

Daniel the Prophet

FOR sheer interest, the Book of Daniel must rank amongst the foremost of the writings of the prophets. Firstly, it is so interwoven into the remarkable experiences of the man himself, as to excite the interest of the reader. It is full of supernatural marvel, both in the events which it records, as in the visions which it describes. But its interest is eclipsed by its importance in relation to world history: it not only preserves unique and vital links in the chain of world events, but it also sets forth important chronological features that hold the key to the time-periods of Yahweh's purpose with the earth.

The Book of Daniel is unique in that it not only provides a plan of prophecy that is basic to the understanding of all prophecy, but it also supplies time limits for its fulfilment. Our verse by verse notes will deal with these, and reveal their importance in understanding the future purposes of God.

The book is both biographical and prophetic. As our analysis will show, the first six chapters tell of the experiences of the man; whilst the last six chapters set forth the visions that he received of God. Both are prophetic. His life enacted the drama of his message. His experiences typed the message he proclaimed. The miracles that the book records are not merely marvels but are designed to dramatise the miracle of God's unfolding purpose among men. To understand the book properly, we must know something of the man himself. Hence, our exposition of his prophecy commences with an outline of the life and times of Daniel. He not only lived to witness the overthrow of the State of Judah, but also to view its restoration at the decree of Cyrus, the Conqueror of Babylon. Therefore he lived in times comparable to our own, so that the study of his Book has additional significance in that we can see definite signs indicating the approaching end of the age. We live in times comparable to those of the prophet and anticipate with joy the manifestation of the antitypical Cyrus (the Lord Jesus Christ) and his subsequent conquest of Babylon the great. Even so come, Lord Jesus.

— H. P. Mansfield, March 1986.

WITH pleasure we add this volume to the bound set of Expositor commentaries of the Scriptures. It is a valuable volume, dealing with a most outstanding prophecy with great relevance to present circumstances. Brother H. P. Mansfield commenced his magazine exposition of Daniel in March 1986, nineteen months before his decease on October 16th, 1987. He had completed his detailed writing up to chapter 9:9, and the exposition was continued by the present editor, with valuable assistance in research by Brethren J. Ullman, J. Knowles and E. Wilson. Much of the content of this latter section is based upon Brother Mansfield's extensive Bible marginal notes, and his other works, so that the whole volume reflects his understanding of the prophecy before us. May the manifestation of the Great Prince soon bring to all who have the faith and courage of Daniel, the glorious consummation of which this prophecy so remarkably speaks.

— G. E. Mansfield, January, 1992.

The Christadelphian Expositor



DANIEL

The Book of Daniel

The Book of Daniel is not only a revelation of prophecy, and, therefore, of God's expressed purpose in relation to the nations; but also a book of instruction. For example, we know more of the ministrations of Yahweh through His angelic hosts from the experiences and words of Daniel and his friends, than from any other book of the Bible. To Daniel, also was outlined the work of personal redemption in the sacrifice of Christ, as well as an outline of his coming majesty and glory in the Kingdom he will set up on earth. By giving close and thoughtful attention to the contents of this book stimulating examples of faithfulness and exhortations to consistency in action will be discovered; as well as revealing a knowledge of God's will in precept and prophecy. In reading and studying this marvellous book, the student will find his knowledge greatly enhanced especially if he goes to the trouble of so analysing its contents in order to make a subject-index of its teaching. This is worthwhile inasmuch as a blessing is pronounced upon those who seek a clearer knowledge. It will draw them into the category of those described in the words of Daniel 12:10: "Many shall be purified and made white, and tried; but the wicked shall do wickedly and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand". The reader's personal efforts in understanding this prophecy will draw him into the company of the wise.

**THE
CHRISTADELPHIAN
EXPOSITOR**



**A VERSE-BY-VERSE EXPOSITION
OF THE SCRIPTURES**

Commenced by

H. P. Mansfield

who prepared from chapters 1 to 8, until his death in 1987

and completed by

G. E. Mansfield

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Foreword

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H. P. Mansfield

Introduction

LIFE AND TIMES OF DANIEL THE PROPHET

Daniel's name means *The Judgment of God*. He lived through a crucial period in Israel's history. With Jeremiah and Ezekiel, he witnessed the tragedy of Judah's death-struggle with the rising power of Babylon: a calamity which brought the Kingdom of God to ruin. But he also saw God's judgment poured out upon the persecuting power of Babylon, and the first of the exiles return under Zerubbabel and Joshua.

If Ezekiel's "thirty years" (Ezek. 1:1) relate to his age, as is most likely, Daniel and Ezekiel were approximately the same age. They were both greatly influenced by the much older prophet, Jeremiah, with whom they were contemporary, and whose voice was so frequently raised in warning and rebuke at that time. The trio of prophets provide a delightful blend of experience and youth. Jeremiah, by far the oldest of the three, must have been greatly encouraged and helped by the faith and virility of his younger companions, whilst they, in turn, gained much from his guidance and experience.

This shows that there is place for both age and youth in the work of the Truth, for both can gain from the co-operation of the other. To that end, both must learn to appreciate the standpoint of the other, and the real benefits that come from blending the experience of age with the enthusiasm of youth. The work of Jeremiah would not have been so effective if Ezekiel and Daniel had not been there to carry it on among those of the captivity; whilst, most certainly, their spiritual development owed much to the influence of the more experienced prophet. How often Yahweh has seen fit to use age and youth in conjunction! A Jonathan and a David; a Haggai and a Zechariah; a Paul and a Timothy, labour much more effectively when harnessed together.

A Son Of The Covenant

All three prophets were ultimately taken into captivity (for even Jeremiah was forcibly removed to Egypt), but Daniel was the first to go. He was but "a child", a youth (Dan. 1:3), about 17 years of age,

when he was taken to Babylon. He was probably born about the year 623 BC, a significant year in Israel's history, for it was then that Josiah compelled the nation to renew its covenant with Yahweh (2 Chron. 34:8, 29-33). Daniel, like Ezekiel, can well be described as a son of the covenant, for he was brought up in the environment of reform instituted by the King in fulfilment of its terms.

Josiah's reform was not without fruit to the glory of Yahweh. It is true that it failed nationally because the majority of the people, forced to conform thereto, had no true heart for it, and are described as turning unto God "but feignedly" (Jer. 3:10). Nevertheless there were some who were influenced for good thereby.

Josiah was determined to completely stamp out pagan idolatry; and the nation submitted, not because it feared God, but because it feared the king! The national conversion, therefore, was only superficial, but even so the king's work was not without lasting, tangible results. He reigned for 31 years, and so long as he was in control, the threatened judgments against Judah were held in check. Therefore, by his own efforts he virtually held at bay the threatened punishments of God against an ungodly nation, permitting time for the development of such characters as Daniel, Ezekiel and many others. He provides an example of the value of good leadership in times of apostasy even though he could not entirely prevent the day of judgment that came.

Josiah not only set about to destroy all idolatry, but also to secure for every Israelite a sound education in the principles of Yahweh's law. He realised that a merely negative approach is not sufficient. It is important to destroy that which is evil, but equally important to replace it with that which is good. Josiah attempted to do this, first by destroying pagan worship, and then by making the study of the Law a form of compulsory education for the people.

Josiah's reform was even more sweeping and complete than that of Hezekiah. Though Hezekiah, jointly with Isaiah, brought about a great reformation in the nation, the shrine which Solomon had erected on the Mount of Olives to Chemosh, the Moabite goddess was permitted to remain standing in full view of Jerusalem and the Temple of Yahweh! The hill had been called in consequence, "The Mount of Corruption" (2 Kings 23:13), and as such symbolised the Apostasy flaunting itself in full view of the pure worship represented by Mount Zion (Heb. 12:22). In his zeal, Josiah destroyed this shrine, together with all other pagan temples and idols throughout the land, slaying the false priests without mercy, and attempting to destroy their influence by force (2 Kings 23:4-20; 2 Chron. 34:3-7). In this he fulfilled the pre-determined counsel of Yahweh (1 Kings 13:1-2).

In such an environment as this were spent the first thirteen years of the lives of Ezekiel, Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, Azariah (Dan.

1:7), and others, who were later taken into captivity "for their good" (Jer. 24:5). Its spiritually beneficial influence was seen in the excellent qualities that such men revealed in the face of the trials which they experienced in captivity.

Daniel's Education And Youthful Impressions

These drastic reforms extended over a period of approximately thirteen years (cp. 2 Kings 22:1, with v. 3), and occurred during the childhood of Daniel. From a child he was reared in an atmosphere of fierce hostility to paganism, and most likely heard Jeremiah (cp. Dan. 9:2), indicting the people for their hypocrisy, and warning them of the consequences of their folly.

During childhood and early youth, he was educated in Divine principles out of the holy Scriptures, and this sound teaching stood him in good stead for the remainder of his life. It blossomed into the outstanding example of faith and determination that he manifested during his captivity in Babylon, and which marked him out as a true leader among the people. How important is the spiritual education of children! Faithful Israelites, throughout the ages, have taken this responsibility most seriously. They have realised that the careful development of the childlike mind by means of the divine Word, enables youth to better master the problems which it will have to face ultimately.

The early period of Daniel was a time of international stress and turmoil. Assyria's power was in decline, and that of Babylon was rising. Then, suddenly, all the nations of the fertile crescent were menaced by a new and formidable enemy that brought fear to many in Judah as well. Asia was invaded by the Scythians. They suddenly appeared from behind the long mountain barrier formed by the Himalayan and Caucasian ranges to menace the civilisations in the south. Fierce and uncivilised, they swarmed over the borders of Assyria down the coastal plains of Palestine towards Egypt. There they were bribed by the Egyptians to turn back northwards, which they did, ravaging the countryside, burning and plundering as they went. They retired north along the plain of Esdraelon, providing Judah with a foretaste of dire things to come, at the epoch of its judgment. For the moment, however, Judah escaped the full brunt of invasion. The Scythians passed it by, to return north, leaving their mark upon the land in the city of Scythopolis, by which was renamed Bethshan, and which remained as a token of warning to many watchers in Judah!

Assyria Falls, Babylon Rises

The Scythian attack played an important part in the development of Babylon. The brutal power of Assyria was weakened, and a decade

was dominated by the Scythians. During this period, two other nations consolidated their power, awaiting the opportunity to strike against Assyria, their common enemy. They were the rising powers of Media and Babylon. To the north-east of Assyria, in the Province of Media, King Cyaxeres had ascended the throne, and was busily preparing to throw off the Assyrian yoke. In Babylon, to the south-east of Assyria, Nabopolasser had established his power, and likewise awaited his opportunity to revolt against his Assyrian imperial overlord. For a time, the presence of the fierce, warlike Scythians delayed the opportunity of Media and Babylon to throw off the Assyrian yoke. But at last, they retired behind their mountain barrier, and immediately Assyria was attacked on two fronts. Nineveh was caught as in a vice by the two satellite nations acting in concert against their one-time overlord. By BC 614, the last stronghold had been taken, and Nineveh was open to the enemy. Cyaxeres was the first to enter the city with his army, and Nabopolasser met him in the ruins of the city. By mutual agreement, they divided up the Assyrian Empire. Media annexed the north and north-east; Babylon lay claim to the south and south-west. By this momentous decision Syria, Palestine and Egypt came under the sphere of Babylonian rule, and plans were now implemented to dominate the area.

Nearly ninety years earlier, Merodach-Baladan of Babylon had sent an embassy to Hezekiah to congratulate him upon his remarkable recovery from sickness, and perhaps to enquire concerning the astounding overthrow of Sennacherib outside of Jerusalem. It was a diplomatic mission, and, doubtless, the embassy came seeking for allies against Assyria rather than to merely congratulate Hezekiah. But the king succumbed to the flattery of the diplomatic approach. He displayed the treasures of his realm to the Babylonians, and laid open to their view the strength and weakness of his power. He was indicted by Isaiah in these terms: "Hear the word of Yahweh of hosts: Behold, the days come, that all that is thine house, and that which thy fathers have laid up in store until this day, shall be carried to Babylon: nothing shall be left, saith Yahweh. And of thy sons that shall issue from thee, which thou shalt beget, shall they take away; and they shall be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon" (Isaiah 39:5-7).

As the menacing shadow of Babylon stretched ominously towards the land of Judah, did any of the people recall the words of Isaiah the prophet? Here were signs of the times, indeed! And a prophecy, too, that had direct reference to the youth Daniel, for he was "of the king's seed, and of the princes", and was destined to be taken to Babylon, and placed in the care of the "prince of the eunuchs" (Dan. 1:3,9).

Perhaps Josiah knew of this prophecy, but felt that so long as he remained in control, he could keep the rising power of Babylon at bay.

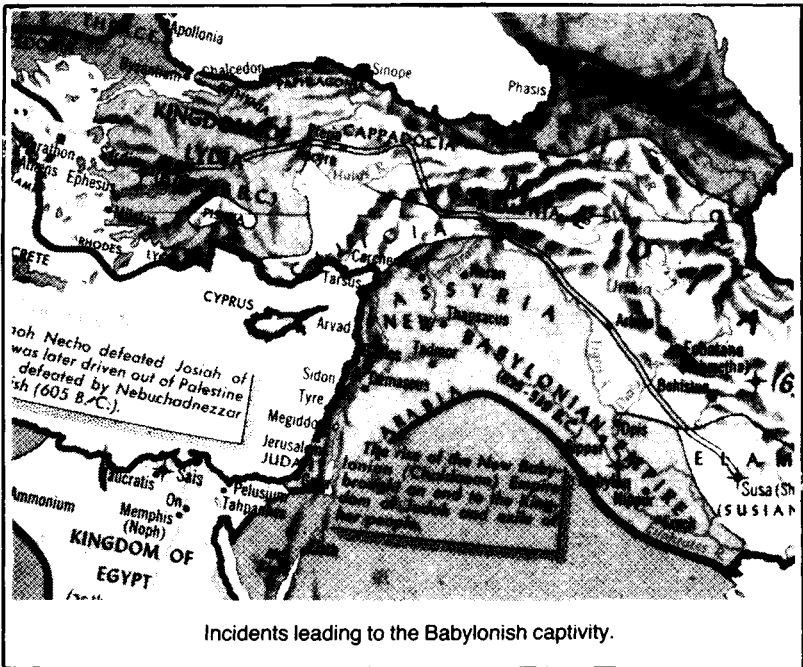
Had not Huldah the prophetess told him that the judgments of God would not be poured out upon Judah so long as he remained in power (2 Chron. 34:24-28)! Fortified with this assurance, the faithful and zealous king prepared to do what he could to protect the people under him from the rising menace that prophecy decreed would descend from the north.

Josiah's Death

As reports from the north told of the fall of Assyria, tension mounted throughout Judah. All nations were involved, and it was obvious that in the clash of power politics, some of the smaller kingdoms would lose their independence. Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon, flushed with triumphs in the north, looked south to extend his influence, and poised himself to attack. Alive to the menace, Pharaoh Necho mobilised his forces. Judah lay between the giants of the north and south: a buffer state threatened with political extinction.

Whilst this news of far-reaching consequences was being discussed in the homes and market-places of Judah, further disturbing information reached the city of Jerusalem.

Egyptian soldiers were actually on the march northwards.



Incidents leading to the Babylonish captivity.

Pharaoh Necho had decided to take the initiative, and move to the aid of the stricken Assyrians. It was true, that for many years, Egypt and Assyria had been bitter enemies, that their armies had clashed time and again, so that Palestine had been constantly disturbed by their contending forces, but policy now dictated that Necho endeavour to strengthen Assyria as a counter to the rising power of Babylon*.

This was a momentous decision, that proved disastrous to the kingdom of Judah, and its royal family. For, foolishly, Josiah attempted to intervene. Doubtless he wanted to keep his country free from foreign domination, and considered that if Necho was successful in the north, Judah would fall under his influence. Despite the comparative weakness of his army, he stood against the Egyptian, possibly expecting Yahweh to intervene as He had against Sennacherib. But if so, his expectations proved in vain. Josiah had not asked Divine counsel and suffered defeat. In the battle he was mortally wounded, and on being conveyed back to Jerusalem, he died.

So, on that day, Daniel would have heard the sounds of mourning, woe, and public lamentation in the streets of Jerusalem. Jeremiah composed the royal dirge and incorporated in it expressions concerning the king that are found in the *Book of Lamentations*. This official lamentation on behalf of good king Josiah, became an "ordinance in Israel" (2 Chron. 35:25), and afterwards was heard in the land whenever tragedy struck. This accounts for the women offering lamentations for the Lord as he walked towards the site of the crucifixion. He told them to weep for themselves; to apply the *Book of Lamentations* to their own circumstances and to the disaster that would overtake Jerusalem itself, for it was guilty of folly in rejecting its king (Luke 23:27-28).

Josiah was at peace with God when he died; and his death removed him from the trouble that then loomed on the political horizon, and almost immediately afterwards broke disastrously over Judah. Yahweh had fulfilled His promise to him (2 Chron. 34:24-28). Josiah's eyes did not see the evil that God was about to bring upon the nation

* 2 Chron. 35:20 states that Necho "came up to fight against Carchemish by Euphrates", but this should be rendered, as in RSV, to "fight at." The incident is recorded upon a fragment of cuneiform text in the British Museum which states: "In the month of Du'uz (June/July, 609 B.C.) the king of Assyria procured a large Egyptian army and marched against Harran to conquer it . . . till the month of Ulul (Aug/Sept.) he fought against the city but accomplished nothing." The circumstances were as follows. After the fall of Nineveh, the remnants of the Assyrian forces had retreated to northern Mesopotamia, from whence their king embarked upon the forlorn hope of reconquering what he had lost. Necho hastened to help him, so as to counter the rising power of Babylon but when, after two months' fighting, even Harran had not fallen, he retired. Leaving his army in the north, Necho returned home. His victory over Judah had made him suzerain of Syria, which Babylon coveted, so that a conflict between Egypt and Babylon became inevitable. Ultimately, Necho rejoined his army in the north, the battle of Carchemish took place, and Egypt was decisively defeated.

because of its wickedness. Both the king and the circumstances typed the death of Messiah. The lamentation that mourned Josiah's death will be repeated when the significance of the death of the Lord is brought home to Israel in the future (Zech. 12:11).

Meanwhile Daniel, as a boy of thirteen, heard Jeremiah's lamentation for Josiah, and doubtless pondered the meaning of the significant words in which it was expressed.

Egypt Defeated By Babylon

Little did Daniel then know how much the rising power of Babylon was to dominate so much of his life. Gradually he saw its ominous shadow move ever nearer the nation of Israel.

Pharaoh Necho, having failed to prevent the overthrow of Nineveh, decided to strengthen his forces to resist Babylon. He visited Judah and placed it under heavy tribute. He dethroned Jehoahaz, the son of Josiah, and appointed Jehoiakim as king in his stead (2 Kings 23:31-35).

He then returned to Egypt to mobilise further forces to resist the growing power of Babylon in the north. In the fourth year of Jehoiakim the expected attack by Babylon took place. Nebuchadnezzar, who had been elevated as regent with his father, was given supreme control over the Babylonian forces, and initiated an attack on Syria. Again Egyptian forces stood in the way. The armies met at Carchemish, where a furious battle took place, and Necho's forces were decisively routed. The result of the battle was a turning point in world history. Jeremiah predicted the Babylonish victory, and saw it as a disastrous defeat for Egypt: "Wherefore have I seen them dismayed and turned away back? Their mighty ones are beaten down, and are fled apace, and look not back: for fear was round about, saith Yahweh . . ." (Jer. 46:5).

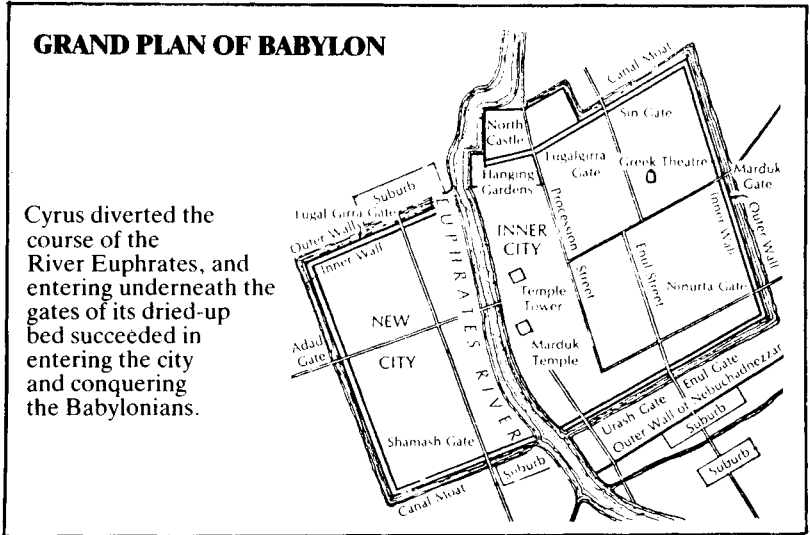
And then in answer: "For this is the day of Adonai Yahweh of hosts, a day of vengeance, that He may avenge Him of His adversaries: and the sword shall devour, and it shall be satiated and made drunk with their blood: for the Lord Yahweh of hosts hath a sacrifice in the north country by the river Euphrates . . ." (v. 10).

The result of the battle was not only a sacrifice, but an incurable wound for Egypt: "Go up into Gilead, and take balm, O virgin, the daughter of Egypt: in vain shalt thou use many medicines; for thou shalt not be cured" (v. 11).

Thus, according to the word of Yahweh, the defeat of Carchemish was but the beginning of sorrows for Egypt. It was never to recover fully from the troubles that Nebuchadnezzar brought upon it from that time forward (2 Kings 24:7).

Nebuchadnezzar boasted: "Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty?" (Dan. 4:30).

The answer to this boast, had previously been proclaimed by Isaiah the prophet: "Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. It shall never be inhabited . . ." (Isa. 13:19).



The rebuilt city was a monument to the glory of the flesh. Ancient historians have described its size and magnificence. It formed a vast square, some 45 miles in compass, enclosed by a wall 200 ft high, and 50 ft broad, in which there were 100 gates of brass. Its principal ornament was the Temple of Belus, in the middle of which was a tower of eight storeys, or towers, placed one above another, diminishing always as they went up, upon a base a quarter of a mile square. It was a most magnificent palace, matched only by the famous hanging gardens. Those artificial gardens were rated one of the seven wonders of the ancient world. They were cultivated upon an artificial mountain, constructed (like our freeways!) upon arches, and planted with trees of the largest, as well as the most beautiful, and varied kinds.

Nebuchadnezzar, like most of the great monarchs of old, took a great delight in recording his accomplishments in stone. One of his inscriptions contains the following: "I finished the great two-fold wall of Babylon. I made strong the city with bricks burnt hard as stones, and piled high in huge masses as mountains. Behold besides the Ingoul-Bel, the impregnable fortifications of Babylon. I made inside Babylon

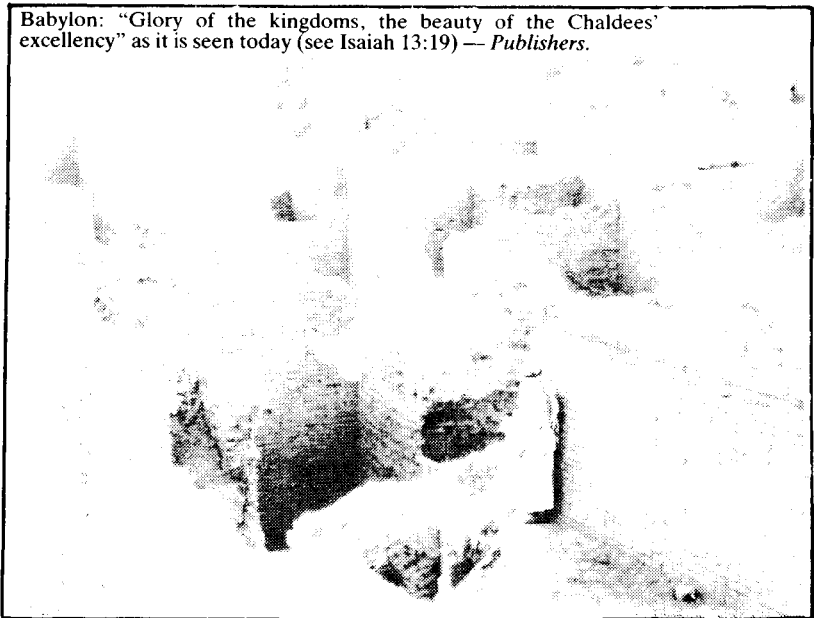
on the eastern bank of the river, such a fortification as no king before me had ever made. I excavated the ditch; with bricks and mortar I bound its bed; I built above it a strong rampart; I adorned its gates. The portals and pillars I plated with bronze. Against presumptuous enemies, the foes of Babylon, 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 glorious!"

How similar these words are to those put in the mouth of the king by Daniel: "Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the honour of my majesty . . .?"

Slave-labor

Nebuchadnezzar saw to it that the skill of his craftsmen was supplemented by forced labour. From the conquered territories he brought to Babylon the most skilled and educated men as well as the best of the workers. Though he may have paid them wages, and they doubtless prospered materially in the land of their captivity, their services were compulsory. The measures he took are recorded in an inscription as follows: "I stirred up the disobedient, and collected the poor and gave full directions for the work, and in numbers I supported them."

Babylon: "Glory of the kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency" as it is seen today (see Isaiah 13:19) — *Publishers.*



He tried to bind them body and soul to building up the greatness of Babylon. That is obvious from the first chapter of Daniel, in that the King selected the best of the captives that they might be educated and so qualify for his service. He also changed their names, from those which honored the God of Israel, to others that acknowledged the gods of Babylon. He tried to make the captives forget their allegiance to the nation and worship of their country, and to dedicate themselves to the glory and worship of Babylon. Mostly he succeeded, for there were few with the faith, courage and determination of Daniel, to resist the decrees of the king, and remain loyal to their calling.

So the people were set to work, building up what Yahweh had declared He would break down. But it proved to be an activity of futility. Where is Babylon today? A heap of rubble and ruins on the solitary banks of a river! Yet then it was the scene of greatest activity and power.

There is a repetition of such futile striving today. It is an age of materialism, but also of great opportunities in material advancement; and many a Daniel is involved in the same seductive appeal and pressures as were the captives in Babylon of old.

Modern Fashions 2,500 Years Ago

There were many trends and fashions in Babylon that were shocking to conservative men like Daniel, as current ones are to those like Daniel today. He would have been disgusted by the effeminacy of men, the masculinity of Babylonish women, and the attempts at legal equality of the sexes, so opposed to the principles of his Israelitish upbringing. Archaeological research enabled one writer to give the following description of Babylon when at the apex of its fleshly glory.

“Vast crowds are pressing in from the country to do their business, in which the women of the neighbourhood take a prominent part. They are not closely shut up from the gaze of the men as was the case in many parts of the East, but work like men, and at the very same tasks as men. Perhaps, even the women are more masculine in their appearance than the men, for both have long flowing hair, both are somewhat slender in their frame, but there is an air of audacity in the features of the weaker sex which is not noticed in the stronger. The latter have every trace of brutality and ferocity stamped upon their countenances, but the former add cunning and intelligence to the other marks which they possess in common with the men. But these are not the grand ladies of Babylon, they are only the country people. The others are, as Isaiah observes, ‘tender and delicate,’ unused to any hard domestic tasks. But even these are more masculine in their demeanour than the young dandies, who are conspicuous with their richly colored turbans, and

whom the whole repository of the Jezebel could not supply with sufficient paint and cosmetics to bright up those cheeks so sunken by the effects of the luxurious and licentious life" (H. Deane).

This description could apply to any western city today. Both sexes labour at the same work and demand equal pay; the women are noted for their masculinity and the young men for their effeminacy; and this attitude creates an environment of contempt for spiritual principles.

The Ecclesia today dwells in the midst of modern Babylon the Great.

Those of its members who succumb to the pressure of flesh-pleasing, immoral fashions jeopardise their future at the Judgment Seat of Christ. This is the obvious teaching of Isaiah 3:16-24, where pleasure-loving women are sternly rebuked: "Moreover Yahweh saith, Because the daughters of Zion are haughty, and walk with stretched forth necks and wanton eyes, walking and mincing as they go, and making a tinkling with their feet: therefore Yahweh will smite with a scab the crown of the head of the daughters of Zion . . . in that day Yahweh will take away the bravery of their tinkling ornaments . . . and it shall come to pass that instead of sweet smell there shall be stink; and instead of a girdle a rent; and instead of well set hair baldness; and instead of a stomacher a girding of sackcloth; and burning instead of beauty . . ."

To what day is the prophet referring? The context clearly shows that it is to the coming day of judgment, the day when "the branch of Yahweh shall be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the earth shall be excellent and comely for them that are escaped of Israel . . . even every one that is written among the living in Jerusalem" (Isa. 4:2-3).

It is important now, as it was in the days of Daniel, that true sons and daughters of Yahweh stand aside from Babylon and its fashions.

IN BABYLON

A City of Materialism

Daniel spent seventy years in Babylon (approx. BC 606-536). During that period, he witnessed the amazing growth of the city until it became one of the seven wonders of the world; and then saw its equally amazing and sudden decline.

Like young Christadelphians of today, Daniel had to resist the educational, social and political pressures to which he was subjected, for otherwise these would have drawn him away from the sound worship of Yahweh. As a young man, he was selected to be educated in Babylonish ways, and to give his time to the "wisdom and tongue of the Chaldeans". But he refused to conform to the full measure of that de-

manded of him, for he realised that to do otherwise would compromise his standing with God. He saw about him a city rapidly rising to power and riches with tremendous opportunities of material advancement. If he had allowed his mind to be dazzled with the prospects of these temporary things, he could have been caught up in the general seeking for prosperity that had the nation in its grip, and so have neglected the prospects of eternal riches that the Truth offers.

Unfortunately, many of his Jewish contemporaries in Babylon failed to follow his example.

Babylon typed the modern world, so that the circumstances of Daniel, as a captive in that city, are of greatest significance. The virility of his faith, and his firm determination to give unswerving loyalty to Yahweh in spite of the demands of the world need to be emulated by those today, who live in a similar environment.

It was a period when secular education was lauded by the authorities. To know "the learning and tongue of the Chaldees" became a status symbol, and was eagerly sought by the intelligentsia of Babylon (Dan. 1:20). That was the first challenge that Daniel had to meet on his arrival at the city, and only the thorough grounding in divine principles that he had received in the land of Israel, perhaps from his parents, certainly through the influence of Jeremiah (Dan. 9:2), enabled him to successfully combat it.

A City Rebuilt

Another remarkable feature, that links the times of Babylon with our own, is the fever of building that then gripped the city. Christ's parable in which the wealthy fool declared his intention of pulling down his barns and building greater (Luke 12:15-21), was enacted in Babylon, and is enacted throughout the modern world today. It is seen in

This inscription by Nebuchadnezzar, found at Babylon mentions the removal of Jehoiachin and the appointment of Zedekiah in his place. It also records the siege and destruction of Jerusalem when Zedekiah rebelled.



every nation; almost every city witnesses to it. Despite the fact that disaster faces modern civilisation, the great cities of the earth are becoming greater. Like the tower of Babel, buildings are defiantly reared up "unto heaven", to become monuments to the power and arrogance of the flesh.

Remarkably, Daniel saw a similar situation, in a civilisation which, within seventy years, was destroyed. During the course of the early years of his sojourn in Babylon, the prophet saw the city almost entirely rebuilt by Nebuchadnezzar, one of the greatest builders of all time. Temples, palaces, multi-storeyed business premises, were erected, to tower up towards heaven. The list of public works undertaken for the improvement of Babylon, according to archaeologists, is amazing. They include more than twenty temples, the strengthening of fortifications, excavations of canals, vast embankments by the river, elegant hanging gardens, and so forth. Bricks stamped with the name Nebuchadnezzar throughout the ruins excavated by archaeologists attest to his enterprise as well as to his opulence and taste. The ancient tower of Babel was in ruins when Daniel arrived, but in his inscriptions, Nebuchadnezzar records that he restored it.

Strong walls and mighty defences gradually enclosed the city. They contributed to give it an appearance of permanency and power: the writings of Jeremiah, ancient historians, and modern archaeologists, witnessing to this. The building projects of Nebuchadnezzar excited the admiration of his contemporaries, and has likewise called forth the praise of archaeologists since. The excavated ruins continue to testify to the skill and genius of his engineers and architects, as well as Babylon's education and culture. And yet, in spite of its pomp and power, and of the strength of the walls that enclosed it, Babylon succumbed to the destruction that Yahweh decreed. Jeremiah predicted: "Though Babylon should mount up to heaven, and though she should fortify the height of her strength, yet from Me shall spoilers come unto her, saith Yahweh" (Jer. 51:53).

Nebuchadnezzar, like modern politicians, built for perpetuity; but his dynasty only lasted seventy years. Within the compass of that time, this mightiest of all the great cities of the past, with defences that were thought to be impregnable, was brought to destruction. And modern Babylon the Great, the world about us today, will experience a similar fate. At the height of its glory, ancient Babylon was made to taste the bitter dregs of shame and defeat, as also will the unheeding world of Gentilism today.

Daniel The Captive

In Jerusalem, Daniel, now about seventeen years of age, was an

observant, but passive, spectator of these political convulsions; but soon events moved to a climax that involved him personally.

The decisive defeat of Necho at Carchemish opened the whole of the south to crown prince Nebuchadnezzar. He invaded Judah, occupied Jerusalem, and set his face towards Egypt. But then came news, reporting the sudden death of king Nabopolassar, his father, in Babylon. This domestic crisis demanded his presence in the capital. What should be done with the fruits of victory? Waiting only to take hostages, and to receive the submission of Judah and Syria, he hurried home to secure the throne.

Among the hostages taken with him at the time was the young man Daniel, a prince of the realm (Dan. 1:3). The warning of Isaiah to Hezekiah was thus fulfilled: "Behold the days come, that all that is in thine house, and that which thy fathers have laid up in store until this day, shall be carried to Babylon: nothing shall be left, saith Yahweh. And of thy sons that shall issue from thee, which thou shalt beget, shall they take away; and they shall be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon" (Isa. 39:6-7).

Daniel was among those "of the children of Israel, and of the king's seed, and of the princes" taken to Babylon at this initial triumph of king Nebuchadnezzar.

Babylonish Commercial Life

Daniel entered Babylon at a time of great commercial development, when opportunities for advancement to increase in material prestige and wealth, seemed limitless. Babylon was the business centre to which the traders and businessmen of antiquity flocked. The research of archaeologists permits us to draw a detailed and vivid picture of the times. We see a bustling city, hard and ruthless in commercial activities. Interest upwards of 40 to 60 per cent was demanded and obtained on loans. The normal interest on good security was about 16½ per cent. In the rapidly expanding city and empire, prosperity seemed permanent to the average Babylonian, but such as Daniel knew that a time limit of only 70 years had been placed upon the city; after which it would be brought to destruction.

Archaeologists have discovered some of the records of the firm of Egibi which tell in familiar language the day-by-day business of that well established company in ancient Babylon. The following entry, among the hundreds discovered by archaeologists, is a typical example: "One shekel of silver which for wine was given, one shekel of silver which to the messenger Tamnaziku was given, a loan of silver which to the messenger of Ratenu was given . . ."

Civilisation in ancient Babylon was thus highly organised. Re-

cords reveal that immense pains were taken to secure the ends of justice, and that a table of legal precedents was drawn up for use of judges. There are good reasons for inferring that the police force was thoroughly organised. Terms of apprenticeship, and other business relationships, were clearly defined. As a result, during the period of Daniel's captivity, the city attained a magnitude of splendour unrivalled in the world.

This material glory, seductive wealth and busy round of life, together with the great opportunities that opened out to whoever might want to snatch at them, constituted a great temptation for captives from backward Judah. Educated in spiritual principles designed to sacrifice the desires of the flesh, they would feel completely out of place in the midst of the hard, brittle civilisation in which they now found themselves. Faith was needed to match and defeat the challenge of the times, and Daniel had sufficient of that to do so. But many of his contemporaries succumbed to the pressure, and became Babylonian in concept, even though they may have remained Jewish in belief and appearance (Psa. 87).

Homesick in a Foreign Land

The status of Daniel and his friends in Babylon (see Dan. 1), was no doubt exceptional to that of the majority of the Jewish exiles. The former, being young men of great promise, were recruited by Nebuchadnezzar for special duties. They were taken to Babylon to be educated, and their characters moulded at the will of their captors. For that reason, they were set aside for preferential treatment. Of normal captives, it has been said, that every Babylonish brick in the buildings of Nebuchadnezzar, represented a groan from one of the numerous slaves who labored in that foreign land. They felt "devoured" and "broken in pieces", whilst their adversaries said: "We offend not, because they have sinned against Yahweh" (Jer. 50:7). Israelitish captives had to endure the sneering contempt of their overlords. They heard the mocking invitation: "Sing us one of the songs of Zion". The feeling of lonely homesickness that afflicted the God-fearing captives is caught, in the words of the reply: "How can we sing the songs of Yahweh in a strange land?" (Psa. 137:3-4).

It was the policy of the Chaldeans to absorb the Israelites into the Babylonish community. The Jews, however, refused to be assimilated. They were a people set apart by Divine decree, and preserved in that separateness by the Law of Yahweh which they tried to observe even in captivity. Although they could not offer their sacrifices and celebrate their feasts, their common practises, based upon the Law, stamped them as a people apart, and invited the ridicule and resentment of the people of the land. This forced them to seek the company of their own

people, and induced in them the desire to commemorate their fallen political state by observing fasts in the fourth, fifth and seventh months, which synchronised with the siege and destruction of Jerusalem (Zech. 7:3,5; 2 Kings 25:3,4,8,25). These religious exercises welded them together as a close-knit people in dispersion, perhaps even more so than when they had dwelt in the land of their nativity.

That they were permitted to live normal lives, is indicated in the letter which Jeremiah sent to the exiles: "Build ye houses, and dwell in them; and plant gardens, and eat the fruit of them; take ye wives and beget sons and daughters . . . and seek the peace of the city . . ." (Jer. 29:5-7).

From this it is obvious that the Jews had fixed residences allotted to them, were permitted to cultivate the soil, to organise their own form of worship, and probably were granted a measure of self-government within their own little community.

Thus Ezekiel dwelt in his own house, and wrote of "them of the captivity at Tel Abib that dwell by the River Chebar" (Ezek. 3:15). His description implies a regular colony of Israelites who had their elders (Ezek. 8:1; 14:1; 20:1), and who maintained a separateness from colonies of other captives. It is most likely that a semblance of religious and political authority was maintained, for when the Jews returned to Jerusalem under the decree of Cyrus, Zerubbabel with Joshua the high priest, were the acknowledged leaders of the people, and assumed the management of affairs (Ezra 2:1-2; Hag. 1:1).

Much of this organisation, the people owed to leaders such as Daniel. Such leaders stimulated the people to emulate the example set them. Their faithfulness under trial was so rewarded as to vindicate the ability of the God of Israel to help and deliver in time of need. From the beginning of his captivity, Daniel gave evidence of the wisdom and omnipotence of Yahweh (Dan. 2:47). His example of unwavering faithfulness demonstrated how it was possible to be in Babylon, and yet "not of it". He was granted a position of honour by virtue and not through compromise. He was not deluded by the apparent permanence of Babylon, nor lifted up in pride or arrogance because of the position he occupied therein. His longing was towards Jerusalem, and the holy mountain remained constant (Dan. 9:16-17). In Babylon he experienced a loneliness and a desire for "home", which apparently continued until death. His life in captivity was made bearable by the promise that he would, at last, "stand in his lot at the end of the days" (Dan. 12).

Letters To Babylon

The fate of Daniel and his companions is being uprooted from their land and taken into captivity, seemed a terrible one to those who were left behind. They congratulated themselves that they had es-

caped such punishment. False prophets, in opposition to Jeremiah, spread the deadly dope that those who remained were Heaven's favorites, that the city was inviolate, and that they would never be removed (Jer. 27:9; Ezek. 11:15; 33:24).

However, the opposite was true. Jeremiah received a vision of two baskets of figs set before the temple of Yahweh: one was filled with good figs; the other was filled with bad figs. He was told: "Like these good figs, so will I acknowledge them that are carried away captive of Judah, whom I have sent out of this place into the land of the Chaldeans *for their good*" (Jer. 24:5).

Therefore, though it must have been distressing for those of the captivity to have been so ruthlessly uprooted from their land, and deported to the foreign, unsympathetic environment of Babylon, it ultimately proved to be a better fate than that which awaited those who were left in the land.

Yahweh's protective hand overshadowed them for good; for they were removed from the terrible judgment that ultimately fell with devastating effect upon the nation of Judah, and particularly the city of Jerusalem.

Final Opportunity of Reform For Guilty Judah

As the succession of captives reached Babylonia from the doomed city of Jerusalem, they brought with them doleful reports of a politically and spiritually deteriorating city and nation.

From the second group of exiles, about six years after Daniel had been taken captive, news of the ignominious end of King Jehoiakim would have reached Babylon.

As the prophet learned of the indifferent attitude of the King of Judah towards the word of Yahweh, he would have been able to sorrowfully contrast Jehoiakim's criminal folly with the more pliable attitude of the Gentile, King Nebuchadnezzar.

Later, perhaps, he was able to see in this a fulfilment of his own prophecy, in which he described how that a "man's heart" would be given to the Chaldean lion (Dan. 7). A man's heart is more understanding and pliable to the things of God than that of a wild beast, and Nebuchadnezzar manifested those characteristics.

As Daniel recorded events in his diary, the dreary record of sin and suffering that was reported from Judah and Jerusalem, must have depressed him. His great desire was that Yahweh's name should be honored above all else.

Despite the iniquity of Judah, Yahweh, in His abounding mercy, determined to give His people one last chance, in order that any within the doomed nation might seek Him whilst there was opportunity.

He called upon Jeremiah to write out all the prophecies he had ut-

tered against the people and nation, and to read them publicly in the ears of the people (Jer. 36:3).

Jeremiah, for some reason not disclosed, was personally unable to do this, but he arranged for it to be performed by Baruch, his faithful friend and scribe. To him, he repeated his prophecies once again, and the scribe recorded them on a scroll. As this was all by inspiration of God, the scroll formed portion of Yahweh's written word.

Having completed this task, Baruch then took the scroll into one of the public courts of the Temple on a day when the people were gathered there (Jer. 36:6), and publicly read it so that all could hear.

The people again listened to the prophecies of Yahweh proclaimed by Jeremiah. They heard the catalogue of sins of which they were guilty, and the punishment that would come upon them.

Among those who heard this recital by Baruch was Michaiah, the son of a prominent Scribe who occupied a chamber in the court of the Temple close by where the reading was given (Jer. 36:10). He was deeply moved by what he heard, and recognised the urgency of the message.

Hastening down to the King's house, and to the Scribes' chamber, he interrupted a Council of State that was in session, to apprise those gathered together of the words of Jeremiah, the action of Baruch, and the concern of the people in consequence.

The princes were impressed, and called for Baruch. At their request, he again read the long list of crimes recorded against the nation, and the prophecies of doom that were threatened against it.

They listened with fear (v. 16), recognising the truth of the indictment, and fearing the consequence of the judgment.

Something had to be done, and that instantly, if the threatened fate were to be avoided. "We will advise the king of this," they agreed (v. 16).

The Criminal Folly of Jehoiakim

The princes, however, knew their king! Even though they may not openly have acknowledged this, they knew him for a spoiled, pompous, empty-headed, vindictive young man. They realised what would be his reaction when told of the action of Jeremiah and Baruch: their lives would be placed in jeopardy. "Hide, both you and Jeremiah, and let no man know where you be," they counselled Baruch as they advised him of their decision.

They then made their way into the presence of the king.

Like Nero, another monster in crime who fiddled whilst Rome was burning, the king had retired to his winterhouse to enjoy its luxury, even though the nation trembled on the brink of disaster.

The princes found him comfortably warming himself before a cosy fire!

They told him of the action of Baruch, the words of Jeremiah, the reaction of the people, and the resultant situation.

The king commanded that the scroll be brought and read to him.

With the princes of his realm standing around, and the king comfortably relaxing before the fire, Jehudi, the scribe, began to read the scroll.

He had not proceeded very far when the king impatiently cut short the reading by an act of defiance against the Author of the message, the King of heaven.

He wanted to hear none of the doleful lamentations of the prophet of sorrow.

He did not want a spirit of defeatism to sweep the nation.

He determined to destroy Jeremiah's influence by an irrevocable act of repudiation of all the prophet stood for, as well as the message he delivered.

Snatching the scroll from Jehudi, he took a knife, and in the sight of the princes, hacked it in pieces, casting the tattered, torn leaves into the fire, "until all the scroll was consumed" (v. 23).

Some of the princes protested in horror at this sacrilegious burning of the Bible (v. 25), but the majority of them were reassured by the bold, defiant attitude of the king, and the impious words that he uttered. For he commanded them to take Jeremiah and Baruch captive, and bring them to him.

The categorical repudiation by the king of the prophet's message, his sweeping rejection of the suggestion that it came from Yahweh, and his declared intention to punish Jeremiah and Baruch, reassured the princes. They possibly justified their action by reasoning that the words Baruch had copied out were the uninspired words of a man, and not those of Yahweh. They endorsed the decree of the king that Jeremiah and Baruch be apprehended and put to death.

The Prophet's Defiance

But from Jeremiah there came a message of personal doom for the king. He warned that judgment upon the guilty king would be decisive and drastic. "He shall have none to sit* upon the throne of David; and his dead body shall be cast out in the day to the heat and in the night to the frost. And I will punish him and his seed and his servants for their iniquity" (Jer. 36:30-31).

Daniel learned later how completely this was fulfilled. Jehoiakim presumed that Babylon's power was about to be eclipsed when

* The Hebrew word "yashab" signifies to dwell, to remain at length. Jeconiah, the son of Jehoiakim, came to the throne but was removed therefrom within three months, and replaced by Zedekiah, his uncle (Jer. 22:30). Jeremiah's words were fulfilled to the letter!

Nebuchadnezzar's army experienced a temporary reverse in Egypt, and acted traitorously to the Babylonish king whom he had promised to serve. He refused to supply the tribute that had been laid upon him. For a moment, his policy seemed successful; for retribution was slow in coming. But when it did come, it was most decisive.

