man without Christ is described in Eph.2:11, 12. Any man, no matter how good morally, is naked and in a state of sin if he is not covered with the sin covering name of Christ, for we read in Jeremiah 17:9, “The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?” Compare Col. 1:21 with Rom. 8:1. See the great example recorded in Mark 1:1-15. Clothed with this covering, it now becomes our duty to keep it clean - Revelation 3:4. This can only be done day by day with the help of God through prayer, meditation and forgiveness.

“girded with gold” - Gold is the symbol of tried faith which can only be developed in the furnace of affliction - 1 Pet. 1:7; Heb. 11:6; Rom. 10:17; Lam. 4:2; 1 Cor. 3:10-17.

“body like the beryl” - The beryl was the tenth stone of the breastplate - Exod.28:16-21. The tenth tribe listed in Numbers 2 is Dan. Dan means “judge” - Genesis 49:16, 18; 1 Cor. 6:2. So then this body being like the beryl, speaks to us of the body of Christ, acting to perform the judgements of God - Psa. 149:6-8. Those baptised into the name of Christ are classified as spiritual Israel - Eph. 2:12-14; Gal. 3:27-29. In Rev. 7, where the tribes are enumerated, the tribe of Dan is eliminated, and is replaced by Levi. It is interesting, and by no means accidental, that Levi is number eight in order - the number of immortality, and in the foundation stone of new Jerusalem - Revelation 21:20 - the eighth stone is beryl. In the Old Testament, then, the beryl is represented as a judge and in the New Testament as a priest. The body being like the beryl then speaks of the day when the multitudinous body of Christ shall be kings and priests on the earth - Rev. 5:10.

“face as the appearance of lightning” - This speaks to us of our

God as a consuming fire as He goes forth to destroy the world of the ungodly, and bring them into subjection before His power - Dan. 2:44; Psa. 144:5, 6; Zech. 9:14; Isa. 30:27; 2:11-22; Rev. 19:11; Joel 3:10; Ezek. 38: 19-23.

“eyes as lamps of fire” - The angels are the eyes of the LORD, keeping a vigilant watch over His universe and His children - Gen. 18:21; 2 Chron. 16:9; Dan. 4:17. This hope of life eternal, and becoming the eyes of God can be a reality in our life if we are faithful - Luke 20:35, 36. Lamps of fire is a symbol used to describe the spirit of God - Revelation 4:5; 5:6.

“arms and feet like polished brass” - Brass in the Scripture is the symbol of flesh - 1 Sam. 17:4-6; 1 Kings 14:27. Polished brass is a metal that has been purified by the action of fire, and polished by friction - Num. 31:22-23. It speaks to us then of purified human nature as we hope to be in the day when we are clothed with immortality. See Eureka chapter 1 section V-10.

“His voice like the voice of a multitude” - This takes us back to what we originally mentioned about the “certain saint”. It speaks to us of the multitudinous Christ. The same thoughts and testimonies apply here.

VERSE 7

“the men that were with me saw not the vision” - Compare Acts 9:7. The Divine influence was felt, but only Daniel received the message. See similar instances - Acts 7:56; Num. 22:31. Acts 26:18 shows us that it is the great and ultimate purpose to open the eyes of all men, so that the divine presence will be made visible. In this we have a picture of the dual manifestation of Christ at his second coming: 1. To the saints, 2. To the world.

VERSE 8

“I was left alone...no strength...turned into corruption...retained no strength” - Here is a picture of the death state that was to come over Daniel. Notice how the succeeding verses present a picture of resurrection from the dead.

VERSE 9

“deep sleep on my face” - Further elaboration of the death state.

VERSE 10

“behold a hand touched me” - In Matthew 8:3 we have the record of Jesus putting forth his hand and cleansing the leper, also Mark 1:41. We are the lepers in the state of death, and on the resurrection morn Jesus will reach forth his hands to all his brethren who are in the death state.

VERSE 11

“I stood trembling” - This is certainly a vivid description of each of us in the resurrection morning as we stand before the great tribunal. This is a picture of Daniel being raised mortal before judgement. We will at least realise our perspective - we will know how utterly unworthy we are. “Oh say to the fearful, be strong of heart, he comes with vengeance, but not for thee. For thee he comes, his might to impart, to the trembling heart and the feeble knee.”

VERSE 12

“Fear not Daniel” - Daniel at last can be sure of his reward - see 2 Timothy 4:6-8. As he looks back over his life he can see how the hand of God has guided his every step in all that he has done. He can now see the reason for the many trials and purgings he has endured. Let this be a source of comfort to each of us as day by day we might feel that our prayers are going unanswered. God always answers prayers, but sometimes the answer is no.

VERSE 13

“But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood one and twenty days” - We cannot be dogmatic as to the exact meaning of this verse. The reference is to Cyrus, the destined deliverer of God’s people, and the delay here mentioned might well refer to the decree going forth to restore the temple.

“Michael” - Probably the angel that was placed over the affairs of Israel - Exod. 23:20-23; see Josh. 5:14. As the angel of God’s

presence, he typifies the mission of the Lord Jesus Christ in the last days. In Daniel 12:1 Jesus is referred to as Michael.

“I remained with the kings of Persia” - Daniel remained to encourage them in their efforts to aid Yahweh’s plan to restore the temple. The Persians greatly aided the Jews in their return under Zerubbabel, Ezra, and Nehemiah.

VERSE 14

“Now I am come to make thee understand what shall befall thy people in the latter days” - This relates directly to the events contained in chapters eleven and twelve.

“for yet the vision is for many days” - There are many things yet to be revealed, and the time of their accomplishment is very distant.

VERSE 15

“I set my face toward the ground and became dumb” - This is a picture of the humility we will experience as we stand before the great tribunal of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

VERSE 16

“The vision of my sorrows are turned upon me and I have retained no strength” - This is a vivid picture of the judgement. In a moment our entire past will flash before us. The piercing fire of God’s judgement will burn deeply within our very being, and we will see ourselves as we really are. Oh how we will desire to recall time. To re-live those wasted hours. To blot out the harsh words, the evil thoughts, our unforgiving and stubborn attitude. We will not be talking about and condemning our brethren then. The one question will be: What does he think of me? The exhortation is obvious.

VERSE 17

“For how can the servant talk with this my Lord ? “ - What will we be able to say before the one who knows all? “When I consider the heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and stars, which thou hast ordained, what is man that thou art mindful of him? and

the son of man, that thou visitest him?" - Psalm 8:3,4. Excuses, lies, shifting of blame will be of no avail.