Jerusalem was again attacked by Nebuchadnezzar, and Jehoiakim's army was completely defeated. The faithless and foolish king now found himself at the mercy of the Babylonians whom he had previously despised. He was placed in fetters and dragged before Nebuchadnezzar. When he humbly prostrated himself before his conqueror, Nebuchadnezzar was disposed to spare his life and take him to Babylon (2 Chron. 36:6). For a moment, Jehoiakim's life hung in the balance, and it seemed as if Jeremiah's prophecy of his imminent death would fail (Jer. 22:19). But at the last moment, the Babylonian king hardened his heart towards his treacherous servant. He ordered that he be executed and given the "burial of an ass". In accordance with this command, the body of the dead king was cast outside the walls of Jerusalem, there to remain day and night in full view of the people. Later his remains were gathered and buried out of sight.

Jeremiah's words were literally and completely fulfilled.

The dire fate of the king was designed as a warning, and a salutary lesson to those in Judah who may have been disposed to follow the king's example. The more thoughtful, recognising the truth of the prophet's words, had opportunity to respect the warning message of Yahweh, and seek that refuge that He always makes available to those who turn to Him in time of need.

The Significance Of This Incident To Daniel

Jehoiakim's defiant attitude in burning the prophecies of Jeremiah must have been highly significant to Daniel because of events that happened in Babylon about the same time.

"It had come to pass" in the fifth year of Jehoiakim (Jer. 36:9).

As the first year of Nebuchadnezzar was the fourth year of Jehoiakim (Jer. 25:1), this fifth year of his reign was the "second year of Nebuchadnezzar."

Now it was in that year, that the Babylonish king had his amazing dream of the image of metals that was destroyed by the "stone" cut out of the mountain without hands (Dan. 2:1).

The king was puzzled and disturbed by his dream, and determined to learn its meaning. But the clergy and wise men of Babylon afforded him no help. The problem was quite beyond them. Ultimately Daniel, by inspiration of Yahweh (v. 28), was able to describe the dream and provide a true interpretation.

It was not one that was flattering to the King of Babylon.

It warned him that the God of Israel had placed him on the throne, and given him the authority he enjoyed (v. 37), and that the same God would remove that power from Babylon (v. 39), ultimately setting up His reign on earth (v. 44).

What was the reaction of this Gentile king? Did he, in pique, order Daniel to be imprisoned, and proceed to ignore the evidence, as Jehoiakim, the King on David's throne, had done with the message of Jeremiah?

No, he honored the God who had granted such understanding and wisdom unto men (v. 47). Elevating Daniel over all the wise men of his realm (v. 48), he proclaimed that a God Who could grant such knowledge should be respected and worshipped.

Sometimes "the children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light".

That saying was certainly illustrated by the reactions of those two kings who in the same year each treated the Word of Yahweh in a manner that illustrates the saying of the Lord Jesus.

Why did Jehoiakim act as he did?

Possibly because familiarity with the Word of life caused him to treat it with a measure of contempt. This is a danger for those who are so brought up in the things of God that they react against their requirements.

Some claim that there is an advantage to those who "come in from the outside", because their experience of the world emphasises by contrast the benefits of the Truth.

We cannot agree with that. Daniel's example is contrary to it. He was "brought up in the Truth", but in such a manner as stood him in good stead when subjected to the pressures of Babylon. There is great advantage to children when they are properly educated in the nurture and admonition of Yahweh; they are better equipped to avoid "the pleasures of sin for a season". It was not Jehoiakim's familiarity with the Word of God that caused him to act as he did, but rather his neglect of it. He saw no beauty in it, he derived no excitement in unravelling its mysteries as did David his forefather. Pompous pride took possession of him, and governed his actions. He was impatient of the restrictions the Word placed upon him, and so set it aside.

The Gentile Nebuchadnezzar showed more wisdom, more understanding and humility, than did the Jew, even though in power and might he stood head and shoulders over the petty little king ruling over a reduced little nation in Jerusalem.

What a lesson; what an exhortation! Daniel who would have learned of the circumstances of Jehoiakim's folly would doubtless compare it with the attitude of the king of Babylon. It would no doubt be a matter of keen sorrow to him that the one sitting upon the throne

of illustrious David, should act in such a stupid way. The "burial of an ass" was afforded this foolish king. He was accounted useless to Yahweh, and therefore his stubborn neck was broken, and he was set aside as unredeemed in Israel (see Exod. 13:12-13). This will be the fate of all those who treat Yahweh's word with similar impunity (Psa. 138:2; cp. Psa. 50:16-22). Let us heed this lesson, and beware how we treat the precious Book that Yahweh has placed in our hands.

Judah's King In Exile

Many events occurred during Daniel's sojourn in Babylon which are not recorded in his book, but of which he must have been an eyewitness. We learn of them through the writings of his contemporaries, and when they are fitted into the circumstances of the times, they help to provide the background to the amazing personal history of the prophet.

Coniah, the son of Jehoiakim, was 18 years of age when his father was miserably executed, and given "the burial of an ass". He was permitted to ascend the throne, but he reigned for only three months. In the records, he is known also as Jechoniah and Jehoiachin.

The plea of Jeremiah that he should "humble himself" (Jer. 13:18), implies that he was following in the footsteps of his father, and had treacherously conspired with Egypt against Babylon. Such a policy was disastrous for both Judah and the king, as the prophet warned. But the king would not listen to the advice of Jeremiah, and, in consequence, it was not long before the tramp of Babylonish troops was heard in the land, as the army moved against the fickle king.

Jehoiachin quickly gave way to the Chaldeans, and capitulated (2 Kings 24:8-16). This time Judah was treated with greater severity than previously. Some 10,000 of the elite of the nation were deported to Babylon (2 Kings 24:14), including military leaders, princes, priests, and skilled workmen. Only "the poorest sort of the people" were left.

Once again, Daniel in Babylon, saw the sorry procession of Jewish captives arrive in the city, their skill and labour to be diverted to the use of the oppressor.

Jehoiachin himself shared the common fate of his people. He was taken to Babylon and imprisoned. But in this, the hand of Yahweh was revealed, preserving a remnant to do His will, as was ultimately revealed. Jehoiachin remained in restraint for some 37 years (2 Kings 25:27-30). Although "imprisoned" in Babylon, he most likely enjoyed a measure of freedom, and probably lived in some state in the city. The Scriptures indicate that he married and brought up children, and that among his grandchildren was a son destined to come to great prominence. This was Zerubbabel, the man whom Yahweh raised up to lead the children of the captivity back to their land (Haggai 1:1), and who

was in the line of the Messiah (Matt. 1:13). Daniel must have viewed with pleasure the growth of the youthful Zerubbabel, and the growing interest that he showed towards the things of Yahweh. He lived to see him organise the return to the land of promise.

Meanwhile, at the end of 37 years of restraint, Jehoiachin was released by Evil-merodach, one of Nebuchadnezzar's successors. He elevated him to honour, "setting his throne above the thrones of the kings that were with him in Babylon" (Jer. 52:31-34). It is significant that Jeremiah states of the king: "And for his diet, there was a continual diet given him of the king of Babylon, every day a portion until the day of his death, all the days of his life" (Jer. 52:34).

Here, then, was the one-time king of Judah living in luxury in Babylon at a time when his nation was in the dust, and his people in captivity. Whereas Daniel had "refused the king's meat" (Dan. 1:8), this poverty-stricken king accepted it. This favour on the part of Babylon towards this prince of the royal house of David must have caused pleasure to those Jews in captivity who ignored the teaching of the prophets. They probably took the elevation of the king as emblematic of the impending restoration of their nation. But the 70 years of captivity were not then up, and their hopes were soon dashed. Jehoiachin's new-found liberty and luxury came to a sudden end with the overthrow of his benefactor. Within two years a revolt occurred in Babylon itself; Evil-merodach was slain, and Neriglissar, a usurper, took the throne. Jehoiachin, most likely, fell with his patron. The friendship of Babylon had not helped the exiled king at all, and had only deluded the people.

A Letter From Jeremiah

Jehoiachin was followed by Zedekiah, the last king to sit on David's throne. Only 11 years now remained before the complete overthrow of the nation, and during that time the spiritual and political conditions in Judah rapidly declined. The nation rushed headlong down to the final and mournful catastrophe. Political excitement was at its height; and the worst passions swayed the various parties that surrounded the king, resulting in his vacillating and disastrous policy.

Jeremiah tried to halt the decline, but in vain. It was his sad lot to witness his own nation, which he loved with such tenderness, plunge over the precipice to destruction below. His ministry was not without fruit, however, for there were those individuals who responded to his appeal, and stood aside from the prevailing apostasy.

Shortly after Zedekiah had been placed on the throne in Jerusalem as a nominee of Babylon and successor of Jehoiachin, two nobles were despatched to Nebuchadnezzar on affairs of state (Jer. 29:2-3). One of them was called Gemariah the son of Hilkiah, and as Hilkiah was the father of Jeremiah (Jer. 1:1), Gemariah could have

been brother to the prophet.

This was probably the reason why Jeremiah was able to send with him, a letter to the captives in the land of Babylon.

In it, Jeremiah warned the exiles that they must not heed the voices of false prophets proclaiming that they will soon return to their land; for 70 years would be occupied in captivity. He admonished them to seek the peace of the city, and advised them to settle down in their homes, and beget sons and daughters "that they may be increased there and not diminished" (Jer. 29:6). "Build ye houses, and dwell in them; and plant gardens, and eat the fruit of them," they were advised.

Daniel doubtless heard the message read. We know from his own pen, that the writings of Jeremiah greatly influenced him (Dan. 9:2), and certainly he seemed to have followed the advice of the older prophet, for he established his own house in captivity which he used as a shelter to worship Yahweh (Dan. 6:10). But though Daniel and others might heed, there were those who rejected the message. In fact, the letter of Jeremiah aroused the greatest resentment and controversy. People like to listen to a message that confirms their actions and attitude, and there were false prophets who were prepared to tell the people what they wanted to hear. Jeremiah warned them against such: "Let not your prophets and your diviners, that be in the midst of you deceive you, neither hearken to your dreams which ye cause to be dreamed" (Jer. 29:8).

These false prophets were allowing their desires to dominate their thinking and teaching; they were permitting hopeless dreams of restoration to govern their minds. They proclaimed that Babylon was about to fall, and Jerusalem about to rise, whereas all about them were signs of greater trouble, and more serious calamity. With wickedness rampant there was no possibility of a betterment of conditions for guilty Judah, and already some of Jeremiah's prophecies of doom had received partial fulfilment.

Yet in spite of all this, Jeremiah's letter held comfort for such as Daniel who realised that faith must conquer, for the prophet had penned the words that had come to him from Yahweh: "I know the thoughts that I think towards you, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to make your latter end an object of hope (alternative translation). Then shall ye call upon Me, and ye shall go and pray unto Me, and find Me, when ye shall search for Me with all your heart" (Jer. 29:11-13).

In the same letter, Jeremiah urged the people to repudiate the counsel of the false prophets. He warned that to do otherwise would result in greater evils coming upon them, "because they have not hearkened to my words, saith Yahweh" (v. 19). As an illustration of the fate of those who continued to repudiate the divine counsel, he

drew attention to two false prophets in Babylon: Ahab and Zedekiah, who had prophesied lies in the name of Yahweh, and “whom the king of Babylon roasted in the fire” (Jer. 29:21-22).*

Daniel would have had personal knowledge of their terrible fate. It evidently was a common form of execution used by Nebuchadnezzar; but whereas Shadrach, Meshech and Abednego “quenched the violence of fire through faith” (Dan. 3; Heb. 11:34), Ahab and Zechariah had been destroyed by it.

Most likely those two false prophets had been proclaiming the imminent fall of Babylon, and inciting the captives to resist their oppressors in contradistinction to the advice of such as Jeremiah and Daniel. The Babylonians worshipped fire, and those false prophets, having turned from the true God, were delivered up to the false one, and consumed like the false doctrine they proclaimed.

A Reply From Babylon

Jeremiah's letter caused controversy and antagonism, as the Truth so often does, even among those who should know better. When the messengers returned from Babylon, they brought with them a letter from a notable false prophet called Shemaiah the Dreamer (Jer. 29:24 — mg) which urged the priests of Jerusalem to throw Jeremiah into prison, and restrain him with fetters as a madman (Jer. 29:26). He complained that Jeremiah was undermining the confidence of the people by claiming the captivity would be long, whereas he asserted that it would soon be over.

But again Jeremiah wrote, and this time to “all them of the captivity” (Jer. 29:31). The letter was evidently read publicly, and in it the prophet not only indicted Shemaiah the Dreamer, but predicted his fate. Not only would Shemaiah never see the restoration he desired so much, but “he shall not have a man to dwell among the people” (v. 32). The fate of this prominent false prophet would be a warning to all those in dispersion, and would strengthen the hands of such as Ezekiel and Daniel in the work of fortifying and guiding the people in the way of Yahweh.

What a pity it is that both then and now such controversy within the ranks of believers should disgrace the Truth. But there is ever the need for fearless exposition, for false teaching inevitably leads away

* Jeremiah 29 contains the substance of two letters written by the prophet at different times, as is evident by comparing v. 28 with vv. 4,5; for otherwise there would be unnecessary repetition. The distinction seems to be at the end of v. 20. The first letter calls upon the captives to reconcile themselves to a long sojourn; the second letter denounces divine judgments against false prophets in Babylon who attempted to discredit the first letter. Daniel would be cognisant of all that was then going on. One other correction in this chapter should be made, for v. 15 should follow v. 20 as it does in the Septuagint.

from God. Those false prophets and their sympathisers had been responsible for the development of "villainy," spiritual adultery, proclamation of lies, and other forms of wickedness within the nation (v.23). If that state of things had been permitted to continue the salvation of individuals could have been imperilled. The indomitable Jeremiah, therefore, stood in the breach, warning the people not to heed the siren voices of the false prophets with their claims of "peace, peace, when there is no peace" (Ezek. 13:10). Courageously he opposed those at home and abroad, warning the people that the false prophets were "causing you to trust in a lie." How valuable was his ministry! How needful in every age is faithful, courageous exhortation such as he provided. We see its need in the case of Jeremiah and Daniel, but it is also true of these days. If Jeremiah had not lifted up his warning voice, many would have succumbed, and perished with the lies they believed. The fate of those who were "roasted in the fire" by Nebuchadnezzar is horrible to contemplate, but they were leading others to a fate just as terrible, and there was a need for them to be restrained. But, as with today, it had to be done in the face of rebuke, invective and challenge. Let us thank God for such as Jeremiah and Daniel.

Public Proclamation of Babylon's Doom

Two chapters in the prophecy of Jeremiah (chaps. 50-51) record "the word that Yahweh spake against Babylon" (Jer. 51:1).

They proclaim the doom of this mighty city, and foretell the circumstances in which its pomp and pride would be levelled to the dust.

The language that the prophet used to describe the doom of historic Babylon has been used in the Revelation to describe the fate of mystical Babylon: the modern spiritual counterpart of the ancient city. The two prophecies, therefore, will repay comparison as type and antitype.

In this volume, however, we are not so much concerned with the message of Jeremiah, as with incidents as they involved, or influenced Daniel.

He must have been an eye-witness of the striking manner in which this forthright and devastating prophecy of Jeremiah was proclaimed in the public places of the very city whose complete and final destruction it predicted.

Dramatic indeed, was the proclamation.

The Prophecy Sent To Babylon

Jeremiah records that in the fourth year of his reign, Zedekiah the last king of Judah, paid a visit to Babylon, taking with him Seraiah, a prince of the realm.

The king had been intriguing with other nations in a conspiracy to throw off the yoke of Babylon (Jer. 27:3); doubtless stimulated to do so by the promises and prognostications of false prophets who were predicting the imminent fall of the city, and it is most likely that Nebuchadnezzar had ordered the king of Judah to appear before him to renew his vow of allegiance.

Seraiah is described as "a quiet prince" (Jer. 52:59). The Hebrew word *menuchah* signifies "peace" and "security". This could mean that Seraiah was a man of peace, or else he was the one appointed to convey the tribute money to Babylon which would secure for Zedekiah and for Judah a temporary peace. Accordingly, these words have been rendered: "Seraiah carried a present." The Revised Version renders them: "Seraiah was chief chamberlain," and in a footnote suggests: "or quartermaster."

Seraiah was well-known to Jeremiah, being brother of Baruch the scribe, and close associate of the prophet (cp. Jer. 32:12; 51:59). The fact that this acquaintance of his was going to Babylon provided Jeremiah with a splendid opportunity to have this important prophecy conveyed to the exiles in Babylon, that they might be apprised of the intentions of Yahweh in regard to the city and nation that had taken them into captivity, and which was lording it over the king on David's throne. Therefore, before the deputation left for Babylon, Jeremiah presented Seraiah with a small scroll containing the prophecy of Babylon, and "commanded" him what he was to do with it when he arrived at that city. He was to call the exiles together, publicly read the prophecy to them, offer a prayer for its fulfilment, and finally give demonstration of the extent to which it would be fulfilled.

What the Prophecy Proclaimed

The prophecy comprised the "word of Yahweh of armies in the land of the Chaldeans" (Jer. 50:25), and pronounced judgment because of the way in which the Babylonians had "striven against Yahweh" (v. 24). It announced that captive Judah would ultimately be freed to return home, at a time when terrible and final judgments would be poured out upon Babylon. Fear would stalk the city in the day of its retribution, so that its once valiant soldiers would become "as women" (v. 37). The city itself would be completely overthrown and never rebuilt, and the sands of the desert would claim its once fertile fields, turning them into arid wastes (v. 39). "Babylon," declared the prophecy, "hath been a golden cup in Yahweh's hand, and made all the earth drunken; the nations have drunken of her wine, and therefore the nations are mad" (Jer. 51:7). But now that Babylon's usefulness in that direction was at an end, only destruction awaited her.

On the other hand, the humbled captives of Israel would be saved

and invited to return home. The prophet declared: "Thus the slain shall fall in the land of the Chaldeans, and they that are thrust through in her streets. For Israel hath not been forsaken, nor Judah of his God, of Yahweh of armies; though their land was filled with sin against the Holy One of Israel. Flee out of the midst of Babylon, and deliver every man his soul; be not cut off in her iniquity; for this is the time of Yahweh's vengeance; He will render unto her a recompense" (Jer. 51:4-6).

The whole prophecy is worthy of close study, particularly as it foreshadowed events then soon to come to pass, as typical of those to take place in these times. It is not our intention of expounding this in this place, however, but merely to indicate the general outline of its predictions. Notice the following comment for captive Israel: "Thus saith Yahweh of armies: The children of Israel and the children of Judah were oppressed together; and all that took them captive held them fast, they refused to let them go. Their Redeemer is strong; Yahweh of armies is His name; He shall thoroughly plead their cause, that He may give rest to the land and disquiet the inhabitants of Babylon" (Jer. 50:33-34).

Such expressions enabled faithful Jewish captives to anticipate the end of Babylon's influence which then seemed so powerful and permanent. The massive walls of the city, its impressive architecture, its lofty towers, its wealth and strength, the extensive victories of its seemingly invincible armies, implied power so strong as could not be broken. Moreover, its very might emphasised the apparent helplessness, weakness, and poverty of its captives. Yet one of their number dared to stand up proclaiming the impending extinction of their oppressors, claiming that the God of Israel is stronger than the gods of Babylon, or the might of its fleshly power. The reading of such a prophecy in the public squares in Babylon, constituted a bold act of defiance.

Zedekiah In Babylon

But before this, Zedekiah, the current king sitting on David's throne, ignominiously entered Babylon to prostrate himself before its haughty pagan monarch. Daniel must have viewed with sadness the humiliating entrance of the trembling deputation from Judah through the gates of the city.

However, the disgrace that he must have felt, would have been followed by tremendous excitement as news was conveyed to the exiles, that Seraiah, the "quiet" prince, was to address a gathering of the Jewish captives in Babylon.

How frequently have "quiet" princes performed greater service in the name of Yahweh than their more blustering, noisy brethren!

In due time the Jews were gathered together to hearken to the

reading of Jeremiah's scroll against Babylon. They must have been stirred to hear the word of Yahweh, and to learn that His vengeance was sure to come upon a people that had violated His Temple (Jer. 50:28). What joy they would have felt to know that their ultimate deliverance from the hand of the oppressor was sure (vv. 19-20).

Daniel, in that audience, was deeply moved (see Dan. 9:2). As with other faithful Israelites, he had not been deluded by the symbols of wealth and power about him, but recognised that Yahweh must save His people in vindication of His promises to Abraham and David. Now the prophecy of Jeremiah confirmed his hopes and those of his fellow captives.

Moreover, their faith must have been stirred by Seraiah's act of defiance against mighty Babylon. To proclaim such a forthright message in the very squares of the powerful city against which it was addressed, needed great courage. Seraiah, that "quiet prince," was equal to the occasion!

Nevertheless, not all gathered together were men and women of faith. There were many who were still prepared to bow down to the decree of Nebuchadnezzar. Doubtless, even while Jeremiah's scroll was being read, the eyes of such would have strayed towards the massive bulwarks and walls of the mighty city, would have contemplated its lofty towers and its massive brazen gates. Who was capable of destroying such power? They had heard some of the prophets claim that Jeremiah was wrong: perhaps his adversaries were right. Perhaps Jeremiah was the false prophet that some in Babylon claimed him to be!

Israel in captivity was divided, as it so often was in the land.

Seraiah's Typical Overthrow of Babylon

Having completed the reading of the scroll of Jeremiah to the people, Seraiah, as instructed, concluded the reading with a short prayer: "O Yahweh, Thou hast spoken against this place, to cut it off, that none shall remain in it, neither man nor beast, but that it shall be desolate for ever."

Therefore, by prophecy and prayer, the captive Jews were taught to neither envy the pomp of Babylon nor fear its power, but to look with understanding to the end decree by Yahweh, when all such avenues of fleshly glory and pleasure will be destroyed.

However, Seraiah's work was not yet completed. Following the instructions of Jeremiah, he tied a stone to the scroll, and, as the Jewish exiles watched, he cast it into the river Euphrates. As it sank, swallowed by the waters, he turned to the people and pronounced: "Thus shall Babylon sink, and shall not rise from the evil that I will bring upon her . . ." (Jer. 51:64).

The bold action of the “quiet” prince, the defiant words of the prophecy he read, must have stirred every man and woman of faith among the exiles, greatly encouraging Daniel in the work that Yahweh had set him to do.

Jeremiah’s prophecy, and Seraiah’s action, form the basis of the prophecies of Revelation against Babylon the great, and of the action of the angel who introduced them to John. John records: “A mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, ‘Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all’.” (Rev. 18:21).

Other prophecies of Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Daniel also anticipate those of the Revelation. The destruction of Babylon by the diversion of the River Euphrates, the visions of the beasts, the prophecy of Gog and Magog, the Temple of the Age to come, all find their counterpart in the symbolism of *The Apocalypse*. Brother Thomas comments upon this fact: “The Eternal Spirit, styled by Peter ‘the spirit of Christ’, is the real author of both prophecies; and what he omitted to tell Daniel, he communicated about seven hundred years after to the apostle John; and all for the benefit of those who ‘walk by faith’ and are ‘the called according to His purpose’.”

Mystical Babylon is rising in power today, but the defiant action of Seraiah the “quiet” prince, and the bold, forthright words of Jeremiah the prophet, witness to its ultimate overthrow.

It is significant, that the year following the action of Seraiah, Ezekiel saw his vision of the Cherubim (cp. Jer. 51:59; Ezek. 1:2). As today the indications of impending destruction of Babylon are clear, it is obvious also that the time of the manifestation of the true Cherubim of glory is imminent.

Daniel’s Character

Daniel was a man of high position (Dan. 1:3), and of equally high principles, well-known to his contemporaries for his wisdom and righteousness (Ezek. 14:14,20; 28:3). His integrity towards Yahweh was reflected in his relations towards men (Dan. 6:4-5). He was a man of firm self-control, steadfast determination (Dan. 1:8; 10:3), undaunted courage (Dan. 8:22-23), unceasing prayerfulness (Dan. 2:17-18; 6:16; 9:3), spiritual vision (Dan. 7:9,12; 10:5,6), outstanding faith (Heb. 11:33), and great wisdom (Ezek. 28:3; Dan. 12:10). He was forthright and direct in speech (Dan. 4:27; 5:17,22-23), yet of humble, modest demeanour (Dan. 2:30; 10:17).

The status of Daniel is endorsed by his great contemporary Ezekiel, who made three direct references to the wisdom of the prophet (Ezek. 14:14,20; 28:3).

He was given the title of *greatly Beloved* (Dan. 10:11); a title given

also to the Lord Jesus by Yahweh (Matt. 3:17); and in turn by Christ to the Apostle John (John 13:23). There is thus a link between Daniel, Christ and John. Daniel was given certain revelations, the times of which were sealed (Dan. 12:4); Christ opened the sealed book (Rev. 5:5), and passed the information on to John (Rev. 1:1). The Book of Revelation unfolds and extends the prophetic revelations delivered through Daniel, and partly fulfilled through Christ.

The Greatest Miracle In The Book of Daniel

The greatest miracle is not the saving of Daniel's friends from the fire, nor the closing of the mouths of lions, nor the revealing of dreams and visions to kings and contemporaries, but something more important than all these. It is a miracle not openly expressed in the book, though it is clearly implied.

We refer to the change that gradually came over the Jewish captives in Babylon. They went into exile hopeless addicts to idolatry (Ezek. 14:3); they returned from their captivity converted into a fiercely monotheistic people. This was a tremendous change. It indicates the truth of Jeremiah's words, that they were the "good figs" that were taken into captivity, and what they suffered was "for their good" (Jer. 24:5). It witnesses to the tremendous influence of good exerted by Ezekiel and Daniel, and particularly the latter. Undoubtedly his example and ministrations helped to bring about that great change. Therefore, though nothing is said of this in the narrative itself, the faithful actions of the prophet, his unflinching courage, and his faithful ministrations to the people, gradually altered their whole attitude towards God. Seventy years after the captivity began, the exiles were so changed in their spiritual attitude, and so motivated by the Truth, as to be ready to return and rebuild the Temple and the nation.

What caused the change? Obviously the miracles recorded in the Book of Daniel, plus the example and teaching of the prophet. These were well-known to the people, and they demonstrated to them, at long last, the value of worshipping Yahweh in truth.

Paul taught that "no man liveth unto himself" (Rom. 14:7). The influence of individuals for good or ill can be profound. It was so in the case of Daniel. He lived in times similar to the present. He saw historic Babylon develop mightily in the earth; as believers today see mystical Babylon doing likewise. He lived in an age of miracle; believers today see the Middle East miraculously vindicating Bible prophecy. His example and teaching helped prepare a people for the restoration under Cyrus; today humble believers can attempt a similar work as they await the appearance of the antitypical Cyrus: the Lord Jesus Christ. The influence of this great man, Daniel, can extend to these times influencing those who study his words, reproducing his faith in

them that they may be with him when he “stands in his lot at the end of the days” (Dan. 12:13).

Chronology of Daniel's Life

We are not specifically informed of the age of Daniel when he was taken captive to Babylon, but the indications are that he was a teenager, about seventeen years of age (see notes, chap. 1). Accepting that premise, the following chronology emerges, revealing the consistency of his witness to the truth at every stage of his life. He provides an example that believers of all ages can emulate. Teenagers, mature men, or those of old age, can be inspired to acts of faith before God and man by the actions and attitude of the prophet.

- As a boy of 17, he resisted the demands of the king and the influence of Babylon (Ch. 1).
- As a teenager of 19, he put his confidence in God, and appeared before the king to interpret his dream (Ch. 2:1).
- As a young man of 20, his discretion and wisdom were acknowledged by the King (Ch. 1:18).
- As a mature man of approximately 50 he fearlessly urged Nebuchadnezzar to change his ways (Ch. 4:27).
- At the age of 67 he received the vision of the four beasts (Ch. 7:1).
- At 70 he was given the vision of the ram and the he-goat (Ch. 8:1).
- As an old man of 87 he stood before Belshazzar, and fearlessly warned him of the consequences of his impiety (Ch. 5).
- At 88 he received the vision of the 70 weeks (Ch. 9:1).
- At 89 he exhibited supreme faith by refusing to limit his devotions to Yahweh at the decree of Darius, and was consigned to the den of lions (Ch. 6).
- At 90 he received the vision of the man of the one, and enacted his own death and resurrection (Ch. 10:1).
- Before his death he received promise that he will yet stand in his lot at the end of the appointed time (Ch. 12:13).

At every stage of his life he showed a consistent faith towards his God, and courage in the performance of his duty, providing an outstanding example for all to emulate.

Outline

THEME OF THE BOOK

Daniel's name signifies *God (El) is my Judge*; and Divine judgment on flesh in all its avenues of manifestation is expressed in every chapter. Therefore, the book, as a whole, may be summed up in the declaration of Paul: "God hath appointed a day, in the which *He will judge* the world in righteousness by that man whom He hath ordained, whereof He hath given assurance unto all men, in that He hath raised him from the dead" (Acts 17:31).

Daniel's prophecies included the judgment of the world, the resurrection and judgment of saints, the establishment of the kingdom of God on earth, and the appointed days when these things shall take place.

Yahweh the Judge is a title of Deity (see Judges 11:27), and is itself prophetic of the purpose of God Who "will be" manifested as "Judge" in the coming crisis, when the Lord Jesus shall be apocalypsed from heaven "in flaming fire taking vengeance of them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ" (2 Thess. 1:8). Isaiah declared: "When Thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness" (Isa. 26:9).

The key verse of the book is Daniel 4:17: "This matter is by the decree of the watchers, and the demand by the word of the holy ones; to the intent that the living may know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever He will, and will set up over it him who is set at nought by men".

Daniel's prophecy, therefore, is an extension of Ezekiel's. The theme of Ezekiel's prophecy is set down as "that they (Israel) shall know that I am Yahweh" (Ezek. 6:10, and repeated some fifty times throughout the book). Daniel's ministry extended this theme to all peoples.

The book outlines the basic purpose of Yahweh for all mankind. By studying its prophecies, the reader is equipped to discern the signs of the times leading to the epoch when rulership of the kingdom of men shall be transferred to the Son of God.

The Apocalypse Of The Old Testament

The word *apocalypse* denotes *an unveiling, a disclosure of things previously hidden, a revelation of divine secrets* (see *Apocalypse Epitomised* p. 25). In uncovering the divine purpose, *The Book of Daniel* and *The Apocalypse* have much in common. The dramatic

crises, the rise and fall of nations symbolised as beasts, the emphasis on the time of the end, appear in both books. The symbolism of Daniel is continued in *The Apocalypse*. *The Book of Daniel* has its "man of the one" (Ch. 10); and *The Apocalypse* has its "one like unto the Son of man" (Rev. 1). Daniel sees the Ancient of Days enthroned and manifested in the earth; and John sees "the appearance of one upon a throne" whose likeness is to God and man. Daniel tells of visions of beasts striving for the mastery; and similar visions are seen by John in Patmos. Both stand upon the sands of the sea, and describe the effect of the storm that rages thereon (Dan. 7:2; Rev. 13:1). Both books outline the consummation of the Divine purpose in similar terms. Daniel declares that "the God of heaven shall set up a kingdom that shall never be destroyed" (though itself overthrowing other kingdoms — Dan. 2:44); and John hears voices in the political heavens proclaiming: "The kingdom of this world is become the kingdom of our Lord and His Christ and He shall reign for ever and ever" (Rev. 11:15).

However, *The Book of Daniel* is not unique in its links with *The Apocalypse* for other books of the Old Testament do likewise. Isaiah's vision of the glory of Christ (cp. Isaiah 6 with John 12:41) as exhibited in the Seraphim, finds its greatest fulfilment in the multitudinous Christ. (Cp. Isa. 6:2-3 with Rev. 4:8). Jeremiah's prophecy of the overthrow of Babyon (Jer. chps. 50,51) is used in *The Apocalypse* as the basis of the destruction of mystical Babylon (Cp. Jer. 51:63-64 with Rev. 18:21); Ezekiel's vision of the Cherubim (Ezek. 1) finds its counterpart in the four living ones of Rev. 4:6-7. His vision of a literal Temple (Chps. 40-48) is used to symbolise the New Jerusalem, the Lamb's Bride of Rev. 21:9-22:2. Zechariah's visions of varicoloured horses, warring chariots, olive trees, lampstand, and flying scrolls, all are reproduced in the Revelation.

Daniel In The New Testament

The credentials of Daniel are endorsed by the Lord, who describes him as "Daniel *the prophet*" (Matt. 24:15). In addition, there are many direct and indirect allusions to his book in the New Testament that likewise serve to emphasise the importance of its subject-matter in the opinion of these inspired writers.

The important Olivet prophecy recorded in Matthew 24, Mark 13; and Luke 21 forms a bridge between Daniel in Babylon and John in Patmos. Therein Christ made constant reference to Daniel's prophecy. He referred to the "abomination that maketh desolate" (Matt. 24:15), which is found in three chapters of the book: Daniel 9:21; 11:31; 12:11. He spoke of himself as "the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven", which is drawn from Daniel 7:13, where it is described as "one like the Son of Man" seen in company with "the clouds

of heaven". In Luke's account of the Olivet Prophecy, "the treading down of Jerusalem" at the conclusion of "the fulfilling of the times of the Gentiles" is given prominence (v. 24), and this is taken from the comments of Daniel 8:13, relating to the "treading down" of the holy.

In indicting the Jewish leaders of his day, the Lord drew their attention to the significance of the great image prophecy of Daniel 2. He declared: "The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof. And whosoever will fall on *this stone* shall be broken; but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder" (Matt. 21:43-44; cp. with Dan. 2:34-35,44-45).

His teaching concerning the resurrection is drawn from Daniel's prophecy. He declared: "They that have done good (will rise) unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of condemnation" (John 5:28-29). This is a direct reference to Daniel's teaching of the resurrection: "Some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt" (Dan. 12:2). Christ's encouraging words: "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father" (Matt. 13:43), is drawn from the comment of Daniel 12:3: "They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament . . ."

In rebuking Caiaphas, the Lord referred him to the prophecy of Daniel: "Hereafter shall ye see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven" (Matt. 26:64), a reference to Daniel 7:13-14. In fact, the title *Son of Man*, so frequently used by the Lord, is the title also frequently found in Daniel's prophecies. The usage of it as found in Matt. 10:23; 16:27-28; 19:28; 24:30; 25:31, is all drawn from *The Book of Daniel*.

The Apostles used the book to illustrate their teaching. For example, Daniel's vision of the "little horn of the beast" (Dan. 7:8), illustrated further by Zechariah's prophecy of the "flying scroll" and the "wicked one" (Zech. 5:1,8), forms the basis of Paul's important prophecy of the coming of the "man of sin", the "wicked one" who will go into perdition at the coming of Christ (2 Thess. 2), and whose destiny is further amplified in Rev. 12,13. Thus Paul's reference to "that man of sin, the son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped" (2 Thess. 2:3-4), is clearly drawn from Dan. 11:36: "He shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvellous things against the God of gods".

Most important of all, *The Book of Daniel* provides the key to unlock the mysteries of *The Apocalypse*. Daniel was told: "The words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end" (Dan. 12:9). The sealed words of his prophecy were unsealed by Christ and revealed to John in Patmos (see Rev. 5:1-5; 6:1), in "the last days" of Judah's common-

wealth (Heb. 1:1-2), called also "the end of the (Mosaic) world" (Heb. 9:26).

The links that unite *The Book of Daniel* with so much of the teaching of Christ and the Apostles demonstrate the importance of its teaching, and the value that they placed upon its prophecies. Nobody who respects their opinion would question the veracity, or the inspiration, of all that it records. To do so would be to undermine the foundation principles of faith. Therefore, whatever critics might urge against either Daniel or his book, those who reverence God's Word know that it rests upon the unshakeable foundation of faith: the confirmation of the Lord himself, whose title of "The Amen, the faithful and true witness" (Rev. 3:14) establishes it beyond doubt: "For all the promises of God in him are Yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us" (2 Cor. 1:20).

The Importance Of Its Study

The Lord specifically named two books of the Bible as being of particular value for study. One is *The Apocalypse*; the other is *The Book of Daniel*. In Rev. 1:3 a blessing is pronounced upon those who read the former book with understanding, and this is endorsed by six other blessings announced throughout the book. In Matthew 24:15, the Lord made mention of Daniel's prophecy and declared: "Whoso readeth, let him understand". Reading and understanding are as cause and effect. It is possible to read without understanding; but given earnest study and prayerful thought, and the book will reveal its stimulating teaching. Daniel was told: "The words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end. Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried; but the wicked shall do wickedly; and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand" (Dan. 12:9-10).

Does the reader desire the purifying influence of the Word? Does he wish to become wise in understanding? The study of this book provides means to that end.

Moreover, divine inspiration is implied, not only in its message, but in the very place it is found in the Bible.

The Book of Daniel forms the fourth of the major prophetic books, as the Gospel of John does that of the four Gospel accounts. And these fourfold accounts of prophecies and Gospels seem to answer to the four faces of the Cherubim (Ezekiel 1): the lion, ox, man and eagle. The Lion represents the royal majesty of the Lord; the Ox, suggests his status as a servant; the Man refers to his humanity; and the Eagle implies his heavenly origin and influence as revealed in the character he developed.

These four faces of Christ are the themes of the four major prophecies and four Gospels. Isaiah and Matthew treat with his royal

majesty; Jeremiah and Mark reveal him as a suffering servant; Ezekiel and Luke depict him as Son of Man (a title used frequently in Ezekiel, whilst Luke links him with Adam — Luke 3:38); Daniel and John show his heavenly origin and manifestation. This Divine overshadowing of the books of the Bible is implied in the placing of *The Book of Daniel* in relation to the other major prophetic books.

Why The Book Is Challenged

Unfortunately, few books have been challenged so vigorously as has *The Book of Daniel*. This is because it is misunderstood; and because flesh feels uncomfortable in the presence of such a record of miracle and marvel as is contained therein.

But the dramatic fulfilment of many of its prophecies demonstrates its inspiration, and witnesses to its truth. Moreover, the attacks of critics are clearly refuted by facts.

The challenges have come mainly from the theories of "Higher Critics" as they are called; though, generally, there is little of elevation in what they put forth. Of course, the amazing detail in which the prophecies of Daniel are given have incited these attacks more than those against other books of the Bible. For example, attempts have been made to place the period of the prophet in Grecian times, so as to account for the remarkable prehistory of such chapters as Daniel 11.

It is claimed that the book was written about B.C. 164, and not in Babylonian times in the sixth century before Christ. The name "Daniel", it is alleged, is a pseudonym for a later writer. Its miracles are decied as imaginary, and its predictions as past history.

The main thrust of attack is against the miracles of the book. If they are discredited, confidence in its prophecies will be undermined. It is claimed that the miracles recorded by Daniel are impossible, and so are rejected. But such critics overlook the fact that the whole Bible is based on miracle, and that those recorded by Daniel are by no means the most remarkable. In fact, the Bible itself is a miracle of production, for "God spake unto the fathers by the prophets" (Heb. 1:1), so that "prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit" (2 Pet. 1:21).

Without miracle there could be no means of redemption. The purpose of Yahweh demands the veracity of miracles: firstly that of creation, and secondly that of the resurrection of Christ. Remove those miracles, and nothing of substance remains in Scripture. So why should anybody, believing the Bible, stumble at the record of miracle found therein?

But grant for the sake of argument that Daniel did live at the age the critics place him, the witness of his major prophecies still remains. The four world empires have risen and fallen exactly as foretold; the

disunity of nations today is just as he predicts: the little horns of the west and east have developed as anticipated; Jerusalem has been trodden down of the Gentiles for the exact period of time stated by the prophet. Events have thoroughly vindicated the teaching of the book.

Greek Words In The Book of Daniel

A few years back an attack was made on the inspiration of *The Book of Daniel* that was pressed very convincingly by certain scholars. The authenticity of the *Book of Daniel* as far as its dating is concerned, was challenged on philological grounds. It was alleged that the book contained words of Greek origin which proved beyond all doubt that it had been written much later than 550 B.C. (the time of the purported period of the prophet), so indicating a much later authorship.

One of the main protagonists of this criticism was Dr. Driver, a prominent Bible commentator of the Apostasy. Subsequently, however, Dr. Driver admitted that the criticism, in fact, was valid in regard to only three words. One of these was admitted not to be conclusive in itself, and the two remaining words were *pesanterin* and *sumphonyah* (Dan. 3:5), which are supposed to be derived from the Greek *psalterion* and *symphonia*. Dr. Driver claims in regard to these two words, which describe Grecian musical instruments, that it is incredible that they could have reached Babylon by the time of the prophet.

But this criticism, limited to two words, has since been challenged by excavations of ancient Greek cities in Egypt which tend to argue otherwise. John Urquhart wrote: "The old contention that Greece carried nothing to Babylonia before the time of Alexander the Great is now too absurd for serious discussion . . . We discover the traces of a very busy commercial intercourse between Greece and Babylonia about a century before the time when Daniel was written . . . a brisk trade was then carried on in musical instruments". J. Baxter states: "The seven-stringed harp invented by the Greek poet and musician, Terpander, in 650 B.C. is now found to have been in use in Babylonia less than twenty-five years after that date."

In spite of this evidence, Encyclopedias still advance the philological argument to discredit the veracity of the book. Why do men do this to a book which sets forth such a glorious message of hope? Because once such a book is accepted, the reality of God is established, and with it personal responsibility of worship and obedience to that which He has set down. The flesh desires to avoid this, and so tries to undermine the veracity of the Bible and its various books.

"The world by wisdom knows not God", wrote Paul (1 Cor. 1:21). Modern knowledge acts as a barrier to humility and true piety, for men believe that they are too clever for faith. Their knowledge blinds their eyes to the need of God. Men shelter behind a pseudo-scientific barrier

of unbelief, and shrug off all responsibility towards God. They are sustained in their folly by attempts to discredit the authenticity of the Bible, and particularly by challenging those books that reveal the marvel of God within their pages. Hence the opposition to *The Book of Daniel*.

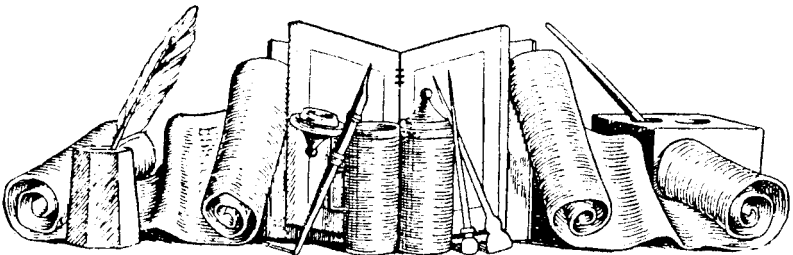
Its Place In The Canon Of Scripture

Despite these attacks, Daniel's place in the Old Testament Scriptures has never been seriously challenged. The book has been highly regarded by Jews and others, bearing within itself, the evidence of divine inspiration.

In conformity with the other books of the Bible, it proclaims the message of God, endorsing the basic doctrines of the Truth, and clearly bringing to bear the revelation of God upon life and history. As one writer has stated concerning it: "It has the quality of timelessness as well as timeliness engrained within it".

Some have thought that because *The Book of Daniel* is not found among the Prophets (*Nebhim*) in the Hebrew Bible, but among the Writings (*Kethubhim*) indicates that it was considered of lesser value in the eyes of Jewish authorities. But that is not so. Although such a division of the Old Testament was recognised by the Lord who divided it into "the law of Moses, and the Prophets and the Psalms" (Luke 24:44), he treated them all as inspired. Therefore, the placing of books within the *Kethubhim* rather than the *Nebhim* does not argue their lesser importance, for all inspired books were considered of equal value. The only way to lessen the importance of one book would be to exclude it from the Canon of Scripture altogether as uninspired. The Jewish authorities do not do that.

Why was *The Book of Daniel* included in the *Kethubhim* rather than the *Nebhim*? We do not know for sure, but probably because Daniel was not technically recognised as a prophet, but as a statesman. He did not hold the prophetic office, and therefore was not listed among the prophets, even though, through force of circumstances, he did fulfil the prophetic function. This is the suggestion made by some, and it seems sound.



Analysis

The Book of Daniel is divided into twelve chapters, and these, in turn, are sectionised into two parts. The general theme of the book is the universal sovereignty of God as revealed in the overshadowing care He manifests towards His people, and the national judgments through which He guides the destiny of nations. We accordingly caption the book:

THE UNIVERSAL SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD

(1) AS REVEALED THROUGH PERSONAL EXPERIENCE — Ch. 1-6

1. *Human Learning Judged — Ch. 1*

- a. The Captivity.....1-2
- b. Challenge: Jewish Hostages Selected for Profane Education3-7
- c. Contest: Daniel Refuses The King's Meat.....8-16
- d. Faith Vindicated: Nebuchadnezzar Acknowledges Daniel's Greater Wisdom.....17-21

2. *Human Philosophy Judged — Ch. 2*

- a. The King's Dream and Decree.....1-9
- b. The Chaldeans' Failure And Fate10-13
- c. Daniel's Request and Prayer.....14-18
- d. Daniel's Thanksgiving at God's Revelation.....19-23
- e. Daniel Before The King24-30
- f. Daniel Reveals The King's Dream31-35
- g. Daniel Interprets the Dream.....36-45
- h. Nebuchadnezzar Is Compelled To Honour Daniel's God.....46-49

3. *Human Worship Judged — Ch. 3*

- a. Nebuchadnezzar Decrees Universal Worship of His Image1-3
- b. An International Convocation Called4-7
- c. A Plot Against The Hebrews8-18
- d. Trial By Fire19-23
- e. Faith Triumphs Over The Flames24-25
- f. Nebuchadnezzar Acknowledges that Israel's God Is Supreme26-30

4. *Human Pride Judged — Ch. 4*

- a. Nebuchadnezzar's Proclamation and Praise.....1-3
- b. His Dream and Dilemma4-7
- c. His Description of the Dream8-18
- d. Daniel's Interpretation and Advice19-27
- e. The Fulfilment And Dethronement Of The King.....28-33
- f. The Restored But Humbled King Acknowledges God's Greatness34-37

5. <i>Human Impiety Judged — Ch. 5</i>	
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6. <i>Human Oppression Judged — Ch. 6</i>	
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(2) AS REVEALED BY PROPHETIC REVELATION — Ch. 7-12

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a. The Vision Of The Four Quarrelsome Beasts	1-8
b. The Ancient Of Days And The Judgment.....	9-14
c. The Angelic Interpretation Of The Vision.....	15-28
8. <i>Judgment On The Eastern Dominion — Ch. 8</i>	
a. The War Of The Ram and The Goat	1-7
b. The Growth And Development Of The Little Horn Of The Goat.....	8-12
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c. The 1260 Days' Prophecy	7-10
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Dragon from the Ishtar Gate, Babylon. Ishtar was a goddess of Babylon, and the Ishtar Gate gave access to the Ceremonial Way that led to the centre of the city.

**The Universal Sovereignty
of God
As Revealed
Through
Personal Experience
— Chapters 1-6**

The Book of Daniel is divided into twelve chapters which are sectionised into two parts. The first six chapters are historical and personal. They tell of the man himself, the times in which he lived, and the amazing adventures that he experienced.

The last six chapters are prophetic and visionary. They outline the remarkable record of pre-history that the prophet received from Yahweh, either through angelic visitation or by visions.

The first section is written in the third person, as though Daniel were writing concerning somebody else; but the second record is expressed in the first person: "I saw", "I beheld", "I beheld", "I saw" (Dan. 7:2, 4, 6, 7), "a vision appeared unto me" (Dan. 8:1), and so forth.

Perhaps modesty prevented Daniel writing of himself in the first person in the first section of his book. It outlines the acts of great courage, wisdom and faith that he revealed; and as the outcome of these illustrated the universal sovereignty of God, it was important that they be recorded. The section shows how that God overshadows the lives of His servants, as well as the destiny of nations. In Daniel's case, however, his experiences were also typical: they not only literally happened, but they foreshadowed the great lessons of prophecy. They not only illustrated that "God rules in the kingdom of men", but also typically set forth the destiny of nations. As the theme of the whole book is that of divine judgment, and these six chapters dramatise the judgment of God on six aspects of human endeavour, and show Yahweh in six relationships, as follows:

- Ch. 1: Human learning judged
— God's Revelation shown as All-sufficient.
- Ch. 2: Human ambition judged
— God revealed as All wise.
- Ch. 3: Human worship judged
— God revealed as All-powerful.
- Ch. 4: Human pride judged
— God revealed as Supreme.
- Ch. 5: Human impiety judged
— God revealed as the Desposer of nations.
- Ch. 6: Human oppression judged
— God revealed as the Avenger of His servants.

The first part (Ch. 1:1-2:3) is in Hebrew, and then follows a section (Dan. 2:4-7:28) in Aramaic or Chaldean (a related language); the book then reverts to Hebrew.

Why?

Evidently Aramaic was considered the language of exile (answering to Yiddish as used by Jews in exile after the dispersion of A.D. 70) Accordingly, that section of the book that applies particularly to Israel in captivity is given in Aramaic. The Eighth Chapter, in which Daniel reverts to Hebrew, predicts the cleansing of Jerusalem after 2300 prophetic "days", and its fulfilment has seen the revival of Hebrew in the land as the language of the returned exiles. The use of Hebrew by Daniel in recording his experiences has therefore followed the actual use of Hebrew by his people. After they were taken into Babylon, Aramaic became more generally used. In recent years, however, Hebrew has been resurrected from a dead to a living language; a remarkable token fulfilment of the prophecy of Zephaniah 3:9. Perhaps Daniel's use of the language of exile, as well as the pure Hebrew, dramatised its revival in the latter days.

CHAPTER ONE

HUMAN LEARNING JUDGED

Nebuchadnezzar, having besieged and subdued Jerusalem, takes hostages to Babylon. He there seeks to superimpose upon them the tongue and the learning of the Chaldeans, and orders that they be given a special diet and new names. Daniel and his friends resist the commands of the king when they violate those of God, and request a different diet. They are granted a test on their chosen diet for ten days by the sympathetic official placed over them, and showing no ill effects at the end of that time, are permitted to continue to live according to their conscience. At the conclusion of their apprenticeship, they prove to be superior to all others in knowledge, learning and wisdom. Thus God's revelation is shown to be all-sufficient, and superior to human learning as faith triumphs over every problem.

The Captivity — vv. 1-2

The tragedy of Judah's decline is displayed in Babylon; for after humbling Jerusalem, Nebuchadnezzar as overlord takes some of the holy vessels out of the Temple to place them in the treasure house of his god.

VERSE 1

"In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah" — In Jeremiah 25:1 this is said to have happened in "the fourth year", and critics have held this up as a discrepancy in Scripture, seeking to discredit Daniel thereby. But Nebuchadnezzar's invasion commenced in his third year, and was not completed until the following year, so that both Jeremiah and Daniel are correct. This was the first of several such incursions by the Babylonians; the final one, in the days of Zedekiah, being decisive, when Judah and Jerusalem were entirely overthrown.

Nebuchadnezzar, as co-regent with his father Nabopolassar, set out in the third year of Jehoiakim, but was delayed by the battle of Carchemish at which he defeated Pharaoh Necho of Egypt (Jer. 46:2). He then moved against Jerusalem which he took, but he had barely time to gather his booty of treasure and hostages when an emergency call came from Babylon: his

father had died, and he had to defend his right to the throne. This fourth year of Jehoiakim, therefore, became the first year of Nebuchadnezzar's sole reign.

On the death of Josiah (B.C. 609), the people had appointed Jehoahaz, or Shal-lum, as king (Jer. 22:11), probably with the intention that he should follow his father's policy of supporting Babylon against Egypt. However, Pharaoh Necho reversed the appointment. He took Jehoahaz as prisoner to Egypt, and set his older brother Eliakim upon the throne. B.C. 608, changing his name to Jehoiakim (*Yahweh raises up*), and ordering him to pay tribute (2 Kings 23:33-35; 2 Chron. 36:3-4). However, on the defeat of Necho at Carchemish, Nebuchadnezzar captured Jerusalem. He bound Jehoiakim as a prisoner of war, with the intention of taking him as a captive to Babylon (2 Chron. 36:6), but for some reason not stated (perhaps because of the news he received of his father's death, and the need to hurry off immediately to Babylon), he restored him as a vassal king (2 Kings 24:1; Jer. 25:1).

"Came Nebuchadnezzar" — This is said to have occurred in the third year of Jehoiakim, whereas Jeremiah is represented as warning him in the *fourth* year of his reign, that Yahweh would send Nebuchadnezzar against Jerusalem. How-

ever, the Hebrew *bo*, rendered "came" denotes to go or to be sent. Though Nebuchadnezzar "set out" in the third year of Jehoiakim, he did not arrive at Jerusalem until the fourth year, as noted above.

Nebuchadnezzar's name signifies *Nebo Defend The Borders*. Nebo was a god of Babylon (Isa. 46:1), so that the king was identified with the religion of his city, and fought in the name of his god. He was an extremely active and skillful general, and established Babylon as the centre of the most powerful empire of his day. However, though he was a mighty dictator (cp. Dan. 5:18-19), the most successful monarch of his age, and a warrior feared by all, he was treated by Yahweh as a "servant" or "slave" performing His will on behalf of His people (Jer. 25:9-11). This is emphasised throughout *The Book of Daniel*. "The God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom", Nebuchadnezzar was told by the fearless prophet (Dan. 2:37), and the same God will supercede human rule to set up His own kingdom on earth (Dan. 2:44). The ministry of Daniel, therefore, showed that rulers are subject to Yahweh's will, and that He rules in the kingdom of men. This illustrates Paul's comment: "All things are for your sakes . . ." (2 Cor. 4:15). Like the Assyrian monarch before him, who took into captivity the ten tribes as a God-decreed punishment, the mighty monarch of Babylon was but a tool in the hands of God to accomplish His purpose, for the benefit of the faithful (Isa. 10:12-15).

Nebuchadnezzar is also referred to in Scripture as Nebuchadrezzar. This is a more exact spelling of his name according to the Aramaic *Nabu-kudduriusur*. He was the son of Nabopolassar who seized the opportunity of Assyria's decline to assert the rule of Babylon. In this he was assisted by Cyaxares of Media. He allied his own family to that of the Medes by marrying his son Nebuchadnezzar to the daughter of Cyaxares. This alliance, as well as the vigilance and ability of Nebuchadnezzar as a warrior, was completely successful. Nineveh was overthrown, the Assyrian empire collapsed, and the spoils were divided between the rising powers of Babylonia and Media. However, Egypt also powerfully asserted her control over portion of the Assyrian empire. It was to prop up the failing Assyrian power against Babylon/Media; or if that failed, to take a share of the spoils, that Necho marched to Carchemish, and



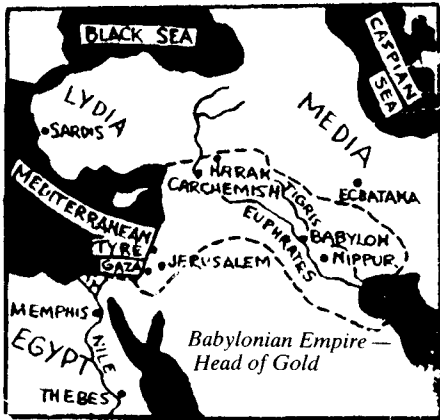
Babylonian "god" image.

there was confronted by Nebuchadnezzar at the head of his father's armies. The battle that ensued (B.C. 605) was one of the most decisive in ancient history, judged by its immediate historic results. Necho was utterly and disastrously defeated, and fled in a rout homeward, closely pursued by the victor, who followed him almost to the borders of Egypt. That one blow made Nebuchadnezzar the presumptive holder of the Middle East.

In B.C. 604, Nabopolassar died at Babylon, and Nebuchadnezzar had to return immediately to take over the government. He proved to be a successful ruler, both in his warlike campaigns as in the governing of his realm. He is noted particularly for his building activities, and during the period of his rule, he restored or rebuilt Babylon so that it became outstanding among the cities of antiquity. He established a dynasty that lasted seventy years, and himself reigned for forty-three years.

"King of Babylon unto Jerusalem" — "King" is *Melech*, anyone royal. Nebuchadnezzar was crown prince.

"And besieged it" — He did this after the battle of Carchemish as noted above.



VERSE 2

“And the Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand” — Note that Daniel is careful to emphasise that Jerusalem fell to Nebuchadnezzar only because God permitted it. This was part of the overruling power of God, His universal sovereignty, which is a feature of *The Book of Daniel*. In it the mighty dictator is described as but a common servant fulfilling the will of God. He became “the rod” whereby Yahweh disciplined His people. The title “Lord” (*Adonai*) should be Yahweh according to *The Companion Bible*. It states that this is one of the 134 places where the *Sopherim*, the Jewish revisers of the text, record that they changed YHWH to *Adonai*. Accordingly, the word should be Yahweh, the covenant name of God, which guarantees the eternal continuance of Israel. The use of the Name in this context illustrates that the discipline of His people is not inconsistent with His promises to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and does not mean that He has completely cast them off.

“With part of the vessels of the house of God” — See 2 Kings 24:13. This should have been a warning to the people of Judah. Instead, they acted on the premise that whilst the Temple remained, God would never allow the nation to be overthrown. But Jeremiah described such teaching as “lying words” (Jer. 7:4-7). Nevertheless, the people refused to heed the warning, and later, Nebuchadnezzar took the rest of the vessels to Babylon (2 Kings 24:13; 2 Chron. 36:18). Despite this calamity, Jeremiah predicted that “the vengeance of the Temple” would reach

out to destroy Babylon because of its desecration of the “house of God” (Jer. 50:28). This happened in the days of Belshazzar’s impiety (Dan. 5:3).

Why should the Babylonians be punished if they fulfilled the will of God in taking Judah into captivity? Because of the motives of the conquerors. They did not act thus to fulfil the purpose of Yahweh, but to accomplish their own selfish desires “to cut off nations not a few”. Thus when Yahweh’s purpose was fulfilled, He punished the persecutors because of the pride of their hearts (Isa. 10:7,12). On such a basis, God justly punished Jewry for crucifying His son, even though the “determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God” was accomplished thereby (Acts 2:23).

“Which he carried into the land of Shinar” — Shinar is the ancient name for Babylonia (Gen. 10:10; 11:2). Brother Thomas suggests that the word signifies *Enemy’s tooth* from *shin*, “tooth” and *ar*, “an enemy”. He aligns it with the serpent power of the Gentiles. “The land of Shinar” therefore signifies the land of the enemy, of the serpent power (cp. Zech. 5:5-11).

“To the house of his god” — Bel was the chief god of Babylon, and for it a most beautiful temple was built. However, some 120 years earlier, Isaiah had prophesied that Bel would be helpless to save Babylon when the time of Divine judgment came upon it (see Isa. 46:1-2).

“And he brought the vessels into the treasure house of his god” — There is a remarkable similarity between the pagan rites of ancient Babylonish religion and those of the Papacy as Hislop notes in *The Two Babylons*. A further point of similarity is the reference to the “treasure house” of Bel. The Papacy also has its *Treasury* at Peter’s Cathedral in the Vatican, in which is stored some of the glittering wealth of the Roman Catholic Church. It, too, is “decked with gold and precious stones and pearls” (Rev. 17:4). Into the treasure house of Bel in Babylon were placed the sacred vessels of the Temple. By this means, Nebuchadnezzar thought to honour the god he worshipped by attributing his victory to its superiority over the God of Israel.

Jewish Hostages Selected For Babylon — vv. 3-7

Flushed with victory and his new-found power, Nebuchadnezzar, the young king

of Babylon, demonstrates his wisdom by the clever moves he makes to consolidate his realm. He selects the best of the Jews as hostages, and trains them in the skills of Babylonian knowledge, that he might wean them from their allegiance to Yahweh and elevate them to honourable positions in Babylon. However, they have to qualify for these positions; and to that end have to submit to certain regulations demanded by him.

VERSE 3

“And the king spake unto Ashpenaz the master of his eunuchs” — It is suggested by some that “Ashpenaz” signifies *Face of a Horse*. As the horse was the symbol of war or power, the name or title evidently denoted a position of power. The term “master of his eunuchs” is *rab sarisim*, from whence, suggests *The Companion Bible* is derived the title *Rab Saris* of Jer. 39:3. The Hebrew for “eunuch” is *saris*, and it can relate to one who is “made a eunuch of men”, or one who “makes himself a eunuch” by giving himself in total dedication to the service of a kingdom (see Matt. 19:12). The word *sarisim* denotes properly and strictly eunuchs, or such persons as were employed in various offices of the court. Hence the word often means a minister of the court, a court officer, though not literally a eunuch (Gen. 37:36; 39:1 where “officer” is from the same Hebrew word). It is not easy to tell when the word is to be understood literally, and when not. The term can be used for a male upon whom the operation was actually performed as well as for those who gave themselves over to a life of celibacy. In 2 Kings 18:17 Rab Saris was a court official accompanying the military expedition against Hezekiah.

“That he should bring certain of the children of Israel” — The word “children” is *beniy* and denotes “sons of Israel”.

“And of the king’s seed, and of the princes” — Those selected were of royal blood, or were nobles of the kingdom of Judah. Doubtless the king of Babylon would take pride in appointing such notables, descendants of the once prominent monarchs of Israel, as attendants of his court. Accordingly, in the treasure house of his god, as in the court of his realm, there were visible evidences of his greatness, and of the power of Bel — or so he thought. The king of Babylon had sent an embassy to Hezekiah following the defeat of Sennacherib outside the walls of

Jerusalem, so that the miraculous destruction of the Assyrian army was recorded in the annals of the nation. But now, the defeat of Judah by Nebuchadnezzar could well be interpreted as indicating that Babylonish power was greater than that of Assyria and of Judah, and its gods superior to Yahweh the God of Israel. The first qualification necessary for the king’s appointment was that selection be made only of those of royal birth.

VERSE 4

“Children” — The word *yeladim* denotes “youths”. It is rendered “young men” in 1 Kings 12:8, and there relates to teenagers. The second qualification was that those appointed should be young in years, and so inexperienced, and more susceptible to the moulding influence of Babylon. Daniel, perhaps, was about 17 years of age. As such, he would have witnessed Josiah’s reform, perhaps heard Jeremiah speak, and, most likely, personally knew Ezekiel who mentions him by name.

“In whom was no blemish” — The third qualification: they must be physically sound.

“But well favoured” — Fourth qualification: they must be of good appearance, of pleasant deportment.

“And skilful in wisdom” — Fifth qualification: they had to pass a test in knowledge. Daniel was noted for his wisdom (Ezek. 28:3). This stemmed from his understanding of the revelation of God, most likely the result of parental guidance and instruction. That now bore fruit in captivity. An understanding of God’s way sharpens the mind in all realms of knowledge, and provides a sound basis for all branches of true science and teaching. Proper education establishes habits of attention which, once fixed, enable a person to be able to master knowledge in all its avenues. Daniel’s skill in the things of Yahweh helped him to master and surpass the Gentiles in their own wisdom. The learning of the Chaldeans embraced both theology and science. In those directions Babylon was prominent among the Gentiles. It already possessed the elements of the telescope, a knowledge of the calculation of eclipses, and other advanced principles of astronomy. But it also encouraged superstition, particularly in connection with astrology and divination. Its gods were legion (see Ezek. 21:21; Isa. 47:12-13); but, as the instruction of

Moses' mother enabled Moses to become "learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians" (Acts 7:22) without becoming adversely influenced thereby, so Daniel's knowledge of Yahweh's revelation (cp. Dan. 9:2) enabled him to clearly discern between truth and error, accepting the former and rejecting the latter. With Daniel, Yahweh's truth was the basic wisdom, and because he endorsed that principle, he excelled the Babylonians in their own wisdom (cp. 1 Cor. 1:18-31; 3:18-23). His experience and example shows that a thorough knowledge of God's way "has promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come" (1 Tim. 4:8).

"And cunning in knowledge" — The sixth qualification was the ability to learn from instruction, observation, investigation etc. "Cunning" is from the Hebrew *yada* "to know". Whereas skill in wisdom might come from book-learning, the "knowing of knowledge" had to stem from an ability to analyse matters, and so determine truth.

"And understanding science" — This seventh qualification was a demonstration of the ability to sift information, and so arrive at truth. The word "understanding" is *biyn*, "to separate, distinguish, and so to understand" (see Prov. 4:5-7). "Science" is *madda*, to thoroughly know a matter, from *yada*, "to know". This seventh qualification demanded that the student be able to carefully sift evidence, so as to arrive at a proper and thorough knowledge of a matter.

"And such as had ability in them to stand in the king's palace" — This eighth qualification demanded of them strength of character, brightness of intellect, and becoming deportment to grace the palace and person of the king. "Ability" is *koach*, and denotes strength to accomplish the duties set.

"And whom they might teach the learning and the tongue of the Chaldeans" — The learning of the Chaldeans was extensive; the tongue of the Chaldeans was Aramaic, related to Hebrew. Nebuchadnezzar was a Chaldean, and it is indicative of his high opinion of the Hebrews, that he should select some of the captives for the purpose he had in mind. Who were the Chaldeans, and to what extent could they be termed "learned"? The original word is *Kasdoyoh* and signifies "wanderers". Ancient Chaldea (*khasdeem*) was located in southern Babylonia, in the area of

Sumer. According to Unger, The Chaldeans were a warlike, aggressive people, apparently Semitic in race, whose origin was the mountains of Kurdistan. "Apparently they were Haldians (or Khaldians), the inhabitants of Uruur, i.e. Ararat or Armenia, who settled in southern Babylonia. In B.C. 731, Ukinzer, a Chaldean, made himself king of Babylon. He was deposed by Tiglath-pilezer III in 728 who ascended the throne of Babylon and ruled under the name of Pul. Pul was followed on the Assyrian throne by Shalmaneser IV (726-722 B.C.). He was succeeded in turn by Merodach-Baladan, a Chaldean. However, he, in turn, was conquered by Sargon the Assyrian, but continued as king until 709 when Sargon took over the reins of control in Babylon as well as in Nineveh". Sargon died 705 and Merodach-Baladan re-asserted himself as King of Babylon. He sent "letters and a present" to Hezekiah, and showed considerable interest in the astronomical sign that had been given to Judah's King. In about 625 B.C. Chaldean power began to assert itself over that of Assyria. Nabopolassar at that time rebelled against Nineveh, and established the new Babylonian empire. He was a Chaldean, so that Nebuchadnezzar was one also.

With Chaldeans on the throne of Babylon, they were elevated throughout the realm, and from 625 B.C. onwards, they held complete sway throughout Babylonia. The city of Babylon was their capital, and became the centre of intellectual life throughout western Asia. This intellectual activity was especially employed in the study of the stars, both scientifically and as a medium of divination. Knowledge of both astronomy and astrology was eagerly sought after by both the learned and the ignorant, by men of science as by men of superstition. As scientists, the Chaldeans founded the exact science of astronomy. For over a period of 360 years they kept meticulous astronomical records. One of their astounding contributions was to reckon a year of 365 days, 6 hours 15 minutes and 41 seconds: a calculation that measures within thirty minutes of what modern instruments have worked out.

As the Chaldeans held sway in Babylon, it was natural that they should give their name to the astrologers as well as the astronomers who made the city famous. Babylon became noted as the home of all sorts of magicians, sorcerers, diviners and

other occultists. Astrology was elevated into a religion, and superstition became widespread. The prophets of Israel had warned against the seductive influence of such (Isa. 44:25-28; 47:13-14), and now that Hebrew captives were taken to the very centre of such influence, it was important that the superiority of Divine truth over the superstition of the astrologers should be clearly maintained. The contest to which young Daniel and his friends were subjected became a means by which this was done. They carried on the struggle initiated by Moses in Egypt (Exod. 7:11,22; 8:7,18,19; 9:11), and to which Paul made reference to Timothy in setting before him the spiritual warfare in which all those who would serve God in truth must engage (2 Tim. 3:8-17).

VERSE 5

“And the king appointed them a daily provision of the king’s meat, and of the wine which he drank; so nourishing them three years” — The selected captives were given special treatment designed to wean them from their private allegiance whether national or spiritual. The preference shown them by the Babylonish King, and the special food offered them, were intended to honour them as a caste apart from others, and so boost their ego, preparatory to indoctrinating them with the teaching and principles of Babylon. It was intended to show that they had more to gain by identifying themselves with the country of their captivity, then retaining allegiance to the state and religion from whence they had been taken. A period of three years instruction and initiation was selected, to wean them from their previous way of life.

“That at the end thereof they might stand before the king” — For a captive from a defeated and humiliated nation to be offered such inducements and prospects of advancement was calculated to turn the heads of young teenagers. The ambitious project was set before them, and they were encouraged to give all their time and energies to attaining it. Those who qualified would have the great honour of appearing before the king as his advisers (cp. Dan. 1:19; 2:2,25).

VERSE 6

“Now among these were of the children of Judah, Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah” — The word “children” is *beniy* as above (v. 3), and denotes “sons”.

VERSE 7

“Unto whom the prince of the eunuchs gave names” — The word for “prince” is *sar*. See note v. 3. The purpose of changing the names of the specially selected captives was to wean them further from their original worship, and to honour the gods of Babylon. This is shown by Nebuchadnezzar’s own comment upon the names so given, for in speaking of Daniel’s Babylonian name, he declared: “whose name was Belteshazzar according to the name of my god” (Dan. 4:8). Nebuchadnezzar had arranged for their education, their diet, and now their names to be changed. Each act was designed to honour Babylon’s wisdom and its gods.

Having attempted to supplant the hope of Israel by educating the young men in the “wisdom” of Babylon, the king then endeavoured to remove all remembrance of the worship of God by changing their names. To appreciate what this meant, note the manner in which the priests of Israel were commanded to bless the people (Numbers 6:23-26). Yahweh declared: “They shall put MY NAME upon the children of Israel; and I will bless them”. It became common in Israel to incorporate the name and titles of Deity into the names of children born in Israel.

Throughout *The Book of Daniel* its author states on six occasions that his name was changed to Belteshazzar (Dan. 1:7; 2:26; 4:8-9,18,19; 5:12; 10:1) which suggests that he did not like his Babylonish name. In contrast, he uses his Hebrew name, Daniel, some 75 times. It is used 5 times elsewhere (Ezek. 14:14,20; 28:3; Matt. 24:15; Mark 13:14).

“For he gave unto Daniel the name of Belteshazzar” — Whereas Daniel signifies *Judgment of God*, or *God is my Judge*, Belteshazzar signifies: *Keeper of the hid treasures of Bel*. Bel was one of the main gods of Babylon.

“And to Hananiah of Shadrach” — Hananiah means *Yah has been gracious*; but Shadrach signifies *Inspiration of the Sun* (or Moon-goddess). These gods were worshipped in Babylon.

“And to Mishael of Meshach” — Mishael means *Who like El?* whereas Meshach signifies *He who belongs to Shaca or (Sheshak)*, a goddess of Babylon somewhat similar to Venus.

“And to Azariah of Abed-nego” — Azariah means *Helped of Yah*; Abed-nego signifies *Servant of the shining Fire*

(or of Light). Some, however, render it as *Servant of Nebo*, the Babylonian god of wisdom, identified with the planet Mercury.

The change of names, therefore, was to identify these young captives with the gods of Babylon.

The Contest — vv. 8-16

Daniel and his companions early show outstanding depths of discernment and discretion. They are prepared to conform to the king's request Rom. 13:3, so long as it does not interfere with their allegiance and obligations to God (cp. Acts 5:29; Rom. 13:3; Tit. 3:1; 1 Pet. 2:17). They are prepared to submit to a course of Babylonish education, but they set their faces against partaking of the king's food. To partake of food dedicated to pagan gods, or which has not been prepared in the manner required by the Law, is for those under it, ceremonially defiling. The three friends discuss the problem, and come to a firm decision to refuse it at all costs. Having agreed on this course they nevertheless act in faith, and with meekness and restraint (1 Pet. 3:15). Their respectful attitude commends itself to the official appointed over them, and he agrees to the request of Daniel that they be subjected to a limited test-diet for a specified period of time. Showing no ill effects from it, they are permitted to continue with it, and to live according to the scruples of their conscience, governed by the Word.

VERSE 8

“But Daniel purposed in his heart” — Daniel evidently took the lead in the action that followed. He was prepared to submit to the king's decree so long as it did not conflict with the laws of God. Accordingly, Daniel came to a clear decision in his heart how far he was prepared to go, and the action that he would take when that point was reached. He was both faithful and prudent: faithful in his determination to resist, and prudent in working out beforehand exactly what he would do. He did not boast about this, nor was loud-mouthed in his determination, but “with meekness and reverence” towards those whom he recognised Yahweh had placed in power (Jer. 27:6), he “sanctified the Lord God in his heart”, and “made ready to give his answer” for the reason of his action, when the time came to do so (1 Pet. 3:15).

“That he would not defile himself with

the portion of the king's meat” — The king's meat most likely included unclean animals, or animals not killed as prescribed by the Law. In any case it would be from animals that had first been offered to idols (Acts 15:29; 1 Cor. 8:10; 10:28). Daniel's conscientious objection to eating such meat, therefore, did not stem from vegetarian principles, but from religious scruples. He was not prepared to so identify himself with the worship of Babylon. Under normal circumstances, he had no objection to eating meat or drinking wine (Dan. 10:1-3).

“Nor with the wine which he drank” — Portion of such wine was poured out as a libation to the gods. Daniel was not prepared to compromise his scruples in the sight of pagans or his own brethren, by identifying himself with such worship.

“Therefore he requested of the prince of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself” — The defilement was moral and spiritual, not physical. Daniel and his friends refused the king's substance on religious grounds. In faith and with courage they were prepared to defy the authority of a king who wielded dictatorial powers (see Dan. 5:18-19).

VERSE 9

“Now God had brought Daniel into favour and tender love with the prince of the eunuchs” — The R.V. renders “tender love” as *compassion*. As in the case of Joseph, this was due to the respectful demeanour of Daniel, and the Providence of Yahweh. The circumstances of both these faithful men were similar. Joseph was in captivity; he was held in high regard by his captors (Gen. 39:21); he interpreted dreams; he was exalted into a position of high authority; he provided an example of faith. Scripture states: “When a man's ways please Yahweh, He maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him” (Prov. 16:7; Psa. 106:46). We never need fear the consequences of doing what is right in the sight of God, for in such circumstances, strength is on our side (cp. 2 Chron. 32:7-8).

VERSE 10

“And the prince of the eunuchs said unto Daniel, I fear my lord the king, who hath appointed your meat and your drink” — Objection is taken to the request of Daniel by the prince (sar) of the Eunuchs on the ground that to agree to it would be to incur the king's displeasure, and bring

his life into danger. The title is slightly different from that of Ashpenaz where it is *Rab* instead of *Sar*. Most likely Ashenaz chose the youths, and the Prince of the Eunuchs attended to their education.

“For why should he see your faces worse liking than the children which are of your sort” — Fear is expressed that Daniel’s refusal on behalf of the others to eat the king’s provisions would result in the friends looking meagre and lean. Possibly he thought that Daniel would reject food of any kind. “Children of your sort” can be rendered “young men of your age” that is, Daniel’s companions.

“Then shall ye make me endanger my head to the king” — Nebuchadnezzar exercised complete, dictatorial powers, and brooked no disobedience from his ministers (see Dan. 5:19).

VERSE 11

“Then said Daniel to Melzar, whom the prince of the eunuchs had set over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah” — Daniel’s request having been rejected by Ashpenaz, he appealed to Melzar for assistance (see the exhortation of Luke 18:1). *Melzar* signifies “steward”. It was the Babylonish title of the steward who had been appointed to serve Daniel and his friends with food. It is from the Akkadian *massar* “a watch” or “sentry” (Unger). The RSV renders the word as *steward*.

VERSE 12

“Prove thy servants, I beseech thee, ten days” — With determination and prudence, Daniel and his friends persist in investigating means to avoid the defilement that would come with eating and drinking the king’s provisions. They ask that a trial period of ten days be granted them.

“And let them give us pulse to eat and water to drink” — The Hebrew *zeroim* denotes something grown, and could apply to fruit, vegetables or grain. The *Interlinear Bible* has “vegetables”; the *LXX* has “seeds”.

VERSE 13

“Then let our countenances be looked upon before thee, and the countenance of the children that eat of the portion of the king’s meat; and as thou seest, deal with thy servants” — Daniel and his friends are prepared to submit to the test *and abide by*

the results. They were convinced that what they did was God-endorsed, and therefore they put themselves entirely into His hands. Daniel realised that even without the direct blessing of Yahweh he would fare no worse by eating the food he prescribed. Most likely, the Babylonians superstitiously imagined that some additional benefit came from eating the king’s meat and wine because it was specially blessed by the priests, and first offered to the gods.

“So he consented to them in this matter, and proved them ten days” — The request of Daniel and his friends being granted, their diet was changed to one that conformed to the requirements of God’s law.

VERSE 15

“And at the end of ten days their countenances appeared fairer and fatter in flesh than all the children which did eat the portion of the king’s meat” — They experienced no adverse effect from denying themselves of the food of Babylon, and living according to the laws of Yahweh — nor will we (see 1 Tim. 4:8). The word for “children” in this verse is *yeladim* as in vv. 4,13.

VERSE 16

“Thus Melzar took away the portion of their meat, and the wine that they should drink; and gave them pulse” — The austere diet which Daniel and his friends requested was more satisfying to them than the king’s rich but defiling food and drink. They were better for it; and showed it in their very appearance, for God blessed them in their fight of faith. If we discipline our lives according to Divine requirements, we, too, will experience a blessing in this life, as well as that which is to come (1 Tim. 4:8).

Faith Triumphant — vv. 17-21

The four faithful young captives not only are benefited physically by their abstemious living, but are also blessed in their understanding of things. Under test they prove to be superior in knowledge and wisdom, and more reliable in explanation of problems than their more self-indulgent contemporaries, as the king subsequently discovers. Thus faith triumphs and human wisdom and ways are judged and found wanting.

VERSE 17

“As for these four children” — The word is *yeladim*, “youths”.

“God gave them knowledge and skill” — Yahweh will grant His servants skill in understanding if they apply themselves to the means He has provided (cp. Dan. 2:21; James 1:5). “Knowledge” signifies perception, and “skill” is the exercise of intelligence in applying it.

“In all learning and wisdom” — See notes v. 4. God blessed them in their studies so that they became adept at the learning and wisdom of Babylon, as well as in the revelation of God. They applied themselves to these things in such a manner that they were able to extract and use that which was valuable to Yahweh’s purpose in them. Like Moses who became “learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians” (Acts 7:22), these young teenagers matured above their fellows by the way they reacted to the circumstances which they had to face. Under God’s guidance they were able to reject the evil and use the good to their own benefit. Unfortunately, most of the other captives succumbed to the conditions imposed on them, illustrating how seductive and dangerous to such is the Babylonish environment. Daniel and his friends continued in association with the university in Babylon by compulsion not by choice. Through God-guided influence, they were able to use the knowledge thus gained to their own advantage.

“And Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams” — Daniel surpassed his three friends in these attainments. Ezekiel, his contemporary, gave acknowledgement of this (Ezek. 28:3). His skill in both the wisdom of Babylon and the revelation of God was generally acknowledged at the conclusion of his three years’ apprenticeship. In the meantime, Nebuchadnezzar had his dream (Dan. 2) which Daniel alone was able to interpret, in consequence of which he was made Master of the Magi (Dan. 2:48-49).

There are three words rendered *visions*, two of which are closely related. The first, *chezev* signifies mental sight, a dream, a vision. It appears to be used to describe that which was seen when the person viewing it was asleep. See the context of Dan. 2:19,28; 4:5,9,10,13; 7:1,2,7,13,15. The second, *chazown* is a related word, denoting a mental sight, a dream, or a revelation. See Ch. 1:17; 8:1,2,13,15,17,26; 9:21,24; 10:14. The vision could be revealed to the senses either by word of mouth (Dan. 9:24), by a dream (Isa. 29:7), or by a picture impressed upon the

mind whilst awake (Dan. 8:1; cp. Num. 24:4). The third word is *mareh* from *ra’ah*, to see (cp. 1 Sam. 3:15; Gen. 16:13-14). It represents something seen as a reflection or a shape. See Dan. 8:16,26,27; 9:23; 10:1,7,8,16.

VERSE 18

“Now at the end of the days” — This was at the conclusion of the three years’ apprenticeship (cp. v. 5).

“That the king had said he should bring them in, then the prince of the eunuchs brought them in before Nebuchadnezzar” — This was in accordance with the original arrangements (v. 13), although in fact, Daniel had already appeared before the king in interpreting the dream of chapter 2.

VERSE 19

“And the king communed with them” — The word “communed” is *dabar* signifying “to speak”. He questioned them at length.

“And among them all was found none like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah” — These four young Hebrew captives excelled all others in their general understanding and wisdom. Already, as narrated in Daniel 2, the king had evidence of Daniel’s ability to expound spiritual matters; now he found that he was equally adept in other avenues of knowledge. It was probably after this judgment and assessment of his worth, that Nebuchadnezzar elevated Daniel as described in Chapter 2:48. Evidently all the selected apprentices appeared before the king, for Daniel and his friends are described as being “among them”. All were brought before the “judgment seat” of the monarch before receiving their appointment in his kingdom. In this they typed the future.

“Therefore stood they before the king” — They were selected for special honour as ministers of the monarch as described in Dan. 2:48. This foreshadows the approval granted those who live Godly lives when they “stand in the judgment” of the age to come (Psa. 1:5).

VERSE 20

“And in all matters of wisdom and understanding, that the king enquired of them” — This describes the “communion” of v. 19. The king interrogated those brought before him to ascertain their ability and worth.

“He found them ten times better than all the magicians and astrologers that were in all his realm” — The term “ten times” is relative. It is an idiom meaning *many times* better. In spiritual numerics it stands for completeness of number, marking the entire round of anything. The king already had found Daniel superior to his pagan advisers in understanding visions and dreams (cp. Dan. 2:2); now he learns that the prophet and his friends exceed the counsellors of his realm in the wisdom in which the latter should have excelled. The experiences of Daniel and his friends in that regard typified the future, when there will be world-wide recognition of the

value of Divine wisdom as manifested by the saints (see Jer. 16:19).

VERSE 21

“And Daniel continued even unto the first year of king Cyrus” — The margin comments: “He lived to see that glorious time of the return of his people from the Babylonian captivity, though he did not die then. So *till* is used in Psa. 110:1; 112:8.” Daniel continued throughout the seventy years captivity to the time of Cyrus. The record does not say that he did not continue longer: but evidently that was the time that he wrote his book.

Daniel chapter 1 records the triumph of faith; Daniel chapter 2 reveals the vindication of truth. It records the first of three incidents through which Nebuchadnezzar, the pagan king, is compelled to acknowledge that the God of the Hebrews Whom he had defied and dishonoured by robbing the Temple of its vessels and placing them in the house of his god, is, in fact, Allwise (Dan. 2:47), All-powerful (Dan. 3:28-29), and Supreme (Dan. 4:37). The incidents recorded are typical of events yet to happen. In them Nebuchadnezzar types the Gentiles, Daniel stands as representative of the Lord Jesus, and his associates typify the brethren of Christ. As Nebuchadnezzar is compelled to acknowledge the Wisdom, Power and Authority of Yahweh, so will all nations ultimately. As Daniel was elevated as ruler over Babylon, so also will be Christ over modern Babylon. As his friends were made co-rulers, so also will the friends of the Lord Jesus Christ be at his coming (Rev. 5:9-10; Dan. 7:27).

CHAPTER TWO

TRUTH VINDICATED: HEATHEN MIGHT JUDGED

Nebuchadnezzar, in the prime of young manhood, has but recently ascended the throne. The success already attending his arms is outstanding; the power that is accumulating under his hand is developing at an astonishing rate. His building projects in Babylon add to his prestige, whilst the zeal of his piety and the firmness of his rule have won him the support of its religious and civil rulers. Yet all this prestige and glory does not go to his head. He is wise enough to ponder the meaning of his success, and the possible course of his destiny. What is going to be the outcome of his rule? What will be the destiny of the Empire which he has so recently helped to build? As he ponders these matters upon his bed, he falls asleep and dreams. When he awakens he is convinced that behind the dream is a message that will answer his problems. He calls for the help of his wise men and counsellors, and commands them to tell him the dream and give the interpretation. They are unable to do so, and in despotic disappointment and fury he orders the execution of them all both practising and apprentices. The decree involves Daniel and his companions. When news of the hasty decree reaches Daniel he requests time to discover the meaning of the dream, and then seeks the help of Yahweh in prayer. The dream and the interpretation are revealed to him, and by him retailed to the king. Nebuchadnezzar is compelled to recognise the truth of Daniel's words, and to acknowledge that the God of the Hebrews is All-wise. In consequence, he honours Daniel and his companions, elevating them to positions of authority in Babylon. In his acknowledgment of the truth of Daniel's teaching, and his action in elevating Daniel and his friends, he types the attitude and the reaction that the world will be compelled to give to the Lord Jesus Christ and his associates in the age to come when the truth of the divine revelation is made obvious in the complete fulfilment of the prophetic scriptures.

The King's Dream and Demand — vv. 1-9

Nebuchadnezzar ponders the circumstances that have brought him to the pinnacle of world power, and finds his disturbed mind further troubled by a remarkable dream that he has. He summons his wise men and religious leaders, demanding that they tell him both the dream and the interpretation. This impossible demand is beyond their ability, as they explain to the king. The Chaldeans, representing the priestly caste in Babylon, become spokesmen for the rest, and explain to Nebuchadnezzar that if he tells them the dream, they will supply an interpretation. Distrusting their ability, the despotic king is angered by their incompetence, and in fury orders the execution of all the "wise men" of his realm, and their apprentices, unless they reveal what he wants to know. The Chaldeans again protest at the impossible demand, but fail to move the king.

VERSE 1

"And in the second year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar" — The first year of Nebuchadnezzar synchronised with the fourth year of Jehoiakim (Jer. 25:1), so that the second year answered to the fifth year of that king. It was a significant year as far as Jerusalem was concerned, for in that year Yahweh gave the people one last opportunity to reform. He instructed Jeremiah to write all his prophecies in a book and read them publicly to the people. If they repented, He would save them from the impending Babylonian attack (Jer. 36:1-8). The reading took place during the fifth year of Jehoiakim which answers to the year of the dream-prophecy (Jer. 36:9 cp. Dan. 1:1). The public reading caused the people and princes of Jerusalem concern, and the latter arranged for it to be read before the king. However, when this was done, the king showed only contempt for the warning words of Yahweh. He took the scroll of Jeremiah from the scribe reading it, and contemptuously cutting it to pieces with a knife, he impiously burned it in the fire, boldly declaring that the things predicted therein would never come to pass. That same year, in Babylon, the pagan king Nebuchadnezzar had his dream, and heeding the interpretation of Daniel, proclaimed that the God of the Hebrews is a "God of gods, and a Revealer of secrets". In this he displayed greater wisdom and a more reverent attitude towards Yahweh than did the king sitting upon David's throne.

"Nebuchadnezzar dreamed dreams" —

Only one dream is recorded, but perhaps it was repeated causing the king greater concern. The dreaming followed his waking thoughts which concerned the destiny of the great power he wielded at the time (v. 29), a matter that troubled him.

"Wherewith his spirit was troubled" —

He was violently agitated and disturbed in mind by what he saw, so that he could not rest.

"And his sleep brake from him" —

His mind was so troubled that he could not sleep. Sleep "went from him" as the phrase is rendered in Dan. 6:18. The dream awoke him; and disturbed in mind, the king was convinced that it was intended to convey a message to him. He lay awake pondering the matter, anxious to learn the truth of the hidden revelation.

VERSE 2**"Then the king commanded to call the magicians" —**

"Magicians" is *chartomim* in Hebrew from *chert* "to engrave or write". They were the scribes of Babylon, skilled in writing, and in the knowledge of the heavens. They were horoscopists (drawing magical lines or circles, and hence "to engrave"). They claimed knowledge of the occult, and practised magic (Exod. 7:11 — the same word).

"And the astrologers" —

The RV renders *ashshaphim* as "enchanters". They were prophets who presumed to pronounce the will of heaven. It is a different word from that rendered "astrologers" in Isa. 47:13. The inscriptions found by archaeologists speak of *Bab Assaput*, "the Gate of the Oracle" (or prophecy), and *Bib Assaput*, "the House of the Oracle". These enchanters were probably related to the worship and proclamation of prophecies which they represented as coming from the oracle, the voice of the gods they worshipped.

"And the Chaldeans" —

From *Kasdoyah* "wanderers". The Chaldeans were a warlike, aggressive people of Semitic origin, originating from the mountains of Khurdistan, inhabitants of Urartu or Ararat who migrated southeast and settled in southern Babylonia in the area of ancient Sumer. In 731, Ukenzer, a Chaldean, made himself king of Babylon. Though he was deposed in favour of an Assyrian, and the Assyrians ruled Babylon, in the days of Hezekiah, Merodach-Baladan, son of Baladan occupied the

throne (Isa. 39:1). He was a Chaldean, as was Nabopolassar the predecessor of Nebuchadnezzar. With Babylon under the control of a Chaldean, it was natural that he would elevate members of his own race. In consequent, the Chaldeans were an aristocratic, priestly caste in Babylon. Their proficiency in the science of astronomy, and their skilful practice of astrology established them as a special class of astrologers. It is in this sense that the word is used in the book of Daniel (Dan. 2:1,10; 4:7 etc.). The explanation of this specialised name is easily understood. Babylon, their capital, was the centre of intellectual life in all western Asia. This intellectual activity was especially employed in the study of the stars, both scientific and as a medium of divination. Babylon became famous as the centre of true knowledge as well as that of magicians, sorcerers, diviners and so forth. (See Unger's Dictionary).

The Chaldeans, therefore, were both scientists and clergy. So exclusively did they fill ecclesiastical positions in Babylon that their name became synonymous with the priests of Bel-Marduk (*Herod. 1, 181, 183*). These priests were esteemed as possessing outstanding wisdom (cp. Dan. 1:4).

"For to shew the king his dreams" — It was natural that the king should turn to them to provide him with an answer of peace in relation to the dream so as to settle his troubled mind. But they, like the clergy of today, were unable to correctly interpret the revelation of God. "Shew" is *nagad*, to boldly explain or expound a matter.

"So they came and stood before the king" — The wise men of Babylon assembled before the king, confidently expecting to use their magical means to satisfy him, as they successfully had done on previous occasions — see *Ezek. 21:21-22*.

VERSE 3

"And the king said unto them, I have dreamed a dream, and my spirit was troubled to know the dream" — Thus spake Nebuchadnezzar, as his wise men confidently awaited him to tell them the dream. His name signifies *Nebo defender of the borders*, but the dream was sent to him to reveal that it was not Nebo but Yahweh Who did that. He rules in the kingdoms of men (Dan. 4:17), and He has determined "the times before appointed, and the bounds of their (the nations)' habitation" (Acts 17:26).

So troubled was the spirit of the king that he desired a true interpretation of the dream, and determined to place his wise men under a special test.

VERSE 4

"Then spake the Chaldeans to the king in Syriack" — The word is *aramith* denoting Aramaic, a Semitic language similar to Hebrew, and of common usage throughout Babylon at that time. As we have stated in the Introduction, and as is noted in the margin of the AV at this place, from here onwards to the end of Daniel 7, the original Scripture is in Chaldee, not Hebrew, though the languages are closely related. Why two languages? It is significant that in the Aramaic portion "the course, character and crisis of the Gentile power are treated of; whereas in the other parts, which are in Hebrew, the things treated of apply more particularly to the Jews and Jerusalem" (Jamieson, Fausset and Brown).

"O king, live for ever" — This was a common form of addressing a king in the east. However, it is rather ironical in this context for the lives of these "wise" men were to be shortened if they could not tell the dream and interpret it!

"Tell thy servants the dream, and we will shew the interpretation" — The Chaldeans were skilled at interpreting dreams, and would have had no trouble in providing a meaning for the king's dream, if he would reveal it unto them — even though their explanation of it would not be according to truth.

VERSE 5

"The king answered and said to the Chaldeans, The thing is gone from me" — These words of Nebuchadnezzar are sometimes interpreted as implying that he had forgotten the dream; but nowhere does he specifically state this. He is here referring to the decree that he has issued. The RSV renders his words as: "The word from me is sure: if you do not make known to me the dream and its interpretation, you shall be torn limb from limb, and your houses shall be laid in ruins. . . ." Note also v. 8. The king was so troubled by the dream that he wanted a correct interpretation. He thus called upon the Chaldeans to explain what it was, as a token of their ability to explain what it meant (cp. vv. 9,24).