VERSE 18

"and he strengthened me" - Here we have a picture of immortality being granted after judgement. Note the sharp contrast to verse 10, which is the picture of coming out of the ground.

VERSE 19

"for thou hast strengthened me" - Here is a picture of the immortalised host becoming one with Jesus the Christ - John 17 - made strong through knowledge, belief, repentance, faith, death, burial and resurrection.

VERSE 20

"Now I will return to fight with the king of Persia" - Already in Daniel's prophecy we have records of Gabriel revealing to Daniel that the angels of God had control of the political world - Daniel 2:20-22; 4:17; Romans 8:28; 13:1-6. Reference here now probably refers to the angel causing Cyrus to carry out the decree to restore the temple. It also carried its great counterpart, that after the saints are immortalised, they shall go forth to bring the world in subjection to Jesus Christ.

VERSE 21

"there is none that holdeth with me in these things, but Michael your prince" - Apart from divine intervention through the angels, the affairs of Israel would not prosper. It is God that brings them to pass, and not mortal man. He uses the circumstances that God creates, and through these circumstances the affairs of Israel, and the purpose of God is advanced - H.P.M. The study of chapters eleven and twelve will now reveal how true this is.

CHAPTER 11

There are many fulfilled prophecies in the Bible, but none of them are so circumstantial in detail or have received such an undeniable fulfilment in the actual events of a long past history as the prophecy contained in the first 39 verses of the eleventh chapter of Daniel. The fulfilment is so remarkable that unbelievers can do nothing with it but assert that the prophecy of Daniel is a forgery, written after the events were accomplished. But this assertion is contrary to explicit evidence as shown in the introduction to this book. - R. Roberts. This chapter records Gabriel's explanation of the vision seen by Daniel in chapter eight. After the death of Alexander who founded the Greek empire - the "mighty king" of verse 3, his four generals divided the territory he conquered into four kingdoms over which they ruled; and then they proceeded to quarrel among themselves, until the rising power of Rome was drawn into the Middle East, and ultimately incorporated them all under its power. Verses five to thirty-four of this chapter outlines in a remarkable way the wars and policy of two of the kingdoms that arose out of the divided Greek empire - comprehending roughly the territory occupied by Turkey today with the addition of Armenia, Media, Persia etc., and represented in the prophecy as the **King of the North**, and the Egyptian empire which included Palestine, Cyprus, and some of the isles of Greece, ruled over by the Ptolemys, and referred to in this prophecy as the **King of the South**. The interpretation of this prophecy is presented in *Elpis Israel* pp. 398 to 403 where the author gives the text of Scripture in italics, and the interpretation in Roman type; and to this interpretation we direct you. It occupies some 250 years of history from about 300 B.C. approx., during which the Jews, who had returned from the captivity in Babylon under the Persian kings, suffered from wars between the Powers of the north and south, but finally obtained complete independence when a priestly family, known to history as the Maccabees, led the nation to victory and glory. Rome never conquered Judea at this time, but merely

incorporated it as an ally into her empire. Gradually, however, Judea lost all independence, so that in the days of Christ it was completely dominated by Rome, and a Roman governor was set up in Jerusalem - Pontius Pilate - H. P. M.

VERSE 1

“Also I” - Gabriel.

“in the third year of Cyrus” - This answers to the first year of Darius the Mede. Probably Daniel was no longer in office or court for in chapter 1:21 it is said “Daniel continued even unto the first year of King Cyrus”. It was in this year that Cyrus who wielded the real power, promulgated the edict for the restoration of the Jews which Daniel was at that time praying for, chapter 9:1, 2,21,23.

“stood” - Implies promptness or an attitude that is willing to help.

“to confirm and strengthen him” - Daniel needed divine help and strength for he was now about to witness a vision that would project him through all the events that were to transpire between his day and the establishment of the kingdom of God on earth.

VERSE 2

“And now I will show thee the truth” - This is in contrast to the serpent’s lie. God is saying, “I will show thee how my kingdom is going to be established in this earth.”

“there shall stand up yet three kings in Persia” - After Cyrus, there reigned three Persian emperors, Cambysses, Smerdis and Darius. Then came Xerxes, notorious in history as the richest of all the Persian monarchs, the leading event of whose reign was the fitting out of an immense naval and military expedition against Greece. This was the beginning of a war which lasted through several Persian reigns, and ended in Persian overthrow.

VERSE 3

“a mighty king shall stand up” - On the Greek side there rose up Alexander the Great, who trampled down the power of Persia and established an immense empire reaching as far as India, which he ruled with despotic authority.

VERSE 4

“his kingdom shall be broken” - When Alexander had finished the conquest of India and returned to Babylon, he came to a premature end at a feast; and his empire, after a regency of 13 years, was partitioned among his four generals - Ptolemy Soter, Seleucus, Lysimachus, and Cassander - none of whom were family relations of Alexander. Of these, Ptolemy Soter became king of Egypt, or “King of the South”, in relation to Palestine at that time; and Seleucus King of Syria, or “King of the North”.

VERSE 5

“the king of the south shall be strong” - Ptolemy Soter, King of Egypt, was established in a strong position, embracing Palestine, Coelo Syria, and Phoenicia, in addition to Egypt: the three first-mentioned countries were originally assigned to Laomedon - a fellow general - but Ptolemy wrested them from him and acquired an extensive dominion.

VERSE 6

“And in the end of years they shall join themselves together” - After long war between Ptolemy and Philadelphus - successor to Ptolemy Soter, and Antiochus Theos, who had succeeded his father, Seleucus, as King of the North, the two monarchs came to a treaty of marriage with Berenice, the daughter of the former. Ptolemy Philadelphus dying, Antiochus put Ptolemy’s daughter away; recalled previous wife, who poisoned Antiochus and killed Ptolemy’s daughter and all her Egyptian attendants.

VERSE 7

“but out of a branch of her roots shall one stand up in his estate” - Her father being dead, a branch of her roots - her brother - Ptolemy Eurgetes avenged her death, by a victorious invasion of Antiochus’s dominions.

VERSE 8

“And shall also carry captives into Egypt” - Ptolemy Euergetes took an enormous booty in Syria and Cilicia, including a large

number of statues and images, besides vast store of precious metals. He also carried away Antiochus's principal courtiers, and had a lengthened reign.

VERSE 9

“So the king of the south shall come into his kingdom” - Ptolemy made a triumphant return to Egypt, with the spoils referred to.

VERSE 10

“But his sons shall be stirred up” - Ceraunus and Antiochus, the sons of Seleucus, the father of the poisoned king, assembled an army and made war on Ptolemy. Antiochus entered and subdued Syria. Retiring to winter quarters, he was stirred up by advance of Ptolemy, and compelled to fall back into his fortress.

VERSE 11

“And the king of the south shall be moved with choler” - Ptolemy again advancing to wrest Syria from Antiochus, Antiochus attacked him with 72,000 foot and 6,000 horse, but was again defeated.

VERSE 12

“when he hath taken away the multitude, his heart shall be lifted up” - Ptolemy, elated with his victory over Antiochus, desired to enter the holy place, but was prevented. He did not follow up his victory, and so was not benefited by it.

VERSE 13

“For the king of the north shall return” - Antiochus recovered his strength, and in nineteen years advanced with another large army and re-subjugated Syria.

VERSE 14

“there shall many stand up against the king of the south” - Ptolemy, Philopater, dying, was succeeded by his infant son, Ptolemy Epiphanes, against whom the Macedonian and Syrian

kings and also Scopas, his father's general, plotted. The Romans also proudly interfered in his protection; but the Romans, though destined to become very powerful after this first appearance in Egyptian affairs, would certainly fall at last.

VERSE 15

“So the king of the north shall come” - In spite of the interference of the Romans, Antiochus advanced against the Egyptians in Syria, besieged Sidon, and captured Jerusalem. The arms of Egypt had no power to arrest the progress of Antiochus.

VERSE 16

“he shall stand in the glorious land” - Antiochus was paramount in Palestine, which he devastated.

VERSE 17

“he shall give him the daughter of women, corrupting her” - Antiochus made a supreme effort, with the help of the Jews, to acquire Greece, of which the Romans had become protectors. In order to secure Egypt's neutrality, he gave his daughter Cleopatra in marriage to Ptolemy Epiphanes, but the daughter sided with her husband against Antiochus, and in favour of the Romans.

VERSE 18

“After this shall he turn his face unto the isles” - Antiochus turned his arms against the isles of Greece. At first, he was successful, but a Roman consul - Scipio - finally defeated him and repulsed him from every part of Asia Minor, thus wiping out the disgrace at first inflicted on the Roman arms and name as the protectors of Greece, and turning it on Antiochus.

VERSE 19

“he shall stumble and fall and not be found” - After this defeat, which was followed by a humiliating treaty of indemnity to the Romans, Antiochus set his face homewards, but never got to the end of his journey. He was murdered as a result of an attempt on his part to rob a temple, for the purpose of raising the money due

to the Romans.

VERSE 20

“a raiser of taxes in the glory of the kingdom” - Antiochus was succeeded by his son, Seleucus Philopater, the great business of whose reign was to raise by taxation the indemnity due to the Romans. Having finished that business, he was privately poisoned at the end of twelve years.

VERSE 21

“in his estate shall stand up a vile person” - Heliodorus, the poisoner of Seleucus Philopater, usurped the vacant throne, but the authorities of the state repudiated him as “a vile person”, upon which Antiochus Epiphanes insinuated himself into favour by flattery and bribery, and obtained the kingdom without war.

VERSE 22

“with the arms of a flood shall they be overflowed before him” - Though established, Antiochus Epiphanes was soon embroiled with the king of Egypt, who demanded the restitution of Palestine and Syria. The army of that monarch he overwhelmed in battle: also the high priest, Onias, prince of the Mosaic covenant, was overthrown and murdered.

VERSE 23

“he shall work deceitfully” - Treaty of peace was made between Antiochus and the king of Egypt, after which, Antiochus worked deceitfully, and under false pretexts renewed the war, and came to Alexandria with a small army, and established himself in the country.

VERSE 24

“he shall forecast his devices against the strongholds, even for a time” - By intrigues, he acquired peaceable possession of the fattest provinces of Egypt, and did that which none of his predecessors had done: he divided the spoils among his soldiers, and laid plans to obtain possession of the whole country.

VERSE 25

“they shall forecast devices against him” - He stirred up his power and his courage against the king of Egypt, raising an immense army. The king of Egypt did the same, but the efforts of the latter came to nothing; for the people of Alexandria formed a successful plot against him.

VERSE 26

“many shall fall down slain” - Yea, the king of Egypt’s own courtiers turned against him, and the army of Antiochus overspread Egypt, and many of the Egyptians were slain.

VERSE 27

“they shall speak lies at one table” - Antiochus and the Egyptian king, Euergetes II, came together to arrange matters. They practised mutual deception, but the plans they agreed upon were destined to failure, because of the appointed developments of the end with which those plans were inconsistent.

VERSE 28

“his heart shall be against the holy covenant” - Antiochus returned from Egypt to his land laden with riches. On his way to Antioch, his capital, he attacked Jerusalem, sacked the temple, killed 40,000 of the inhabitants, and sold as many into slavery.

VERSE 29

“At the time appointed he shall return” - A little later he returned to Egypt, but this invasion was not as the former or as the latter will be.

VERSE 30

“for the ships of Chittim shall come against him” - For a Greek fleet, with Roman ambassadors on board, arrived while he was in the full tide of conquest, and in the name of the Roman senate, demanded evacuation of Egypt. Reluctantly yielding, he vented his rage on Jerusalem on his way back to Antioch, and entered into alliance with the unfaithful among the Jews.

VERSE 31

“they shall place the abomination that maketh desolate” - An army despatched by him destroyed a great part of the city, profaned the temple, suppressed the daily sacrifice, and placed a Greek idol on the altar.

VERSE 32

“such as do wickedly against the covenant shall he corrupt by flatteries” - Such among the Jews were unfaithful to the law, yielded to the seductions of Antiochus, and co-operated with him in the devastation of the Holy Land, but those among them of a faithful mind - namely, the Maccabean family and their supporters - made themselves strong in defence of the law, and performed many valiant feats of arms.

VERSE 33

“they that understand among the people shall instruct many” - They were the only party among the people possessed of Scriptural understanding, and they exerted themselves to the instruction of as many as would listen, and got up a powerful movement in defence of the law; but for seven years the tide of events was adverse to them, and they were scattered and oppressed by war.

VERSE 34

“they shall be holpen with a little help” - At the end of seven years, the tide turned. Judas Maccabeus, one of the family that had made themselves conspicuous in opposition to Antiochus, raised an army and defeated the enemy's forces in several encounters. Many unfaithful Jews joined the Maccabean party when they saw it was succeeding.