"If ye will not make known unto me the dream, with the interpretation thereof, ye shall be cut in pieces, and your houses

shall be made a dunghill” — The punishment described in this verse was evidently common in Babylon (cp. Dan. 3:29). The RSV renders the first part as “torn limb from limb” which seems more in conformity to the original as expressed in the margin: *made pieces*. The houses of the executed would be turned into dunghills, or made public latrines. The word “dunghill” is *nevaliy* from a root “to be foul”.

VERSE 6

“But if ye shew the dream, and the interpretation thereof, ye shall receive of me gifts and rewards and great honour: therefore shew me the dream, and the interpretation thereof” —

The margin renders “rewards” as *fee*, a very expressive word to use for the clergy of Babylon! The word the king used as rendered “shew” (*chava'*) denotes *to live*. The king demanded a clear, complete (living) explanation of the dream in all its detail: not a shadowy outline, the fulfilment of which could be a matter of doubt.

VERSE 7

“They answered again and said, Let the king tell his servants the dream, and we will shew the interpretation of it” — From this it would appear that the Chaldeans believed that the King knew the dream, but withheld knowledge of it from them.

VERSE 8

“The king answered and said, I know of certainty that ye would gain the time, because ye see the thing is gone from me” —

The word “gain” is from *zeban* signifying to purchase or barter (see mg.). The King claims that his “wise” men were only trying to purchase or barter time until his desire to know the dream should fade. On the other hand, the word he used: “gone” is *azda* and denotes something fixed, a course *determined* upon. So the RSV renders: “I know with certainty that you are trying to gain time, because you see that the word from me is sure that if you do not make known the dream to me, there is but one sentence for you . . .”

VERSE 9

“But if ye will not make known unto me the dream, there is but one decree for you” — See comments above.

“For ye have prepared lying and corrupt words to speak before me” — This crisis in the life of the King revealed the inability of the clergy or counsellors of his realm to properly interpret the purpose of God, or wisely direct Nebuchadnezzar in

the course he should take. Under test, their claims were proving “false and corrupting”. That is true of the teaching of the clergy and of the wise of this world today (cp. 1 Cor. 1:20-21). When the dream seen by the King shall be manifest in the earth in its final fulfilment the “lying and corrupt words” of the clergy of Great Babylon will be apparent to all (see Zech. 13:2; Jer. 16:19).

“Till the time be changed” — Until time causes the king’s desire to fade by his losing interest in his request.

“Therefore tell me the dream, and I shall know that ye can shew me the interpretation thereof” — This statement of the king explains why he withheld the dream from the Chaldeans: he wanted to be sure that the interpretation he received was true beyond doubt. Therefore, he reasoned, if they can give a true explanation, they can reveal the dream.

The Chaldeans’ Failure And Fate

— vv. 10-13

The Chaldeans fail to satisfy the King’s demand, and he decrees their execution.

VERSE 10

“The Chaldeans answered before the king, and said, There is not a man upon the earth that can shew the king’s matter” —

The Chaldeans claim that the King’s demand is unreasonable, beyond the realm of possibility.

“Therefore there is no king, lord, nor ruler, that asked such things of any magician, or astrologer, or Chaldean” — The Chaldeans gently hint that the King was ridiculous in making such a demand: an impossible one.

VERSE 11

“And it is a rare thing that the king requireth” — By use of the word “rare” they claimed that the king’s request was unique.

“And there is none other that can shew it before the king, except the gods whose dwelling is not with flesh” — They were frank enough to confess that they lacked complete knowledge. According to their beliefs, there were certain gods that dwelt with flesh, and revealed matters through those whom they “possessed”; but the request of the king was too difficult to be revealed by these lesser gods. An example of such a belief is described in Acts 16:16 where the poor, insane woman who followed Paul is said to be “possessed with a spirit of divination”. In the Greek, how-

ever, as stated in the margin, she is said to be "possessed with a spirit of Python". "Python" was identified with the god Apollo, and hence the poor woman was supposed to be possessed by a lesser god, and thus able to divine. The Roman Catholic teaching of "saints" as being a sort of lesser god, is in this category.

VERSE 12

"For this cause the king was angry and very furious, and commanded to destroy all the wise men of Babylon" — As dictator exercising absolute power over his realm, the king was not prepared to brook any thwarting of his requirements. See his power expressed in Dan. 5:19.

VERSE 13

"And the decree went forth that the wise men should be slain" — The word for "wise men" is *chakam*, which denotes acquired wisdom. Strong identifies the *chakamiym* with the magi. There are fourteen references to them in the Book of Daniel (2 x 7s — a significant number): Dan. 2:12, 13, 14, 18, 21, 24, 24, 27, 48; 4:6, 18; 5:7, 8, 15. In Daniel 12:3, 10, two further references are made to "the wise", but there the word is *maskeel*, and signifies acquired intelligence *as shown in action*. It is from a root *sakal*, "to be circumspect and hence intelligent", and it describes the wisdom of the truth in contrast to that of the world. Davidson defines the word as denoting "to act wisely and prudently, to make wise, teach, instruct". (*Sakal* is rendered "understand" in 9:13, 25; 11:33, 35 and "skill" or "skilful" in 1:4, 17; 9:22 in a significant contrasting context to *chakkiym* in Dan. 9:13). The Chaldean *soklethanuw* is from a corresponding root, and is used in Dan. 5:11, 12, 14 to denote the superior knowledge and wisdom of Daniel above that of the "wise men of Babylon".

"And they sought Daniel and his fellows to be slain" — From this it is obvious that Daniel had not been summoned with the rest of the "wise men", for his time of apprenticeship was not as yet completed (cp. Dan. 1:5 with 2:1). Nevertheless, Daniel and his associates were included in the decree and were to be executed with the others.

Daniel's Request and Prayer

— vv. 14-18

Included in the mass execution that has been decreed against the wise men of Babylon, Daniel seeks a stay of proceedings,

and gathering his friends together in the privacy of his home, seeks the help of heaven.

VERSE 14

"Then Daniel answered with counsel and wisdom to Arioch the captain of the king's guard" — The decree of the king caused consternation among the wise men of Babylon, and evidently attempts were made to circumvent it. When Daniel and his friends were summoned, and enquired of the purpose of such a hasty decree he gave support to the attempt to turn the king from his decision. This fact is hidden beneath the narrative of the A.V. The word "answered" is rendered *returned* in the margin; and "counsel" is from *ce'ad*, "to aid or support". Daniel was able to lend support, or to aid Arioch, in seeking to divert the king from his purpose. "Wisdom" is prudence, so what Daniel declared supported the cause of Arioch, and was prudent in its appeal. The word Arioch signifies *Servant of the Moon goddess* (see also Gen. 14:1) from the Chaldean *Eri Aku*. He was a high official in the religious and civil administration of Babylon. His title was "captain of the guard" *Rab Tabachaiva*, from a root signifying "to slaughter", literally therefore *Chief of the Butchers or Executioners*. The Spanish Bible renders it as *Chief of the Cut-throats*. See the margin of the A.V.

"Which was gone forth to slay the wise men of Babylon" — Evidently the decree was about to be executed, and a messenger had to be sent to call Arioch back to interview Daniel.

VERSE 15

"He answered and said to Arioch the king's captain" — The word for "captain" in this verse is *shalliyt*, and is from a root signifying "to dominate". It relates to the high office and authority of Arioch as appointed by Nebuchadnezzar. Only an official of high standing with the King would dare intercede.

"Why is the decree so hasty from the king? Then Arioch made the thing known to Daniel" — Until this crisis, Daniel had been in ignorance of the terms of the king's demand.

VERSE 16

"Then Daniel went in, and desired of the king that he would give him time" — Arioch, because of his position of eminence, was able to obtain an audience for Daniel with the king, and from Nebuchad-

nezzar Daniel sought time to solve the mystery. However, the word used in this verse is different from that rendered "time" in vv. 8:9 which the king refused to grant the wise men. Here it is *zeman*, and signifies an appointed time. Daniel invited the king to place a set time on his request for the dream and its interpretation to be revealed.

"And that he would shew the king the interpretation" — Daniel's statement regarding "interpretation" implies that the king knew the dream. Daniel, however, undertook to reveal both it and its meaning within whatever appointed time the king liked to designate.

VERSE 17

"Then Daniel went to his house, and made the thing known to Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah, his companions" — Daniel and his companions evidently had private quarters close to the School of the Chaldeans. Having received a stay of execution for a limited period of time, Daniel sought the co-operation of his brethren, and hastened to tell them of the results of his interview with the king.

VERSE 18

"That they would desire mercies of the God of heaven concerning this secret" — The efficacy of communal prayer is emphasised by the Lord Jesus (Matt. 18:19), and was practised by the early Ecclesia (Acts 12:12). In like manner, the four faithful Jews united their prayers in beseeching Yahweh that He would grant them an answer of peace within the allotted time. The crisis was acute: their lives were at stake. The word "mercies" is *rahamin* and denotes "bowels". It denotes the feelings of a parent for his children, the fruit of his loins. Hence the four faithful Israelites pleaded the compassion of Yahweh on the grounds of their spiritual relationship to Him as His sons.

They desired knowledge of the secret that had been revealed unto the King, and this Yahweh has promised to grant. See Amos 3:7; Psa. 25:14; Matt. 7:7; James 1:5. They, therefore, approached God in confidence that their request would be granted. In this verse "secret" is from Chaldean *raz* meaning "mystery" — see v. 19, 27, 28, 29, 30, 47; 4:9. In Ch. 2:22 the word is from *sethar* meaning "that which is concealed".

"That Daniel and his fellows should not perish with the rest of the wise men of Babylon" — They might well petition this

on the same grounds as Abraham pleaded for the righteous in Sodom, namely "that the Judge of all the earth (would) do right" (Gen. 18:25).

Daniel's Thanksgiving and Praise of God — vv. 19-23

The request of Daniel and his fellows having been granted, they offer a prayer of thanksgiving and praise unto God in which the Divine attributes are appropriately stated.

VERSE 19

"Then was the secret revealed unto Daniel in a night vision" — Daniel evidently saw a repetition of the King's dream. As it concerned a prophecy relating to Gentile times, it was appropriately given to him in a *night* vision. See John 9:4-5.

"Then Daniel blessed the God of heaven" — The word "blessed" in this verse is *berak* signifying "to kneel, to adore". Daniel kneeled in thankful adoration before his God.

VERSE 20

"Daniel answered and said" — God had replied to his request by granting knowledge of the King's dream, and now Daniel responds.

"Blessed be the name of God for ever and ever" — As did Christ in his model prayer to the Apostles, Daniel commenced his prayer by hallowing the name of God. That name is related to the covenant made with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (Exod. 3:15). Therefore it is appropriate for a spiritual descendant of Abraham to seek God in that name. The word "ever" is *Alam*, the Aramaic form of *Olam*, representing a hidden period, or in this context, eternity. See *Eureka* Vol. 1 pp. 125-134. This stretches backwards as well as forwards; so Daniel states that the name of God should be held in reverence from eternity to eternity.

"For wisdom and might are His" — Daniel acknowledges that God has both the wisdom and power to accomplish His purpose. In both wisdom and might He is above flesh.

VERSE 21

"And He changeth the times and the seasons" — The word "times" is *idaniy*, and denotes times as established by the order of nature. "Seasons" is *zemaniy*, and relates to time as set by man. The former can be interrupted by death; the latter can be changed by circumstances.

The nations have times and boundaries set them by God (Acts 17:26), and it is in His power to elevate or humble a nation according to His will and purpose. Paul declared that the "ages are thoroughly adjusted to God's command" (Heb. 11:3 — *Diaglott*), and in accordance therewith, there is a "set time" to favour Zion; and a "set time" to judge His people (see Psa. 102:13; 75:2 mg).

"He removeth kings and setteth up kings" — The dream demonstrated how true this statement is. Yahweh is revealed as the great King of heaven (Psa. 89:18; 95:3), and the great Disposer of humankind (1 Sam. 2:7-8; Job 12:16-21; Psa. 75:6-7; 113:7-8; Luke 1:51-52; Acts 13:21-22; 17:26).

"He giveth wisdom unto the wise" — The word is *chakam*, the same term as is applied to the wise men of Babylon. Daniel proclaimed to the King that the God of the Hebrews is the only Source of true wisdom. He granted wisdom unto Bezaleel (Exod. 31:2-3) and Solomon (1 Kings 4:29), and continues to do so through His Word (Deut. 17:18-20; 1 Cor. 2:13; James 1:5,17).

"And knowledge to them that know understanding" — "Knowledge" is from *manda* meaning wisdom; intelligence (see also Ch. 1:17; 5:12). "Understanding" is translated from *biynah*, a word which is derived from a root signifying "to separate or distinguish". Hence in this context it suggests the ability to distinguish between the value of spiritual principles in contrast to worldly knowledge (cp. Heb. 4:12-13). To those who manifest this ability, and clearly discern the value of the former, Yahweh will grant further wisdom. Daniel was a living witness of this fact.

VERSE 22

"He revealeth the deep and secret things" — To those who seek Him in truth, Yahweh will reveal the secret of His purpose. He did so to Joseph (cp. Gen. 41:16, 25, 28), to the prophets (Amos 3:7), and has promised to do so to all who seek Him in proper reverence, or "who fear Him" (Psa. 25:14). The "deep and secret things" are revealed in the Gospel which comprises "the revelation of the mystery (secret) which was kept secret since the world began" but is uncovered in the "preaching of Jesus Christ" (Rom. 16:25). The Gospel provides the humblest man or woman of faith with an understanding of "deep and secret things" such

as is beyond the ability of the natural mind to grasp, no matter how profound it might be. On the other hand, as Paul observes, "the world by (its) wisdom knows not God" (1 Cor. 1:21). The scientific world can develop the means of placing an astronaut on the moon, but fails to manifest the ability to bring happiness to humanity on earth. On the other hand, the Gospel provides believers with peace of mind and a source of satisfaction and enjoyment passing the knowledge of man.

"He knoweth what is in the darkness" — Darkness covers things from view, so that the Lord declared: "Men love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil" (John 3:19). On the other hand, the Godly man will ever bear in mind that "all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with Whom we have to do" (Heb. 4:13). This the godly man recognises, being conscious of His living reality. He hearkens to the exhortation to "walk before God and be perfect" (*mature* — Gen. 17:1). He will ever bear in mind that "darkness hideth not from Thee" (Psa. 139:11-12; Jer. 23:24; Luke 12:2-3), and that "the hidden things of darkness" will be uncovered at the Judgment Seat (1 Cor. 4:5).

"The light dwelleth with Him" — With Thee," declared the Psalmist, "is the fountain of life; in Thy light shall we see light" (Psa. 36:9; 104:2). The Lord Jesus is the channel of that light to humanity (1 Tim. 6:16), and himself declared: "I am the light of the world" (John 8:12). This divine light is unvarying in its constancy and power (James 1:17), so that John declared: "God is light and in Him is no darkness at all" (1 John 1:5). The construction of the Greek in this place implies that God is in Himself light; and that it radiates out from Him. His very nature is light, so that He sends forth light. Consequently, John adds: "If we say we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth".

VERSE 23

"I thank Thee and praise Thee, O Thou God of my fathers, Who hast given me wisdom and might, and hast made known unto me now what we desired of Thee" — Daniel thanks Yahweh for permitting him to be the medium of the manifestation of His divine qualities of wisdom, might and knowledge. He was Yahweh's servant to that end (cp. v. 20).

“For Thou hast now made known unto us the king’s matter” — Daniel had been given a revelation of the dream and its meaning.

Daniel Before The King — vv. 24-30

Armed with the knowledge granted him of God, Daniel advises Arioch that he is now prepared to explain the matter unto Nebuchadnezzar. Accordingly, Arioch arranges for an audience with the Babylonish monarch, which, in due course takes place. The young teenager-prophet explains how it is possible for him to reveal to the king knowledge that was hidden from the so-called wise and prudent of Babylon.

VERSE 24

“Therefore Daniel went in unto Arioch, whom the king had ordained to destroy the wise men of Babylon” — For details concerning Arioch see v. 14.

“He went and said thus unto him; Destroy not the wise men of Babylon; bring me in before the king, and I will shew unto the king the interpretation” — Though the dream had been revealed to Daniel, he said nothing about this to Arioch, but merely stated that he could reveal the interpretation. This supports our conclusion that the king retained knowledge of the dream, and only demanded that the wise men reveal it unto him as a guarantee that they could provide a correct interpretation. See previous notes.

VERSE 25

“Then Arioch brought in Daniel before the king in haste” — The matter was urgent: the lives of the wise men of Babylon were at risk. Knowing the king, he realised that the dread decree would be executed at the very time specified.

“And said thus unto him, I have found a man of the captives of Judah, that will make known unto the king the interpretation” — Arioch’s claim that *he* had “found” one able to provide a correct interpretation is not fully in accord with the facts, for Daniel had sought out Arioch, and not *vice versa*. His language, however, was designed to placate the king, and elevate him in his good graces. It implied that he had a deep concern for the king and had busied himself in trying to satisfy his desire for a true interpretation. Arioch describes Daniel as a *gebar* (man). This is the Chaldean equivalent of *gibbor* implying a “mighty man” which, perhaps, was indicative of Daniel’s personality or status. The word “captives” in the Hebrew is as the margin: “of the sons of the captivity”

VERSE 26

“The king answered and said to Daniel” — Evidently Daniel was present with Arioch who proceeded to introduce him to Nebuchadnezzar.

“Whose name was Belteshazzar” — See Dan. 1:7.

“Art thou able to make known unto me the dream which I have seen, and the interpretation thereof?” — The king still requests knowledge of the dream as a guarantee of the correctness of the interpretation.

VERSE 27

“Daniel answered in the presence of the king, and said, The secret which the king hath demanded cannot the wise men, the astrologers, the magicians, the soothsayers, shew unto the king” — Daniel gives this preamble, not in the spirit of boastfulness, but to indicate the truth of that which is stated in Isa. 41:21-24. For the significance of “astrologers” and “soothsayers” see verse 2.

VERSE 28

“But there is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets” — Daniel passed on to Nebuchadnezzar the facts expressed earlier in v. 22.

“And maketh known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days” — This statement is of the greatest significance in interpreting the dream-image. It states that there is a *latter-day manifestation* of the Image in addition to the outline of world events that it symbolises.

“Thy dream, and the visions of thy head upon thy bed, are these:” — The prophet proceeds to reveal the thoughts of the king, the dream, and the interpretation of it such as Nebuchadnezzar desired.

VERSE 29

“As for thee, O king, thy thoughts came into thy mind upon thy bed, what should come to pass hereafter” — To the amazement of the king the very thoughts that flooded his mind as he prepared for sleep are revealed unto him. Before he slept, he had spent a restless evening, due to the thoughts that occupied his mind. The sole control of Babylon had only recently been conferred upon him, and, in addition, outstanding victories had been won under his direction that gave him widespread power. Being of a religious turn of mind, he wondered at the purpose of this, doubtless contemplating the destiny of the nation over which he ruled, and the political power he

wielded, both of which he was even then in course of increasing and consolidating. He was concerned as to the future, and this revealed that he was a man of outstanding qualities of greatness. Instead of being lifted up in pride, and pressing on his conquests in an increasing orgy of achievement and personal triumph on the field of battle, the young king (for he was only young at the time), took time to consider the purpose of his own life and the circumstances that had brought such power to him. What would it all lead to? How best could he use it? These thoughts worried him as for a moment sleep fled from him. Nebuchadnezzar thought his empire would last forever, but, in fact, his kingdom did not last long. Its downfall already had been predicted by the Hebrew prophets (Isa. 13:19; Jer. 51:37,43,58), and now was to be confirmed by Daniel.

“And He that revealeth secrets maketh known to thee what shall come to pass” — See notes v. 29 and cp. Gen. 40:8; 41:16.

VERSE 30

“But as for me, this secret is not revealed to me for any wisdom that I have more than any living” — Daniel, unlike the magicians of Babylon, modestly disclaims his personal ability to provide the king with a true answer; he reveals that it came from the very God Whom Nebuchadnezzar had despised (cp. Dan. 1:2. See Psa. 119:98).

“But for their sakes that shall make known the interpretation to the king, and that thou mightest know the thoughts of thy heart” — Yahweh’s revelation to the prophet demonstrated six points:

1. It revealed to the king the things he desired to know and understand.

2. It saved Yahweh’s servants from the fate they would have suffered at the hands of Babylon’s executioners.

3. It brought conspicuously before Babylon the knowledge of the true God.

4. It emphasised how useless were the false systems of religious superstition prevalent in Babylon.

5. It elevated Yahweh’s holy name by revealing the ultimate triumph of the hope of Israel.

6. It demonstrated that Gentile might is subject to the will of the God of Israel.

The proclamation of the Gospel in any age includes some of the principles advanced above.

Daniel Reveals The Dream To The King — vv. 31-35

Daniel proceeds to describe the dream to Nebuchadnezzar, demonstrating his ability to provide a true interpretation of its meaning.

VERSE 31

“Thou, O king, sawest, and behold a great image” — It was probably a warlike figure symbolising Gentile military power.

“This great image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee” — The metals glowed brightly so that the image was exceedingly luminous.

“And the form thereof was terrible” — The word rendered “terrible” signifies *to slink as in fear*, and therefore suggests that the form of the image was exceedingly formidable in appearance. The RSV renders: “Its appearance was frightening”. It represented the kingdom of flesh, built upon violence and bloodshed (cp. Hab. 1:7; Isa. 13:17-18).

VERSE 32

“This image’s head was of fine gold” — “Fine gold” suggests the best quality gold. The head of the image was formed of the heaviest metal, so that the whole structure, resting on feet of iron and clay, was top heavy. Despite its formidable appearance it was very vulnerable.

“His breasts and his arms of silver” — Silver is a metal of lesser value than gold, providing the reason for Daniel’s comment of an “inferior” kingdom replacing Babylon (v. 39).

“His belly and his thighs of brass” — Brass or copper suggests a further deterioration in the quality of the metals.

VERSE 33

“His legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay” — The deterioration of the metals continues, until, finally, there is the introduction of clay. Hence the image rested upon an unstable foundation, easily broken.

VERSE 34

“Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands” — The description “without hands” denotes without human hands, or human agency. Similar expressions are used in Dan. 8:25; 11:45, linking these other prophecies with the one be-

fore us. A stone "cut out without hands" is unhewn stone, as was used for the formation of an altar (Exod. 20:22-24; Deut. 27:5), foreshadowing the Christ altar (Heb. 13:10). It represents one whose nature was human, but whose origin and character were divine, and thus unshaped by human manipulation. There is a sharp contrast in the appearance of the image and the stone. The former exhibited a luminous glory that shone forth with exceeding brightness, whereas the unhewn stone had "no beauty" such as is attractive to human sight (Isa. 53:2). It did not present an external glory such as would appeal to flesh. There is a glory, but it is apparent only to Yahweh and those motivated by His word. Nevertheless, the Stone of Israel is destined to triumph, and references to its ultimate glory are found throughout Scripture (Gen. 49:24; Psa. 118:22; Isa. 8:14; 28:16; Zech. 3:9; Matt. 21:44; Eph. 2:20; 1 Pet. 2:4-8; Rev. 4:3).

"Which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and break them to pieces" — Compare with the prophetic statements of 2 Sam. 22:43; Psa. 18:42 relating to the future work of Messiah.

VERSE 35

"Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the golden, broken to pieces together" — Notice the Lord's citation of this passage in illustration of his own future work (Matt. 21:43-44). The use of the word *together* is significant. It teaches that in "the latter days" (v. 28) the Image must stand upon its feet. The dream, therefore, anticipated the latter-day development of a confederacy of the powers (Ezek. 38) found upon the territories of the nations symbolised by the image. In *Elpis Israel* Brother Thomas comments: "Now, there has never yet existed a single dominion, contemporary with the two-kingdoms, and of course comprehending them in its jurisdiction, which could claim to be represented by Nebuchadnezzar's image. In order, then, to prepare for the catastrophe, the image which is now in antagonistic parts, *must be confederated*; in other words, a dominion must arise before the setting up of the kingdom of God, which shall rule over the toe-kingdoms, and the Turkish and Persian territories, till it meets the British Power in the East. The description of the dream says that the feet were smitten; and *'then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together'*; thereby intimating that the break-

ing of the power of the ten kingdoms would precede that of the conjoint destruction of all the other parts. That when they are conquered, the dominion of the conqueror will be overturned by the revelation of power from above" (p. 327).

"And became like the chaff of the summer threshingfloors" — The judgment of Armageddon is likened to the threshing of nations (Mic. 4:11-13; Joel 3:12-14). Armageddon, when considered in the light of its Hebrew derivatives denotes a *heap of sheaves in a valley of judgment* (see notes on Rev. 16:16 in *Apocalypse Epitomised*. See also Psa. 1:4 on the destiny of the wicked).

"And the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them" — Following the destruction of the Gogian confederacy at Armageddon, the Catholic countries of Europe will re-group under "the beast" (Rev. 17:13), and will prepare to resist the demands and ultimatum of the king in Jerusalem (Psalm 2:10-12; Rev. 14:6-7). But without waiting for them to attack, he will invade their territories, and so "rebuke strong nations afar off" (Mic. 4:3). In this work of conquest, he will use Israel after the flesh officered by the saints, and so re-formed into "a new sharp threshing instrument" designed to thresh the nations (Isa. 30:27-28; 41:15-16).

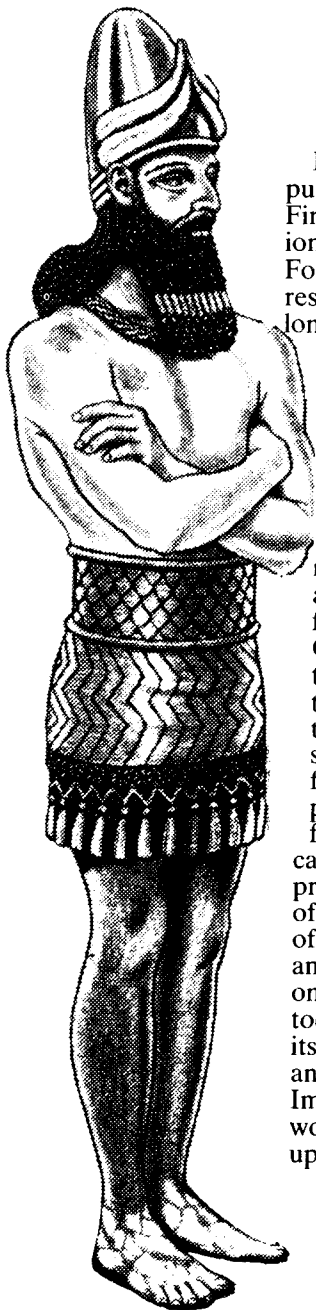
"And the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth" — A mountain is used symbolically in Scripture for an empire (see Jer. 51:25; Isa. 2:2). Messiah's empire will be co-extensive with the whole world (Psa. 72:8,11; Dan. 2:44; Mic. 4:8; Zech. 14:9; Rev. 11:15).

Daniel Interprets The Dream — vv. 36-45

Having demonstrated his ability to give a true interpretation of the dream by describing it in detail to the king, Daniel proceeds to supply Nebuchadnezzar with the interpretation of its significance, and so provide answers to the questions previously troubling the King.

VERSE 36

"This is the dream; and we will tell the interpretation thereof before the king" — The king made no comment as Daniel concluded his description of the dream. He doubtless listened in wonder as it was so clearly outlined to him, and recognised divine inspiration in the words of the prophet. He now eagerly waited to learn the significance of it.



The Image Prophecy

It is helpful to recognise the threefold purpose expressed in the Image prophecy. Firstly, the obvious application of the vision, presents an outline of world history. Four Gentile world powers are represented by four different metals (Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece and Rome) to successively dominate the world, but to be finally absorbed by the Kingdom of God — Ch. 2:44. Secondly, it was given to show what shall come to pass “in the latter days” — Ch. 2:28. This requires a confederacy of the modern nations existant upon the territory dominated by the ancient empires. Thirdly, and greatly significant, the prophecy foreshadowed the decline of national Government, from the golden autocratic absolutism of Nebuchadnezzar to the clay Socialism and Communism of the last days, as represented by the statement of Ch. 2:43. The dramatic fulfilment of the prophecy in all three particulars shows that the greatest confidence can be place in the prognostications of Scripture. In vindication of the prophecy history reveals the emergence of four world powers, and then an epoch of divisiveness among the nations answering to the toes of the image. Secondly, it is obvious that Russian power today is gradually incorporating within its influence, a confederacy of powers answering to the requirements of the Image-prophecy. Thirdly, the decline of world government is manifest by the uprise of Socialism and Communism answering for the clay of the Image.

VERSE 37

“Thou, O king, art a king of kings:” — This describes an absolute dictator, and as such is a title of Christ (Rev. 17:14). Nebuchadnezzar, doubtless, would heartily agree with this description of his majesty and status. It contrasts with the feet of the image which were of iron and clay.

“For the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory” — The Eloah (Mighty One) of heaven is the God of Daniel, not of Babylon (cp. v. 18). Accordingly, this statement is humbling in its import. To show the king that all his power, glory and status came not from his ability, but from the God of Israel (cp. Dan. 5:18) would tend to deflate him. It was God Who enabled Nebuchadnezzar to conquer Israel, and take the vessels of the Temple to Babylon (Dan. 1:2). This was the courageous and fearless statement made by the young teenager Hebrew slave. God gave Nebuchadnezzar the king (Dan. 1:2), power (Dan. 5:18), strength (Dan. 4:21; Jer. 27:6), and glory, so that though he did not realise it, the king was subject to Yahweh. This fact underlines the basic significance of the dream; for the same God Who gave Nebuchadnezzar such power, could as easily withdraw it, and establish His own rule (see v. 44).

VERSE 38

“And whosoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath He given into thine hand” — At creation, God had promised man dominion over the lower creatures (Gen. 1:28), which, elsewhere, are shown to be representative of mankind (see Ps. 8:6-9; Heb. 2:8-9). Beasts and birds are symbolic of nations and peoples (cp. Dan. 7:3; Isa. 46:11), and these had been brought into subjection to Nebuchadnezzar. Through the power granted him of God, he enjoyed a status to which the glorified saints shall attain in the age to come (Gen. 1:28).

“And hath made thee ruler over them all” — In this statement, *all* is a figure of speech, a synecdoche in which the whole is put for a part, a hyperbole in which a statement is deliberately exaggerated to emphasise a point, such as we might say concerning a matter that “everybody is doing it”, or “all know this” etc. By that we mean that the matter is commonly done or commonly known, and not literally that every individual is doing it, or all, without

exception, know of it. Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom did not extend throughout the earth, but without doubt he was the greatest ruler of his age, and his authority, status and power were acknowledged by all. Nevertheless, the extent of his empire was limited.

“Thou art this head of gold” — By “thou” is meant the dynasty of Nebuchadnezzar. The accepted dates of his dynasty (and we have reason to doubt the dates — though not the length of the reigns — as we shall show later) are as follows:

Nebuchadnezzar as head — 606-603 — reigned 43 years (first as regent, then as sole ruler).

Evil-Merodach (his son) — reigned 2 years

Neriglissar (his son in law) — reigned 4 years

Laboresorched (Neriglissar's son) — reigned 4 months

Nabonidus & Belshazzar — reigned 20 years

As the “head of gold” Nebuchadnezzar was an outstanding incarnation of human pride and power; though subsequently he was humbled by the revelation of Divine wisdom and strength. He brought Babylon to the pinnacle of its glory. But the length of his influence was limited by Divine decree to seventy years (Jer. 25:11). He came against Jerusalem in the first year of his reign (Jer. 25:1), and seventy years later, Babylon fell to the Medes and Persians. In the 19th year of his reign, the Temple in Jerusalem was smitten, and seventy years later, in the 2nd year of Darius, the command was issued to rebuild it (Ezra 4:24; 6:1). In the 23rd year of his reign, a further and final deportation of captives occurred (Jer. 52:30), and seventy years later, in the 6th Darius, the rebuilding of the Temple was completed (Ezra 6:15). Hence a period of seventy years separated the triumphs of Nebuchadnezzar and the trials of Israel in dispersion.

The head of gold answers to the lion with the man's heart of Dan. 7:4. It represented the nation of Babylon which existed upon the territory of modern Iraq. How can it be incorporated into the Image of the latter days as the prophecy requires (vv. 28,35)? Not merely by the inclusion of Iraq into the Gogian confederacy, but also by the linking of Babylon the Great of Rev. 17 into the sphere of Gog's influence, and the setting up of dictatorial power. This requires a Catholic-Communist confederacy as predicted in Dan.

8:25. When Russia moves into Constantinople (Istanbul) as prophecy requires, such a confederacy will take place, and a latter-day mystical Babylon will be incorporated with Russia as head of the Image.

Under Nebuchadnezzar, Babylon became the golden city of a golden age (Isa. 13:19; 14:4). Gold was plentifully used to glorify it. In an inscription, Nebuchadnezzar declares: "The walls of the cell of Merodach must be made to glisten as the sun. The halls of his temple must be overlaid with shining gold, lapis lazuli, and alabaster. And the chapel of his lordship overlaid with bright gold". Nebuchadnezzar was fittingly described as the head of gold, for he brought all this glory to the city; and Babylon is properly identified with the king himself, for he brought its power to the apex of its influence. His rule represented autocratic absolutism, he deferred to no one (see Dan. 5:18-19).

VERSE 39

"And after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee" — This was the kingdom of Medo-Persia which assumed the ascendancy over Babylon in B.C. 536. It is represented elsewhere in Daniel as the bear of Dan. 7:5, and the ram of Dan. 8:3. Silver was an appropriate metal to represent this kingdom, for, according to Herodotus, the taxation and tribute of the empire was paid in silver talents. But even as silver is inferior to gold, so this kingdom is thus described. However, it was not inferior to Babylon in the length or extent of its rule, for it exceeded its predecessor in those particulars. Medo-Persia incorporated far more territory into its realm than did Babylon, and continued for a longer period: 207 years as against 70 years. In what way, therefore, was it "inferior" to Babylon? This is an important question having a bearing on the latter-day manifestation of the Image. The "inferiority" of the Medo-Persian rule was in its governmental control. Unlike Babylon, the kings of Medo-Persia were bound by their own decrees; they could not escape these even though they may have desired to do so. This is illustrated by the attempt of Darius to release Daniel from the results of his own law. This he was unable to do because he was governed by it (cp. Dan. 6:14-16). Nebuchadnezzar would have tolerated no such limitations to his will. He was a dictator subject to none, and could revise or reverse his decisions at will. Thus the golden head of the image is indicative of the dictatorial autocracy of

his rule. No House of Legislature intervened between the will of the king and its exercise (see Dan. 5:19). Nor will it when the image is again set up. Meanwhile, the various metals of the Image reveal a deterioration from the absolute autocracy of the head to the democratic-communism of the feet (see v. 43).

"And another third kingdom of brass" — Brass, or copper, is the metal of Greece. Even prior to the establishment of the Grecian empire, Greece or Javan was noted for this metal (Ezek. 27:13). Later it was incorporated into the armour worn by its warriors, so they were described as "the brazen coated Greeks". Therefore, both Nebuchadnezzar and Daniel would be able to identify the third world power designated by such a metal. In B.C. 334 at the battle of Granicus, Alexander the Great defeated the numerically superior forces of Persia, and in the following year, at Issus, the victory was made complete, and the Grecian Empire dominated the world scene. Elsewhere, in Daniel's prophecy the symbols of the leopard (Dan. 7:6) and the he-goat (Dan. 8:4) are used to describe the Grecian power.

"Which shall bear rule over all the earth" — Alexander the Great of Macedonia was a military genius whose ability on the field of battle was unrivalled in his day, and whose military tactics are recognised and studied by strategists to this day. He extended his rule much further than any previous conquerer. He overthrew and occupied Medo-Persia, and invaded India, though subsequently he withdrew his forces to the River Indus and made that the most easterly of his borders. According to legend, the young man Alexander (he died at the age of 33) "wept because there were no more worlds to conquer".

Modern Greece is to be incorporated into the Image. The fourth beast, in its latter-day manifestation, is described as having "nails of brass", with which it "devours, brake in pieces, and (with its feet) stamps the residue" of the beasts (Dan. 7:19). This suggests that Greece will be incorporated into the territory of the fourth beast, the Gogian confederacy of the latter days.

VERSE 40

"And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron" — There is a subtle difference in the wording by which this fourth

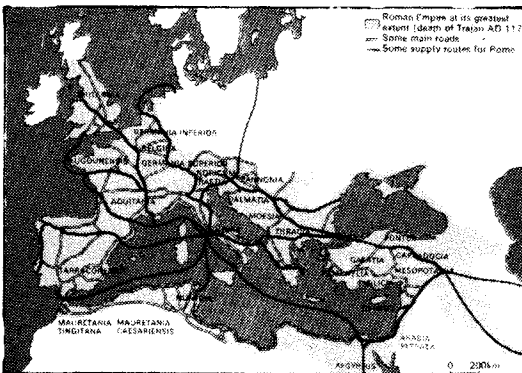
empire is introduced; one which shows how exactly Daniel's description conforms to world history. The previous verse, describing the silver and brazen elements of the Image, is introduced by the words "after these shall arise . . ." This implies that the kingdoms designated would develop out of Babylon, which, in fact, is what happened. It was only after Cyrus had taken the city that his Kingdom superseded that established by Nebuchadnezzar; and after Alexander had overthrown the forces of Medo-Persia and Babylon that Greece was recognised as a world power.

But Rome never conquered Babylon nor extended east into Persia, though the Fourth Beast in its latter-day manifestation will do so in order to set up the Image in its complete form. Rome became a world power though it never occupied Persia, so that Daniel's description conforms exactly to the details of history. In his later chapters, describing the visions subsequently given to him, greater detail is given of the Roman empire in both its civil and ecclesiastical developments (see Dan. 7:7-8; 8:23). Rome gradually extended its influence eastward. In B.C. 133, it obtained the Kingdom of Pergamum, it being willed to the Empire by Attalus III. This brought the growing power of Rome into Asia Minor. In B.C. 63, Pompey incorporated Palestine into the Empire, the last remnant of Grecian power in that area.

Daniel described this fourth empire as being "strong as iron". It is significant that the Roman legions were noted for their iron swords and breastplates which they preferred in favour to the brass or copper of the Greeks. In *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, Gibbon makes the fol-

lowing comment: "The arms of the Republic, sometimes vanquished in battle, always victorious in war, advanced with rapid steps to the Euphrates, the Danube, the Rhine and the ocean; and the images of gold, or silver, or brass, that might serve to represent the nations or their kings, were successively broken by the iron monarchy of Rome". For a disbeliever in the Bible such as Gibbon this is a remarkably descriptive passage conforming to the metals of the Image. Again he writes: "The Empire of the Romans filled the world".

The two legs of the Image answer to the twofold division of the Empire which took place during the reign of Constantine. He used the growing influence of so-called Christianity as a stepping stone to world power, so that Rome became the ecclesiastical headquarters of the church. But the Empire had outgrown the usefulness of Rome as a centre of civil administration, and in 326 he set up Constantinople (Istanbul) as a new capital for that purpose. It became the civil and military headquarters of the Empire, whilst Rome remained the religious capital. Subsequently, during the reigns of his successors, the division became more complete, and the Empire was divided into Eastern and Western Rome. In 476 A.D. the Western Empire fell and was replaced by the Barbaric nations represented in the Image as its toes. These were replaced in A.D. 800 by the Holy Roman Empire which continued for about one thousand years; a millennium of terror, violence, error, and wickedness. The Eastern Empire retained its independence (though increasingly restricted) until 1453 when Constantinople succumbed to the Ottomans, and the Turkish Empire replaced it.



The iron dominion of Rome at its greatest extent never conquered Persia. The latter day manifestation of the Fourth Beast (Russia in Constantinople) will do so. See Dan. 7:7.

However, as the Image is yet to stand up in its completeness, this twofold division of the ancient Roman world can be expected to re-form. Today it is in course of doing so. The EEC or Common Market confederacy, formulated by the Treaty of Rome in 1957 is developing the western division, and the Communist Confederation of nations established by the Warsaw Pact is developing the Eastern sector. Subsequent prophecies of Daniel show that this division will become more clearly defined. The Papacy will rise to greater power and influence, and Russia will occupy Istanbul (Constantinople) to set up the military "dragon" power of the East. In *Exposition of Daniel*, p. 87, Brother Thomas remarks: "While the head, breast, arms, belly, thighs, legs and toes have all existed, the feet have not yet been formed; so that it has hitherto been impossible for the colossal image to stand erect as Nebuchadnezzar saw it in his dream. It is, therefore, the mission of the Autocrat to form the feet and set up the Image before the world in all its excellent brightness, and terribleness of form; that all men subject to the kingdom of Babylon may worship the work of its creator's power".

In the Common Market and Eastern bloc of nations, the revival of the feet are taking place — surely a wonderful sign of Christ's imminent coming.

Again, in his *Preface to Elpis Israel*, Brother Thomas wrote: "The future movements of Russia are notable signs of the times, because they are predicted in the Scriptures of truth. The Russian Autocracy in its plenitude, and on the verge of dissolution, is the Image of Nebuchadnezzar standing upon the Mountains of Israel, ready to be smitten by the Stone. When Russia makes its grand move for the building-up of its Image-empire then let the reader know that the end of all things, as at present constituted, is at hand. The long-expected, but stealthy, advent of the King of Israel will be on the eve of becoming a fact; and salvation will be to those who not only looked for it, but have trimmed their lamps by believing the gospel of the kingdom unto the obedience of faith, and the perfection thereof in 'fruits meet for repentance'."

World events witness to the fact that we are at the epoch of the Return.

Later, in Daniel's prophecy, the two legs of the Image are represented by the little horns of the West (Dan. 7:8) and of the East (Dan. 8:9).

"Forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things; and as iron that breaketh all these, shall it break in pieces and bruise" — The two words here used are significant, "break" is *daqaq* and signifies to *cause to crumble, to break into pieces*; whereas "bruise" is *re'a*, to *spoil by breaking, to make good for nothing*. This was the effect of the conquests of Rome considered either militarily or ecclesiastically. Its power was great. As an Empire it outlasted all others in the length and extent of its domination, and Daniel reveals that a latter-day manifestation of its power can be expected.

One significant feature. What it did in the past, the Kingdom of God shall do more completely in the future. As Rome "broke in pieces" its enemies; so will the Kingdom of God (see v. 44).

VERSE 41

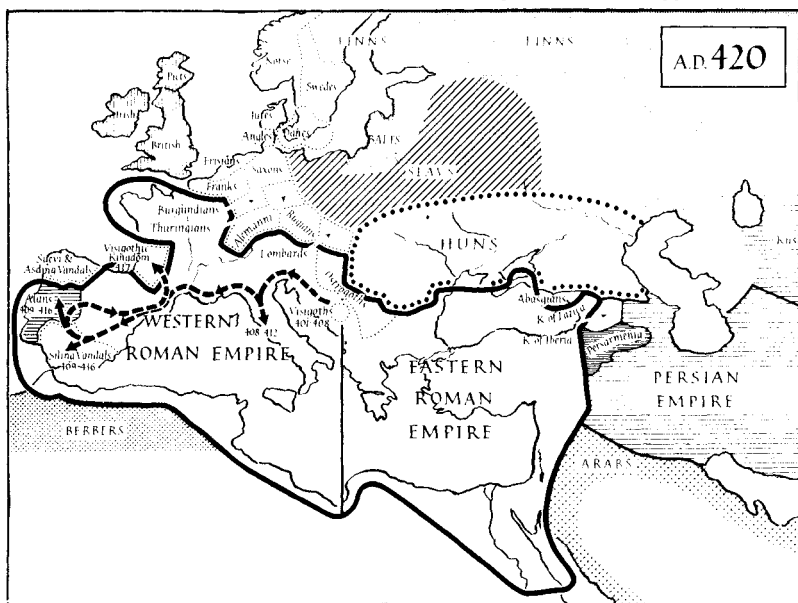
"And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes" — The entire Image will stand upon its two feet in latter-day manifestation. The feet comprise a latter-day revival of the two legs of the Image such as Brother Thomas expected to see.

"Part of potters' clay, and part of iron" — Ancient iron production was 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 iron and clay was mixed. The symbol thus speaks of the imperfect efforts of man to weld humanity into a strong alliance of unity and peace. The symbol of clay is commonly used for man (Job 33:6; Isa. 64:8; 1 Cor. 15:47), and in the prophecy represents communism as the philosophy of the flesh. The rust of iron is typical of the defilement of the flesh which it represents. Accordingly, the use of iron tools in the construction of altars, and of the Temple of Solomon was treated as defiling (Deut. 27:5; Josh. 8:30-31; 1 Kings 6:7).

"The kingdom shall be divided" — Instead of one united kingdom, Europe was divided into a number of kingdoms. There are several lists of these given, though Brother Thomas observes that the terms of the prophecy do not necessarily require ten. It needs to be remembered that "ten" is used in Scripture in a symbolic sense as representing a whole as divided. (The numeral is used to represent a large unspecified number — 1 Sam. 29:5; Psa. 3:6; Song 5:10; 1 Cor. 4:15; 14:19). Used in the

same way here, it represents the whole of Western Empire as divided. Here is a list of some of the kingdoms established on the ruins of the Western Empire: the Huns (356), Vandals (407), Visigoths (378), Burgundians (407), Gepidae (378), Lombards (483), Franks (407), Suevi (407), Alani (356), Bavarians (488). In 476 Rome was occupied by the Goths, the Western Empire fell, and its territory was divided among the Barbarians who had swarmed over the Roman border, and continued to do so. In all, some twenty-one tribes overran the Roman Empire (*Encyclopaedia Britannica*).

also predicted in Rev. 8. The tribes north and north-east of the Empire swarmed over its borders, and dividing the united Empire, replaced it with numerous tribal nations. Though many attempts have been made to define ten such kingdoms, it appears that at no time were there ten distinct nationalities existing on the territory at the same time. As mentioned above, the numeral ten is frequently used in Scripture in the sense of completeness rather than to denote a rigid number. The use of the numeral in that way, predicted that the Empire would be completely carved up. This is what happened, for not



“But there shall be in it of the strength of the iron, forasmuch as thou sawest the iron mixed with miry clay” — The word “mixed” is *‘arab*, “to commingle”. It denotes the mingling of two distinct culture elements: the infusion of barbaric races into the Empire. This same infusion of two distinct culture elements being Catholicism and Communism.