VERSE 35

“some of them of understanding shall fall” - After a time of Jewish independence, adversity again befell the nation, that the faithful might be tried and made ready for the work of the time of the end when “many of them that sleep in the dust shall awake,” which was yet an appointed long way off, as Daniel intimates in

the beginning of the vision.

VERSE 36

“he shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvellous things against the God of gods “ - Israel down, a king-power at this time intervened in Israel’s affairs, which prospered during the long interval elapsing to the time of the end - as evident from the statement that he prospers “till the indignation” that is, the indignation against Israel “be accomplished”. This power should make divine pretensions, for “he shall magnify himself above every god.” Rome came upon the scene at this time in the person of Pompey, and absorbed Judea. Afterwards, Rome, in her imperial and papal expansion in history alone answered to the verse. She absorbed the whole of the countries involved in the early part of the prophecy, and became at last imperially enthroned in Constantinople, within these countries, as the capital city of the Eastern section of the empire. The prosperous existence and extraordinary official claims of Romano-ecclesiastical imperialism in its Eastern extension alone fulfil the verse.

VERSE 37

“he shall magnify himself above all” - The new power discarded the gods of Pagan Rome, and adopted a new god in its own ecclesiastical chief head of the celibate priesthood creating it, which outraged the rights of women in the denial of marriage, and exalting itself as head above all.

VERSE 38

“in his estate shall he honour the God of forces” - In honouring this god in his estate, he honoured a god who was a god of pretended guardian saints and angels and other forces - a god that his fathers knew nothing of - yet upon whom he lavished the utmost wealth of the empire.

VERSE 39

“Thus shall he do in the most strong holds with a strange god”

- This honouring of a strange god he carried out in the highest and strongest places of his dominion, and gave his priests authority over all ranks of society - dividing the lands of the empire among them for gain. Hence the tithe-rent on all lands to this day.

VERSES 39-45

These mainly describe the coming attack of Russia on the Middle East, and for complete understanding should be studied in conjunction with Ezekiel 38; Zech 14; Rev. 16:12-17; Joel 3. They describe the great crisis among the nations that shall witness the manifestation of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is a crisis that all the prophets have anticipated, and for which all men of faith have waited, for it will end in the transference of the Kingdoms of men to the control of Jesus Christ - Revelation 11:15.

VERSE 40

“at the time of the end” - This defines the time at which the prophecy is to be dated. Whereas the Kings of the North and South of previous verses relate to past ages, the Kings of the North and South of these verses relate to our times.

“the king of the south” - A latter-day occupier of Egypt. In 1882 circumstances forced Britain to intervene in Egyptian affairs, and once in the land they were forced to remain there. In recent years British control in Egypt has disappeared, an indication that her work there is completed. Over 100 years ago, Christadelphians were anticipating the fulfilment of these prophecies that required Britain to occupy Egypt, and in 1882 they saw their expectations realised. Britain, then is the King of the south of this verse.

“push at him” - The “him” is the “king” of verse 36. We saw that this was the power ruling in Constantinople. In the days of Constantine (B.C. 312) and onwards, this city became the headquarters of the Roman Empire. In 1453, however, it fell to the Turkish power who made it their capital, and have continued to hold it. The Turks destroyed the remnant of the Roman Empire, and thus became the “him” of this verse. The prophecy thus demanded that at the time of the end, the power in occupation in

Egypt - Britain - should push at Turkey. This occurred in 1917, during the great war of 1914-1918. At that time Turkey controlled most of the Middle East including Jerusalem and Palestine. But in the war she sided with Germany against Britain, and Britain "pushed at" Turkey from Egypt, driving her from Jerusalem and Palestine. As a result, the Jews were invited to return to Palestine, and the Jewish return commenced. This portion of verse 40 is thus fulfilled.

"and the king of the north" - The king of the north of latter days, or time of the end - see Ezek.38:15- 16, is Russia who occupies some of the territory dominated by the ancient king of the north of previous verses.

"shall come against him" - Shall attack Turkey. One day this will happen, and Turkish political power will be destroyed completely. Today Russian forces are stationed on the borders of Turkey, and the Turks are in constant fear that Russia will attack them. Russia has declared that the time must come when she will have a portion of Turkey. Thus the situation exists today for the fulfilment of this prophecy.

"like a whirlwind" - A sudden unexpected attack that shall take the world off its guard.

"chariots" - Tanks, half-tracks, armoured personnel carriers.

"many ships" - Russia has rapidly built up her navy to rival that of U.S.A.

"shall enter and overflow" - Turkey will fall, and the whole of Europe will come under the power of Russia. The world will be divided into two camps and will anxiously await the next move. Russia will probably pause after the attack on Turkey before proceeding to the next stage in the campaign.

VERSE 41

"He shall enter into the glorious land" - The promised land. Russia will drive down along the coastal plains of Israel intent on taking Egypt. At this stage Israel will be bypassed.

"Edom, Moab, & Ammon shall escape" - These countries were in the area today known as trans-Jordan. Russia will drive swiftly

down the coastal plains of Israel missing for the moment this territory which is east of the Jordan river

VERSE 42

“Egypt shall not escape” - Russia will attack and take Egypt, thus dominating the eastern Mediterranean. This will be a severe blow to the U.S.A. and allies.

VERSE 43

“he shall have power over the precious things of Egypt” - Today, this is mainly the vital strategic importance of Egypt. Occupying this territory, the Russian Gogue, or king of the north, will have gained one of the most important positions on earth from whence the power of Britain and America can be challenged.

“the Libyans and Ethiopians at his steps” - These territories border on Egypt. Gogue shall dominate them, and they will become incorporated into his forces - see Ezekiel 38:5.

VERSE 44

“Tidings out of the east” - Sinai is east of Egypt. It is at Sinai that the judgement seat shall be set up - Rom. 14:10; Deut. 33:2 (this is prophetic of the future, and does not relate to the past except that the past was a type of the future; see verse 28; Hab. 3:1). The resurrection and gathering of the saints unto the Lord Jesus will take place before Russia enters Egypt, and while he is there, Christ in company with the immortalised saints, will emerge to execute the judgements written against the nations - Psa. 149:4-9. The “tidings out of the east” could well be the remarkable activity of this body of immortals as they emerge from Teman, or, the south as the word signifies - i.e., Sinai, see Hab. 3:3, against a world at war.

“tidings out of the north” - Jerusalem is north of Egypt, and doubtless when Russia makes its drive down to Egypt, the allied forces will attempt to cut his communications by building up their forces in Israel preparatory to attempting to eject Gogue. In the terms of Ezek. 38:13 they will challenge the supremacy of the

Russian king of the north. The strange activity of the divine host at Sinai, and the preparations of Britain and America in Israel will be tidings that "shall trouble the king of the north."

"he shall go forth to destroy" - Leaving a portion of his force to hold Egypt, Gogue shall ascend north to Jerusalem to destroy once and for all the power of his enemy. He will not be able to understand the true nature of the army of immortals who shall come forth out of Sinai, and will probably think it is some unaccountable revolt of local forces. He will look upon Britain and America as the main enemy to be crushed.

VERSE 45

"the tabernacles" - "Tents".

"of his palace" - His power. See Jeremiah 1:15 for similar use of the term.

"between the seas" - The Mediterranean and the Dead seas.

"in the glorious holy mountain" - Mount Zion. In other words, he shall attack Jerusalem, so that at this city, all the nations will be gathered to battle - Zech. 14: 1-2. Here Gogue will be successful. Britain will be driven back, and Jerusalem shall fall to the king of the north - Zech. 14:2.

"yet he shall come to his end" - He shall be destroyed, not by Britain, but by Christ - see Zechariah 14:3; Joel 3:16; Zephaniah 3:8; Ezekiel 38:21-23.

"and none shall help him" - There will be none that will be able to deliver him out of the hands of Christ wielding divine power.

CHAPTER 12

VERSE 1

“at that time” - The time referred to in Daniel 11:40 - the “time of the end.”

“Michael” - The word means “Who is like unto El (God)” and is a title of the Lord Jesus Christ who is also called Emmanuel or “God with us” - Matt. 1:23 - because he revealed or manifested God to man, and will do so again. There is another Michael referred to in Daniel 10:13,21, and styled “your prince” because he was put in charge of the affairs of Israel. He was doubtless that angel referred to in Exodus 23:20-23, and in Joshua 5:14 and who, in this latter place, styled himself the “prince of the host of Yahweh”. His work as Prince of Israel will be superseded by the Lord Jesus who is established as “Commander of the people” - Isaiah 55:4 - and as Prince of princes - Daniel 8:25. Thus this Michael of “the time of the end” is the Lord Jesus Christ who shall return sometime during the course of the fulfilment of the prophecy of Daniel 11:40, that is, these times. We thus live at the very epoch of the return.

“the great prince” - The king of the Jews.

“standeth for the children of thy people” - For Daniel’s people, for Israel, both natural and spiritual. The brethren of Christ are Daniel’s people and Israel after the flesh also constitute his people. Christ will stand for both. He will raise from the dead and give eternal life to his people, his brethren; and he will bring from their political graves Jewry after the flesh, creating them a nation in the land, and elevating their status, so that Israel will become the first and not the last among nations. It will then be the first dominion in the Empire Christ will establish - Micah 4:8.

“there shall be a time of trouble” - The world will experience terrible trouble by war and earthquake - Zech. 14; Ezek. 38. See particularly Jeremiah 25:32-38. Christ will overthrow all the institutions of Gentilism, and establish his kingdom on the ruins of all others - see Daniel 2:44. All the other nations will cease. If they will refuse to accept Christ, they will be disciplined until they

submit. Human nature being what it is many nations will not accept him, and will suffer the rigours of war - see Psa. 2; Isa. 30:27; 2:10-22; Psa. 46:8-10.

“such as never was” - The world is facing a time of trouble that shall exceed anything that man knows in recent years. The trouble of World War 2 will fade into absolute insignificance.

“since there was a nation” - Salvation will come, however, so that it will not be as terrible as the flood, and this phrase excludes the flood, for the nations were formed subsequent to the flood - Genesis 11:6.

“thy people shall be delivered, every one found written in the book” - This is the “book of life” - Revelation 3:5 - a symbolic book, not a real one, in which is recorded the characters the faithful develop. Those whose names are recorded in this all-important book shall be delivered by being granted everlasting life. Those whose names are blotted therefrom will receive shame and everlasting contempt. All who are responsible will be raised to judgement and brought before the judgement seat - Rom. 14:10; 2 Cor. 5:10; Eccl. 3:17; John 5:22,27; Rom. 2:6-9 - to receive eternal life or death.

VERSE 3

“shall shine as stars” - In scripture, sun, moon, and stars are used to symbolise ruling powers. The sun represents the civil authority, the moon represents the ecclesiastical authority, and the stars represent the principal statesman. Isaiah condemned Jewish heavens and earth in which would dwell righteousness - i.e. , the kingdom of God -Isa.65:17-18. The symbolic sun - the Lord Jesus - Mal. 4:1; shall shine forth brightly from the political heavens then established, and the symbolic moon - the system of religion established under Christ - will likewise shine forth brilliantly - see Isa. 30:26 - this verse cannot be understood literally, for such power would destroy all creation. See the fate of the Gentile heavens - Isa. 51:6. In the new political heavens the immortalised brethren of Christ shall shine forth as stars - i.e. statesmen - ruling with Christ - Revelation 5:9-10.

VERSE 4

“seal the book” - A sealed book cannot be read - Isa. 29:11, and though Daniel’s book could be read, it was not read with understanding - Daniel 8:27. It was sealed up, but the revelation which Jesus Christ gave to his servants helped to unseal its mysteries - Rev. 5:5 - and make known the events it predicted - Rev. 1:1. L.G. Sargent observed that the apocalypse is in a special degree a sequel to the book of Daniel, covering in more detail a part of the ground of his prophecy. Whatever principles are applied to the interpretation of Daniel must be applied also the apocalypse. A comparison of the two prophecies will leave no doubt that both portray continuous historical developments up to the time of the end. See the appendix for more on this.

“to the time of the end” - Knowledge of the fulfilling prophecies of Daniel have been unravelled in these times through the aid of faithful expositors like John Thomas in *Eureka*, *Elpis Israel*, and *Exposition of Daniel*, and by the unfolding of Yahweh’s purpose in the events that happen from day to day and which are revealing the truth of Daniel’s word.

“many shall run to and fro” - Man has subdued the earth on land, sea and air as God commanded from the beginning - Genesis 1:28, and this is in preparation for the kingdom to be established. It would not have been convenient to have established the kingdom at Christ’s first advent, for much of the earth still remained to be explored and prepared for the consummation of Yahweh’s purpose - Num. 14:21. Today travel and speed is a feature of the times.