VERSE 42

“And as the toes of the feet were part of iron” — In accordance with the prophecy, the Roman Empire was first divided into two, and then into multiple segments. This was due to the barbarian invasions,

a segment of the western empire remained. In 476, the last of the Roman Emperors, Romulus Augustus, was deposed by Odoacer the Visigoth, and the Empire came to an end; only the toes remained.

Today Europe remains divided, and though there are ten nations in the Common Market, they do not fulfil the requirements of the Image. For example, both Britain and Greece must withdraw therefrom; the former to manifest an independence from such involvement, and the latter to form part of the eastern bloc of nations. Meanwhile the Iron Curtain effectively divides the nations of the Continent into two sections representing the two feet. And that division is separating

the nations as predicted in the vision seen by Nebuchadnezzar and interpreted by Daniel. In other words, and in conformity with the figurative significance of the numeral ten (representing completeness) all the territory represented by the toes in both the western and eastern segments of the Image will find place in the confederacy.

“And part of clay” — Some of the kingdoms would be strong, others would be weak. Some politically of the right, others of the left.

“So the kingdom shall be partly strong, and partly broken” — The word *teber* signifies *fragile*, and is so rendered by Rotherham. A fragile object is easily broken; hence the description signifies that some kingdoms would be powerful, exercising dictatorial authority, others would be claylike, swayed by the vacillating influences of democracy, and so bringing an element of fragility to the toes, some of which were broken (Dan. 7:8). The history of Europe has demonstrated this feature, for nations have risen and fallen in power, whilst others have maintained a stability throughout Gentile times.

VERSE 43

“And whereas thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men” — This important statement illustrates the most disturbing influence of current international politics. “They” represent the “toes” or “kings” of v. 44, and the statement claims that unless the governments are prepared to co-operate with the democratic and socialistic influences of their realms they will find it impossible to exercise the authoritative power suggested by the iron. The term “men” in this place is from the Chaldean *enosh*, a term describing the lowest form of man. There are several words in Hebrew for “man”: *adam* speaks of man as far as his nature is concerned; *ish* relates to man in his ability, made in the image and likeness of the Elohim; *enosh* describes man in his weakness, his flesh inclinations; and so the lowest type of man. Daniel thus described the gradual decline in human government from the autocratic dictatorship of Nebuchadnezzar to the time, in the latter days, when governments will have to defer to the lowest strata of society in order to rule. That is the political state of things today. Govern-

ments are forced to co-operate with Labour and Socialistic Movements within their borders in order to remain in control. Socialism and Communism are everywhere on the increase as required by Daniel’s interpretation of the Image. The result is that, politically, the iron is already mixed with the clay. Men exercising ruthless power will arise as the iron segments of the toes, and will co-operate with the communistic and socialistic elements in the nations in order to retain power. The fact is in evidence throughout the world today. If a government attempts to ignore the Socialistic tendencies of the times, it can as well give up hope of effectively ruling.

“But they shall not cleave one to another even as iron is not mixed with clay” — There will be discovered no formula that will secure complete amity or unity. It is a phenomenon of modern history, that despite the invention of frightening munitions of war and weapons of destruction such as threaten civilisation itself, and makes the establishment of peace absolutely essential to the maintenance of civilisation, man has shown himself quite incapable of evolving a satisfactory system. The League of Nations established between the two World Wars was unable to do so; and equally ineffective is the so-called United Nations Organisation of today. This inability of man to evolve an effective system that insures peace and security provides a remarkable vindication of Daniel’s interpretation of the Image. See also 1 Thess. 5:1-2.

VERSE 44

“And in the days of these kings” — At the time described in v. 43.

“Shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed” — Compare this statement with that made by Daniel to Nebuchadnezzar in v. 37. There he declared that the God of heaven had given power to the King of Babylon; then he warned that the same God will transfer that power to another inferior kingdom; now He predicts that He will extend His power to set up his own Kingdom on earth. His ability to do so is illustrated by the remarkable fulfilment over the centuries of the Image prophecy. His determination to do so is proclaimed throughout Scripture. See Dan. 4:3,43; 7:27; Mic. 4:1-7; Obad. 21; Zech. 14:9; Luke 1:33 etc.

“And the kingdom shall not be left to

other people” — The original expresses this as “the kingdom thereof”, that is the governance of the kingdom. This will not be left to other peoples, there will be no transference of power as has happened in the past, requiring the various metals to form the Image. Its rulers will be immortal (Rev. 5:9-10; 20:6).

“But it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms” — All other powers will be broken in pieces like the metals of the Image (see Mic. 4:13), and will be consumed (Luke 20:18). “The nation and the kingdom that will not serve Thee shall perish”, Isaiah was moved to proclaim (Isa. 60:12. See also Psa. 2:8-9). All other powers will be incorporated into the Empire of Christ which will be co-extensive with the globe (Zech. 14:9). The “first dominion” of that Kingdom will be vested in Israel (Mic. 4:7) to which all other powers will be subservient.

VERSE 45

“Forasmuch as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands” — The stone that became a mountain filling the whole earth is a symbol of the Kingdom of God, of which the Lord Jesus Christ is the nucleus (Isa. 28:16), whilst the mountain out of which it was cut is symbolic of the flesh (Jer. 51:25). The saints comprise the aristocracy of the Kingdom, reigning with Christ (Rev. 5:9-10). They are “taken out of the Gentiles” (Acts 15:14) as the stone is represented as cut out of the mountain. This was done “without hands”, that is apart from human agency (see also v. 34).

“And that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold” — This statement once again endorses the principle that the Image must be completely formed in all its elements in the last days, for all its component parts are broken in pieces *together*. The king evidently saw the various metals of the image tumbled indiscriminately on the ground, for Daniel describes the metals in a different order to that given in the Image. The confusion is perhaps suggestive of the bewilderment of the nations at the blow received by the stone-power.

“The great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter” — The literal expression is “after this”. The Image presents an outline of world history from the days of Daniel until the setting up of the Kingdom.

“And the dream is certain and the interpretation thereof sure” — As Daniel had revealed the dream, and given a coherent explanation that the King recognised as true, he could only endorse this statement.

Nebuchadnezzar Is Induced To Honour Daniel — vv. 46-49

The mighty dictator of Babylon is humbled by the ability of the young Hebrew teenager and captive, Daniel, to reveal the dream, and cannot but accept the interpretation given as true. He recognises it as a Divine revelation, and is compelled thereby to acknowledge the might and wisdom of the God from Whom it stemmed. The realisation of this causes him to honour the God of Israel, and decree that He be universally respected and admired. Daniel also is elevated, and following the request made by the young prophet to the King, his friends are likewise given positions of honour within the Kingdom of Babylon. In this Nebuchadnezzar types the Gentiles at the return of Christ who will likewise be compelled to bow before the glorified redeemed and proclaim: “Surely God is in thee; and there is none else, there is no God” apart from Thee (Isa. 45:14-15).

VERSE 46

“Then the king Nebuchadnezzar fell upon his face, and worshipped Daniel” — In the amazing revelation brought him by Daniel, Nebuchadnezzar recognised a Divine influence, and therefore saw in the prophet a manifestation of the God of the Hebrews. In acknowledgement of this, he prostrates himself before the prophet, that being an act of homage and reverence rendered great men in honour of their status (2 Sam. 9:6; 14:33; 1 Kings 18:7). Similar homage will be paid to the glorified saints in the Age to come (Isa. 45:14-15; Rev. 3:9).

“And commanded that they should offer an oblation and sweet odours unto him” — This action indicates a form of worship fit only for God, and as such would be distasteful to Daniel (see Acts 14:13; Rev. 22:9). Already the prophet had disclaimed any personal ability or qualification of wisdom to solve the King’s problem (v. 30), claiming that such could only come from the “God of heaven”. And now he rejects the King’s approach. See v. 47.

VERSE 47

“The king answered unto Daniel” — The word “answered” is *‘anah* and denotes to heed, pay attention, or respond. To what did the king respond? We are not told, but it is implied. Daniel evidently rejected the king’s form of approach and expounded the facts concerning the God Whom he worshipped, the Source of true wisdom and sound revelation. Through Him alone He could give the king an answer of peace; and He alone should be worshipped as divine. Hence Nebuchadnezzar’s statement was in answer to this unrecorded declaration of fact and faith on the part of the prophet.

“And said, of a truth it is, that your God is a God of gods” — The Chaldean is *Elah of Elahin*, the equivalent of *Eloah of Elohim*, the Mighty One of the Mighty Ones, or the Mighty One Whose spirit motivated the King as well as the Angelic host of heaven. In acknowledging Daniel’s God as such, the King acknowledged that the God of the Hebrews, who manifested His power through the angelic host of heaven, is a God of Truth.

“And a Lord of Kings” — This is a most significant title of Yahweh, and particularly appropriate to the revelation that Daniel had expounded to Nebuchadnezzar. “Lord” is *Marey*. It is derived from a root signifying *to dominate*, and therefore denotes a Master or a Dictator. Daniel had explained to the King that his authority stemmed from the God of heaven (v. 37) Who would subsequently transfer the power of Babylon to an “inferior” kingdom (v. 39), but ultimately would set up His own rule on earth (v. 44). Daniel therefore revealed Yahweh as the great Disposer of Kings and nations, or as *King of nations* (Jer. 10:6-7), before Whose wrath “the earth shall tremble, and the nations shall not be able to abide His indignation” (Jer. 10:6-7,10; Rev. 15:3 mg.). Paul proclaimed this same truth to the philosophers of Athens (Acts 17:24-31). Nebuchadnezzar, recognising this fact, referred to Him as *Marey Malchin* or “Dictator of Kings”.

“A Revealer of Secrets” — This is a further title of Yahweh: *Galeh Razin*. The expression is derived from a word signifying *to unveil or reveal*. The LXX uses the term *Apokaupton*, for Daniel’s revelation comprises *The Apocalypse* of the O.T. In relation to this title, see Deut. 29:29; Dan. 2:19,22,28,29,47; 10:1; Amos 3:7. Christ

explained to his Apostles that in giving them such a revelation, he treated them as friends and not as servants (John 15:15). The pagan King went to considerable trouble to ascertain the significance of the dream he recognised as a revelation from God; how much greater should be the endeavour, and what determination should Yahweh’s sons and daughters reveal to comprehend the significance of His revealed Word (see Rev. 1:3).

“Seeing thou couldest reveal this secret” — The king recognised the dream as true, and this provided confirmation of Daniel’s doctrine concerning the God he worshipped (see v. 28). In fulfilment of the type, the setting up of the Kingdom at the coming of the Lord will provide confirmation of the Gospel, and will result in Gentiles placing their power at the disposal of Christ (see Jer. 16:19; Isa. 60:12; Rev. 11:18).

VERSE 48

“Then the king made Daniel a great man” — He elevated Daniel above all the magi, or wise men of Babylon. This gave the prophet a position of privilege above all the other “wise men of Babylon”.

“And gave him many great gifts” — Honour and wealth had been promised the one who would reveal the dream and its significance (v. 6). So Daniel and his friends were honoured above all the great men of Nebuchadnezzar’s realm. This typed the exceptional honour that will be paid to Christ and his redeemed associates in the Age to come.

“And made him ruler over the whole province of Babylon” — In this also, Daniel typed Christ who will be given power over modern Babylon (Rev. 16:15-19) when the judgment of God (the meaning of the name, *Daniel*) is revealed (Acts 17:31).

“And chief of the governors over all the wise men of Babylon” — The word *rab-sagan* signifies chief prefect. Reference to the “governors” over whom Daniel was elevated is found in Dan. 3:2-3. The “wise men” of Babylon were the Magi, and Daniel is now made their chief (see v. 12). He evidently used this position of privilege as an opportunity to reveal the source of his knowledge to those placed under him; and apparently this understanding of the divine purpose, and the time-periods associated therewith were

acknowledged by some of them at least. Matthew (Ch. 2:1) records that at the impending birth of the Lord "wise men came from the east to Jerusalem" having understanding of the times and expectation of one to be "born King of the Jews". These were members of the Magi, a Persian sect also found in Babylon over whom Daniel is now placed (see also Dan. 5:11). Their interest and enquiry at that time indicate the great influence that the prophet exercised upon them, even until the birth of the Lord.

VERSE 49

"Then Daniel requested of the king" — Daniel made representation to Nebuchad-

nezzar on behalf of his associates which resulted in their elevation to power.

"And he set Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, over the affairs of the province of Babylon" — As Daniel's friends were elevated to positions of authority within the province of Babylon, so also will the "friends of Christ" (John 15:15) in the age to come (Malachi 1:11; Luke 19:15-19; Rev. 2:26). In the case of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, their elevation to honour incited the jealousy and hostility of others (see Dan. 3:12). The "province" of Babylon extended beyond the confines of the city, and over this extended territory they ruled.



The lion of Babylon (see Jer. 50:17) depicting the nation's dominance over others.

CHAPTER THREE

NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S GOLDEN IMAGE HEATHEN WORSHIP JUDGED

Whilst Nebuchadnezzar is compelled to recognise the veracity of Daniel's interpretation of the Image, he decides to try and defeat the Divine purpose by a decree that compels all mankind to worship the gods of Babylon. By this means Babylonish Religion is made compulsory irrespective of the claims of Yahweh, or the conscience of man. In doing so, the King typed the attempts of the Apostasy to do likewise (Rev. 13:8). Whereas the image of composite metals, as seen by the King in his dream, shows that the power he wields will be superceded by an inferior form of rule exercised by a foreign nation before which Babylon would fall, he decides to defeat the fulfilment of the prophecy by erecting an Image all of gold (the gold representing Babylon) and issue a decree commanding the compulsory worship of it on pain of death for refusal. Daniel's friends, however, buoyed up by a faith that motivates the highest courage refuse to conform. They are threatened with death by burning in a fiery furnace. Undeterred, they continue to refuse. The furious King orders that they be bound, the furnace be heated to full capacity, and they be flung into the midst of the burning. So extreme is the heat thus generated that it slays the men of Babylon who stoke up its flames. Whilst regretting the death of his military servants, the King consoles himself with the belief that he has crushed all opposition to his rule. But to his consternation, he observes that there are now four men in the flames; that they are walking about in the huge furnace unaffected by the fire; and in fact that they have escaped the death with which he has threatened them. The fourth man, he observes, is a son of God. These circumstances compel the King to acknowledge that the God of the Hebrews is supreme. He issues another decree warning any against speaking disrespectfully against Israel's God, and promotes the three friends to positions of the greatest eminence.

Nebuchadnezzar Decrees Universal Worship of His Image — vv. 1-3

In order to defeat the prophecy of his dream, King Nebuchadnezzar orders that

an image all of gold be constructed and set up. That representatives of the province of Babylon be assembled before it, and at a given signal bow down and worship it.

VERSE 1

“Nebuchadnezzar the king made an image of gold” — Whilst recognising that Daniel had correctly interpreted his dream, and though honouring the God who had revealed this to the prophet, the King decides to attempt to defeat the Divine intention as shown by the interpretation of his dream and perpetually establish the glory of his Kingdom by compelling his subjects to worship an external symbol of the religious power of Babylon. He had been told that the gold of the Image represented his dynastic power (Ch. 2:37-38), and so the image erected was all of that metal, though its shape is not revealed. The word used, *tselein* signifies “a figure” without revealing its shape. Most likely it was similar in shape to the Image of composite metals, though made entirely of gold. The word in the original is derived from a root signifying a shade, or shadow, then that which shadows forth anything, such as an idol representing the god worshipped. This image probably was set up to shadow forth the glory and permanence of human, Babylonish rule.

“Whose height was threescore cubits, and the breadth thereof six cubits” — It was sixty cubits high and six cubits broad. Six is the number of flesh (Rev. 13:18), and Babylon’s form of worship, was based on the flesh as is that of mystical Babylon today. The height of the Image (90ft) seems out of proportion to its breadth (9ft), but it may have included the pedestal. Diodorus, in giving an account of the plunder of Xerxes mentions an image of gold, 40 ft high taken from the temple Belus.

“He set it up in the plain of Dura in the province of Babylon” — Dura signifies *wall, rampart or circuit*. The site of the image is identified by some as one of the tells, artificial mounds, discovered in the territory. Several localities in Babylon were called Dura. There is a river by this name, with Tulul Dura near by. See *The Dictionary of the Bible*. Babylon is situated on the Euphrates in a large plain, and it is obvious that the Image was set up in proximity to the mighty city. The three friends of Daniel had been elevated over the affairs “of the province of Babylon” (Ch. 2:49); and the intention of the King seems to have been to directly challenge their interpretation of his dream.

VERSE 2

“Then Nebuchadnezzar the king sent to gather together the princes, the governors, and the captains, the judges, the treasurers, the counsellors, the sheriffs, and all the rulers of the provinces, to come to the dedication of the image which Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up” — Babylon, by its dominance, had become the epitome and source of all Gentile power, and this had its roots in the religion of Babylon. Babylonia proper comprised the territory situated between the two rivers of Euphrates and Tigris, a prominent city of which was Ur of the Chaldees. It was from this area that Abram was called to separate himself and go to a land that God would show him (Gen. 13:1). The state of Ur and of Babylon today witness to the value of the call; and Abram’s wisdom, as well as his faith, in obeying it. They are utter ruins, but the Land of Promise is reviving. Nebuchadnezzar commanded that all the officials of State to assemble at a convocation to pay their homage at a ceremony of dedication of the idol he with his priests had arranged. The decree included the three friends of Daniel: Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego who had recently been granted positions of authority in the empire (Dan. 2:49).

The action of Nebuchadnezzar in setting up this image and compelling universal worship of it, typed “the image of the beast” set up by the “two horned beast of the earth” (the Holy Roman Empire) which, by the authority and power of the sword, it commanded all mankind to worship. It failed to succeed in this objective through the resistance of “the remnant of the seed” of the woman (see Rev. 12:11,17; 13:10). Therefore, this record of Nebuchadnezzar’s attempt to establish universal worship of his false gods should be considered in the light of the Inquisition to do likewise on behalf of the Image of the Beast: the Papacy. See *The Christadelphian Expositor* on Revelation chapters 13,14.

VERSE 3

“Then the princes, the governors, and captains, the judges, the treasurers, the counsellors, the sheriffs, and all the rulers of the provinces, were gathered together unto the dedication of the image that Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up; and they stood before the image that Nebuchadnezzar had set up” — The vari-

ety of officials listed indicates how well organised was the Kingdom of Babylon. Nebuchadnezzar, like the Papacy with its Popes, Cardinals, Priests, Nuns and so forth, knew how to delegate his authority to the greatest benefit of his realm. Each of the ten different forms of authority listed had its specific work to do. Combined they provided for complete control, for ten is the number of completeness in multiplicity. The **Princes** (*achashdarpani*) were satraps or privy counsellors. They had access to the king (Dan. 6:1-7). The **Governors** (*sagani*) were superintendents, as the word signifies. They were the prefects or lieutenants of the realm. The R. V. renders the title as "the deputies". The **Captains** (*pechahi*) were prefects of small cities or districts. The R. V. renders the title as "governors". The **Judges** (*adar-gazeri*) is a term derived from *adar*, "foremost" and *gezer*, "to cut or divide". They were the chief diviners (see Ezek. 21:21). The R. V. mg renders the title as "chief soothsayers". The **Treasurers** were those in charge of the treasuries of Babylon (see Dan. 1:2). The **Counsellors** (*dethabar*) were the legal officials skilled in administration. The **Sheriffs** (*tiptay*) were those in charge of the judicial system of Babylon; the R. V. mg renders the word as "lawyers". The **Rulers** (*shilton*) is a term derived from a word signifying Potentates, and relates to state and civil officers.

To these eight forms of authority, add those mentioned elsewhere: the **Counsellors**, as in v. 27 and elsewhere, from a different word to that used in this verse, rendered by Dr. Strong as Viziers or Nobles. The **Lords** (*rabreban* — see Dan. 4:36), from a term signifying to be large or domineering, and denoting a magnate appointed to govern.

All these authorities from all the provinces of Babylon were gathered at the Plain of Dura to participate in the dedication of "the image of the beast". Subsequent verses imply that large companies of the common people did so also. It was a display of popularity and power such as is suggested in Rev. 18:9-11.

The Dedication Service — vv. 4-7

A herald pronounces the demands of the king warning that whoever disobeys will be delivered over to death by burning. An orchestra will play and the submission of all present to the golden image will follow.

VERSE 4

"Then an herald cried aloud, To you it is commanded, O people, nations, and languages" — The decree is universal, involving the representatives of all nations under the control of Babylon. The expression, "peoples (the word is plural in the original), nations and languages" is found seven times in *The Apocalypse* as relating all those that make up Babylon the Great. The threefold term includes ethnic groups, nations as such, and those speaking diverse languages. In *The Apocalypse*, the Redeemed are described as those "taken out" of the "people, nations and languages", and dedicated unto Yahweh. See Rev. 5:9-10, and note the comment there in *The Christadelphian Expositor*. Daniel 7:27 states that the time is coming when the Saints shall possess the Kingdom comprising all these sections of humanity.

VERSE 5

"That at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, dulcimer" — Notice that six forms of musical instruments are given here, and that "six" is the number of flesh (Rev. 13:18). The music of Babylon is designed to gratify the flesh. The "Cornet", or *qeren* was the horn, a wind instrument. The "Flute" is from *mashroqitha*, to whistle, and denotes a flute. The "Psaltery" is from *pesantekin* which is said to be derived from the Greek *psalterion*, and to denote a musical instrument originating from Greece. Critics of Daniel claim that this instrument was not found in Babylon until the time of Alexander, and therefore they try to discredit Daniel by claiming a later date for the book. However, archaeology has since revealed that the seven stringed harp, invented by the Greek poet and musician Terpander in B. C. 650, was already in use in Babylon less than 25 years after that date. Obviously Grecian instruments were exported elsewhere including Babylonia, giving the lie to such criticism. The "Sackbut" by some is thought to have been the bagpipes. However, it is from the word *sabbeka* from a root signifying to *intertwine*. It therefore is thought to be a stringed instrument like the lyre. Some define the Septuagint *sambuca* as representing a triangular, stringed instrument whose short strings produced the highest notes in the orchestra. The "Harp" or *qiytharoc* was of Greek origin and is also called the kithara, an instrument of ten strings played with a plectrum. The "Dul-

cimar" or *siyphoneya* is defined by Gesenius as the bagpipes, a double pipe with a sack. The word dulcimer signifies "sweet", as indicative of its sound; if the bagpipes can be considered sweet!

"All kinds of music" — Music has ever played a prominent part in religious services; but there are some forms of music that should never find a place in meetings associated with the Truth. The playing of the banjo and similar instruments in youth gatherings and so forth, to accompany a "swing" adaption of hymns, should be avoided; for it can override the significance of the Word, and the reverence of worship which is all important. Music, whether appropriate or otherwise, should not drown out the Word itself which creates a harmony of the mind (Eph. 5:19). Some in Israel were condemned because they misused their musical talents. They "chanted to the sound of the viol, and invented to themselves instruments of music like David" (Amos 6:5). Though imitators of David his motivation was absent in their singing and instruments. Like Babylon the Great they used music to rouse the feelings of the worshippers. It made them feel good, but was devoid of real significance. It was vain, empty noise as far as Yahweh was concerned.

The music composed for Nebuchadnezzar's service commenced with a resounding orchestral blast in which all instruments combined. The staccato beat of the strings set the tempo, the shrill sound of the sackbut lifted it to a high crescendo, whilst the wail of the bagpipes provided a depth of sound to blend with the other instruments. The harmony produced was designed to induce in the multitude a mass-spirit of patriotic enthusiasm; to move each one to submit to the requirement of the King, and bow low to the golden image which stood high and arrogantly before the assembled dignitaries.

"Ye fall down and worship the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king hath set up" — The object was adoration of the golden image representative of Nebuchadnezzar's power and dynasty.

VERSE 6

"And whoso falleth not down and worshippeth shall the same hour be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace" — This is the first time in Scripture that reference is made to an "hour". The division of

time into hours was probably an invention of the Chaldeans who specialised in the study of astronomy. There would be no postponement for formal trial or examination of any who defied the decree: despotism would have its way and would brook no delay. Refusal to conform would be punished with death by burning. The decree was as unrighteous as those of the Papacy enforced by the Inquisition. It is significant that Rome likewise used the same method of death for those who refused to bow down to the Image set up by the Papacy. Babylon's furnace of fire however, was set up in the Plain of Dura, ready at hand, warning all of their fate if they should refuse the King's demand. The Babylonians worshipped fire, so any consigned to the flames of this furnace would be justified as an offering to its gods. Such a death was a common form of punishment by the Babylonians, and already had been experienced by some Israelites who had refused to submit to an earlier decree by Nebuchadnezzar (see Jer. 29:22; Ezek. 23:25). In like manner, through burning at the stake, Babylon the Great has condemned many who, for conscience sake, have refused to submit to its unrighteous decrees (Rev. 13:10-18).

VERSE 7

"Therefore at that time, when all the people heard the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and all kinds of musick, all the people, the nations, and the languages, fell down and worshipped the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up" — A set time was given. It could have been at early dawn (like early mass!) when the bright rays of the sun caressed the Image of gold causing it to sparkle like fire. Then with a loud crash of opening chords, the orchestra commenced, and the assembled notables bowed low with one accord. Except for three in their midst!

The Chaldeans Accuse the Jews — vv. 8-12

Of that vast multitude three remain obdurate: they refuse to bow. Instead they stand bolt upright, boldly facing the huge golden image which now sparkles as with fire. Certain Chaldees view this disobedience with pleasure. It presents them with an opportunity such as they have been seeking. They see it as a means of bringing about the downfall of the three Israelites who have been elevated to positions of emi-

nence above them. *They approach Nebuchadnezzar and apprise him that three Jews have defied him; that they not only repudiate the national worship of the gods but now refuse to submit to the King's decree to bow before the image he has set up.*

VERSE 8

"Wherefore at that time certain Chaldeans come near, and accused the Jews"

— Evidently Nebuchadnezzar was not present at the great dedicatory service. Accordingly some of the Chaldeans approached him to accuse the Jews. The Chaldeans were a politico-religious group in Babylon like the cardinals and priests of Rome. See p. 62. They "accused the Jews". The verb is a translation of two words 'akal, to "accuse or devour"; and qerats to "eat the morsels of any one", i.e. to chew him up, figuratively by slander" (Strong's Concordance). These Chaldeans were evidently motivated by jealousy and maliciousness. Eagerly they grasped at the religious scruples of the three Jews to represent to the King that their opposition was personal. They slandered the Jews by distorting the true motives of their conscientious objection to image worship.

VERSE 9

"They spake and said to the king Nebuchadnezzar, O king, live for ever" — This was a common form of submissive approach towards one in authority.

VERSE 10

"Thou, O king, hast made a decree, that every man that shall hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and dulcimer, and all kinds of musick, shall fall down and worship the golden image" — The constant repetition of the musical instruments emphasises the importance that was attached to this form of service; something like the emphasis placed upon music in modern religious revivals instead of sound exposition of the Word. It was emotional religion, stimulated by rousing music.

VERSE 11

"And whoso falleth not down and worshippeth, that he should be cast into the midst of the burning fiery furnace" — The penalty described was according to the King's decree.

VERSE 12

"There are certain Jews" — Those accused were well known.

"Whom thou hast set over the affairs of the province of Babylon, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego" — This implies that the Jews in question did not acknowledge the great privileges granted them, nor show any gratitude to Nebuchadnezzar who had elevated them over affairs of state. The word "affairs" is from the Chaldean 'abiydan, and signifies labour or work. According to J. Thompson, in Talmudic Aramaic it is a word generally used of construction where labour was used. This would imply that Shadrach, Meshech and Abednego superintended labourers employed by Nebuchadnezzar in his vast building projects.

"These men, O king, have not regarded thee" — This was a shrewd, cunning statement of the jealous Chaldeans. The word "men" is from *Gebarin*, and signifies mighty men. Nebuchadnezzar was invited to bear in mind the positions of authority to which he had elevated them, and the bad example their insurrection would set to those under them.

"They serve not thy gods" — In spite of the fact that Nebuchadnezzar had honoured their God they had not reciprocated by acknowledging his (cp. Dan. 2:47).

"Nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up" — They refused to submit to the King's law. The worship of the golden image was something new, and not to be confused with the regard these Chaldeans implied the three Jews should have paid to the pagan gods of Babylon. Worship of the golden image was virtually an acknowledgement that the dynasty of Nebuchadnezzar, and the might of Babylon, should continue throughout the ages. To refuse to submit to this implied a traitorous attitude towards the king and his realm. It was a challenge to his dignity.

The Jews Defy The King's Law

— vv. 13-18

The temper of the king is aroused to ungovernable fury by the action of the three Jewish captives whom he has so richly honoured. Without giving them opportunity to explain or defend their attitude, he presents them with another opportunity of paying obeisance to the Image at a special recital of the orchestra. The three courageous captives reply that their minds are made up; they will not bow down to the Image. They are prepared to obey the law of the land as

far as they could (Rom. 13:1-7), but they will go no further (see Acts 4:19-20; 5:29). Courageously and faithfully they remain in opposition to the furious king.

VERSE 13

“Then Nebuchadnezzar in his rage and fury commanded to bring Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. Then they brought these men before the king” —

From this it is obvious that the scandalising Chaldeans had spoken to the king privately in the absence of the accused. The result was that that the flesh took control of Nebuchadnezzar, and in unreasoning fury he reversed his previous stand (see Dan. 2:47-49), and demanded that the defiant Jews comply with his decree. He possibly feared them, knowing that God was with them, and recognising that if they successfully defied his law, the prophecy of the dream-image must prevail. He was susceptible to deep emotions, and allowed them to gain the ascendancy over him.

VERSE 14

“Nebuchadnezzar spake and said unto them, Is it true, O Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, do not ye serve my gods, nor worship the golden image which I have set up?” — Notice the rendering in the margin: “Is it on purpose”? Such a rendition is supported by Gesenius. The King wanted to know if the action of the three Jews was an oversight or deliberate. He gave them opportunity to retract, to excuse themselves by stating that it was a mistake. The King possibly believed that his request was quite reasonable. One can almost hear his reasoning: “I have honoured your God why do you not honour mine?” How similar was Nebuchadnezzar’s interrogation of the Jews to that of the Inquisition. It, also, called upon protestants to recant, and warned them of dire torture if they refused to do so.

VERSE 15

“Now if ye be ready that at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and dulcimer, and all kinds of musick, ye fall down and worship the image which I have made; well; but if ye worship not, ye shall be cast the same hour into the midst of a burning fiery furnace” — Evidently the King had a kindly regard for the three courageous captives, and so gave them opportunity to retreat from the position they had taken. It was as

though he could hardly credit that men he had so recently honoured would manifest such disloyal and stubborn ingratitude. He was prepared to order a repeat performance of the orchestra specially for the Jews. If they complied with the decree, the past would be forgiven, and all would be well. This was a great concession on the part of Nebuchadnezzar who was not used to retracting. See Dan. 5:18-19.

“And who is that God that shall deliver you out of my hands?” — As noted above, the Chaldeans worshipped fire, so that Nebuchadnezzar now drew the controversy into the realm of a religious context. He will pit his god against the God of the Jews. This was similar to the challenge and boast of the Assyrian Rab-shakeh (2 Kings 18:32-35). But Nebuchadnezzar’s threat was a challenge that Yahweh had already taken up through the lips of Isaiah. He had promised: “When thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee” (Isa. 43:2). His very Name of Yahweh was first proclaimed at the site of the burning bush, which though it was on fire was not consumed of the flames (Exod. 3:2,14-15). In view of the protective power of Yahweh, Moses, at the end of his life, commended the people of Israel to “the good will of Him that dwelt in the bush” (Deut. 33:16). So the three friends, strong in faith, remained unmoved by the King’s threats. Yet the King had cause to boast of the power of his gods. Not only had he conquered the world, he had also consigned some Jews to the fire who had claimed to have spoken in the Name of Yahweh. And this tragedy had been witnessed by many in Babylon. Jeremiah makes mention of “Zedekiah and Ahab, whom the king of Babylon roasted in the fire” (Jer. 29:22). They were false prophets speaking in the name of Yahweh, and therefore not defended by Him; but this Nebuchadnezzar did not realise. He saw the punishment of those prophets by fire as a triumph of his gods.

VERSE 16

“Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, answered and said to the king, O Nebuchadnezzar, we are not careful to answer thee in this matter” — In effect they replied: “We do not need a second chance; our minds are fully made up!” Their faith was like that of David when he strode confidently across the field of Elah to do battle with Goliath (1 Sam. 17:37).

The word "careful" is *chahach*, which, according to Gesenius signifies to be needed, or necessary. Faced with a cruel death by burning they did not flinch; they had the faith to endure whatever trial was laid on them.

VERSE 17

"If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and He will deliver us out of thine hand, O king" — This was a bold statement to offer so furious a man; but they had complete faith in Yahweh's ability to deliver them from both the fire and the king. However, they also had the faith to respect His wisdom to extend His hand to deliver or to refrain from so doing. They realised that "wisdom and might are His" (Dan. 2:20). Moreover, Yahweh had already once delivered them from death by revealing to them the dream of the king and the interpretation thereof, so they were confident that He could do it again if He so willed. Their faith looked to the future. "Faith is the confident anticipation of things hoped for" (Heb. 11:1), and ever anticipates eternity.

VERSE 18

"But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up" — Yahweh had delivered them once, but it might be His will that this time they die as a witness to their convictions. Whatever the hidden purposes of God might be they were prepared to submit. How could they serve Nebuchadnezzar's gods when their impotence had so recently been made evident in the revelation given them of the King's dream? And how could they bow down to the image when they knew that the purpose of God was that the golden head of Babylon should give way to the silvery monarchy of Persia? Whatever protection God may or may not extend on their behalf at that time, there was one thing they would not do: comply with the King's decree!!

Flung Into The Fiery Furnace — vv. 19-23

The bold defiance of the three faithful captives increases the rage of the king. Convinced by angry emotions beyond his control, he orders the fiery furnace to be first stoked up to full capacity, and the three men be flung into its depths. This is done and the fire becomes so hot as to slay those who perform the king's command. The

furnace was a large construction big enough for four men to walk in (v. 25), and with a large opening at its side so that the king could watch the execution (v. 26). Again there is a foreshadowing of current events, as the fires of war are being stoked to full capacity today.

VERSE 19

"Then was Nebuchadnezzar full of fury" — The unwavering fidelity of the Jews to their God, and their unequivocal refusal to comply with the king's decree inflamed his anger until he was governed by uncontrollable fury.

"And the form of his visage was changed against Shadrach, Meshech, and Abednego" — The King's fury was displayed by his changed appearance. His face became diffused with rage. His appearance was terrible, and calculated to instil fear in the most courageous of men. He was now the personification of the appearance of the image seen in his dream (Dan. 2:31).

"Therefore he spake, and commanded that they should heat the furnace one seven times more than it was wont to be heated" — His pride had been flouted, and this caused his passion to so rise that he could not think coherently. He became "mad" as Jeremiah described the state of Babylon (Jer. 51:7), and he acted stupidly, as the nations are doing today in their preparation of weapons of destruction. Why stoke up the heat of the furnace to such intensity? Because Nebuchadnezzar had received such evidence of the power of the God of the Hebrews that he is somewhat not sure of the outcome. By heating the fire, he increased the power of the god of fire. He made the furnace so fearsome that it would be beyond the power of God or man to prevent it destroying anything consigned to its flames. But for the three captives it represented the "fire of affliction" which would purify their faith (Isa. 48:10; 1 Pet. 1:7).

This incident also has a prophetic significance. As the image foreshadowed the Image of the Beast of Revelation 13:14 that exercised power in the past, and will do so again, the heated furnace also has its place in the type. The nations today (and typically they were represented by Nebuchadnezzar) are "heating the furnace" in their preparations for war, and so horrific are the weapons of destruction in preparation for Armageddon that they

will bring devastation to the very ones who have been given the duty of stoking that fire: the military commanders of the nations. The "seven times more" that the king commanded this be done represents the most furious heat it is possible to create. Such a heating anticipates the "time of trouble" that today awaits the nations (see Jer. 25:31; 30:6-7; Dan. 12:1; 2 Pet. 3:10).

VERSE 20

"And he commanded the most mighty men that were in his army to bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, and to cast them into the burning fiery furnace" — The army is called in to handle these three, unresisting, captive Jews! Which indicates that Nebuchadnezzar feared the power of their God, as he had reason to do. The power of Babylon will endeavour to militarily destroy the people of Israel at the time of the end, and is already stoking up its fire to that end.

VERSE 21

"Then these three men were bound in their coats, their hosen, and their hats, and their other garments, and were cast into the midst of the burning fiery furnace" — The captive Jews were completely clothed. Reference is made to their "coats". The word is *sarbilēn*, and signifies "to cover". The Vulgate renders it as "breeches", something covering the lower parts of the body; possibly the large, loose trousers worn by some men of the east today. Their "hosen" is rendered *tunicis* by the R.V. and other renditions. The word "hats" is from *karbela*, signifying "to gird or clothe" and hence a mantle as rendered by the R.V. So they were dressed in large, loose trousers, tunics, and enveloping mantles, similar to the clothing of the Babylonians. This normally would have made them more vulnerable to fire. But why should the narrative stress the articles of dress they wore? Because clothing is treated as important in Scripture. All true saints are clothed, for they have "put on Christ" (Gal. 3:27), and seek to "keep their garments unspotted from the world" (James 1:27). Adam and Eve had to be properly clothed in Eden; and the clothing worn by the Israelites in the wilderness never wore out; figuratively they were clothed with Christ. In addition to their clothing, the three captives in Babylon were first bound that they might not struggle. Such binding speaks of mortality and

death, and this Christ came to loose (Luke 4:18).

VERSE 22

"Therefore because the king's commandment was urgent, and the furnace exceeding hot, the flame of the fire slew those men that took up Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego" — The angry, hasty king, now governed by rage, urged the mighty men of his army to fling the captives into the fire. His urgent commands and threats put fear into his men. Nervously they set about heating the furnace impervious to their own danger. Flinging the three men into the fire, the flames flared out and destroyed the executioners in the midst of their work. That is the destiny of the mighty men of war today who are heating up the furnace to consume their enemies. They will be destroyed by that which they are busily preparing to consume others. The might of the nations will be overwhelmed by a fire of their own making, though permitted of Yahweh (Isa. 66:15-16; 2 Pet. 3:10-11), but Israel will be saved (Isa. 45:17).

VERSE 23

"And these three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, fell down bound into the midst of the burning, fiery furnace" — Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego in the midst (or hottest part) of the furnace "fell down bound". Their cause must have appeared lost at that point of time; it would have seemed as though they had to pay the supreme sacrifice for their faith.

Four Men in The Furnace — vv. 24-25

Around the furnace are scattered the dead bodies of Babylon's mighty warriors, but inside it, the king, to his great astonishment, sees four men, one of whom he recognises as an angel, a son of God! Rub his eyes as much as he may, it is no delusion! Not only are Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego alive, but who is the other man in the midst of the flames? The king demands an explanation.

VERSE 24

"Then Nebuchadnezzar the king was astonished, and rose up in haste, and spake, and said unto his counsellors" — The king's anger was swamped by his astonishment and consternation. He recognised that he was in the presence of a miracle of such extent that he could not understand.

He typified the state predicted in Isa. 52:15, where speaking of the astonishment that shall grip the nations at the appearance in glory of the Lord Jesus Christ, he declared: "kings shall shut their mouths at him; for that which had not been told them shall they see; and that which they had not heard shall they consider". The *Septuagint* interpolates: "And it was when the king heard them singing praises and stood and saw them living, then was king Nebuchadnezzar the king astonished . . ." Perhaps Paul and Silas were moved by that account, for after being imprisoned and "shamefully treated in Philippi", they responded by praising God in the singing of hymns. The reference to "counsellors" whom Nebuchadnezzar now consulted has been commented upon in the notes on v. 3. The word *haddaberin* seems to relate to those authorised to speak authoritatively, being derived from *debar*, "word". They were among the principal advisers to the king.

"Did not we cast three men bound into the midst of the fire? and they have no hurt: and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God" — Nebuchadnezzar cannot believe the sight of his eyes, and perhaps wonders whether he was experiencing another dream! He sought confirmation from his counsellors that it was really only three men that were cast into the furnace; and most amazing of all, cast in "bound". Moreover, although the fire had consumed the ropes that bound them, so that they were standing free it had not affected their clothes! And though the flames reached up around their clothes, they were not harmed! A comparable miracle was the unconsumed burning bush seen by Moses.

"They answered and said unto the king, True, O king" — What else could they say! They were as astonished as he. There was no doubt about the veracity of the miracle, but they could not explain it. What of the future, when many who have been buried are again seen on the earth, free and unharmed by their experience; having been purified in the fire of affliction and of judgment (1 Cor. 3:13). The same astonishment and wonder will be experienced by all who witness the amazing developments of the future.

VERSE 25

"He answered and said, Lo, I see four men loose" — This was a vindication of the gracious promise of Isa. 43:2. Though

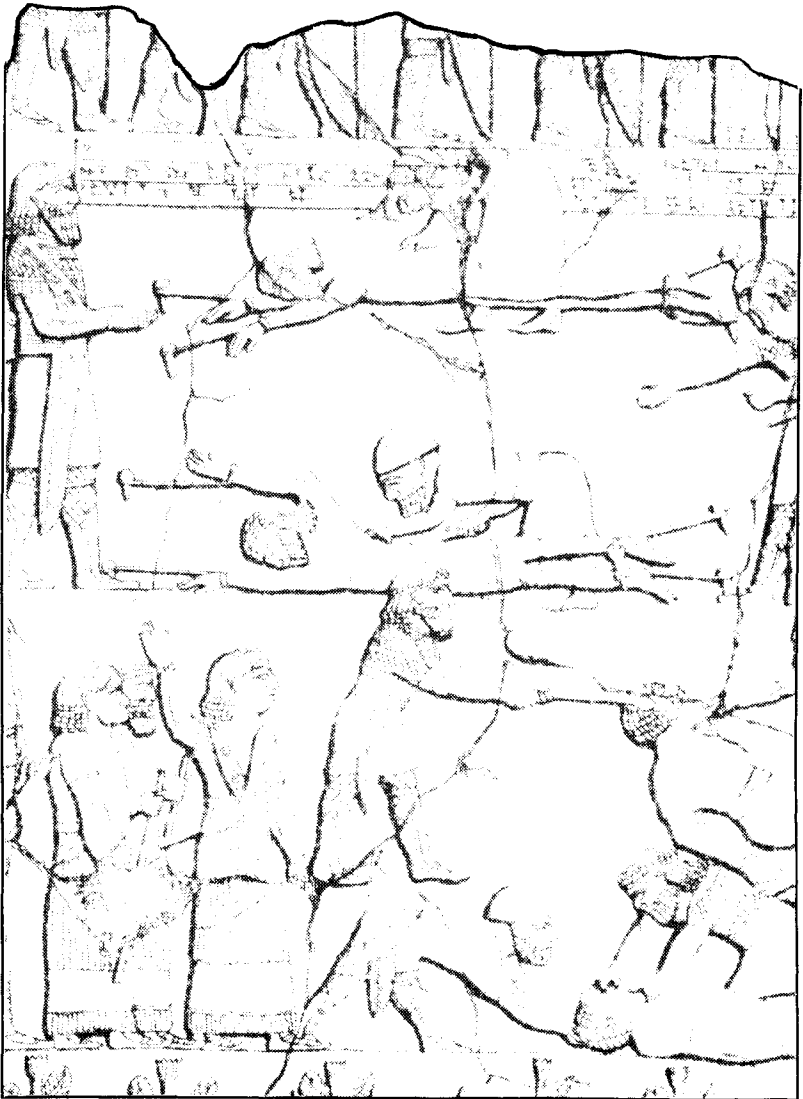
Yahweh had not delivered His servants *from* the fire; He had delivered them *in* it. He had deliberately suspended His natural laws, and arrested the normal procedure of nature. What He did then, He will do again in the future. He will deliver His people from out of the fiery time of trouble that shall involve all nations, and grant them eternal life in the Kingdom. His own people of Israel will be raised from the political death which has claimed them, and they shall experience a political resurrection and glorification in the Kingdom (Ezek. 37).

"Walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt" — The only ones hurt were those who had stoked up the fire, and whose charred bodies on the ground presented a contrast with the living ones in the furnace. As for the three, the fire had destroyed their bonds, but left no smell of smoke or singeing on them. See v. 27.

"And the form of the fourth is like the Son of God" — The king could discern the difference in the appearance of the fourth one, and recognised that he was "a son of Elohim" or gods as he would understand it. He does not recognise him as Jesus Christ, but does recognise him as an angel (v. 28). His "form" is different from that of the three mortals. There is dignity and authority in his bearing, of such a nature as to discern that he was a Son of the Elohim. In his polytheistic belief Nebuchadnezzar saw him as an angel of one of the many gods. He was an angel; but which one? Most likely he was Michael who is identifiable as the angel into whose care were placed the children of Israel (Exod. 23:20-22), and who is described as Daniel's "prince" (Dan. 10:13,21). Following Christ's ascension Michael's position was taken over by the Lord Jesus Christ to whom the angels are subject (1 Pet. 3:22), and who is typed in the incident before us. The time is rapidly approaching when the antitypical Nebuchadnezzar (the ruler of Babylon the Great) will see one "like unto the Son of Elohim" in the company of the glorified elect, or the Elohim of the future; then made "equal unto the angels" (Luke 20:36). Their manifestation in glory will be associated with a "fiery furnace" that will consume the military leaders of the present age (2 Thess. 1:6-10).