“Knowledge shall be increased” - in all avenues of knowledge; science, travel, prophecy, etc.

VERSE 5

“I Daniel looked” - He was permitted to listen to a discussion between angels concerning the visions he had seen.

“there stood other two” - Remember, he was by the river Tigris or Hiddekel - Daniel 10:4, and had seen the “man clothed in linen” Daniel 10:5. Now he sees two other angels.

VERSE 6

“The man clothed in linen” - This man represented the body of the saints in glory - see notes on Daniel 10:5-6 Thus the question had relation to the time when God’s purpose in regard to the vision concerning the “certain man” should be fulfilled.

“how long” - Has been the constant cry of the faithful down the ages - Hab. 1:2; Psa. 74:10; Rev. 6:10, etc.

VERSE 7

“time, times and a half” - Three and a half “times”. A “time” is a Jewish year of 360 days. 360 times three and a half is 1260 As the prophecy had relation to the development of Roman Catholicism - see Daniel 11:38 - it is logical that this period had relation to the same subject. The Church of Rome was granted its authority in 610 by Phocas the Emperor in Constantinople, and 1260 years later, in 1870 it lost this power, when the Pope was greatly reduced in authority. Here a day is used to represent a year - see Numbers 14:34.

VERSE 10

“the wise shall understand” - Here is mankind divided in the light of God’s estimation. The pure and the impure; the wicked and the righteous; the wise and the ignorant. Here is encouragement for us to try to understand the prophecy, and to this the Lord Jesus adds his words, see Matt. 24:15.

VERSE 11

Here is the alternative and better rendering: “and from after the time the daily shall be removed even for to set up an abomination making desolate - 1290.” The “daily” refers to the daily sacrifice of Israel and thus relates to Judaism which was “taken away” in A. D. 70 when the Jewish state was overthrown by Rome. But among the early ecclesias were some who taught that believers should observe the law of Moses - Acts 15:1, 5, and Paul had to constantly fight these errorists. After a time, these errorists taught that as the Law of Moses provided for priests and Levites, so the Ecclesia should

support the clergy, and thus form its own brand of “priests” separated from the believers. In time this developed into Roman Catholicism. Thus, the “daily” was taken away, and “an abomination that astonisheth” set up. This was Roman Catholicism, concerning which John declared: “I wondered with great astonishment” - not admiration as in the A.V. - Revelation 17:6. “1290 days” - Date from the same time as the 1260 - see verse 7 - brings to 1900 when Zionism was sponsored in England and a great impetus given to national hopes. First conference of Jews and publication of the pamphlet *The Jewish State* was in 1878. So the purpose of God was brought a great step forward.

VERSE 12

“**1335 days**” - Forty-five years later - 1945 when world war two came to an end, and Russia emerged as a world force, and out of which came the Jewish state. World War two laid the foundations for the final crisis, and World War three depicted in Daniel 11:40-45.

“**blessed is he that cometh to it**” - We are blessed because we see the tokens of Christ’s imminent coming - see Matt. 13:17. These words can apply to us today as we witness God’s plan slowly but surely developing. The fulfilment of the 1335 day period, commences an epoch when they shall rise from the grave to receive their inheritance. May the study of God’s word so influence us that we will be found among their number.

APPENDIX

Daniel and the Apocalypse - A Comparison

The two great examples of the form of prophecy known as apocalyptic are Daniel, and the Revelation "signified" to John. This form has its beginnings in Ezekiel and recurs after the exile in Zechariah, but it is Daniel who is its great exemplar in the Old Testament. The reason is to be found in the circumstances of his prophesying and the need which was to be met. When Nebuchadnezzar dreamed of the Great Image he had already laid siege to Jerusalem and the days of the Kingdom of Judah were numbered. When in the first year of Belshazzar Daniel saw the vision of the Four Beasts, the throne of David had long been "overturned", in accordance with the prophecy of Ezekiel, until he come whose right it is ; the Temple as the visible symbol of God's presence had been destroyed; the seventy years of Jeremiah's prophecy of captivity were nearing their end, and the times of Gentile domination were well on the way.

What was the position and what were the hopes of the remnant of God's covenant-people? What lay before them? To answer these questions it was necessary to reveal on a new scale the purpose of God not only with His people but with the kingdoms of men. Without this knowledge there were two errors into which the people of the Lord might fall; they might think that complete and final deliverance was just at hand, and have their faith undermined when it did not come; or they might, as years and ages went by, think that God had abandoned men to their own aimless strifes; they might build upon premature hopes, or they might lose faith in His control. However little the first readers of the prophecy might understand, they could be left in no doubt that many and great events were to transpire in the rise and fall of empires, and that they were to occupy long periods of time. There was only one way in which history on such a scale could be contracted into brief prophecy, and that was by presenting it in what might be called

living cartoons. This was the only form in which all history could be surveyed beforehand up to the judgement of God and the coming of the Messiah in glory; and Daniel's day was the juncture at which it became necessary to give such a foreview of history for the benefit of that generation of the people of God and all in later ages who should follow it.

There are many points of comparison between the situations of Daniel, the "man greatly beloved" - 9:23; 10:11, - and John, the beloved disciple. John the exile in Patmos, though he would never be a great man in a foreign state, shared with Daniel separation from the land of God's promise. Not only had the Temple been destroyed, but it had first of all been deprived of its function by that perfect sacrifice which Daniel had been foreshown as making an end of all sacrifices. Not only had the people again been exiled but the "Church of the living God" had also been scattered abroad, as John's own presence in Patmos bore witness. Their Lord had been taken away, and they looked for his coming again: when should it be? It was in these circumstances that John received the Revelation, for as in Daniel's day there was a particular need to strengthen the saints of the new Israel to endure during long periods of time and in the course of a vast programme of events. They too would not be told smooth things; they must be braced to endure by a knowledge of great and terrible things in God's purpose - a knowledge that at first would seem daunting and disheartening. For them too the vision would speak only as each age unfolded its fulfilment, and even in the time of the end much would remain obscure; but in every age they would gain some sense of perspective. With such a kinship in circumstances and aim, it is not surprising that Daniel and the Apocalypse are allied not only in form but by definite thought links.