Nebuchadnezzar Acknowledges The Supremacy of Yahweh — vv. 26-30

Thoroughly convinced of the supremacy



“They shall be cut in pieces, and their houses shall be made a dunghill” (Dan. 3:29). Nebuchadnezzar’s threat would be treated realistically by his subjects. The ancient inscriptions depict the atrocities committed on those who became enemies of the State. The above, from the Assyrian monuments is a typical example. It depicts the frightful cruelties of the Assyrians. In the top row, an Elamite is being skinned alive; the second row shows one being beaten to death, and the another having his tongue torn out. Some were decapitated and dismembered.

of Yahweh's power, and recognising these three Israelite captives as servants of the Most High God, Nebuchadnezzar does His utmost to atone for his treatment of them. He frankly acknowledges that Yahweh is all-powerful, and now issues a decree that threatens with death any who dare speak a word against Him. He recognises His power, and promotes His servants Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego in the province of Babylon, an action that publicly vindicates them. In the typical history of the book this anticipates the future conversion of the Gentiles, the submission of Gentile power in the face of miracle at the coming of the Lord, and the promotion of the friends of the Lord Jesus over the affairs of Babylon the Great.

VERSE 26

"Then Nebuchadnezzar came near to the mouth of the burning fiery furnace, and spake, and said, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, ye servants of the most high God" — In the face of such an astounding miracle, the king is compelled to acknowledge the supremacy of the God of the Hebrews, describing Him as "the most high God". This is a most significant title which first finds expression in Gen. 14:18 where attached to it is the description: "possessor of heaven and earth". It therefore testifies to Yahweh's hidden governance of national affairs (see Acts 17:26). The title is used on the background of Abram's victory over the combined forces of Chedorlaomer and his allies in their invasion from the north, described in Genesis 14:19. See additional note on this divine title in v. 29. Its significance found expression in the prayer of Daniel: "He removeth kings and setteth up kings" (Dan. 2:21); and in his statement: "The Most High ruleth in the Kingdom of men" (Dan. 4:17). The victory over Chedorlaomer is not attributed to Abram, but to "the Most High God" which implies His lofty dominion. In all places where the title is used the idea of dominion is inferred if not openly expressed. Thus: "The Most High ruleth in the Kingdom of Men" (Dan. 4:17). "He shall be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David" (Luke 1:32). In the verse before us the word "God" is *Eloah*, an Aramaic term, similar to *Eloah* in the Hebrew, and signifying *Mighty One*, whereas in Gen. 14:8 it is *El Elyon* or *Most High Power*.

In *Phanerosis*, Bro. Thomas remarks

that the title "Most High" implies that there are High Ones subordinate to the Most High One (p. 42). These are the angels who do the bidding of the invisible God. Nebuchadnezzar is compelled to recognise that the three captives he had so miserably condemned are actually in the lofty position of being servants to the One Who is above all others.

"Come forth, and come hither" — Nebuchadnezzar bids the three captives to come forth, and make their way to where he was sitting in state.

"Then Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, came forth of the midst of the fire"

— They survived its burning and came out unharmed, as will all those faithful ones in spite of the "time of trouble such as never was" (Dan. 12:1), for "thy people shall be delivered".

VERSE 27

"And the princes, governors, and captains, and the king's counsellors being gathered together" — Comment upon

these authorities has been made in an earlier verse. As in v. 24 term "counsellors" introduces yet another. Gesenius renders it as "leaders" and the Septuagint as "nobles". At the bidding of Nebuchadnezzar, all the authorities are described as being "gathered together," so that they witnessed the miracle. In the antitype, or crisis of the "last days" all the authorities of Babylon the Great, will be gathered together at Armageddon and they will witness the miracle of the mighty power of the Most High El in the overthrow of the military leaders of the Gentiles, and the manifestation of the saints in glory.

"Saw these men upon whose bodies the fire had no power" — The Babylonians worshipped fire, but the consuming fury of their god had no power against Yahweh's servants.

"Nor was an hair of their head singed" — This is probably the origin of the statement used by the Lord in his Olivet Prophecy: "There shall not an hair of your head perish" (Luke 21:18). That prophecy is based upon those of Daniel (Matt. 24:15), and forms a bridge between it and *The Apocalypse*.

"Neither were their coats changed" — The fire had not affected their clothing any more than will affliction change the covering of Christ (Gal. 3:27).

"Nor the smell of fire had passed on

them — The fire had not contaminated them in any way.

VERSE 28

“Then Nebuchadnezzar spake, and said, Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego” — This is a remarkable statement and shows that the king was amenable to wisdom. To make such a proclamation in the hearing of his assembled officials was to humble himself indeed.

“Who hath sent His angel” — The term “son of God” (*Elohim*) signifies a Divine being, such as an angel. See Job 38:7. They are “ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation” (Heb. 1:14; Psa. 34:7).

“And deliver His servants that trusted in Him” — Deliverance came in a remarkable manner, but there were many anxious moments before it was manifested. Imagine the tension that would build up under the circumstances described in v. 21. See the exhortation in Psa. 62:8; Isa. 26:3. The experience of the three friends was not unique; there have been amazing circumstances of deliverance on other occasions. See 1 Chron. 5:20; 2 Chron. 20:20-24.

“And have changed the king’s word” — Note the expression of Daniel’s prayer. Dan. 2:21.

“And yielded their bodies that they might not serve nor worship any god, except their own God” — This is another frank acknowledgement of truth. Nebuchadnezzar openly confessed that they were right and he was wrong. He conceded that they had put their confidence in God and, with indomitable faith and courage, had dared to challenge his word. Rather than serve or worship any god than Yahweh, they had been prepared to jeopardise their bodies and lives. Their faith was not merely a matter of word, but of deed. And acknowledged by Paul as such: for he observed: “faith quenched the violence of fire” (Heb. 11:34).

VERSE 29

“Therefore I make a decree” — Nebuchadnezzar openly confessed his faith in the power of Yahweh, the God of the Hebrews. His might had been openly manifested before all those assembled, as it will be at the Lord’s return. As he was compelled to acknowledge this, so will the nations then, particularly when they see

the saints in glory, and the amazing deliverance of Israel natural at Armageddon (Zech. 14:3).

“That every people, nation and language, which speaketh any thing amiss against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, shall be cut in pieces, and their houses shall be made a dunghill” — The time is coming when all mankind will be compelled to witness to the truth proclaimed so long ago by this monarch. Those that refuse shall suffer. See Isa. 60:12; Psa. 72:11; Rev. 5:9-10. Their “houses shall be made a dunghill”, this relates to their symbols of political and ecclesiastical power, and will include the so-called “holy places” of Gentile worship. The margin renders “any thing amiss” as any *error*. It anticipates the time when men shall freely acknowledge the truth whilst rejecting the “lies” that have been spoken in the name of God (See Jer. 16:19).

The punishment Nebuchadnezzar threatened those who blasphemed was common to those times. Ancient inscriptions depict captives being drawn and quartered. Christ used similar terms in describing the condemnation that shall be meted out to those rejected at the Judgment Seat (Luke 12:46). Not that they will be literally “cut in two”, but having broken the covenant, the fate of the covenant victim (to be divided into parts) will become their’s in that they will be rejected. See notes on Dan. 2:5 where the same form of punishment is threatened.



Nebuchadnezzar's Cameo. *Cut by his order it has the inscription: "In honour of Merodach, his lord, Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, in his lifetime had this made". It is today in the Berlin Museum.*

“Because there is no other God that can deliver after this sort” — In this statement, the king acknowledged the God of the Hebrews as being All-powerful, Omnipotent. So in a series of dramatic incidents Nebuchadnezzar was being brought to an acknowledgement of Truth. First, he had been compelled to acknowledge that Divine wisdom was greater than that of the magicians and astrologers of his realm (Dan. 1:20); then, that the God of the Hebrews is All-wise (Dan. 2:47). Now that He is Omnipotent. The statement “No other God can deliver after this sort” comprises a further stage in Nebuchadnezzar’s knowledge. He was conscious of gods other than Yahweh of the Hebrews, but he freely confessed that among the polytheism of Babylon there was none that could deliver as had the God of the Hebrews; therefore He is high above all other gods. The term “most high God” (v. 26) is *‘illay Elahh*. *‘illay* is from a root corresponding to that of *‘Elyon* (Gen. 14:26).

The title, therefore, is the Chaldean equivalent of *El Elyon* of Gen. 14:19. The Book of Daniel provides a revelation of this Name (Dan. 4:17,24,25,32,34; Dan. 5:18,21; 7:25). For the equivalent of *Elyon* see Dan. 7:18,22,25 (2nd) 27. The word is rendered “high” in Dan. 4:2.

VERSE 30

“Then the king promoted Shadrach, Meshech, and Abednego, in the province of Babylon” — The promotion of these fearless and faithful Israelites, witnessed to their associates in Babylon that any who are prepared to honour Yahweh at the sacrifice of himself by so doing will never lack a reward, even in material things (see Psa. 37:23-25). The benefits are immediate as well as being in the future (see Mark 10:30; 1 Tim. 4:8). Moreover, whatever may be the circumstances of the faithful in this life (cp. Heb. 11:36-39) they have the assurance of greater compensation in the Age to come.

Babylon's fiery furnace designed to compel universal worship of the "image of the beast" (for Babylon is depicted as a lion) was typical of the fires of the Inquisition designed to bring mankind into religious subjection to the Papal image of the beast. The illustration depicts the burning on the stake of two reformers, Latimer and Ridley in A.D. 1555.



Latimer's exhortation to Ridley: "Be of good comfort, Master Ridley, and play the man; we shall this day light such a candle, by God's grace, in England, as I trust shall never be put out".

Chronological Sequence

The events recorded in Daniel 3 were obviously shortly after those described in Daniel 2: that is, early in the reign of Nebuchadnezzar when it was important for him to secure the close allegiance of all puppet governments and domestic authorities (see Daniel 3:2). On the other hand, those described in Chapter 4 occurred much later in his reign when his power had been stabilised, and the tremendous building projects he undertook were completed (see Daniel 4:30). Meanwhile, Ezekiel would have commenced his ministry in exile (Ezekiel 1:2); letters would have been received by the captives from Jeremiah, advising them to prepare for a protracted period of captivity (Jeremiah 29); those in Babylon would have witnessed the humiliation of Zedekiah as he humbled himself in the city and before the king of Babylon (Jeremiah 51:50), and would have heard the dramatic *Book of Babylon* read by the defiant Seraiah, and then dramatically flung into the Euphrates (Jeremiah 51:59-64); Jews in exile would have seen successive deportations of captive Jews arrive from time to time (Ezekiel 1:1) with depressing news of conditions in the land; would have seen the blinded king Zedekiah arrive (Jeremiah 39:6); and have heard of the political death throes of the nation of Judah, as well as the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple (Ezekiel 33:21). These, and other events would indicate that Babylon's triumphs would continue indefinitely. The vision of the Tree dispelled that illusion.



CHAPTER FOUR

THE VISION OF THE TREE — HUMAN PRIDE IS JUDGED

The first three verses of this chapter form a prologue to a royal proclamation in which Nebuchadnezzar relates his own personal experience at the hand of God, and gives reason for the unusual decree that he issues. He has a dream in which there is visualised the glory of his realm, and the sudden collapse of that which he has politically created. It is a vision of a tree in all its glory, under whose shade beasts recline in comfort, and whose branches shelter the birds of heaven. But the tree is cut down, though the roots are permitted to remain protected by a band of brass and iron. None of his wise men can provide an interpretation, so in desperation Daniel is called in to interpret the vision. The answer of the prophet is humbling to human pride. Nebuchadnezzar, himself, is to work out the terms of the vision as an illustration of its actual fulfilment. He suffers from a bout of lycanthropy in which he imagines himself to be a beast, and acts accordingly. He is driven out into the fields and in feeding and general care acts like a wild animal. Only the intervention of God can heal him of his malady; and by such means he is cured. His experience foreshadows the Divine purpose. Flesh in its self-sufficiency will ultimately be humbled and made conscious of its weakness until it learns that the Most High rules in all departments of life. That happy consummation will only come about at the return of the Lord Jesus who will heal the nations of their madness and establish sane and sound control over their affairs.

Key verses in the chapter are: vv. 1,6,12,15-17,25-29.

Nebuchadnezzar's Proclamation

— vv. 1-3

These verses form a prologue to the royal proclamation which follows, and in which Nebuchadnezzar relates his own personal experience at the hand of God. Therefore, in point of chronological sequence they should follow at the close of the chapter. It is as the result of his experience that the decree is issued.

VERSE 1

“Nebuchadnezzar the king, unto all people, nations and languages, that dwell in all the earth” — This language is that of a formal decree to the subjects of Babylon. For those to whom it is addressed, see note Ch. 3:4.

“Peace be multiplied unto you” — This is the normal salutation made in such circumstances. See Dan. 6:25.

VERSE 2

"I thought it good to show the signs and wonders that the high God hath wrought toward me" — A sign is something that testifies symbolically, as a monument depicts the object memorialised: a "wonder" emphasises the miraculous nature of what is revealed. The term "the high God" is a reference to Yahweh under the title by which Nebuchadnezzar had come to know Him (see Dan. 3:26; 4:17).

VERSE 3

"How great are His signs and how mighty are His wonders" — His signs are outstanding in their meaning and significance, and therefore great so as to command attention; whilst His miraculous wonders are mighty, beyond the comprehension of man. Nebuchadnezzar had seen plenty of both to witness to this truth.

"His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and his dominion is from generation to generation" — Where did Nebuchadnezzar learn this truth? Undoubtedly from Daniel. In the Image prophecy he had given brief expression to this fact (Dan. 2:44); and no doubt further explanation had been supplied the king regarding God's future intentions (cp. Dan. 7:27). In this remarkable statement, therefore, Nebuchadnezzar gave expression to two fundamental truths of Divine revelation: 1. God's kingdom shall last forever (see Luke 1:33; 1 Cor. 15:23-28); and, 2. The earth will always be inhabited (see Eccles. 1:4; Isa. 45:18; Rev. 21:3-4). Though these are clear statements of doctrinal truth, they are frequently disputed by so-called "Christians". Nebuchadnezzar had a better understanding of the purpose of God than do many outside who mouth the name of Christ.

Nebuchadnezzar's Dream and Dilemma
— vv. 4-7

Nebuchadnezzar outlines how he was troubled by a dream and a vision, and so called together the wise of his realm to interpret it. They prove unable to do so, leaving his mind still troubled.

VERSE 4

"I Nebuchadnezzar was at rest in mine house, and flourishing in my palace" — From this statement we conclude that the dream occurred a fair while after the golden image was set up on the Plain of

Dura. See our note on the chronology of this period. In the statement of this verse the king described the circumstances which gave rise to his proclamation. He was at peace from wars and fightings; everything was restful. He was "flourishing" in his palace, answering to the picture of the luxuriant tree seen in his vision, which was "green" or "flourishing".

"The Babylonian campaigns in Syria, Phoenicia, Arabia, Egypt and elsewhere recorded in both profane and sacred history had been completed. It has been recorded that "for extent of dominion, great revenues it supplied, and unrivalled success in war, the magnificence and splendour of Nebuchadnezzar's court, as well as his stupendous building projects and improvements in the city of Babylon, constituted him incomparably the greatest monarch on a pagan throne that the world has ever seen."

VERSE 5

"I saw a dream which made me afraid, and the thoughts upon my bed and the visions of my head troubled me" — See similar expressions in Ch. 2:1,29. The dream concerned him, and caused him to contemplate what it represented, the visions of which troubled him further. The king had great concern for the future of his kingdom and the people over whom he ruled.

VERSE 6

"Therefore made I a decree to bring in all the wise men of Babylon before me, that they might make known unto me the interpretation of the dream" — There are several words rendered "decree" in the Book of Daniel. *Dath* signifies a royal edict, statute or commandment and is found in Dan. 2:9,13,15; *Te'em* signifies literally to taste, flavour, then it denotes judgment and discernment. The word in this context denotes the discriminating judgment of the decree as appropriate to the circumstances. It is found in Ch. 3:10,29; 4:6; 6:26. *Gezerah* means to determine, decide. It is from a root meaning "to cut" hence to covenant to do a thing. See Ch. 4:17,24. *'ecar* is a binding vow or interdict. See Ch. 6:7,8,9,12,12,13,51. The R. V. renders the word as "interdict". The "decree" of this verse, therefore, was a decision the king had come to after due consideration of the circumstances. Believing that the dream had a message to tell, he decided to bring in the wise men for consultation.

VERSE 7

“Then came in the magicians, the astrologers, the Chaldeans and the sooth-sayers: and I told the dream before them” —

This is a variant from Nebuchadnezzar’s previous procedure. On that occasion he had withheld the dream, and sought for both a description of it as well as the interpretation. This time he revealed the dream, and invited the wise of his realm to tell him what it meant. He did not first bring Daniel, even though he had been appointed “master of the magicians” (v.9); perhaps because he believed that the interpretation would be easily explained by one of the others.

Daniel Explains the Dream — vv. 8-18

After the wise men of Babylon have failed to explain the dream, Daniel makes his way into the presence of the King. The King, addressing him as “master of the magicians”, expresses his confidence that he will be able to interpret the meaning of the dream. It is clear to the monarch that human intelligence and sagacity are not sufficient to provide a solution to his problem, and his confidence in Daniel is not in those areas but because he believes “the spirit of the Holy Gods or Elohim, is in him”. The dream is then explained to Daniel.

VERSE 8

“But at the last Daniel came in before me” — Daniel may well have been absent when the King called upon the wise men of Babylon to solve his problem; and this may have been providential. The failure of the Chaldeans and other counsellors of Nebuchadnezzar’s realm to expound the dream, showed beyond doubt that something more than human intelligence and sagacity were needful for that purpose. It was God who gave the dream, and God who must interpret it.

“Whose name was Belteshazzar, according to the name of my God” — See note at Ch. 1:7. There we make the point that in changing the names of the captives Nebuchadnezzar intended to honour the gods of Babylon above Yahweh of Israel. His statement, recorded in this verse, shows this to be so without doubt, because he states that he changed Daniel’s name to Belteshazzar “according to the name of my god”.

“And in whom is the spirit of the holy

gods” — At the time of Joseph, Pharaoh also sought a man “in whom the spirit of God is” (Gen. 41:38) and he found such a one in Joseph. Apparently Nebuchadnezzar considered Daniel as having been inspired by his god Bel. The name Belteshazzar signifies *Keeper of the Hidden Treasures of Bel*.

“And before him I told the dream” — In the case of the image-vision Nebuchadnezzar refused to explain the dream. On this occasion he does so, seeking only an interpretation.

VERSE 9

“O Belteshazzar, master of the magicians” — This title as applied to Daniel (it is repeated in Ch. 5:11), shows how high he had been promoted in the affairs of Babylon. The magicians referred to were sometimes called *Magi*. It is significant that among the officials of Nebuchadnezzar’s army at the siege of Jerusalem, was one titled Rab-Mag (Jer. 39:3). In the Hebrew, the definite article is attached to the title: *the Rab-Mag*, or Chief of the Magi. According to Vine, “the superior Greek version of Daniel by Theodotios” has it also at Dan. 1:20; 2:27; 4:7; 5:7,11,15. Daniel, as *Master of the Wise*, or *Magi*, was in a position to influence some of them in the revelations granted him of Yahweh. This opportunity obviously continued during the Persian domination of Babylon (Dan. 6:2). That he did so, is indicated by the *Magos* who came enquiring as to where the Lord should be born (Matt. 2:1,7,16). The Magi closely studied the heavens; and evidently, when they saw the star in the east, and compared the time of its appearance with the time-prophecies of Daniel, and particularly those concerning the birth of Messiah (Chap. 9:24-25), which they evidently retained in their possession, their interest was greatly aroused, and they sent representatives on the long and difficult journey to Jerusalem to enquire more closely regarding the matter.

“Because I know that the spirit of the holy gods is in thee and no secret troubleth thee” — The Chaldean *Elahin*, here rendered “gods” is the equivalent of the Hebrew *Elohim* and means the same, namely, *Mighty Ones*. Nebuchadnezzar recognised that Daniel spoke by Divine inspiration, although he evidently did not comprehend the full truth concerning the

unity of God. Obviously Nebuchadnezzar's opinion of Daniel and his ability to unravel mysteries was well known in the kingdom. Later, years after his death, the Queen-mother used the title given by Nebuchadnezzar to Daniel in commending him unto Belshazzar (Dan. 5:11).

"And no secret troubleth thee" — Nebuchadnezzar expressed his confidence in the ability of Daniel to expound the meaning of the dream.

"Tell me the visions of my dream that I have seen, and the interpretation thereof" — This is evidently a poor translation of the original, because, unlike the image-dream, King Nebuchadnezzar proceeds to outline this dream to Daniel. Accordingly, the R.S.V. renders: "here is the dream, with the purpose of obtaining the interpretation thereof . . ." As the statement stands in the A.V., the ellipsis should be provided: "tell me *the meaning* of the visions of my dream that I have seen, and the interpretation thereof".

VERSE 10

"Thus were the visions of mine head in my bed; I saw, and behold a tree in the midst of the earth, and the height thereof was great" — A similar parabolic use of symbolism is found in Ezekiel 31 where Assyria is likened to a cedar in Lebanon (Ezek. 31:3). The Lord likewise used the parable of a tree to illustrate the future growth of the Kingdom of God (Matt. 13:31-32). The tree that Nebuchadnezzar saw in his dream represented Babylon, which kingdom then flourished in the midst of the earth.

VERSE 11

"The tree grew, and was strong, and the height thereof reached unto heaven, and the sight thereof to the end of all the earth" — This description illustrates the extension and glory of the kingdom of Babylon.

VERSE 12

"The leaves thereof were fair, and the fruit thereof much, and in it was meat for all" — In his dream the King saw the tree in the midst of the earth (v. 10), and as he watched, he saw it grow until the top reached heaven, and its boughs stretched to the ends of the earth. It represented, of course, the Babylonish Empire in all its wide-spreading glory, illustrating the hid-

den desire of the King himself. Isaiah predicted: "Thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation in the sides of the north" (Isa. 14:13). The widespread branches of this stately tree covered with fair leaves, and bearing much fruit, symbolised the majesty and extent of Babylonish rule.

"The beasts of the field had shadow under it, and the fowls of the heaven dwelt in the boughs thereof, and all flesh was fed of it" — The beasts of the field and the fowls of the air, as in the early chapters of Genesis, symbolised the nations. They were brought under the influence of Babylon, and their welfare depended upon the goodwill of its King.

VERSE 13

"I saw in the visions of my head upon my bed, and behold, a watcher and an holy one came down from heaven" — The conjunction "and" can be rendered *even*. As Nebuchadnezzar gazed upon the tree, he saw a "watcher, even an holy one", a messenger from heaven, whose appearance was similar to the one who walked in the midst of the fiery furnace with the Hebrew young men. The title given this "Holy One" described his activities. He is described as a Watcher. The word signifies one who is awake and vigilant, "a wakeful one". That describes this angel's particular work, whilst the statement "an Holy One" relates to his character. He was a manifestation of Yahweh, the Holy One of the Heavens. The angels are His "ministering spirits" sent forth to minister on behalf of those who shall be heirs of salvation" (Heb. 1:14). They supervise world events and the personal circumstances of saints on their behalf. Accordingly the apostle Paul wrote: "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose" (Rom. 8:28). Again: "For all things are for your sakes" (2 Cor. 4:15). In that service the angels comprise "the eyes of Yahweh which run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong on the behalf of them whose heart is perfect towards Him" (2 Chron. 16:9. See also Zech. 3:9; 4:10). There are gradations of rank among the angels. Under the supervision of those of higher status, such as Michael and Gabriel, other Divine messengers were set to

overlook the affairs of Israel. However, when the Lord Jesus ascended into heaven, the angels were placed under his direction (see 1 Pet. 3:22). Since then, under his supervision they have guided the destiny of nations (see Rev. 16:1). However, in the future age, this work will be placed into the care of the immortalised saints then made "equal unto the angels" (see Luke 20:36; Heb. 2:5). In describing this angel as a Watcher, therefore, Nebuchadnezzar was acknowledging that affairs on earth are overlooked by the angels of heaven. Nothing is left to chance regarding Yahweh's defined purpose.

VERSE 14

"He cried aloud and said thus, Hew down the tree and cut off his branches, shake off his leaves, and scatter his fruit"

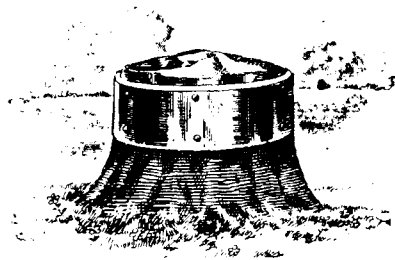
— At the command of this Watcher from heaven, the tree was lopped. This symbolised the restriction of Babylonish influence. In the previous dream-vision, Daniel explained to the King that it was the God of heaven that had given him power (see Dan. 2:37), and that the same God will take it away and establish His kingdom (Ch. 2:44). Now in this further prophetic dream the King is shown that the One who placed him in power, will send His angel to reduce his influence. The rise and fall of nations is governed by Divine wisdom and power. Paul, in preaching the gospel, proclaimed: "God hath determined the times before appointed and the bounds of their habitation" (Acts 17:26). In other words the nations are limited as to the time of their dominance, as well as to the extent of their dominion. That was the lesson that Nebuchadnezzar was taught.

"Let the beasts get away from under it, and the fowls from his branches" — As stated earlier the beasts and fowls represent the various types of nations that were brought under the control of Babylon. The statement describes the disintegration of the Babylonian Empire.

VERSE 15

"Nevertheless leave the stump of his roots in the earth" — In the parable, the hewing down of the tree did not kill the stock or the roots. They remained alive, imbedded in the earth, ready to shoot forth with new growth as vigorous as before. The word rendered "stump" is *Iqqar*, and relates not to the stump above

the ground, but to the stock of the roots which remained alive and capable of growth. The religious teaching and influence of Babylon remained after its political demise, to spring forth into new life in apostate Christendom, symbolised in *The Apocalypse* as Babylon the Great (Rev. 17:5).



"Even with a band of iron and brass" — (see above) This band protected the stock and roots of the Babylonish tree. The metals represented Rome and Greece, as in the Image-dream. Significantly, and in fulfilment of the symbolism, so-called Christianity, described as Babylon the Great, became divided into Roman and Greek Catholicism. Their respective centres of influence were Rome and Constantinople (Istanbul). When the Ottoman Turks occupied Constantinople in 1453 then a Grecian city, and the headquarters of the Greek Catholic Church, they extended their religious influence throughout Macedonia and further south. Constantinople was changed into an Islamic centre, and Greek Orthodox churches were converted into Mosques. The headquarters of the Greek Catholic Church was driven therefrom, and set up in Moscow, which became known as the Third Rome. But Greek Catholicism with Roman Catholicism remained as a band of brass and iron around the Babylonish stock and root. The pagan teachings of Babylonish worship had been superimposed upon Christianity in the days of Constantine, and were openly incorporated in the theology of both Roman Catholic and Greek Catholic Churches.

"In the tender grass of the field" — In the Bible, grass is symbolic of flesh, and therefore people (see Isa. 40:6). Among the susceptible and superstitious people of

Babylon the Great, paganised Christianity found acceptance.

“And let it be wet with the dew of heaven” — Symbolically dew represents doctrine or teaching (Deut. 32:2). The dew of heaven, which is described as falling upon the tender grass of the field, appears to relate to Governmental decrees. Heaven is frequently used in the Bible as a symbol of the ruling powers of the nations, and in the past, national decrees have been proclaimed in favour of Rome. These included those which gave power to the Church to persecute the saints of God (see Rev. 13:7-10).

“And let his portion be with the beasts in the grass of the earth” — The parable now directs attention to Nebuchadnezzar himself. This is shown by the sudden use of the personal pronoun *his*. The King would be compelled to enact this part of the prophecy, and would be so reduced as to associate for a time with the beasts of the earth.

VERSE 16

“Let his heart be changed from a man’s, and let a beast’s heart be given unto him” — This verse spells out the degradation of Babylon’s rulers as represented by the malady of Nebuchadnezzar. They would become bestial in their ways. In the king’s former dream, recorded in Daniel 2, the deterioration of national government was clearly outlined descending from the gold of the head to the clay of the toes. Here the decline is moral in its description. The two dreams taken in conjunction with each other show that at the time of the end the nations will not only be politically corrupt and communistic but morally bestial. Their habits have degenerated below those of beasts.

“And let seven times pass over him” — Israel was warned that if the people proved disobedient, they would suffer seven times of trouble (see Lev. 26:18,21,24,28). These seven “times” appear to denote an extended sabbath. Referring to the dispersion of Israel, Lev. 26:43 reads: “The land also shall be left to them, and shall enjoy her sabbaths, while she lieth desolate without them”. As the seventh day was a sabbath there seems to be a link between the “seven” mentioned and the rest that the land would enjoy. The sabbath principle again seems to be in view in Jeremiah’s prophecy. He predict

ed that seventy years would be spent by the captivity at Babylon (Jer. 29:10). In 2 Chron. 36:21 this is described as “the land enjoying her sabbaths”, for, of course, the land would be at rest. The seven times of Daniel’s prophecy provide an extension of this sabbath principle. A “time” in Jewish reckoning is a year of 360 days. Seven times this number represent 2520 days, and on the prophetic reckoning of a day for a year (Ezek. 4:6) seven times represents 2520 years. Nebuchadnezzar besieged Jerusalem in the years 606-603 B.C., so that 2520 years from then would terminate in the years 1914-1917. In 1917 the Turks were driven from Jerusalem and the Jews invited to return and establish a national home therein. The termination of that period commenced an epoch that will not cease until Gentilism is overthrown and the Kingdom of God established.

From this it would appear that there were two applications of the dream-vision seen by Nebuchadnezzar, and recorded in the chapter before us. Firstly, as subsequent verses show, the prophecy had an immediate fulfilment in Nebuchadnezzar himself as he suffered an attack of Lycanthropy, and acted as a beast. But it also has an extended application of 2520 years in relation to Gentilism at large. It is significant, therefore, that since World War I (1914-1918) the nations have become more aggressive, ruthless and bestial. They are suffering a form of insane lycanthropy, so that their madness is apparent to all (Isa. 30:28; Jer. 51:7). Moreover the wise of this world are hopeless in correcting the malady. For them “there is no way out” apart from Divine intervention (Luke 21:25-26). The verse before us, therefore, presents a graphic symbolisation of bestial Gentile rule at the time of the end, supported by the Roman and Greek Catholic bands of iron and brass. Man through pride, wantonness and bestiality has turned civilisation into a jungle, a mad-house.

VERSE 17

“This matter is by the decree of the watchers” — The word “matter is from a Chaldean word *pithgam* a decree, or judicial sentence. The word “decree” is from *gezerah* and signifies to determine, or decide upon a certain course of action. It is from a root signifying *to cut* hence to covenant to do a thing. The term *Watchers* is applied to the angels, or Elohim of

heaven, who comprise the "eyes of Yahweh". Some of these Watchers came down to earth to observe the apostate conduct of flesh at the time of Babel, and after conference decided to confuse the language of mankind (see Gen. 11:5). Others visited Sodom when the cry of the city arose, and having observed the state of immorality rampart therein, after consultation, decided on its destruction (see Gen. 18:21). Others have appeared from time to time to supervise the course of history, or to obstruct or limit the mad pursuits of flesh. They comprise the Elohist eyes of Yahweh (see 2 Chron. 16:9; Isa. 3:8; Zech. 4:10; Heb. 1:14). In their capacity as Yahweh's Watchers, the angels do His bidding (Psa. 103:20). They overshadowed the fathers of Israel (Gen. 28:16), were placed over the affairs of the nation (Exod. 23:20), and continue to watch over the destiny of nations (see Zech. 4:10). In *Elpis Israel* p. 323 Bro. Thomas writes: "Not a kingdom has been established nor a king dethroned, but it has formed a move, which has contributed to the maturity of the present crisis, which will ultimate in the introduction of the kingdom of God. This truth is beautifully expressed in the words of the prophet, saying, "Blessed be the name of God for ever and ever; for wisdom and might are His, and *He changeth the times and the seasons; He removeth kings and setteth up kings; He giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding; He revealeth the deep and secret things; He knoweth what is in the darkness, and the light dwelleth with him*" (Dan. 2:20-22). It is He to whom all things are subjected; "for He ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever He will, and *setteth up over it the basest of men*" (Dan. 4:17). This is the reason why men and women with so little wisdom, or rather possessed of so much positive folly and imbecility, are able to rule the nations without "setting on fire the course of nature". When their wickedness and stupidity become obstacles to His purpose, He removes them out of the way, and introduces other actors upon the stage. In this way, He controls and regulates the world's affairs; but in every interference He shapes the course of events towards the consummation predetermined from the foundation of the world".

"And the demand by the word of the Holy ones" — The "Holy ones" describe

the character of the Angels of heaven. Yahweh is Holy (Lev. 19:2), and so also are the members of His Elohist family. As "Holy ones", the angels are remote from flesh, being like God in character.

"To the intent that the living may know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men" — Circumstances had compelled Nebuchadnezzar to acknowledge the God of Israel as the "most High God" (see Ch. 3:26). In our treatment of that title of Deity we showed that it relates to His governance over the nations. It is a title always used in that context, and first appears in Gen. 14:18-19. In that place it has a pendant to the title describing Him as *Possessor of heaven and earth*. Therefore, all that happens in heaven and in earth is under His cognisance; and as Most High He rules in the kingdom of men. The purpose of the madness of which Nebuchadnezzar was shortly to be afflicted, was to humble his arrogance, and compel him to acknowledge "that the Most High rules in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever He will" (v. 25). It is interesting to note this gradual development in the education of Nebuchadnezzar. In chapter 2, he was introduced to the God of Daniel as the Ruler of heaven (see vv. 28,37,44), and was forced to acknowledge that He was a "God of gods, and a Lord of kings, and a Revealer of secrets". In short, he was compelled to recognise that there is a King in heaven higher than any upon earth, including himself. In chapter 3, he was brought to recognise His status as the "Most High God", greater than all others in his ability to deliver (vv. 26,29). In the chapter before us, he was shown that He is Omnipotent even in the politics of nations (see vv. 2,17,24,25, 32,34).

It is significant that in this verse the singular number is used to describe the kingdoms of men. In their diversity they are referred to as a unit, a kingdom, for Gentilism in its totality is the "kingdom of Satan", the rule of the flesh. But even there God is supreme. He rules in the *Kingdom of men*. Though the nations are divided and antagonistic, they are all united in that their power stems from the flesh. They are the creation of man, and not of God. They are, as described by the Lord Jesus Christ, the kingdom of Satan, because their policies are dictated by the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. (see Matt. 12:26).

“And giveth it to whomsoever He will”

— Nebuchadnezzar was taught the basics of Divine prophecy, namely, that destiny is not in the hands of flesh, but in the hands of God. The Dictator of Babylon imagined that he had come to power by his own military might, governmental skill, and political ingenuity. He had to learn that this was not so. As Jeremiah had predicted previously, Yahweh of Israel had brought the nations in subjection to Nebuchadnezzar that they may be humbled by him (see Jer. 27:4-7). Despite all his boasts, pomp, pride and arrogance, Nebuchadnezzar, like those in power today, was but the servant of Almighty God, and completely subject to the will of Heaven. Yahweh gives power to those who will advance His purpose. Nebuchadnezzar was one such, and had to learn that he was but the tool of the Almighty.

“And setteth up over it the basest of men” — The term “basest” signifies lowliness (see Ezek. 21:27; 1 Cor. 1:26-30). The statement can be literally rendered: “the lowest one of men He will set up over it”. Rotherham renders it: “one low among men”; the *Septuagint* has: “him who is set at naught by men”. The statement, therefore has reference to one individual who will ultimately be set over mankind. This one is the Lord Jesus Christ. Though the Son of God, he was meek and lowly, and entirely submissive to the will of his Father (Matt. 11:29; Phil. 2:5-8). Therefore, wrote Paul, “God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name. That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow . . . and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father” (vv. 9-11). In revealing to Nebuchadnezzar God’s ultimate purpose, Daniel implied that if the King wished to retain his rule he must emulate such characteristics (see v. 27). So must all who would rule with that lowly one in the day of his exaltation (see Prov. 16:32). This verse, therefore, contains the basic purpose of Bible prophecy. It not only summarises the plan of God for the nations, but reveals the attitude of mind necessary in those who would reign with Christ. Moreover, it teaches that the Most High rules at the present time and guides the destiny of nations. It also proclaims that His purpose ultimately is to set up in power over the kingdom of men one who meantime has been set at naught by man-

kind. That one is the Lord Jesus Christ.

VERSE 18

“This dream I king Nebuchadnezzar have seen. Now thou, O Belteshazzar, declare the interpretation thereof, for as much as all the wise men of my kingdom are not able to make known unto me the interpretation” — The wise men of Nebuchadnezzar’s palace could not interpret the dream, any more than so-called wise men among the Gentiles today can solve the problems of humanity. It is quite beyond them, and the time will come when they will be compelled to acknowledge the need of the assistance of one who is truly wise in the things of God (Jer. 16:19). Paul makes the observation that “the world by wisdom knows not God” (1 Cor. 1:21). Despite all man’s wisdom and inventiveness, he cannot solve the problems of humanity. He can put a man on the moon, but he cannot devise means to feed starving millions on earth. The basic principles of the gospel are beyond his ken. Paul makes the observation: “God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: that no flesh should glory in His presence”. That was the lesson that was impressed upon Nebuchadnezzar. He was compelled to confess, as all the world will have to do ultimately, that the so-called wise men of his realm could not interpret the dream. Previously those same wise men had boasted to the King that if he would only make known unto them the dream, they would provide him with an interpretation (Dan. 2:4), but now the shallowness of their boast is obvious, for although told the dream, they can make nothing of it.

“But thou art able; for the Spirit of the holy gods is in thee” — Nebuchadnezzar recognised that Daniel spoke by Divine inspiration. He had learned to greatly admire his wisdom, and now sought from him an interpretation of the dream. Most likely in attributing “the spirit of the holy gods” to Daniel, Nebuchadnezzar had in mind that he was motivated by the gods of Babylon, as well as by Yahweh of Israel. This is implied inasmuch as he addressed Daniel by the name Belteshazzar, which

THE ANGELIC DECREE

“This sentence is by the decree of the watchers, and the demand by the word of the Holy Ones. . .” (Daniel 4:17).

This is a most significant statement. The words “decree” and “word” in the original suggest a conference and a decision. The former is from a Chaldean word signifying to *determine* or *decide*, from a root denoting to *cut*, hence to covenant to do a thing. The word “word” suggests an authoritative proclamation such as an edict. The angels are described as Watchers and Holy Ones. As such their function was to watch over the affairs of nations, and to guide their several destinies in accordance with their character, promoting those that conform thereto, or punishing those who need discipline. Disapproving of the conduct of Nebuchadnezzar, they had decided to restrain and discipline him. The expressions used in conjunction with their offices imply an angelic council which, after a review of circumstances, and a discussion, has come to a decision. This suggests that there is a heavenly council under Yahweh, implied by Jeremiah’s words: “For who hath stood in the council of Yahweh, and hath perceived and heard His word” (Jer. 23:18).

The Scriptures depict Yahweh as above even the Elohim. He is pictured as seated on a throne before which are the assembly of angels. They “excel in strength, do His commandments, hearkening unto the voice of His word”. They are His ministers “that do His pleasure” (Ps. 103: 20-22), “ministering spirits” (Ps. 104:4), “sent forth to minister for the heirs of salvation” (Heb. 1:14). However, it is obvious from the words of Christ and Peter, that the full outworking of the Divine purpose was hidden from them. For example, the Lord declared that the “day and hour” of his return was hidden from their knowledge (Mark 13:32); Peter claimed that the “angels desire to look “into the outworking of the Divine purpose” (1 Pet. 1:12). Paul adds his testimony, implying that whereas the overshadowing of events during the present dispensation is given into their hands, similar ministrations in the future age shall be under the supervision of the glorified elect then made “equal unto the angels”. Therefore “unto the angels hath He not put in subjection the world to come” (Heb. 2:5).

From these and other references, it would appear that Yahweh leaves the details of the outworking of the Divine purpose to the angels. For that purpose they form a kind of heavenly council (1 Kings 22:19), to confer and determine what acts of divine intervention should be undertaken in circumstances that arise. The expression of Daniel 4:17 would suggest that following such an angelic council, a decree was proclaimed with the authority and in the name of Yahweh.

In that Elohist council there were angels of various gradations of rank and authority. Gabriel was one who “stood in the presence of God” (Luke 1:19). Another angel had the title of *Wonderful* (Jud. 13:18 mg) was known as *The Numberer* (Dan. 8:13 mg). He, apparently, overlooked the chronological sequence of events: the “times before appointed” (Acts 17:26). Other angels had their various functions.

In these consultations, no doubt, the more important decisions required the endorsement of Yahweh. This is suggested by the chapter before us. For Nebuchadnezzar heard the Holy One or Watcher announce the sentence against the tree (v.14), and to it was added (v.17); “The sentence is by the *decree of the watchers*, and the demand by the *word of the holy ones*”. Upon this Daniel comments: “It is the *decree of the Most High* that is come upon my

lord the king" (v.24). The decisions of such consultations (see Dan. 8:13; 12:6) therefore, were given under the authority of Yahweh.

Such consultations preceded the confusion of tongues at Babel (Gen. 11:5-8), and the destruction of Sodom (Gen. 18:20-21). Upon one of the angels delegated upon whom was bestowed the name of Yahweh (Gen. 11:5; 18:22; Exod. 23:20), for Yahweh, personally, has never appeared to man. This was the Angel seen by Jacob at the top of the staircase reaching unto heaven, for it is recorded that Jacob "beheld Yahweh" (Gen. 28:13), though Paul declared that "no man hath seen nor can see Him" (1 Tim. 6:16). This angel, by virtue of the name bestowed on him was be granted greater authority than that given others, and as such would have more ready access to the great Increate Himself.

When the Lord ascended into heaven, "angels, authorities and powers were made subject unto him" (1 Pet. 3:22). He assumed the status occupied by the Angel in whom was vested the Divine authority (Exod. 23:21). He today supervises their intervention in human affairs whether it be the overshadowing of saints or nations.

It is appropriate, therefore, that the angels will assist him at the work of resurrection and judgment (Matt. 12: 41-42; 25:31-32). They, with him, will form a council of Judgment, which will supervise the bestowal of rewards. Over that council, the Lord Jesus, as representative of his Father, shall preside (John 5:22).



Ruins Of Balyon Today

name honoured Bel the god of Babylon (see v. 8, cp. Isa. 46:1).

Interpreting the Dream — vv. 19-26

Daniel listens to the words of Nebuchadnezzar with deep concern. He clearly understands the meaning of this vision of the night. The stately tree symbolises the Empire of Babylon, over which the mighty King rules with dictatorial hand. Daniel finds it dreadful to contemplate that all that greatness and majesty shall be humbled and its ruler reduced to the level of a wild animal! Moreover, having developed a regard for Nebuchadnezzar, he feels deep concern for his welfare. He gives the King sound advice which if acted upon will avoid the dream becoming reality; and then he proceeds to reveal the significance of that which the King has been shown by dream. Faithful to the vision of God, and the request of the King, he fearlessly unfolds to him the judgment of God he is about to experience.

VERSE 19

“Then Daniel, whose name was Belteshazzar, was astonished for one hour, and his thoughts troubled him” — Daniel had come to appreciate the integrity of Nebuchadnezzar, and therefore was deeply concerned at the significance of the dream which he clearly understood. However before disclosing his knowledge of such a personal issue, he carefully contemplated how best to do so. How could he, the faithful servant of the great monarch, reveal to the King the dire calamity about to befall his royal master? It was not fear but thoughtful concern that kept him silent. His long years of service in the Babylonian court had brought him in close acquaintance with the King. He had come to appreciate his better qualities, so that esteem and sympathy now closed his lips.

Instead of rendering the time given as “one hour”. Rotherham translates it as “for a short time”. For this period, whilst in the presence of the king, Daniel remained silent, whilst displaying in his demeanour his deep concern. Nebuchadnezzar watched with growing concern the downcast countenance of the prophet, but encouraged him to speak his mind.

“The king spake, and said, Belteshazzar, let not the dream or the interpretation thereof, trouble thee” — Nebuchadnezzar recognised by the attitude of Daniel

that the dream was of ill omen. Nevertheless, never lacking in courage, he called upon the prophet to boldly set forth the revelation that had been given him.

“Belteshazzar answered and said, My lord, the dream be to them that hate thee, and the interpretation thereof to thine enemies” — The word “Lord” is from the Chaldean *Marey*. It signifies “to dominate” and therefore describes a Dictator. The dream foreshadowed such a humiliating and shameful fall on the part of Nebuchadnezzar from the position of eminence and glory he presently enjoyed, that Daniel could only wish it upon the king’s enemies.

VERSE 20

“The tree that thou sawest, which grew, and was strong, whose height reached unto the heaven, and the sight thereof to all the earth” — The tree that the king saw in his dream represented the Babylonish Empire strong and virile. Its thick, massive trunk reached unto heaven, and its widespreading branches provided ample shelter for all birds and animals. It was the admiration of all mankind.

VERSE 21

“Whose leaves were fair, and the fruit thereof much, and in it was meat for all; under which the beasts of the field dwelt, and upon whose branches the fowls of the heaven had their habitation” — To Nebuchadnezzar God had “given” world supremacy for which he craved and for which he fought and struggled. Accordingly the dream brought home to the King that he held power not through his own wisdom and might, but by the grace of Yahweh. That granted to Nebuchadnezzar demanded as the price of its continuance, obedience to the will of the Giver. However, in the passage of years there had been neglect of this, and abuse of the imperial power thus given. Success had gone to Nebuchadnezzar’s head. He had become proud and arrogant, developing such callousness to the rights and feelings of his subjects as needed a check if the position of supremacy entrusted to him was to continue. He had to learn that there is One greater than he. Twice had he received warnings designed to impress this lesson, but in both instances the effect was transitory. Now it would be brought home to him by personal suffering that he was

not the greatest of monarchs, that there is One who "ruleth in the kingdom of men and giveth it to whomsoever He will". Under Nebuchadnezzar's rule the empire of Babylon had flourished so that all nations of the ancient world were subject to its control. The city itself was glorified with magnificent buildings, and strong fortifications. The people enjoyed an outstanding wealth and luxury. The arts and culture were encouraged, and flourished. The King's policy was not only to conquer but also to convert. He uprooted nations and transported the people elsewhere, endeavouring to superimpose upon them the religion of Babylon. Evidence of this was shown in Daniel's own experience. He and his companions had been uprooted to Babylon, and taught the language and learning of their conquerors. What Nebuchadnezzar did not keep in mind, though Daniel reminded him of it, was that all this power and wealth had been given him of God, and could be withdrawn from him as easily as it had been granted. As his power increased he overlooked this fact of human rule, and grew in arrogance and pride before God and man. Hence he had to be humbled and restrained.

VERSE 22

"It is thou O King, that art grown and become strong; for thy greatness is grown, and reacheth unto heaven; and thy dominion to the end of the earth" — Nebuchadnezzar headed a dynasty that lasted only seventy years. He imagined that he was the arbiter of his own destiny, and that he was establishing a rule that would prove permanent. Already, in the dream-vision of the metallic image, he had been shown that this was not the case; and that the God of heaven Who had granted the exercise of power would remove it from him (Dan. 2:37-38, 44). The vision of the Tree was similar, except that on this occasion the King would personally dramatise the judgment to be administered. When Daniel identified Nebuchadnezzar with the tree ("it is thou, O king") he did so because of his status in relation therewith. Nebuchadnezzar aspired to the greatest possible summit level among men. His ambition "reached unto heaven". He not only claimed supreme power on earth, but arrogantly claimed Divine power as well. Isaiah, in prophecy, indicted the King: "for thou hast said in thine heart, I will

ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation in the sides of the north" (Isa. 14:13). In overthrowing Jerusalem, Nebuchadnezzar had aimed to sit upon "the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north" for he fought in the name of his gods. However, it is significant that the prophecy of Isaiah 14 relates also to the future. The future setting of it is given in the first three verses of that chapter which refer to Israel being restored again to its land as the time of its fulfilment. It then states "that thou (Israel) shalt take up this proverb against the King of Babylon". Accordingly, whatever happened in the past to the King and his nation formed the pattern of that which will happen again in the future. We can therefore expect a ruler of mystical Babylon to aspire to dominate Jerusalem and its holy places, and so lift himself up against God. Accordingly, the prophecy before us has a double application. What happened then types what will happen in the future. Meanwhile Nebuchadnezzar's power extended throughout the earth. In similar manner today, mystical Babylon is in process of extending its influence on a worldwide basis. The Apocalyptic Babylon the Great also aspires to universal power (see Rev. 17:15).

VERSE 23

"And whereas the King saw a watcher and an holy one coming down from heaven, and saying, Hew the tree down, and destroy it; yet leave the stump of the roots thereof in the earth, even with a band of iron and brass, in the tender grass of the field; and let it be wet with the dew of heaven, and let his portion be with the beasts of the field; till seven times pass over him" — The command to the angel to "hew down the tree" shows that the rise and fall of nations is supervised and governed by God. To that end, He works through the angels of heaven (see Psa. 103:20-22; Acts 17:26; Heb. 1:14; and see notes on Dan. 4:15-16). The command to the angel to proclaim judgment against Babylon, was evidently issued by Michael the Archangel, into whose hands the affairs of Israel were particularly placed (see Exod. 23:20; Josh. 5:14; Dan. 10:21).

VERSE 24

"This is the interpretation, O king, and this is the decree of the Most High, which

is come upon my lord the king” — See previous notes for explanation of this verse. The word “lord” is as in v. 19, and relates to Nebuchadnezzar as a dictator.

VERSE 25

“That they shall drive thee from men, and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field, and they shall make thee to eat grass as oxen, and they shall wet thee with the dew of heaven” — In spite of the information given Nebuchadnezzar by the dream-vision and explanation, he failed to respond by humbling himself before the will of Yahweh. As we have noted, the period in which the events of this chapter took place was much later than those recorded previously. His power was now absolute, and the splendour of his realm was evidenced in the magnificence of the rebuilt city. Nebuchadnezzar was lifted up in pompous pride at his accomplishments, and it was necessary that he be humbled. Hence the decree issued against the king by the “watchers” of heaven. However, it needs to be kept in mind, that the king’s experiences at this time typified what will happen nationally at the time of the end. Today cities are being rebuilt to match the glory of ancient Babylon; and man’s pride and arrogance know no bounds. The moral conditions of the nations will continue to deteriorate to a standard lower than that of beasts (Ecc. 3:19). In his madness, Nebuchadnezzar represented the bestial attitude of mankind at the time of the end. He had no covering for he ignored the advice of Daniel, as the world refuses the covering in Christ Jesus (Gal. 3:26-28). He grovelled in the dirt like an animal, foreshadowing the earthy ways of flesh today. The sad decline of morals throughout the modern world is antitypical of the state into which Nebuchadnezzar fell when he became as a beast of the field, grovelling in its dirt and eating its grass. Why should the king experience such terrible, humiliating judgment? Because of his arrogance. The years of prosperity had worked to his disadvantage. He had become proud, and had developed such callousness to the rights and feelings of his subjects as required a check.

“And seven times shall pass over thee” — These seven times, or seven years, totalling 2520 days related to Nebuchadnezzar both personally and typically. He suffered the humiliation personally for a

period of seven years, and within the terms of the prophecy, the nations have experienced a deterioration morally for 2520 days or prophetic years. The world has reached the epoch of the end of that period.

“Till thou know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever He will” — See notes on verse 17. The lesson that Nebuchadnezzar was called upon to learn was that there is a greater Dictator, a greater Monarch than flesh. The word “ruleth” is from *shalat* a word that signifies to rule, to have the mastery, to govern, to have dominion. The king had to be humbled before he would acknowledge that Yahweh rules in that way, and his restoration depended upon him doing so. Ultimately, all human rule, represented by Nebuchadnezzar’s empire as a tree that sheltered all the beasts and birds, must submit to such teaching. Daniel, in commenting upon the state of the king declared “his heart was lifted up, and his mind hardened in pride” (Dan. 5:20).

VERSE 26

“And whereas they commanded to leave the stump of the tree roots; thy kingdom shall be sure unto thee” — The word “sure” signifies that which is permanent and steadfast, and therefore suggests restoration. The king was promised that once humbled his kingdom would be restored to him. This prophecy was fulfilled inasmuch as Nebuchadnezzar was restored to his sanity, dignity, and glory. As that happened to him so there will be a restoration and elevation experienced by the nations at large consequent upon them acknowledging the status and authority of the God of Israel. They then will be restored from their present bestial state, to enjoy the sanity, dignity, and glory of the kingdom of God. Meanwhile, their insane and absolute folly is obvious. They sink lower and lower in their state of degradation and know not how to extricate themselves from their desperate condition.

“After that thou shalt have known that the heavens do rule” — Nebuchadnezzar would remain insane until he came to recognise the omnipotence of Yahweh, and acknowledge Him as the unseen Ruler over the kingdom of men. Such knowledge is essential to the sanity of the

human race. In the beginning man was made "in the image and likeness of God" that he might exercise dominion over the lower creation (Gen. 1:26). He, alone of all creation, has the potential to develop Divine characteristics in mind and action. But in the bestial state to which he has declined, he is unfit for God's Kingdom. Mankind will be humbled, until it learns the lesson set Nebuchadnezzar. The statement, "the heavens do rule", implies that Yahweh delegates His heavenly authority. Yahweh is a great King above all the Elohim and grants them differing degrees of authority and glory. The angel that Joshua saw (see Josh. 5:14), was the commander of His host or army. He was the angel that was placed in charge of the affairs of Israel, as promised Moses in Exodus 23:20. His name, according to Gabriel, was Michael (see Dan. 10:21). As commander of Yahweh's host and Archangel (Jude 9), he had numerous angels under him. These comprise "the heavens" that rule. Once the Lord Jesus ascended into heaven, he, as Israel's future King, took over the supervision of events. So Peter declared: "He hath gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him" (1 Pet. 3:20,22).

Daniel's Exhortation — v. 27

Having come to appreciate the better qualities of the King, Daniel is anxious that he avoid the judgment threatening him. He pleads with him to change his attitude towards Yahweh the God of heaven.

VERSE 27

"Wherefore, O king, let my counsel be acceptable unto thee, and break off thy sins by righteousness, and thine iniquities by shewing mercy to the poor" — It is obvious from Daniel's words, that the king had sinned considerably to bring such judgment upon him. In Dan. 5:20, the prophet declares that Nebuchadnezzar had "lifted himself up, and hardened his mind in pride". This had caused him to flout the instruction earlier received from the prophet, and to reverse his attitude towards Yahweh the Revealer of secrets. It was because he had failed to appreciate the wonderful privilege given him of a revelation of God's purpose, that God saw fit to humble him. History confirms the records in Daniel. At the height of Nebuchadnezzar's power and glory,

Babylon became noted for its arrogance and harshness towards those brought into captivity by it. It was in these areas that Daniel now pleaded with the king to review and show "mercy to the poor".

"If it may be a lengthening of thy tranquility" — Daniel suggested to the king that he could possibly avoid the threatened judgment if he changed his ways and attitude and humbled himself to do the will of Yahweh. Unfortunately for Nebuchadnezzar, the exhortation went unheeded. Concerning the responsibility of nations towards the requirements of Yahweh, Brother Thomas has this to say in *Elpis Israel*: "The great national crime has been committed, and perpetuated, of converting the truth of God into a lie, of blaspheming His name, and of bruising the heel of His saints. All nations are guilty of this, and as national offences can only, and must necessarily, be punished by national judgments, retribution is pouring out upon them according to the Word of the Lord" (p. 353.)

Nebuchadnezzar Humbled — vv. 28-33

Nebuchadnezzar ignores the warning exhortation of Daniel and the judgment comes upon him. He suffers a form of lycanthropy, a mental aberration that causes the patient to imagine himself to be a beast, and act accordingly. This happens to Nebuchadnezzar. He imitates the ways of an animal, making his way into the fields to graze! The king spends seven years like that, showing in his appearance the effect of his malady. At the conclusion of that time he is restored to his throne. Learning the lesson of his folly, he issues a decree that acknowledges his own failings and the righteousness of the God of Israel in inflicting him with such punishment. His experiences type the future when Babylon the Great will be humbled in similar fashion. The nations will be compelled to recognise that in their present state they are but beasts. They will seek the help of Yahweh which will readily be granted them.

VERSE 28

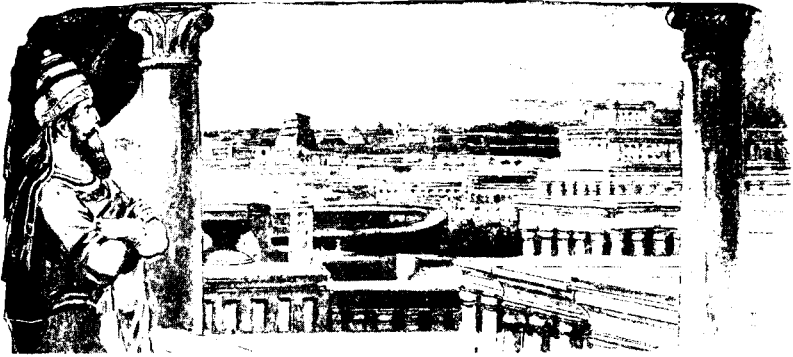
"All this came upon the king Nebuchadnezzar" — This statement forms part of the decree that the king issued in explanation of its command. Ignoring the exhortation and warning of Daniel, in due course the judgment came upon Nebuchadnezzar.

VERSE 29

“At the end of twelve months he walked in the palace of the kingdom of Babylon”

— The ruins of that palace still remain. They are indicative of the building skill and luxury living of the Babylonians. An amazing city in its glory, its ruins on the banks of the River Euphrates testify to the remarkable, detailed truth of Bible prophecy (see Isa. 13:19-22).

great twofold wall of Babylon. I made strong the city with bricks burnt hard as stones, and piled high as huge masses of mountains. Behold besides the Imgoul-Bel the impregnable fortifications of Babylon. I made inside Babylon on the eastern bank of the river such fortifications as no king before me had ever made. I excavated the ditch; with bricks and mortar I bound its bed; I built above the



“Is not this great Babylon that I have built for the house of my Kingdom by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty?”

VERSE 30

“The king spake, and said, “Is not this great Babylon that I have built for the house of my kingdom by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty?” — Babylon was a mighty city. According to ancient historians, it formed a regular square of 45 miles (72kms) in compass, enclosed by a wall 250ft (76.2m) high and 50 ft (15.2m) broad, access to which was through one hundred gates of brass. Among its principal ornaments was the temple of Belus in the middle of which was a tower of eight storeys (or towers placed one above another, diminishing as they went up), upon a base a quarter of a mile square. In addition, a most magnificent palace, and the famous hanging gardens, comprising an artificial mountain, raised upon arches, and planted with trees of the largest as well as the most beautiful sorts, added to its wonder as a city. The greatness and majesty of Babylon is described in an inscription found among the ruins of that city, in which Nebuchadnezzar himself records what he did. It reads as follows: “I finished the

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 that 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 glorious . . .”

Nebuchadnezzar’s building activities were remarkable. They included more than twenty temples, vast fortifications, excavations of canals, strong embankments by the River Euphrates, and so forth. Bricks stamped with the name *Nebuchadnezzar* throughout the ruins attest to his enterprise as well as to his opulence and taste. Daniel witnessed this building activity, and the glory of the city as expressed by the king in the verse before us.

VERSE 31

“While the word was in the king’s mouth, there fell a voice from heaven, saying, O king Nebuchadnezzar, to thee it is spoken” — Young renders this: “they

are saying", and so links this verse with the speakers of v. 17.

"The kingdom is departed from thee" — The God of Israel who granted the authority to Nebuchadnezzar according to the statement of Daniel 2:37, would now withdraw it. This action witnessed that "the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever He will".

VERSE 32

"And they shall drive thee from men, and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field: they shall make thee to eat grass as oxen, and seven times shall pass over thee, until thou know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever He will" — No doubt Nebuchadnezzar was driven from his palace by his servants when the spate of madness came upon him. But, in fact and in accordance with this verse, those who drove the king from his palace were the angels who, under Yahweh, guide the destiny of nations and now announced their decision to discipline Nebuchadnezzar (see v. 17).

VERSE 33

"The same hour was the thing fulfilled upon Nebuchadnezzar" — In a passage in the inscriptions, the king mentions a period during which "the kingdom did not rejoice my heart", and during which he did no building or "sing the praises of Merodach". Why did not the kingdom please him? Why did he cease from his building activity? The obvious inference is that this was the period of his madness when he was driven from the palace, and Babylon was ruled by a deputy.

"And he was driven from men, and did eat grass as oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven, till his hairs were grown like eagles' feathers, and his nails like birds' claws" — Nebuchadnezzar acted like an animal. It typed the bestial state of things to which the nations are deteriorating today. Unfortunately, men are blind in their ignorance and folly. Solomon wrote: "I said in mine heart concerning the estate of the sons of man, that God might manifest them, and that they might see that they themselves are beasts" (Ecc. 3:18).

Nebuchadnezzar's strange mental disease is known by the name of lycanthropy

in which a man imagines himself to be an animal and acts accordingly. Because of the bestial attitude of men, the nations are depicted in the *Book of Daniel* as wild beasts (Dan. 7:4). The *Book of Proverbs* declares: "As a roaring lion, and a ranging bear; so is a wicked ruler over the poor people" (Prov. 28:15). Nebuchadnezzar's experience foreshadowed the moral decline of man's rule. Consider the circumstances today: men are descending to the law of the jungle. In their violence, their undignified conduct, their abandonment of restraint, their blasphemy and blatant sinfulness, they are like the Babylonish King in his madness. Never before have the nations been so bestial as today. All restraints are gradually being relaxed, and the flesh is being permitted to gratify itself. Drug addiction, homosexuality, moral perversion, criminality are on the increase. Such conditions preceded the fall of the Roman Empire and the French Revolution. They herald the collapse of modern civilisation, the imminence of Christ's return and the establishment of God's reign on earth.

VERSE 34

"And at the end of the days I Nebuchadnezzar lifted mine eyes unto heaven, and mine understanding returned unto me" — Nebuchadnezzar, as representative of flesh in authority, was thoroughly humbled by his experience. This caused him to turn his eyes upwards, and seek an understanding of things. This is what is going to happen to the nations in the future (Dan. 7:11-12,17-18). It may well have been that during the time of the king's insanity, Daniel filled an important place in his realm. Those who trusted his word waited for "the end of the days", or seven years at the expiration of which sanity returned to the king. When that happened, Daniel was at hand to assist him. It is significant to notice how Nebuchadnezzar employed his first lucid moments. There is no appeal to his heathen gods but a turning to the Most High God of the Hebrews.

"And I blessed the Most High, and I praised and honoured Him that liveth for ever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and His kingdom is from generation to generation" — This statement of the king was incorporated in the decree that he issued to the subordinate nations (see v.3). Nebuchadnezzar had learned

the needed lesson of humility, and with it acknowledged the supremacy of the God of Israel. He was wise enough to acknowledge that by publicly praising Him. He enacted what the nations will be compelled to do at the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. They will be humbled, and then elevated under the reign of Jesus Christ.

VERSE 35

“And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing” — See Isa. 40:15.

“And he doeth according to His will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth” — The army of heaven comprise the angelic forces in belligerent manifestation. The captain of that host was seen by Joshua (see Josh. 5:14), and his name, Michael, was revealed to Daniel (Dan. 10:21). In the garden of Gethsemane the Lord made reference to this army in reproving Peter. He declared: “Thinkest thou that I cannot pray to my Father, and He shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?” (Matt. 26:53). The angels of this heavenly army, as Psa. 103:20 reveals, “excel in strength, and do His commandments, hearkening unto the voice of His word”. They are more than a match for any army upon the earth.

“And among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay His hand, or say unto Him, what doest Thou?” — This vision, given towards the end of his life, brought the king to an apex of understanding of Divine things. In the two previous incidents, recorded in Chps. 2,3, he had come to acknowledge that the God of the Hebrews is wise and powerful, now he is humbled in the face of the manifestation of that wisdom and power, to learn that the God of the Hebrews is also supreme. Moreover, he is compelled to acknowledge that he holds his position as monarch by the will and grace of Yahweh, and therefore he is responsible to Him for the manner of his rule. His pride and arrogance is obvious in the events recorded in the preceding chapters, in spite of the king’s “command” and “decree” (Dan.

2:46; 3:49). But in this chapter there is a more humble approach both to God, and in his decree to men.

VERSE 36

“At the same time my reason returned unto me; and for the glory of my kingdom, my honour and brightness returned unto me; and my counsellors and my lords sought unto me; and I was established in my kingdom, and excellent majesty was added unto me” — Elsewhere the term “brightness” is rendered countenance (see Dan. 5: 7:28). Nebuchadnezzar’s sanity was evident in his very appearance. There was an external, as well as a mental, improvement in the king. When mankind learns the lesson that Nebuchadnezzar did in his day and generation, there will be vast changes throughout the earth. Wickedness, blasphemy, crime and violence will be suppressed, and men will be united in a common worship of God to the glory of Yahweh and the wellbeing of each other. Political and religious “madness” will cease, and a sane way of life will be set up on earth.

VERSE 37

“Now I Nebuchadnezzar praise and extol and honour the King of heaven, all Whose works are truth, and His ways judgment: and those that walk in pride He is able to abase” — The Title of Yahweh as “King of Heaven”, is embedded in the Hebrew Scriptures. See Psa. 11:4; 93:1; 103:19; and elsewhere. All His works are according to truth and stability; He is just and supreme in power. Everything He does is administered with a true understanding of what is required. This is not appreciated as yet, but the time is coming when men shall come to know that He has “not done without cause all that He has done” (see Ezek. 14:23). Moreover, His ways are according to judgment. That is, they are conducted with perfect discrimination. That may not be recognised as yet, but the time is coming when it will be acknowledged, and there will be “Glory to God in the highest; and on earth peace and goodwill toward men”.

Nebuchadnezzar's Seven "Times" of Insanity — A Summary.

The "seven times" represent seven years of 360 days, 2520 in all. The period relates both to Nebuchadnezzar personally, and to Babylon prophetically. This is shown by what happened to the king himself, and also by the description of the tree, when cut down, in that it was protected by a band of iron and brass. What happened to the king foreshadowed the destiny of the city and empire he established. Though historic Babylon was completely destroyed, it was replaced by mystical Babylon: Babylon the Great of *The Apocalypse*. The religious influence of pagan Babylon continued in papal Babylon, as well as in her harlot daughters (Rev. 17:5).

As a prophecy, the Tree-dream supplements the Image-dream of Dan. 2. In the Image the deterioration of human government was dramatically exhibited, descending to the Communist clay of the feet and toes. In the Tree-dream, the moral decline of rulers and people is depicted. When both dreams are considered in conjunction, Daniel was shown that there would be a drastic decline in both government and morals: that the nations would act with bestial insanity. Nebuchadnezzar acted as a beast; so also do the nations which Daniel depicted as "beasts" (Dan. 7:3). Again, whereas in the Image-dream the king was shown the course of human history, he was not told when it would be finally consummated by the establishment of the Kingdom of God, except by the vague statement that it would be "in the latter days" (Dan. 2:28). That omission is supplied in the prophet's Dream-vision of Daniel 4, by the reference to "seven times".

The lopped tree was protected by a band of iron and brass. In our interpretation we have pointed out that Babylon was not finally crushed, but continued to dominate in a different way: through its religion. The paganism of Babylon was superimposed upon other nations, and ultimately incorporated into so-called Christianity. Babylonish Pagan Rome became Babylonish Papal Rome. In 1054, however, the Great Schism took place, and so-called Christianity was divided between the Roman and Greek Catholic Churches. The influence of Babylon remained, protected by its band of iron (Rome) and brass (Greece).

The symbolism of the intoxicating religion of ancient Babylon is reproduced to illustrate that of Papalism. Of the former, Jeremiah declared: "Babylon hath been a golden cup in Yahweh's hand that made all the earth drunken: the nations have drunken of her wine; therefore the nations are mad" (Jer. 51:7).

The cup in the hand of the Papal Babylon the Great has likewise affected the nations (Rev. 17:4; 18:3). The intoxicating folly thus induced will cause the nations to rise against Christ at his coming: "The kings of the earth set themselves and their rulers take counsel together

against Yahweh and against His Anointed" (Christ — Psa. 2:1-2. See also Rev. 17:13-14). What stupidity! The madness of nations will be accentuated by the wine of Babylon at the "time of the end", and will cause such a state of inebriation as will be incurable by man.

Seven "times" or "years" according to the lunar dating of the Bible comprises 2,520 days, and on the prophetic basis of a "day for a year", 2,520 years. What are the commencing and terminal dates of that epoch? In answering those questions, W.H. Carter wrote:

"Some students have suggested that as both the Tree and the Image were concerned with the Kingdoms of Men, the count should be from the 1st of Nebuchadnezzar; but it will be found that in so reckoning, the period does not reach forward to the end of their kingdom, as seems fitting. Moreover 'the seven times' were to 'pass over', *not* the Tree but the 'stump'."

He suggests the following figures:

The Seven Times

Nebuchadnezzar's 1st year:	A. M. 3402/3 (B.C. 604-603) — terminates A.D. 1917/18
Babylonian domination of Judah begins	(B.C. 603)
Nebuchadnezzar's 38th Year:	A.M. 3439/40 — terminates A.D. 1956/7
7 years madness begins	
1st Year of Darius the Median: Following the conquest of Babylon	A.M. 3469/70 (534-533) — terminates A.D. 1986/7 by Cyrus the Persian Cyrus' decree issued
	A.M. 3471/2 — terminates A.D. 1988/9

The first of these terminal dates, A.D. 1917/18, saw an event of the greatest significance in regard to the fulfilment of God's plan. The Balfour Declaration was proclaimed, inviting Jews to return to Palestine and establish therein a National Home. This was a tremendous development prophetically.

The second (1957) saw the development of an event equally dramatic. The Rome Pact was signed laying a foundation for the EEC or Common Market. This has divided Europe into two parts answering to the two feet of the Image, though as yet the feet and image are not properly formed nor are they standing upright.

We are writing in the year 1986, the year proclaimed by the UNO as the Year of Peace and Safety; and dramatic events are taking place. It has seen a further consolidation of the "feet" in that the attack of USA on Libya has drawn USA, Great Britain and Israel more closely together whilst isolating them in measure from West Europe; and in spite of what might take place subsequently, such a division will occur ultimately.

But what of the final date? Will it witness the return of the Lord? We pray that it may!

CHAPTER FIVE

HUMAN IMPIETY JUDGED

Babylon's night of pleasure turned into fear

At the death of Nebuchadnezzar, his son Evil-Merodach succeeds to the throne. He pays special honour to King Jehoiachin after his thirty-second year of captivity, by releasing him from prison and granting him a pension (Jer. 52:31-34; 2 Kings 25:27-30). After two years, however, Neriglissar, his brother-in-law leads a revolt against Evil-Merodach, and assassinates him. Neriglissar claims a royal right to the throne having married a daughter of Nebuchadnezzar. He advances his young son, Labarosoarkod, who is a mere child: but the lad wins no support, and within less than a year is put to death by those who promised to assist him. The generals and political leaders then select Nabonidus (who also married a daughter of Nebuchadnezzar, Nitocris, to support his claim to the throne) who has manifested considerable ability to command. From Nitocris, Nabonidus already has a son, Belshazzar. Because of his royal blood, Belshazzar, three years after the ascension of Nabonidus, is made co-regent with his father, and is given a special assignment to govern the city and province of Babylon. These facts, conforming exactly with the description of the chapter before us, have been confirmed by archaeology. The character of this young monarch is depicted as lifted up in pride, and so acting with reckless blasphemy towards Yahweh Whom his grandfather had honoured. At a time of international threat, he organises a festival to which he invites all the notables of his realm. During the drinking and feasting he seeks to elevate the gods of Babylon at the expense of Yahweh of Israel. His blasphemous actions are interrupted by a mysterious angelic hand that writes a message on the wall, and then hides it. The king's terror at this is increased by the inability of his wise men and counsellors to read it. At the instigation of the Queen-mother, however, the deposed Daniel is called in. At his request, the hand is withdrawn and the writing disclosed. He

reads and interprets it as pronouncing the doom of Babylon, as well as that of the King. That very night the city is taken and the King slain by the Medes and Persians. Previous to this Daniel, as promised, is elevated to the status of third ruler in the Kingdom, and with the absence of Nabonidus and the slaying of Belshazzar is in a position to assume the highest authority when the conquerors enter the fallen city.

Key verses: 1,3,5,6,8,15-17,28,30.

Belshazzar's Feast

—vv. 1-4

Though enemy troops are menacing Babylon, Belshazzar calls the lords and ladies of the city to a great religious feast. Wine is drunk without reserve or restraint until, in drunken folly, the king adds intolerable blasphemy to his wanton stupidity, and orders the sacred vessels of Yahweh to be brought and humiliated before the assembled company.

VERSE 1

“Belshazzar the king” — One time it was very strongly denied that Belshazzar was ever king. Sayce stated: “Belshazzar never became king in his father’s place”. Driver wrote: “In point of fact, Nabonidus was the last king in Babylon; he was a usurper, not related to Nebuchadnezzar, and one Belsharuzur is mentioned as his son”. The conclusion is that Daniel erred in calling Belshazzar “king” and son of Nebuchadnezzar. In dispensing with those criticisms, Babylonian inscriptions that archaeologists have since found completely confirm Daniel’s description of the relationship of all the parties referred to in this chapter. They show that Nabonidus had a son identified with Belshazzar, and that when he took up residence at Teima in North Africa, he left Belshazzar in charge of the northern frontier of the Babylonian empire. Thus Belshazzar became the *de facto* king of Babylon as regent in the absence of his father. This clearly endorses the record of Daniel 5, for Belshazzar offered to the successful reader and interpreter of the mysterious writing on the wall the position of “third place in the kingdom” (v. 7). In several building inscriptions, Nabonidus associated Bel-shar-usur, whom he describes as his “firstborn”, with himself

in such a way as to indicate that he took an active part in the government as co-regent.

But does the relationship between Nebuchadnezzar and Belshazzar (that of father and son) as described in this chapter (see v.2) conform to fact? Or was Driver right in stating that Nabonidus, the father of Belshazzar, had no relationship with Nebuchadnezzar? Archaeology has proved that Daniel was right and Driver was wrong. First, the terms “father” and “son”, as used in such a context, do not necessarily denote a blood relationship. In ancient times, a king was treated and addressed as the “father” of the nation, and the respect or honour that was paid to such was that due to a parent. But there was probably a much closer relationship.

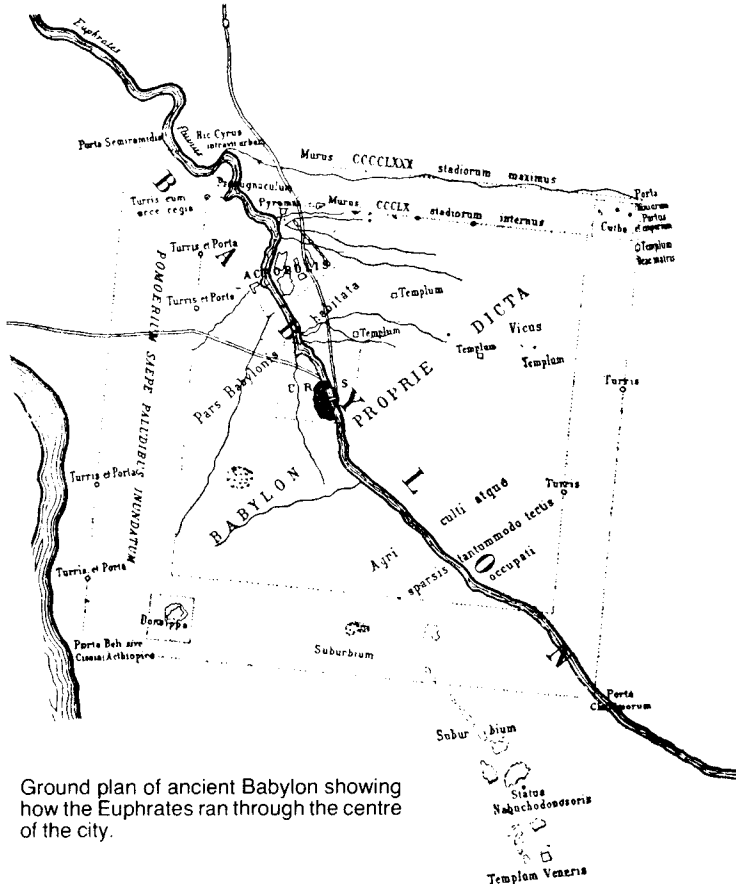
It is pointed out by some that Neriglisar, the predecessor of Nabonidus, married the daughter of Nebuchadnezzar in order to lay claim to the throne, and then arranged for the assassination of the disolute Evil-Merodach (2 Kings 25:27; Jer. 52:31), to grasp the throne for himself. In doing so, it is believed that he established a precedent that Nabonidus followed, and that he also married a daughter of Nebuchadnezzar to legitimise his claim to the throne. This conforms with the requirements of Scripture. Jeremiah predicted that “all the nations shall serve him (Nebuchadnezzar) and his son, and his son’s son until the very time of his land come” (Jer. 27:7). Now, in Scripture the word for “son” does duty also for “grandson” completely reconciling the prophecy of Jeremiah with the facts recorded by Daniel in this chapter. It will be noted that the margin renders “son” as “grandson”.

“Made a great feast to a thousand of his lords” — Belshazzar (*Bel Protect the King*) evidently believed that the defences

of Babylon made it impervious to attack, and that being under the special protection of the Babylonian god Bel who, he believed, was powerful to save, he could face disaster with impunity. In those mistaken ideas, he gave himself over to pleasure and abandonment. The modern world does likewise, but as Babylon was brought to ruin, so also will it. Cyrus diverted the course of the River Euphrates, and along the dry bed of the river which flowed through the city, his warriors were led to attack and overthrow it. In Revelation 16: 15-16 these historical

details are used as the basis of the symbology of the Sixth Vial that describes the "drying up of the River Euphrates" that "the way of the Kings of the East might be prepared", through whom Babylon the Great will be judged and destroyed.

It is believed that Belshazzar's feast was an annual religious festival, a time of public rejoicing during which the whole night was given up to hedonistic revelling. The historian Herodotus states that Cyrus knew of this, and took advantage of it to attack the city. This night of feasting was predicted by Isaiah (Ch. 21: 4-5) and



Ground plan of ancient Babylon showing how the Euphrates ran through the centre of the city.

Jeremiah (Ch. 50:24; 51:39,57). Isaiah described the reaction of the king at the writing on the wall: "My heart panted, fearfulness affrighted me: the night of my pleasure hath He turned into fear unto me. . . ." Jeremiah prophesied: "In their heat I will make their feasts, and I will make them drunken, that they may rejoice, and sleep a perpetual sleep and not wake, saith Yahweh. . . ." "I will make drunk her princes, and her wise men, her captains, and her rulers and her mighty men: and they shall sleep a perpetual sleep, and not wake, saith the King whose name is Yahweh of hosts."

Belshazzar's feast anticipated the hedonism, the drunken and excessive revelry and blasphemy of peoples at the Time of the End. Inebriated by the wine of Babylon, they will not be able to reason clearly nor act coherently. Their madness will draw them along a course that will ultimately prove disastrous, leading to Armageddon. The feast surely anticipates the rejoicing of Rome at her seeming successful efforts to revive Papal power at the Time of the End (see Rev. 18:3,7): "She saith in her heart, I sit a queen; and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow". The manifestation of the Papacy in latter-day power was predicted by Paul who wrote of "the parousia" of the Wicked One "after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders" (2 Thess. 2:9). Concerning the word *parousia* rendered "coming", *The Vocabulary Of The New Testament* has this to say: "What, however, more especially concerns us in connection with the N.T. usage of *parousia* is the quasi-technical force of the word from Ptolemaic times onwards to denote the 'visit' of a king, emperor, or other person in authority, the official character of the 'visit' being further emphasised by the taxes or payments that were exacted to make preparations for it." Papyri are cited to show that Christians were conversant with this use of the word. On that basis, the "coming" mentioned by Paul has relation to the manifestation of the Papacy and the Pope with acknowledged power in the earth. This, as Daniel later was shown, will be with the support of Russia (Dan. 8:25).

"And drank wine before the thousand" — Belshazzar himself led in the drinking. The royal table was probably on a raised dais at the end of the huge banquetting hall. The hall itself would be colourfully

decorated with the images of the Chaldeans, painted in vermillion. The guests would be entertained by young people of both sexes playing music, chanting hymns, or performing dances in the orgiastic abandonment of eastern custom. Intoxication through drinking of wine was common at Babylonian religious carousals; and in this the King led the way (see Rev 17:2).

VERSE 2

"Belshazzar, while he tasted the wine, commanded to bring the golden and silver vessels which his father Nebuchadnezzar had taken out of the temple which was in Jerusalem" — The word translated "tasted" does not denote merely to sip the wine but to quaff it immoderately. As the King became heated with the fiery liquor, he became more reckless and unrestrained in conduct. His example was emulated by his guests who also gave themselves over to its influence until the wildest and most abandoned passions prevailed. In this drunken condition, the King devised a further act of blasphemous wickedness. Recalling the gold and silver vessels, taken by Nebuchadnezzar from the Temple at Jerusalem nearly seventy years before, and perhaps to show his contempt for the predictions of Daniel foretelling the fall of Babylon (cp Dan 7:1), the King impiously ordered that they be brought into the banquetting Hall, that he and his guests may drink therefrom in honour of his Babylonish gods, and to the humiliation of the God of the Hebrews. Unknown to the King, however, Jeremiah had predicted the overthrow of Babylon, and his predictions had been publicly read in the public square of that city (see pp 32-34). Moreover, though Jeremiah had earlier proclaimed that Jerusalem would fall before the might of Babylon, he had also predicted that "the vengeance of the Temple" would reach out to take its toll of that God-dishonouring city, and its monarch (Jer. 50:28). Belshazzar evidently knew some of these facts, but chose to deliberately ignore them (see Dan. 5:22-23).

"That the King, and his princes, his wives, and his concubines might drink therein" — The verse describes a descending scale of notables from the King to his concubines; the obvious intention of Belshazzar being to show his contempt for the worship of Yahweh. In view of his part-knowledge at least of Daniel's ministry, it

was probably an act of defiance against the God of Israel; an act of bravado to demonstrate before all, his indifference to such prophecies of doom as Daniel had proclaimed.

VERSE 3

"Then they brought the golden vessels that were taken out of the temple of the house of God which was at Jerusalem; and the King and his princes, and his wives, and his concubines, drank in them." — The servants obediently brought in the sacred vessels, and with wanton impiety the sacrilege was committed. The wine of Babylon was poured therein. In like manner, the heady intoxicating teaching of Rome today is served up in vessels that claim to belong to Christ! Jeremiah had predicted: "Babylon hath been a golden cup in Yahweh's hand that made all the earth drunken: the nations have drunken of her wine; therefore the nations are mad. Babylon is suddenly fallen and destroyed. . . ." (Jer. 51:7-8). The wine in that cup represented the power, wealth, luxury, glory, learning and heady religion of Babylon with all its emotional appeal. This had drawn the nations to drink therefrom, or to make alliances with the Empire (Jer. 25:15). This, however, was used by Yahweh as a medium of punishment and vengeance. But it also typically set forth what the future will reveal. What Belshazzar did at the feast typed what the Papacy will do shortly. (Rev. 17:4; 18:23). Babylon the Great, like its prototype, will come to its end suddenly and unexpectedly, providing a "proverb" that will be recalled in the Kingdom (Isa. 14:4).

How significant are Jeremiah's words following his statement cited above: "We would have healed Babylon, but she is not healed; forsake her . . ." (Jer. 51:9). Daniel and his companions had done everything possible to heal Babylon (see Dan. 4:27), but in vain. All that remained was to allow the judgments of God to fall upon the guilty city, and for those educated in the Truth who had answered the call of God, to forsake her. In like manner, the saints of God in this age have done all in their power to heal those under the religious dominance of Babylon the Great, by the proclamation of the Truth; and having done so, they must abandon her to her fate. The time is at hand when she and her adulterous progeny will likewise receive the judgments of God and

the cry will be heard: "Come out of her my people that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues" (Rev. 18:4).

VERSE 4

"They drank wine" — Impervious to the enemy at the gates of the city; indifferent to their fate, the king and his guests gave themselves to the wine before them, and in their inebriated, drunken stupor committed the grossest sacrilege (See Rev. 18:3). To "drink wine out of a cup" in such a fashion is to unite in covenant fellowship with those offering it, and so to endorse their policy or purpose. At Belshazzar's feast it meant that all who drank endorsed the King's action. A similar drinking of wine is described in Rev. 18:3, and signifies union on the part of the rulers of the Roman earth with the plans and policies of the Papacy. Such a union will be followed by international peace, and then, as in the case of historic Babylon, with "sudden destruction" (1 Thess. 5:3).

"And praised the gods of gold, and of silver, of brass, of iron, of wood, and of stone" — Babylon the Great also has its idols of gold, silver, and so on, to which its adherents pay reverence. The time is rapidly approaching when with the unmistakable manifestation of Divine power and majesty, men shall "cast their idols of silver and gold, which they have made for themselves to worship, to the moles and to the bats" (Isa. 2:20). See the warning of Habakkuk against those who practice the idolatry of Rome (Hab. 2:15-18). And Zechariah's prediction against the "idol shepherd" of the Papacy (Zech. 11:17).

The Writing On The Wall — vv.5-6

The drunken revelry is at its height. The lords and ladies of Babylon (answering to the kings and harlot daughters of Rev. 17:2,5) are heated and excited by wine. With mockery or indifference they view the desecration of Yahweh's holy vessels. But suddenly the praises of Bel die on the lips of the revellers, as they come face to face with the supernatural. A hand appears and writes on the wall: and having completed its message remains there covering the writing. Belshazzar, at his elevated table, sees the hand moving from right to left inscribing its message. Fear takes possession of him, as his staring eyes become riveted on the mysterious hand.

VERSE 5

“In the same hour came forth fingers of a man’s hand” — The drunken king, leading his people in their blasphemous revelry, had his attention drawn to a mysterious hand that suddenly appeared writing on a section of the most prominent part of the palace wall. The hand is the organ of action. It not only writes but acts. The one seen by the King was an angelic hand, directed by the angelic Committee of heaven. It seems to be linked with the action of the Cherubim that Ezekiel, Daniel’s contemporary, had seen in vision. Under their wings was hidden “the hand of a man” (Ezek. 1:8). This angelic “hand” gave to the prophet the “little scroll” containing the judgment of Yahweh (Ezek 8:3). As the organ of action it now appears in the palace of Belshazzar.



“And wrote over against the candlestick upon the plaister of the wall of the King’s palace” — The word “candlestick” is from the Hebrew *Nabrasha* signifying “to shine”, and therefore denoting a chandelier; and not from the word *Menorah* which would indicate a lampstand. The “plaister” describes the white stucco which formed part of the wall above its brightly painted bas-reliefs. Being adjacent to the chandelier, the writing was in the full glare of the most prominent and brilliantly illuminated portion of the palace.

“And the king saw the part of the hand that wrote” — The king saw a moving object materialise and recognised it as a hand. He saw only the hand, and not the body of the angel motivating it. Writing in Hebrew from right to left, the hand covered the letters as soon as they were written (see vv.8,24). The amazing, and

supernatural appearance struck the king dumb with fear. His eyes became fixed on the wall. The company seeing this, followed his gaze, and was similarly silenced in dumb fear. In consternation, those quaffing wine from the vessels provided, stopped doing so and returned them to the table; the drunken blasphemy and idiotic speech ceased, as the eyes of all were fixed on the wall to watch the mysterious hand that having finished its message, now remained against the wall covering the writing.

VERSE 6

“Then the king’s countenance was changed, and his thoughts troubled him;” — The word “countenance” is from the Chaldean *zivr*, a word that signifies “brightness”, “cheerfulness”. Belshazzar’s previous hilarity was now silenced by

fear. A pallor spread over his face as his bulging eyes remained fixed upon the mysterious hand on the wall. Deeply troubled in mind by the phenomenon, his fear was reflected in his general appearance.

“So that the joints of his loins were loosed, and his knees smote one against another” — So frightening was the theophany to Belshazzar that he could not control his emotion. He was seized with violent trembling so that he lost control of his limbs. In the abject state to which he was reduced there remained nothing regal, powerful, nor awe-inspiring in his appearance.

The Babylonian Clergy Fail To Help — vv.7-8.

In his abject, fear-ridden state, Belshazzar loudly calls for the assistance of the religious leaders and political advisers of his realm. He offers a grand reward to any

who can read and explain the writing. But in vain. None can do it.

VERSE 7

“The king cried aloud” — His fear so dominated Belshazzar as to cause him extreme nervousness. In a loud peremptory voice he demanded that the wise men of Babylon come into his presence to explain the mystery of the hand.

“To bring in the astrologers, the Chaldeans, and the soothsayers” — The various functions of the different groups brought before the king have already been explained. These, like the clergy of modern Babylon, were all skilled in the superstitions of its religion. For the astrologers, see Dan. 2:2. They claimed inspiration. The Chaldeans were a religious sect in Babylon (see Dan. 1:4). So completely did they fill the Ecclesiastical positions in the capital that their name became synonymous with the priests of Bel-Marduk, a principal god of the nation (see *Herodotus 1, 181, 183*). These priests were considered as possessing outstanding wisdom (Dan. 1:4; 2:2,4). The soothsayers were considered as being especially equipped to unravel mysteries. The title is derived from a root signifying *to cut or divide* (Ezek. 21:21). They were considered as having a special relationship with the gods, and therefore in a position to determine the meaning and significance of mysteries. Now called in by the king, they were given opportunity to demonstrate their ability and credentials. Meanwhile the banquetters left the luxurious couches upon which they had been reclining, and, gathering in groups, gazed with frightened eyes at the now motionless hand covering the writing on the wall. They cannot read the message it hides, but they are dominated by a sense of foreboding and crisis. This induces the greatest anxiety and trepidation; it silences the blasphemous words, drunken demands and licentious acts which previously characterised the feast. Their hopes were in the “wise men” who, at the bidding of the king, now assembled in the hall of the palace.

“And the king spake and said to the wise men of Babylon” — Babylon was noted for its so-called “wise men” (See Isa. 47:13), as is Babylon the Great today. At all times, both ancient and modern, men of the flesh have preferred to consult such, rather than the revelation of Yahweh.

“Whosoever shall read this writing, and shew me the interpretation thereof, shall be clothed with scarlet, and have a chain of gold about his neck, and shall be the third ruler in the kingdom” — Honours of the highest order were promised the one who could read and interpret the writing. This again implies that the writing was hidden, for there would be no difficulty in any reading the simple wording of the message, as later recorded in this chapter. The successful contestant was promised that he would be robed in a scarlet robe of royalty, would be decorated with a chain of gold about his neck as a symbol of his royal rank and authority (Gen. 41:42), and would share the third highest dignity of the Kingdom jointly with Nabonidus and Belshazzar.

It is significant that the rewards promised the successful contestant were similar to those promised by God to His faithful servants. Purple is the colour of royalty and of God manifestation (and the scarlet robe is rendered “purple” in the margin, and by the R. V. — see Exod. 25:4); gold is the symbol of a tried faith (1 Pet. 1:7); and a third place in the royal dignity of the future Kingdom of God will be shared by the saints in conjunction with the Father and the Son (Rev. 3:21).

VERSE 8

“Then came in all the king’s wise men; but they could not read the writing, nor make known to the king the interpretation thereof” — Being unable to read the writing, they were in an impossible situation to provide an interpretation. But why could they not read the writing? Because the hand covered it. Though some interpret the chapter as teaching that once the sentence was written, the hand disappeared; a closer look will reveal that such was not the case. Instead, the hand continued to cover the writing. To read it one would have to remove the angelic hand, and that was impossible to human power. There would have been no difficulty in reading the simple words of the message if the letters could have been seen.

VERSE 9

“Then was king Belshazzar greatly troubled, and his countenance was changed in him, and his lords were astonished.” — The King’s growing concern was manifested in his face, whilst his lords remained astonished and perplexed.

It was for them "a time of trouble" (Dan. 12:1), or in the words of the Lord: "distress with perplexity" (Luke 21:25). The fear of the king spread to the ministers of his court, until all were depressed and afraid, unable to explain what it was all about. In the meantime the Medes and Persians were taking steps to overthrow the city.

The Queen's Wise Council — vv. 10-12.