(1) In Revelation 1:4-8 John writes of "him that loved us, to him be the glory and the dominion for ever and ever. Amen." The association of glory and dominion may seem so familiar and natural to us as to be almost a cliché, but in fact the one obvious source for it is Dan. 7:14, where it is written of the Son of Man: "And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom. his

dominion is an everlasting dominion...” John is recalling the words of the prophet and appending to them the solemn affirmation, “Amen”.

(2) Behold, he cometh with the clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they which pierced him; and all the tribes of the earth shall mourn over him. Even so, Amen (R.V.). These are without doubt “the clouds of heaven” with which in Daniel “one like a son of man” came to the “ancient of days”. Again John recalls it with solemn affirmation.

(3) When in John’s introduction it is said that Christ “hath washed us from our sins in his own blood” (verse 5), a vast range of ritual and prophecy is distilled into a phrase, but prominent among the prophecies recalled must be the angel’s revelation to Daniel in chapter 9 of “Messiah” who should be “cut off”. This is the prophecy of seventy weeks determined upon the people and the holy city “to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity. . . to anoint the Most Holy” (verses 24-26). Christ’s redeeming work for the “kings and priests” of the future age has its place in Daniel, and the phrase in the Apocalypse reflects this prophecy no less than others. While, therefore, these prefatory verses bring all the prophets to a focus, they have such a distinctive connection with Daniel as to suggest what fuller study will confirm: that the later book is a sequel to the earlier, called forth by similar conditions and corresponding needs.

(4) There is an equally remarkable correspondence between the reactions of the two seers. On two occasions Daniel underwent a typical death and resurrection. In both cases long periods of time had been indicated in the prophecies, during which it was evident that Daniel must die and remain in sleep until the time come for him to “enter into his lot at the end of the days” (12:2, 13). In the Apocalypse the meaning is made abundantly clear. Having seen the “one like a Son of man”, John says: “And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last: I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death” (1:17-18). The one who spoke

was “the Resurrection and the Life” . To both Daniel and John the visions were overwhelming; both were shown that by the requirement of the prophecy they must spend long periods of time in the sleep of death; and both were assured of resurrection to life.

The comparison of the symbolic figures in Daniel and Revelation, leads to certain conclusions about the one like a Son of man in Revelation 1. He expresses a multitude embodied in One. His garments are priestly, as is the golden girdle worn like a breastplate. Since gold represents tried faith, the multitude whom he embodies have come out of tribulation in which faith has been perfected. The One has therefore come out of humanity, yet since he possesses some of the features of the Ancient of Days he has the quality of Divinity; he is Deity manifested. The feet like incandescent bronze indicate One endowed with Spirit-power which is to be exercised in judgement. These attributes represent a future perfection and power for the people of God embodied in One who is their head. Yet the Son of Man also belongs to the present, for he is seen in the midst of very fallible human ecclesias, and expressing his judgement upon them. That which he represents is therefore (a) future, (b) complex or multitudinous, and yet (c) is present, or having a present meaning. The Son of Man is both singular and multiple, seen in future power, yet even now in the midst of the ecclesias. That the Son of Man should be both future and present may seem strange, but it is the first example of a principle which governs the entire book. Time belongs to this earth; only to those who are on this globe can time be measured by the revolutions of the heavenly bodies. He who is above the heavens is beyond time, and it is completely natural that things that are not should be to God as though they are. In His revelation the future of His people is shown as God sees it, and therefore time is transcended; the future can mould the present and He who is coming can also be in the midst of the churches. This is only another way of saying the purpose of God is a present fact controlling the events which are to lead to its fulfilment.

This principle is striking in Daniel’s vision of the “One Man” (chapter 10). This figure too clearly represents a multitude in

future perfection and power, and beyond the resurrection of the dead; yet it is this "One Man" who gives to Daniel the prophecy of chapter 11, which outlines in great detail the doings of the kings of Persia and Grecia and their successors. From Xerxes to Antiochus Epiphanes the account is so exact and literal that no critic questions that it describes the history of the times; they only question whether it was written before the events. Thereafter the prophecy is more generalised, but it carries on to the consummation in chapter 12 when "many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake.. And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament." It is also evident that the early verses give the literal counterpart of the events represented symbolically in the vision of the Ram and the He-goat. Chapters 10, 11, and 12 of Daniel thus give an example of continuous historical prophecy, having its starting point in the prophet's own day, and opening out of a vision of the future glory and leading up to that glory as the culmination. The distant future precedes in the vision the events leading to it, and is in fact their source.

This is exactly the principle which governs the structure of the Apocalypse. Each section is introduced by a vision of the future from which emerges the events leading to it; the future is shown as in the present, as well as being the standard by which the present is judged. Thus in chapters 4 and 5 the redeemed of the future, represented by the four beasts and the twenty-four elders, acclaim the Lamb which had been slain, and the Lamb receives the scroll which contains the future, and proceeds to break the seven seals. The breaking of each seal reveals a stage in the events of history. Until this principle is grasped, the moving to and fro in time appears baffling; but when it is understood it is seen as a logical expression of what might be called the Divine philosophy of history. From men's point of view the end is in the beginning; as the acorn contains the oak, so the beginning of a historical development contains its outcome, and to find the explanation of things as they are we must go back into the past. From God's point of view the opposite is true; the beginning is the end. Since God's purpose governs history, the end is the effective cause of the events

leading to it; the end contains the beginning, rather than the beginning the end. Once perceived, this principle gives coherence and intelligibility to the structure of the Apocalypse.

In Revelation 1, therefore, the vision of the Son of Man not only precedes the letters to the churches but is the head and fount of the entire book. Whether as the Apocalyptic Son of Man, or as the Lamb that had been slain, Christ pervades and dominates the whole of his revelation. He is the Beginning and the Ending, which is, and which was, and which is coming; all God's redemptive purpose with men is comprehended in him, and spans the changing course of world events which forms the setting in which the people of God's name suffer and are perfected. It is for their sakes that the world's history is controlled, and the purpose of the Apocalypse is to show the environment in which the saints will live their lives. There have been three main schools of interpretation of the Apocalypse: (1) purely historical; (2) wholly or mainly future; and (3) continuous historical. Modern critical views would fall into the first category, referring it wholly to Roman history in the persecutions of Nero or Diocletian; it will not satisfy any student of the book who is prepared to accept that prophecy can genuinely foretell.

The futurist interpretation suffers the disadvantage that it robs the book - or a very large part of it - of any purpose for the writer's or succeeding generations until the end. It also fails to satisfy the requirements of comparison with the book of Daniel. Stress has already been laid on the links between Daniel and the Apocalypse, the resemblance in the situations in which they arose, and the apparent similarity in their aims. It has been pointed out that prophecies in the Book of Daniel - the Great Image, the Four Beasts, the Ram and He-Goat, and the detailed forecast of chapters 10, 11 and 12 - are interpreted within the book itself as having their beginning in the prophet's own day, and they all extend beyond his life-time to the Kingdom of God. Is it not likely, therefore - to put it at the lowest - that an approach on similar lines will be the most fruitful in understanding the Apocalypse?

When that approach is made, and the book falls so readily into the

kind of outline here offered, surely the evidence is strong for the third of the interpretations listed above, the continuous historical. It will be found in fact that whatever difficulties in detail there may be, this is the only interpretation which demonstrates the unity of the book and gives a comprehensive view of its message. No other can claim to give a consistent interpretation of every part. Many students are therefore convinced that, whatever modifications may be needed in detail, the older Christadelphian approach to the Apocalypse was sound in principle. Like Daniel, John had a prevision of the course of history from his own time to its climax in the Kingdom of God. He begins in the day of the Iron Kingdom, when the power of the fourth Beast was at its height. He foresees the changes which that power would undergo until at last it is swept away by Divine judgement.

(5) John saw “a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his heads seven diadems” - Rev. 12:3. The likeness to Daniel’s indescribable fourth beast is self-evident, for this was “dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly, and it had great iron teeth...and it had ten horns” - Daniel 7:7. The ten horns in Daniel’s vision correspond to the ten toes of the Great Image; they represent a division of power. Yet while “devouring and breaking in pieces” and “stamping the residue with its feet”, the beast is clearly acting as one irresistible power. The divided state is anticipated as a later development, but devouring strength is the beast’s characteristic. The ten horns are the strongest mark of identification with the Apocalyptic dragon.

(6) Daniel in his vision saw “the four winds of the heaven break forth upon the Great Sea” - 7:2, and it was from this sea that the four beasts emerged. John says the dragon “stood on the sand of the sea” - 12:1, R.V.; and from the sea another beast emerged. This beast had a close connection with the dragon, and also with the fourth beast of Daniel, for it too had “ten horns and seven heads”, but this time the diadems were upon the horns, and the heads bore “names of blasphemy”. It is also remarkable for combining features of all four of Daniel’s beasts, being like a leopard, but with the feet of a bear and the mouth of a lion. It is not independent

of the dragon, and does not supplant it, as (for instance) pagan Rome replaced the power of Greece; for the Dragon endows the beast with its own power, throne, and great authority. The sea is the Mediterranean, yet it also represents the turbulence of peoples. From their unrest arises a new power in the old world, which receives authority from the Dragon power of Rome to which it is closely akin. It must in fact represent a development of the dragon power. It combines features of the other beasts, and so is in some sense the heir of Gentile rule, yet it also has distinctive features of its own.

Dr. Thomas' interpretation of this as the persecuting papal power, with authority derived from edicts of the Eastern Roman emperors, has an obvious fitness. The beast has already been referred to in Rev. 11:7 as "the beast that cometh up out of the abyss" and kills the two witnesses. To appreciate the features of the Beast of the Sea it is necessary to take a closer look at Daniel's fourth beast. As the prophet considered its ten horns there came up "another horn, a little one", before which three of the other horns were uprooted. This little horn had eyes like a man's and a mouth "speaking great things" (7:8). This power of utterance is a distinctive quality not shared by any of the other beasts or by the fourth beast in earlier stages. Any emperor can issue edicts or declarations, but in the case of the Little Horn which "made war with the saints, and prevailed against them" until the time of judgement came (verse 21). It was described as diverse from those before it, and subdued three kings: "and he shall speak 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 and times and half a time" (verse 25)

The Beast of the Sea shows so many points of comparison with this that one must conclude that it represents the same facts by a fuller and more detailed symbolism. It was like the Little Horn in power of utterance, which was bestowed upon it at a certain stage in its career, for there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies. . . (compare with Daniel 7:8,20). This he used "to blaspheme God's name, and his tabernacle, and them that

dwell in the heaven”. Of the Little Horn it is said that he made war with the saints, and prevailed against them (Daniel 7:21). Of the Beast of the Sea the same words are used: “It was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them”. They operate for similar periods, the Little horn for “a time, times and a half” (Daniel 7:25), and the Beast for “forty and two months” - the same length of time differently expressed, and the same period as that for which the woman of chapter 12 was fed or “nourished” in the wilderness.

(7) The fourth Beast of Daniel continued “until the Ancient of days came, and judgement was given to the saints of the Most High” (Daniel 7:22). So too the power represented in Revelation 13 continues in one or more of its phases until the Son of Man thrusts in his sickle of judgement, and the earth is reaped (Revelation 14:14-16). The picture of judgement is expanded in Revelation 17, when the scarlet woman rides on a beast, once again to be identified by its seven heads and ten horns. When it is said that “the seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth” (17:9), and that the woman is “that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth” (17:18), no expository questions that Rome is intended; the only difference is whether it means Rome pagan or papal. This beast “goes into perdition” after making war with the Lamb, supported by the “false prophet”, and by the ten horns which “are ten kings” (verse 12). It therefore, like the fourth beast of Daniel, continues until the final judgement. By identifying the beasts of Revelation 12-13 with Daniel’s fourth beast, it may be deduced that the interpretation of both should be on historical principles. The Apocalyptic symbols portray in greater detail the same period and the same events as are covered in the later phases of Daniel’s Fourth Beast.

(8) The comparison between Daniel and the Apocalypse continues to the end. To the prophet it was said, At that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book (Daniel 12:1). In the Apocalypse those who enter into the Holy City are “they which are written in the Lamb’s book of life” (Revelation 21:27). “The book of life” is a characteristic feature of

both. The general picture of the final bliss of Paradise restored in Revelation 21 and 22 may owe more to other prophets - Isaiah and Ezekiel in particular - but in principle it amplifies the assurance given to Daniel: "And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to everlasting contempt. And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever" (12:2-3).

The Apocalypse is the essence and crown of all the prophets; but it is in a special degree a sequel to the Book of Daniel, covering in more detail a part of the ground of his prophecy. Whatever principles are applied to the interpretation of Daniel must be applied also to the Apocalypse; and one would think it could hardly be in doubt that both portray continuous historical developments up to the time of the end.