However, it is not all folly and fear in the Kingdom of Babylon. The Queen-mother, Nitocris, the daughter of Nebuchadnezzar, is not present at the feast, but hearing of the problem hurries to the Banqueting Hall to offer wise advice. She urges the king to seek the services of the one man who can help him: Daniel the captive Prophet.

VERSE 10

"Now the queen by reason of the words of the king and his lords came into the banquet house" — The Queen was the Queen-mother, or Nitocris the daughter of Nebuchadnezzar, for Belshazzar's wives were already in the hall feasting with him (v.3). Nitocris, hearing of the crisis, and entering the hall, saw the king and his guests overcome by fear and alarm. Nevertheless, her status was such that the greatest deference was paid her. On entering the banquet house, her attention was instantly directed to the strange hand covering the message on the wall. Immediately, she recognised that she was face to face with Divine intervention, and this turned her mind towards Daniel.

"And the queen spake and said, O king, live for ever; let not thy thoughts trouble thee, nor let thy countenance be changed" — The queen saw looks of fear and anxiety. She saw the gloom on the face of the king, the appearance of fright on the countenances of his guests. With pious concern, and doubtless affection, the queen greeted the king with the wish that he might live for ever; little did she realise that he would die that very night! (see v.30).

VERSE 11

"There is a man in thy kingdom, in whom is the spirit of the holy gods" — The eminence Daniel once enjoyed (Dan. 2:48), had evidently been withdrawn, and the prophet demoted on the elevation of the ungodly rulers who followed king

Nebuchadnezzar; and particularly by Belshazzar, even though he had received prophecies during the life of that wicked king (see Dan. 7:1; 8:1). During that period there had followed a sharp decline in the moral standards of Babylon. For all his idolatry, Nebuchadnezzar had a sense of moral accountability. But this had declined with his successors. The same decline in moral standards is manifested in Babylon the Great today; and at the same time there has been an equal increase in every form of wickedness until hardly any restraints remain. This fulfils the type presented in this chapter. Bro Thomas anticipated that as the End approached so wickedness would increase. A note in my Bible, placed there many years ago states: "In like manner the influence of the Truth will lose its impact (on the public mind) as the Time of the End approaches". That is certainly the case at the present: a significant sign of the times!

Meanwhile, the Queen-Mother of Babylon, representing an older generation repeated to Belshazzar the words of Nebuchadnezzar that in Daniel dwelt "the spirit of the holy gods" (Dan. 4:9).

"And in the days of thy father light and understanding and wisdom, like the wisdom of the gods was found in him" — The excellent impression that Daniel had made on Nebuchadnezzar was recalled by his daughter. Her description of Daniel as one who manifested "light and understanding and wisdom like the wisdom of the gods" expressed his understanding of Divine principles and purposes. In those areas he manifested exceptional sagacity. Today, those who heed Daniel's knowledge manifest a proper understanding of the significance of the times. They know the solution of current problems, and understand the purpose of God with the earth and man upon it. The humblest saint, basing his knowledge of current events on the Truth, possesses greater wisdom than the highest educated scholars of political philosophy.

"Whom the king Nebuchadnezzar thy father, the king I say, thy father" — The Queen-mother emphasised the relationship of the one who had acknowledged the outstanding wisdom and skill of Daniel. As a son Belshazzar should heed the opinion of his grandfather.

"Made master of the magicians, astrologers, Chaldeans, and sooth-

sayers." — Daniel had been appointed Master of the Magicians by Nebuchadnezzar. Occupying such an authoritative position he evidently used it to outline to them the Divine wisdom and knowledge imparted unto him, together with the time-periods God had given him. This knowledge was apparently passed on down through the centuries until the birth of Christ. Then, the attention of some of their number having been drawn to a "star in the east" which they saw as a sign, and this synchronising with the time period of Dan. 9:24-26, they made their way to Jerusalem enquiring as to where the King of the Jews had been born (Matt. 2:1-2).

VERSE 12

"Forasmuch as an excellent spirit" —

This first qualification describes the character of Daniel. His humble attitude, in spite of his outstanding knowledge, was an adornment to his excellent wisdom. See 1 Pet. 3:15.

"And knowledge, and understanding, interpreting of dreams, and shewing of hard sentences, and dissolving of doubts were shown in the same Daniel." —

Nebuchadnezzar had experienced all these qualifications of Daniel. His knowledge and understanding were beyond doubt, and acknowledged by his contemporaries (Ezek. 14:14; 28:3). Nebuchadnezzar had profited from his ability to explain dreams, and interpret hard sentences, as well as his skill in offering practical advice as to what should be done under certain circumstances; and that with fearless faithfulness (Dan. 4:27). There are many who are able to explain the significance of Scripture, but fail to provide sound, practical advice as to what should be done in specific circumstances. But Daniel, by a thoughtful consideration of the will and purpose of Yahweh, as illustrated in a dream, a vision or a hard sentence did not hesitate to set forth plainly the will of the Almighty. Now the queen lists six qualifications of the prophet, all of which were capable of assisting Belshazzar in his dilemma, and if to these is added the possession of the Holy Spirit guidance, there are seven in all which completes the value of his interpretation and advice.

"Whom the king named Belteshazzar" — The Queen reminds Belshazzar that Nebuchadnezzar had been so impressed with Daniel as to name upon

him the name of his god (see Ch. 4:8).

"Now let Daniel be called, and he will shew the interpretation" — The Queen had equal confidence in the ability of Daniel.

Daniel Before the King — vv.13-16

Brought in before Belshazzar, the king repeats the offer to the captive prophet that he has already made to his wise men and counsellors.

VERSE 13

"Then was Daniel brought in before the king, And the king spake and said unto Daniel, Art, thou that Daniel which art of the captivity of Judah, whom the king my father brought out of Jewry?" — The question of the King would imply that Daniel had been deposed from the position of Master of the Magi as held under Nebuchadnezzar (v.11). This may have been by Nabonidus or by Belshazzar. Perhaps the king may have desired to cover his own criminality in deposing Daniel by implying ignorance of the prophet's ability to expound.

VERSE 14

"I have even heard of thee, that the spirit of the gods is in thee, and that light and understanding and excellent wisdom is found in thee" — Belshazzar repeated the recommendation of his mother as expressed in verse 12.

Daniel Rejects the King's Gifts — vv.15-23

Daniel contemptuously refuses the gifts and honours proffered by the impious King. The gifts of a king or a nation whose doom is sealed are of little value. Nevertheless, he agrees to read the writing, but before doing so administers a sharp rebuke to the blasphemous monarch.

VERSE 15

"And now the wise men, the astrologers have been brought in before me, that they should read this writing, and make known unto me the interpretation of the thing" — See notes v.7.

"But they could not shew the interpretation of the thing" — This was a repetition of Nebuchadnezzar's experience. See Dan. 2:10-13.

VERSE 16

“And I have heard of thee, that thou canst make interpretations, and dissolve doubts; now if thou canst read the writing, and make known to me the interpretation thereof, thou shalt be clothed with scarlet and have a chain of gold about thy neck, and shalt be the third ruler in the kingdom” — Despite the King’s antipathy for Daniel and his God he made the same offer as he had given to the wise men and counsellors of his realm. See v. 7.

VERSE 17

“Then Daniel answered and said before the king, Let thy gifts be to thyself, and give thy rewards to another” — Daniel knew that Babylon was doomed. Isaiah had named its conqueror, whose armies were even then at the gates of the city (Isa. 45:1). Jeremiah had sent to Babylon a prediction in great detail of the conditions to which the city would be reduced by its conquerors, and the degree of degradation to which it would be brought (Jer. chps 50-51). Accordingly, Daniel rejected the gifts and honours of a blasphemous regime on the eve of its destruction as Abram had those of the King of Sodom in similar circumstances (Gen. 14:22-24). See also 3 John 7. In his prediction of the fall of Babylon, Isaiah declared: “he that is joined unto them shall fall by the sword” (Isa. 13: 15). Daniel sought to avoid that fate. His defiant rejection of the King’s honours and gifts was most courageous, and was proclaimed at risk of life, for the king still retained the power to avenge himself on the prophet.

“Yet I will read the writing unto the king, and make known to him the interpretation” — The interpretation of that message, still hidden by the angelic hand, would be a witness of truth against the King and his court.

VERSE 18

“O thou king, the most High God gave Nebuchadnezzar thy father a kingdom, and majesty, and glory, and honour” — The title Most High God defines Yahweh as “Possessor of heaven and earth” (Gen. 14:19), and therefore the One Who “rules in the kingdom of men, giving it to whomsoever He will” (see notes Dan. 4:17). For the extent of political glory Yahweh granted Nebuchadnezzar, see Dan. 2:37-38; 4:17, 25-26.

VERSE 19

“And for the majesty that He gave him, all people, nations and languages trembled and feared before him” — Yahweh granted unto Nebuchadnezzar dictatorial power such as flesh has seldom wielded. He had bestowed a great empire upon him, so that international greatness, glory and majesty had been his. Such monarchs normally treat their subjects as mere slaves.

“Whom he would he slew; and whom he would he kept alive; and whom he would he set up; and whom he would he put down” — So great was the mighty monarch that all mortals trembled before him: his was an absolute sovereignty. The arbitrary power of life and death was in his hands, so that the exaltation or degradation of individuals were subject to his caprice.

VERSE 20

“But when his heart was lifted up, and his mind hardened in pride, he was deposed from his Kingly throne, and they took his glory from him” — In spite of all his pride and power, Nebuchadnezzar was taught that he was but “a slave” before the Most High God (see Jer. 27:6). In the fullness of his might and arrogance he had suffered a humiliating reversal but had submitted to it in an admirable manner. This historical fact provided a signal warning and example to such as Belshazzar who had blasphemously humiliated the God of heaven.

VERSE 21

“And he was driven from the sons of men; and his heart was made like the beasts, and his dwelling was with the wild asses; they fed him with the grass like oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven;” — These were historical facts familiar to Belshazzar. In his day the madness of Nebuchadnezzar would not be disputed as it sometimes is today. (see Ch. 4:25).

“Till he knew that the Most High God ruled in the kingdom of men and that He appointed over it whomsoever He will” — It is that lesson that Yahweh desires all mankind to learn and heed (see Dan. 4:17). Only when the nations do so will they experience true peace. Meanwhile Belshazzar had an example he could emulate if he chose.

VERSE 22

“And thou his son, O Belshazzar, hast not humbled thine heart, though thou knewest all this” — The historical facts were known to Belshazzar, but he chose to deliberately ignore them, and flout the God of Israel. The world does so today. Both he and it are more culpable because of this fact.

VERSE 23

“But hast lifted up thyself against the Lord of heaven” — Nebuchadnezzar had submitted in spite of his pride; but Belshazzar had pursued a path of arrogant provocation against the Lord or Dictator of heaven.

“And they have brought the vessels of His house before thee, and thy lords, thy wives, and thy concubines, have drunk wine in them; and thou hast praised the gods of silver, and gold, of brass, iron, wood, and stone, which see not nor hear, nor know; and the God in Whose hand thy breath is, and Whose are all thy ways, hast thou not glorified” — Belshazzar had (1) arrogantly set himself up against God; (2) mocked at Him as though He were powerless, by publicly and contemptuously displaying the captured vessels of the Temple; (3) committed sacrilege by profaning them by using them as drinking vessels; (4) refused to acknowledge the One who had humbled his grandfather, and Who is the Author of life; (5) set aside the teaching brought home to Nebuchadnezzar and which he incorporated in the public decree he issued: that the Most High rules in the kingdom of men; (6) heaped reproach and indignity upon Yahweh by praising the gods of silver, gold, brass, iron, wood and stone, which Daniel now sarcastically declared with scorching ridicule, can neither see, hear, or know. Belshazzar’s sin was inexcusable. It was wanton and deliberate. The King knew what he was doing, and the example he set before others must be revealed as such and punished accordingly. Belshazzar’s action is repeated today, and the time of retribution is approaching.

The Writing On The Wall — vv. 24-29

As Daniel concludes his public and scorching rebuke, the hand is removed, the writing is revealed, and Heaven’s decree of doom is read and interpreted. In spite of the dire warning it discloses, Belshazzar fulfils his promise, and Daniel is promoted.

VERSE 24

“Then was the part of the hand sent from him; and this writing was written” — This statement shows that previously the hand covered the writing, but now it was removed to reveal the message recorded.

VERSE 25

“And this is the writing that was written” — As the hand was removed and the writing revealed, all eyes turned to it, to read the simple words that then appeared.

“Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin” — This literally signifies *Numbered, Numbered, Weighed, Divided* — No difficulty attached to the reading of those words, but what did they proclaim?

Daniel proceeded to reveal this.

VERSE 26

“Mene, Mene” — The word is doubled. Why? Because of the certainty of the vision. Joseph revealed this to Pharaoh in interpreting his dreams: “The dream was doubled unto Pharaoh twice; it is because the thing is *established by God*, and God will *shortly bring it to pass*” (Gen. 41:32). Daniel explained the meaning of the doubled word:

“God hath numbered thy kingdom, and finished it” — See Daniel’s comments on the ability of Yahweh to do this (Dan. 2:21). See also Paul’s exposition in Acts 17:25-26. The days of Babylon had been numbered and were at an end.

VERSE 27

“Tekel” — This word signifies *weighed*. It is from a common root with the word *shekel* and signifies to weigh or balance a thing. The shekel, as a coin, was of an established weight. As a part of the sentence *tekel* indicated that the time of judgment on Babylon was set beyond all change, and that the punishment would fit the crime.

“Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting” — Neither men nor nations are set in power to please themselves. They are responsible to God for what they do. When they go beyond the limits of what He permits, He will exact judgment upon them. Babylon’s blasphemy had gone beyond what Yahweh was prepared to tolerate, and hence judgment had been designed to be poured out at the set time. In similar manner, Baby-

lon the Great has ignored Yahweh's requirements and is facing judgment which will be administered at the set time laid down (Dan. 7:11). This set time is named "the day of Yahweh" (Isa. 12:2; Zech 14:1-22). It marks off a period when He will be vindicated in the judgments to be poured out upon a blasphemous, rebellious, immoral age.

VERSE 28

"Peres" — Upharsin (v.25) is a participle of the same verb from which *Peres* is derived. It signifies *and they divided it*. The Persians were known to the Chaldeans as *Paros*, therefore, there is a play upon the words. *Peres* indicated not only the dividing that would take place, but also implied that Babylon would be given to the Persians.

"Thy kingdom is divided and given to the Medes and Persians" -- As the army of the Medes and Persians was then at the gates of Babylon, Belshazzar might consider that great ability had not been displayed by Daniel in predicting the conquest of the city. Isaiah had foretold who would take it (Isa. 45:1), and the writing on the wall taught that the attack would succeed. But Isaiah had also spoken of Cyrus in terms that set him forth as a type of Christ, describing him as Yahweh's Anointed or Christ (Isa. 45:1), and describing his victory in terms that apply also to the conquests of the Lord in the Age to come. It is the height of significance, therefore, that *The Apocalypse* describes the drying up of the political Euphrates "that the way of the kings who are out of a sun's rising" might be prepared (Rev. 16:12). Daniel had long waited this moment, for he looked for the restoration of his people as a consequence of the victory of Cyrus. He had watched his conquests with the greatest interest. However, it must also have been for him a frustrating experience, for Cyrus seemed to lead his army everywhere but to Babylon. He attacked Nineveh, Asia Minor, and other nations before moving to Babylon. Daniel must have experienced the same impatience that saints do today. They see Russia growing in power, making demands, and extending its influence. But when will it take Turkey?

VERSE 29

"Then commanded Belshazzar" —

Daniel had rejected the offer of promotion by the king (v.17), but Belshazzar was determined to carry it out. Under the circumstances it became helpful to Daniel. Being elevated to the third highest position in the Kingdom not only granted him great honour, but also proved advantageous. For, with Belshazzar dead, and Nabonidus absent, Daniel remained the one with whom the enemy had to negotiate regarding the terms of capitulation.

"And they clothed Daniel with scarlet, and put a chain of gold about his neck, and made a proclamation concerning him, that he should be the third ruler in the kingdom" — See notes on v.7

The Conquest of Babylon — vv.30-31

Judgment is not long postponed. That night the city was conquered and the blasphemous king slain. Yahweh, Who holds everything in His hands determines "the times before appointed and the bounds of their (the nations) habitations". Just as He placed power in the hands of Nebuchadnezzar to accomplish His will, He now removes it from the hands of his grandson so that His purpose might be advanced.

VERSE 30

"In that night was Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans slain" — This simple statement sums up the drama of the mighty city's overthrow. An historian of ancient times, Xenophon (*Cyrop.* 7:5) is quoted as stating: "But Cyrus, when he heard that there was to be such a feast in Babylon in which all the Babylonians would feast and revel through the whole night, on that night, as soon as it began to grow dark, taking many men, opened the dams into the river (i.e. he opened the dykes which had been made by Semiramis and her successors to confine the waters of the Euphrates to one channel), and allowed them to again flood the country, so that he could enter Babylon beneath its walls in the channel of the river". He quotes the address of Cyrus to his army: "Now let us go up against them. Many of them are asleep; many of them are intoxicated; and all of them are unfit for battle". Herodotus (*Book 1:19*) states: "It was a day of festivity among them; and whilst the citizens were engaged in dance and merriment, Babylon was, for the first time, thus taken". Isaiah predicted that the gates of brass would no longer provide

a defence, and that the "bars of iron would be cut asunder" (Isa. 45:2). Herodotus states that these brazen gates were situated along the banks of the river, but at the time of the attack, some of them had been left open, probably by some within the city who had come to terms with the Persians.

VERSE 31

"And Darius the Median took the kingdom" — Nearly twenty years earlier than the fall of Babylon, Cyrus of Persia had risen to power. He commenced his conquests by dethroning Astyages, the last king of Media, and absorbing Media into the Persian empire. He next came into conflict with the wealthy Croesus of Lydia who then dominated most of Asia Minor. Defeating him, he became master of the Lydian Empire. His next foe was Babylon, and he swept over Babylonian territory in Upper Assyria and defeated Nabonidus, the king of Babylon, who retired to consolidate his forces in the sacred city of Borsippa. Babylon with Belshazzar reigning as co-regent, remained to be taken. The city was strongly fortified with massive double walls some hundreds of feet high and eighty-five feet (30 m. wide). *Smith's Bible Dictionary* states:

"These walls were strengthened by two hundred and fifty towers and pierced with a hundred gateways, the lintels and side posts, as well as the gates themselves, being of brass". The city was divided into two by the river Euphrates, and "the river was enclosed on both banks by quays, which were likewise protected by walls and brass gates" (see Jer. 50:15; 51:52,58).

Such a city might well have been deemed impregnable, but Cyrus took the only course open to him. As foretold in Jer. 50:38, he diverted the course of the Euphrates into a channel. He waited until the drunken, religious festival in honour of the god Bel-Marduk and the goddess Ishtar was held. It was conducted with the greatest religious frenzy. Drunken revelry held the city in its grasp throughout the night. In the attack upon the city Belshazzar was slain; Nabonidus had already surrendered, and had received in compensation a principality in Carmania; and Babylon was incorporated into the Persian empire under Darius.

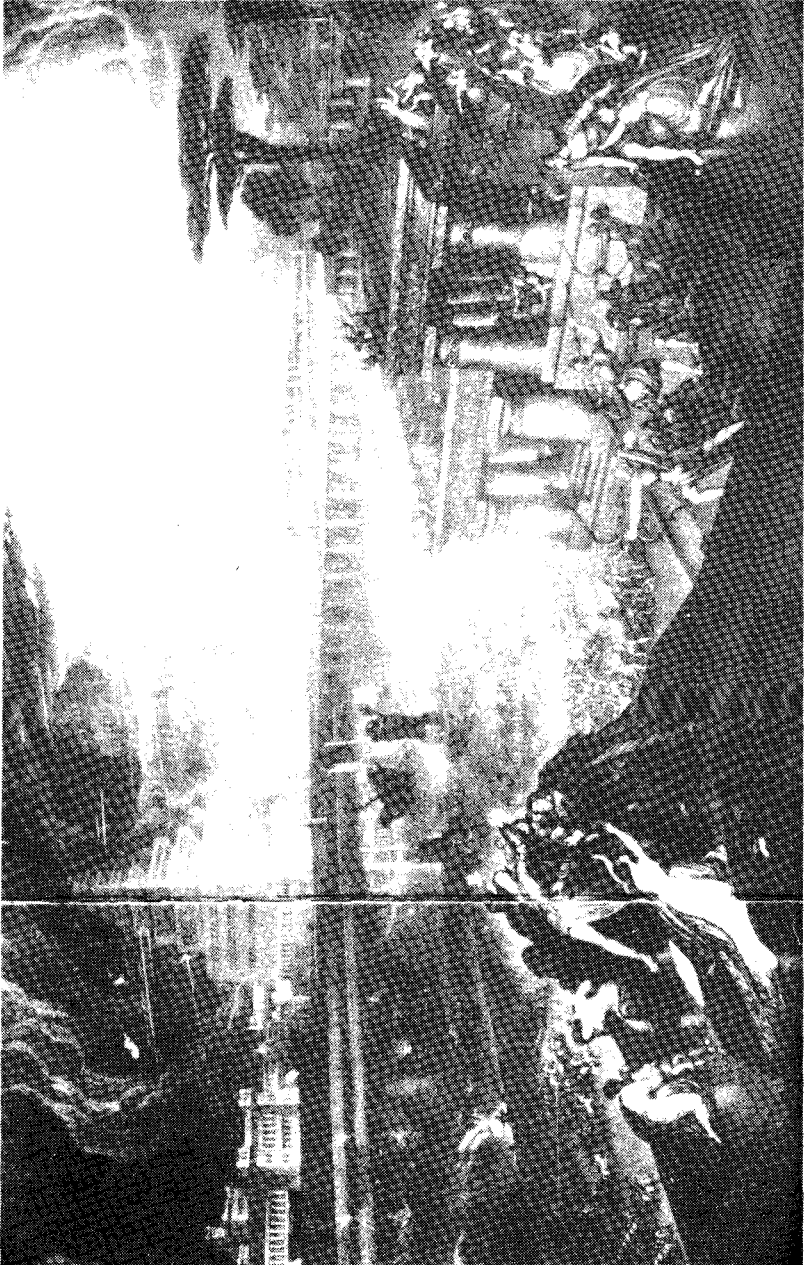
"Being about threescore and two years old" — Who was this Darius? Speculation

has been rife in an attempt to answer that question. First it needs to be kept in mind, that Darius is not a name but an appellative, a title, which was borne by several Kings, and which means *The Subduer*. It is claimed by some that the Darius of this verse was a title given Cyaxares II, the son of Astyages, and the uncle or father-in-law of Cyrus. If that were the case, Cyrus exercised wise diplomacy placing his relation of Media upon the throne. J. C. Whitcomb, however, in *Darius the Mede* argues that it was a title given to Gubaru, the Governor of Babylon, who is referred to in various 6th century B.C. cuneiform texts. He claims that Cyrus left Babylon after its fall, departing for Ecbatana, and appointed Darius Gubaru as ruler, subordinate, of course, to himself. In the prophecy relating to Medo-Persia the bear is shown as lop-sided, and Bro. Thomas interprets that as representing the dominance assumed by the Persians over the Medes. Though the Medo-Persian Empire represented a joint monarchy, Median kings ruled for only two years, whilst Persians ruled for over two hundred years, until challenged by Rome. The claim that Darius relates to Gubaru made by J. Whitcomb is endorsed by Unger. See his *Bible Dictionary*.

However, the claim that "Darius the Mede" relates to Gubaru does not seem appropriate in view of the great authority exercised by the Darius as depicted by Daniel, nor of his identification as "the son of Ahasuerus" (Dan. 9:1). Rollin's *Ancient History* claims that Cyrus, as a diplomatic move, elevated a Median relation to power in Babylon who ruled therein for a short time. This conforms to the character of Cyrus, and answers all the requirements of the Book of Daniel. In Dan. 9:1, Darius the Mede is said to be "made king over the realm of the Chaldeans" which describes an appointment, but not a conquest. It is translated from *gebal* which can signify to "acquire" a thing. The RV renders the statement as "received it". This conforms to the circumstances. In Dan. 9:1 Darius is said to be "made king over the realm of the Chaldeans". When Cyrus left for other parts to consolidate his gains he appointed his relation the Mede as ruler over his realm.

R. Collins in *The Medes And Persians* writes:

"Contrary to custom, Astyages wasn't slain. Cyrus—great,—great—Grandson



19th-century painting showing the destruction of Babylon.

of Achaemenes and soon to become the noblest Persian of all, took the old man (his Median predecessor whom he had defeated in battle) into the court and dealt with him sympathetically for the remainder of his life. It was an unusual touch of humanity for those savage times and a sign of better things to come.

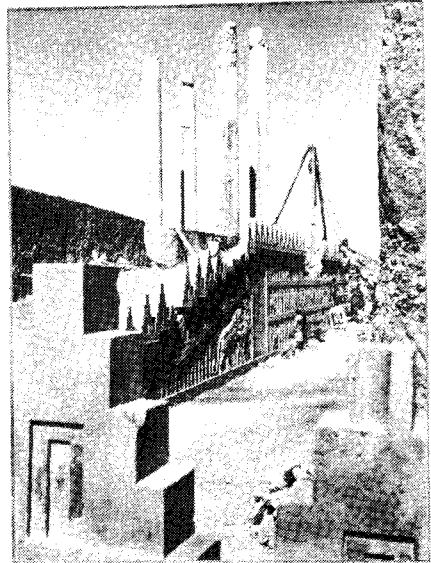
The reference to the age of Astyages by R. Collins conforms to the statement of this verse.

Therefore, we differ from J.C. Whitcomb in identifying "Darius the Mede" as Gubaru. Surely, a limited ruler over Babylon would not have been granted the widespread power indicated in the next chapter. Nor could it be said of Gubaru that he was the "son of Ahasuerus" of the "seed of the Medes" (Dan. 9:1). Who was this Ahasuerus? As with the appellation "Darius", Ahasuerus was a title signifying *The Mighty*, and as such was used by a number of Median and Persian monarchs. It therefore, could relate to the father of Astyages, the relative of Cyrus as suggested. It seems more in line with the circumstances that Cyrus should elevate his relative the Mede to a high position in the Kingdom whilst he completed his conquests, than that he should give such authority to one like Gubaru who certainly does not conform to the description of Dan. 9:1. We therefore believe that the ruler in the chapter before us (but not the Darius of Dan. 6) was a nominee and relative of Cyrus who ruled for a short time conforming to the prophetic description of the "bear" (Dan. 7:5). Daniel, therefore, had the great privilege of witnessing portion of his prophecies being fulfilled. The age of the ruler, whoever he may have been indicates that his term of office would be very limited; in fact, it lasted only two years.

Though Cyrus conquered Babylon so that it passed under the control of the Medo-Persian empire, the predicted destruction of the city did not take place until hundreds of years later. It was still a flourishing city in New Testament times, and for a while Peter made it the centre of his activities (1 Pet. 5:13). After the destruction of the Jewish State in A.D. 70 and 135, Babylon became a centre of Jewish learning, and the so-called Patriarch of Babylon exercised considerable influence over Jews throughout the east-

ern sector of the Roman Empire. But gradually the decay of the city set in, and though long delayed, it ultimately was overthrown and destroyed. The wheels of God might turn slowly, as men consider time, but they grind exceedingly small.

Meanwhile, with Daniel appointed ruler by Belshazzar, Darius, as representing Cyrus, negotiated with the prophet regarding the terms of capitulation of the city. This ultimately brought Daniel into contact with Cyrus himself.



The newly discovered stairway in front of the Audience Hall of Darius at Persepolis

The Fall of Babylon

Following the death of Nebuchadnezzar, dissatisfaction, violence and revolt swept Babylon. Evil Merodach, his successor, after a short reign was assassinated. His successor who headed the revolt did not last long; and his son was murdered within a year. Unrest continued during the reign of Nabonidus. Five years after he came to the throne, Cyrus the Persian overthrew Astyages the Mede, whose capital, Ecbatana, he made the headquarters of his enlarged kingdom. Nabonidus reacted to this victory by moving into Arabia Felix, leaving his son Belshazzar in control of Babylonia to suffer the defeat that followed.

According to the Cyrus Cylinder, Babylonia not only suffered from inefficient administration, but also from a religious crisis. Hostility had been shown to local cults, including those of Ur and Marduk. Cyrus claimed to march at the direction of all the gods captured by the Babylonians, so that his occupation of the city was claimed to be by divine intervention.

According to the Nabonidus Chronicle "Ugbaru, the governor of Gutium led the forces". But this is disputed. Xenophon states that Gobyras a traitor and leader of Babylonian malcontents did so, though the two names may describe the one person. Apparently, sympathisers within the city opened some of the gates along the banks of the Euphrates, giving the invaders access to the city proper (see Isa. 45:2). After a proclamation warning Babylonians to keep out of the way, any found in the streets of the city were put to the sword.

Persian policy allowed for religious tolerance; and Cyrus proclaimed liberty to the captives of all nations found in Babylonia. The elevation of Daniel by Belshazzar to third ruler doubtless brought him into prominence before Cyrus. Daniel could well have shown him the prophecies of Isaiah (in which Cyrus is specifically named) and of Jeremiah. Or, for that matter, some of his own prophecies: the silver kingdom of the Image; and the Bear prophecy received in the first year of Belshazzar (Dan. 7:1,5). This, attested by the miracles for which he was well known, could have contributed to the elevation of his status in the Persian Kingdom as described in Daniel 6.

CHAPTER SIX

HEATHEN PERSECUTORS JUDGED

The theme of judgment continues in this further and final biographical chapter of Daniel's life. Elevated to high authority under Darius in the Kingdom of Cyrus, he becomes the mark for the jealous envy of other high officials. However, their closest scrutiny reveals him to be impeccable in conduct and incorruptable in integrity. They come to the conclusion that the only way they will be able to degrade him is on the score of his religion. They conspire to do this, and with lies and flattery induce the King to issue a decree forbidding any to ask a petition of either God or man, apart from the King, for a period of thirty days. Foolishly the King is taken in the trap and issues the decree. But to no avail as far as Daniel is concerned. Whilst he is prepared to obey the King in all matters that do not conflict with the requirements of the higher King of heaven, he is not prepared to waive his obligations and privileges of worship; nor to disguise the fact. Openly he continues with his normal practice of prayer and is found so doing by those who seek his disgrace. The king is informed that he has broken the royal decree, and reluctantly the writs are issued in his name to bring Daniel to judgment. Darius makes every attempt to save Daniel, but in vain: he is caught in the mesh of his own laws, and so is compelled to submit. He does so with the declaration to Daniel that only his God can save him, and then orders that he be placed in the lions' den. But Yahweh saves His prophet. He sends an angel who protects Daniel from the claws and teeth of the savage beasts. Daniel is saved, and his persecutors are condemned. The chapter ends with the death of Daniel's persecutors, and with the King ascribing the highest praise to the God of Daniel. The record is an outstanding example of a saving faith (Heb. 11:33), providing encouragement to such as Paul who likewise thanked God inasmuch as he, too, "was delivered out of the mouth of the lion" (2 Tim. 4:17).

Key verses are: vv.3-5; 10; 16; 20; 23; 26.

Elevation Of Daniel — vv. 1-3

In the absence of Nabonidus, from Babylon, and with the death of Belshazzar, Daniel, remains third highest in the captured city (Ch. 5:29). This brings him prominently before its conquerors. His status of authority is reconfirmed by Darius.

VERSE 1

“It pleased Darius” — Who was the Darius of this chapter? He is generally identified with the Darius of Ch. 5:31. But the statement there defining that Darius as “Darius the Median” would suggest the need to discriminate between the two thus described. Darius is not a name but an appellative meaning *The Restrainer* (see *Herodotus 6:98*), or *The Maintainer* (Pro. Sayce). It was a title used by several monarchs. Archaeologists and historians are uncertain of the identity of this Darius. D. Winton Thomas in *Documents from Old Testament Times* states: “The recent discovery of a text of Nabonidus from Harran which refers to ‘the King of the Medes’ re-opens the historicity of this Median and makes it possible that it was but another name and title for Cyrus himself”. Certainly, whoever he was, he exercised considerable power and influence which would hardly accord with the authority of one wielding but local and limited control. But what are we to make of the statement of Ch. 6:28 which discriminates between Darius and Cyrus? That verse can read “*This Daniel prospered in the reign of Darius, even in the reign of Cyrus the Persian*”. It is acknowledged that such a rendering is quite permissible linguistically. It would accord with the statement found in the Nabonidus chronicle which describes Cyrus as “King of the Medes”. Moreover, the prophecy of Daniel 7:5 demands the elevation of a Mede to power for a short period before Cyrus, followed by a Persian dynasty from thence afterwards. In view of that requirement, the suggestion of Bro. Thomas (drawn from *Rollins History*) could well provide the true answer to the problem. He claimed that Cyrus, as a diplomatic measure, elevated a relative, a Mede, to a ruling position in Babylon as either a vassal king or co-ruler over the city. In conformity with this, the *Book of Daniel* discriminates between Darius the Mede, and the Darius of this chapter, who has not that distinguishing addition to his

title. The terms describing the Darius of this chapter would imply a dominant ruler rather than a subordinate one; and could relate to Cyrus himself. As indicated above, *Darius* was a title used by a number of Persian monarchs in addition to other titles they claimed.

“To set over the kingdom” — It was a well-attested policy of Cyrus to appoint military prefects over districts of conquered countries in order to enforce order and to suppress any incipient insurrection. The number of appointments varied from time to time according to circumstances. The kingdom over which they were appointed is described as “the whole kingdom” and not merely the city of Babylon. This hardly would apply to an appointee such as Gubaru as suggested by J.C. Whitcombe and endorsed by Unger.

“An hundred and twenty princes, which should be over the whole kingdom” — In the days of Esther, the Empire was divided into 127 provinces. This provides no discrepancy, for, as indicated above, the division of the Empire into varying numbers of provinces was governed by circumstances and need. As the Empire was extended, the need increased.

The term “prince” denotes a satrap, governor or lieutenant. The Persian ruler delegated his authority such as his extending conquests demanded.

VERSE 2

“And over these three presidents” — These three presidents provided the basis of authority. They are represented as the “three ribs” in the mouth of the bear (Dan. 7:5).

“Over whom Daniel was first” — **The elevation of Daniel was viewed with jealousy by his fellow presidents.**

“That the princes might give accounts unto them, and the king should have no damage” — The three princes carefully supervised the collection of taxes and other matters, accounting to the King. As Daniel was chief, all such accounts were under his care. His integrity was beyond doubt, but it angered his fellow presidents and the princes, who, perhaps, would have liked to have enriched themselves at the king’s expense! Perhaps the refusal of Daniel to enter into any such scheming caused the trouble that arose.

VERSE 3

“Then this Daniel was preferred above the presidents and princes” — Daniel was set above all the others. He was by now a very old man, over 90 years of age. But he evidently retained his virility and was active and reliable in whatever ministerial duties were given into his care. He was conscientious and faithful in his worship of Yahweh, and revealed the same characteristics in his service to the King. Being thus “faithful in that which is another man’s” he qualified for a position of authority in the Kingdom to come which will be his lot in fact, and not merely by delegation (Luke 16:12; Dan. 12:13). He thus had “a good report of them who were without” (1 Tim. 3:7), exhibiting the principle advanced by Paul: “Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh; not with eyeservice, as men pleasers; but in singleness of heart, fearing God” (Col. 3:22).

“Because an excellent spirit was in him” — The “excellent spirit” found in him was similar to that commended in Matt. 5:3; 26:41.

Laying a Trap For Daniel — vv. 4-9

The favour shown Daniel incites the jealous enmity of his fellow presidents and satraps. They seek means to undermine his influence and standing, and secure his removal from the authority vested in him. They frankly acknowledge that the quality of his service to the crown is above reproach, and no charge can succeed against him unless it be “concerning the law of his God”. What a wonderful witness to the integrity of this old man, and to his God Who motivated such characteristics by His word.

VERSE 4

“Then the presidents and princes sought to find occasion against Daniel concerning the Kingdom” — Success in life generally results in envy on the part of others (Ecc. 4:4). Moreover, Daniel belonged to an alien race, almost universally disliked. Both these considerations could have motivated the antagonism of his peers and those under him. But it was most likely stimulated by a further matter. It may have been that his fidelity contrasted with their corruption. Normally, such officials used their position to enrich themselves. They had no hope of doing so

whilst Daniel occupied the highest position, for all their accounts were under his supervision (v.2). They are shown by the record to be dishonest, for they did not scruple to lie to the king in order to secure an occasion against Daniel.

“But they could find none occasion nor fault” — Daniel in their midst was an object of antagonism as the Lord was in the midst of Jewry 1900 years ago! The adversaries of the prophet and the Lord tried to find occasions against them, but in vain.

“Forasmuch as he was faithful, neither was there any error or fault found in him”

— They evidently believed that an accounting of his transactions would reveal that he had dishonestly made gain for himself; in short, they judged him on the basis of their own dishonesty. If they had opportunity they would certainly enrich themselves at the expense of the King! But there was no “error” in Daniel’s books of account. The Truth he proclaimed in doctrine was reflected in his day by day conduct. This increased their spite and malice against him. He was an outstanding example of a true “stranger and pilgrim”, having his “way of life honest among the Gentiles; that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation” (see 1 Pet. 2:11-20). See also Dan. 3:29 mg.; Phil 2:15; Tit. 2:8; 1 Pet. 3:16; 4:14-16.

VERSE 5

“Then said these men, We shall not find any occasion against this Daniel, except we find it against him concerning the law of his God”

— What a marvellous testimony in the mouth of unscrupulous liars. Paul set himself the same objective in life: “Herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence toward God, and toward men” (Acts. 24:16). The Lord challenged his equally unscrupulous adversaries: “Which of you convicteth me of sin? And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me?” (John. 8:46). The only line of attack remaining open to Daniel’s opponents was in the “law of his God”. And that posed a great problem; for Cyrus had proclaimed a policy of religious tolerance for all forms of worship. But it is never difficult for unscrupulous men to defeat the laws of the

land! These men carefully considered the facts, sought out a cunning way to secure their ends, and arranged for a petition to be presented to the King.

VERSE 6

“Then these presidents and princes assembled together to the king” — The word “assembled” is from *regash* which signifies to assemble *tumultuously*. These officials made their way into the presence of the King with every appearance of earnestness and excitement as though it was of the utmost urgency that the king instantly concur with their request. They presented to Darius that their request should be granted immediately, probably implying that to do so would prevent an uprising. Notice that the same means were used to procure a conviction against the Lord (Matt. 27:23-25), and against the Apostle Paul (Acts 22:22-23). And will be manifested by nations at Christ’s coming (Ps. 2:1-2). It is a common strategy of the flesh to gain a conviction against one whose conduct of doctrine they cannot successfully challenge.

“And said thus unto him, King Darius, live for ever.” — This was a common expression of getting signifying that the rule of the King be not interrupted.

VERSE 7

“All the presidents of the kingdom, the governors, and the princes, the counselors, and the captains, have consulted together to establish a royal statute, and to make a firm decree” — The decree was a binding interdict as the margin states, and as such, once signed, could not be changed (vv. 8, 9, 12, 13, 15). But it was based upon a lie; for those presenting it claimed that “all the presidents” that is, all *three* had agreed to the law. This was not so. Daniel had not been consulted; and probably many other officials likewise had been ignored. In claiming that all had agreed to the proposal, the two presidents and the princes were able to press the urgency of their request.

“That whosoever shall ask a petition of any God or man for thirty days, save of thee, O king, he shall be cast into the den of lions” — There is nothing unusual in this request. The kings of ancient times were identified with the national gods, and were themselves considered divine. Indeed, death on the part of a king was

considered as the gateway to the world of the gods. It is claimed that “the kings of the Medes and Persians were regarded and worshipped as representatives and incarnations of Ormuzd” the national god. The request that prayer should only be offered to him, as required by these officials, was perfectly reasonable according to the Persian religion. The limitation of it to thirty days did not oppose the injunction of Cyrus granting religious freedom to foreigners under his realm, for after that time each could revert to his normal custom. The limitation to thirty days, however, was to illustrate that as Medo-Persia exercised control over the other nations, and did so in the name of its national god, so Ormuzd was higher than the gods of other nations, including Yahweh.

To authorise such a decree, however, it is obvious that Darius was of higher status than such as Gubaru, who surely would not have the authority to execute such a decree, nor to speak in the name of the Persian god.

VERSE 8

“Now, O King, establish the decree, and sign the writing, that it be not changed, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which altereth not”

— The deputation clearly stated that the law proposed would be irrevocable; but did so in the name of Daniel as well as themselves.

VERSE 9

“Wherefore king Darius signed the writing and the decree” — Having received the signature of the king, the two presidents and the princes in the plot believed that the fate of Daniel was sealed.

Daniel’s Fearless Faithfulness — vv. 10-13

The proclamation of the decree makes no difference to Daniel’s actions as far as Yahweh is concerned. His fidelity to God matches the service he renders his monarch; and he is not prepared to deviate from his responsibilities of worship and prayer. In full recognition of what will happen, he continues his devotions, and is accused before Darius of breaking the law.

VERSE 10

“Now when Daniel knew that the writ-

ing was signed, he went into his house” — Daniel’s actions in returning to his house for the purpose of prayer was not dictated by defiance of the Law, but because it was his normal habit so to do at specific times. Despite the decree’s prohibition, he saw no reason to change a custom made necessary by his love of Yahweh. He accounted his life of secondary importance to obedience to God, with its prospect of life eternal in the age to come (see Luke, 14:26). This is a requirement of true discipleship in every age. The Apostles acted similarly, and when accused of the Jews, responded: “Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard” (Acts 4:16-20). Again: “We ought to obey God rather than men” (Acts, 5:29). This has been the attitude of faithful believers throughout the ages. Of them it can be recorded: “They overcame by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death” (Rev. 12:11).

“And his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem” — The word for “chamber” is *allyth*, and like *Aliyah* signifies a *going up*, and therefore implies a room built on the flat roof of the dwelling.

The normal eastern house for such an official as described by travellers and archaeologists was a large capacious building containing many rooms set apart for various officers of State who were under the superintendence of the occupier, and one large airy room at the top, in which were large windows filled with shutters that could be opened or closed at will. Daniel saw no reason to close the shutters in order to pray; the prohibition of the decree was a challenge he accepted in faith. Following the instructions of 1 Kings 8:48-49, Daniel fearlessly set his face towards Jerusalem at the open window and maintained his habit of prayer. See Ps. 5:7.

“He kneeled upon his knees three times a day and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime” — The three times were morning, midday and at evening. At midday the hands of a clock converge to point to heaven; and men of God saw it as an appropriate time to do likewise. Daniel’s three daily prayers are suggested by the statement of Ps. 55:17. It

evidently was a custom maintained by the Apostles as is implied by Acts 10:9. This wonderful and courageous act of faith demonstrated the fearless fidelity of Daniel towards Yahweh.

VERSE 11

“Then these men assembled, and found Daniel praying and making supplication before his God” — Daniel’s faith made him fearless and calm in spite of the threat against his life. His habit of regularly praying was well known to his adversaries (cp. vv.5-6), so they gathered in concert at his house at the appropriate times.

VERSE 12

“Then they came near, and spake before the king concerning the king’s decree; Hast thou not signed a decree, that every man that shall ask a petition of any God or man within thirty days, save of thee, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions?” — As noted previously, the decree did not mean the abandonment of religion, for the king was looked upon as divine. An ancient historian wrote: “The Persians are not only pious in worshipping their kings among the gods, but wise in so doing, for this majesty is a protection to the Empire.” The terms of the decree suggest that the Darius of this chapter was a Persian, and not a Mede as was the Darius of the previous one (see v.28).

“The King answered and said, The thing is true, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which altereth not” — The despicable character of these officials was revealed in their action. Having discovered the object of their jealous hatred in the midst of his religious exercises, they immediately hastened into the king’s presence to ensure judgement against Daniel. Little suspecting their plot, the King calmly replied to their question that, yes, indeed, the decree had been authorised and must be carried out.

VERSE 13

“Then answered they and said before the king, That Daniel, which is of the children of the captivity of Judah, regardeth not thee, O king, nor the decree that thou hast signed, but maketh his petition three times a day” — Having entangled Darius and made it impossible for him to retract, they present their case carefully and cleverly. They first emphasise Daniel’s Jewish

origin. This is given to add to the offence. That a foreigner, a member of a hated nation, should show such base ingratitude to the king who had elevated him highly added to the measure of his guilt. They are quite unscrupulous in their presentation of their case. They allege that Daniel has no thought of the King, nor his law. This, of course, was quite untrue; as evidenced by the outstanding service that the prophet had rendered. And Darius knew that it was untrue; he clearly saw through their sophistry; and now realised that he had been trapped.

The Execution Of The Sentence

— vv. 14-16

Darius is angered when he learns how his perfidious princes have deceived him; but he is unable to do anything about it. The laws of the realm prohibit the revoking of any such decree. He seeks every way to deliver Daniel out of the legal trap in which both he and the Prophet have been caught; but in vain. The schemers press their advantage heartlessly and shamelessly until the sentence is executed.

VERSE 14

“Then the king, when he heard these words, was sore displeased with himself, and set his heart on Daniel to deliver him”

— The Chaldean word rendered displeased, *beayich*, signifies to be rotten! It implies such distress of mind as to cause rotteness in the bones. From this it is obvious that Daniel had made a great impression on the King; in addition to which, the King was distressed in himself that he had fallen to the trap set him.

“And he laboured till the going down of the sun to deliver him” — He probably consulted lawyers seeking some precedent to evade the decree but could find none; he probably browbeat the conspirators but without success. Whilst time allowed, until night-time intervened, he sought every means to avoid the trap; but in vain: he could find no loophole.

VERSE 15

“Then these men assembled unto the king, and said unto the king, Know, O King, that the law of the Medes and Persians is, That no decree nor statute which the King establisheth may be changed” — Fearing that their plot may not succeed, the presidents and princes again assem-

bled tumultuously before the king, peremptorily and discourteously reminding him that the established punishment by the decree could not be set aside. They were bold and determined in their approach. The law was on their side and they proceeded to press it to the full measure of its demands. The king was bound by the laws of the State, indicating the inferiority of the Medo-Persian rule in contrast to that of Nebuchadnezzar (Dan. 2:39; 5:19).

VERSE 16

“Then the king commanded, and they brought Daniel, and cast him into the den of lions”

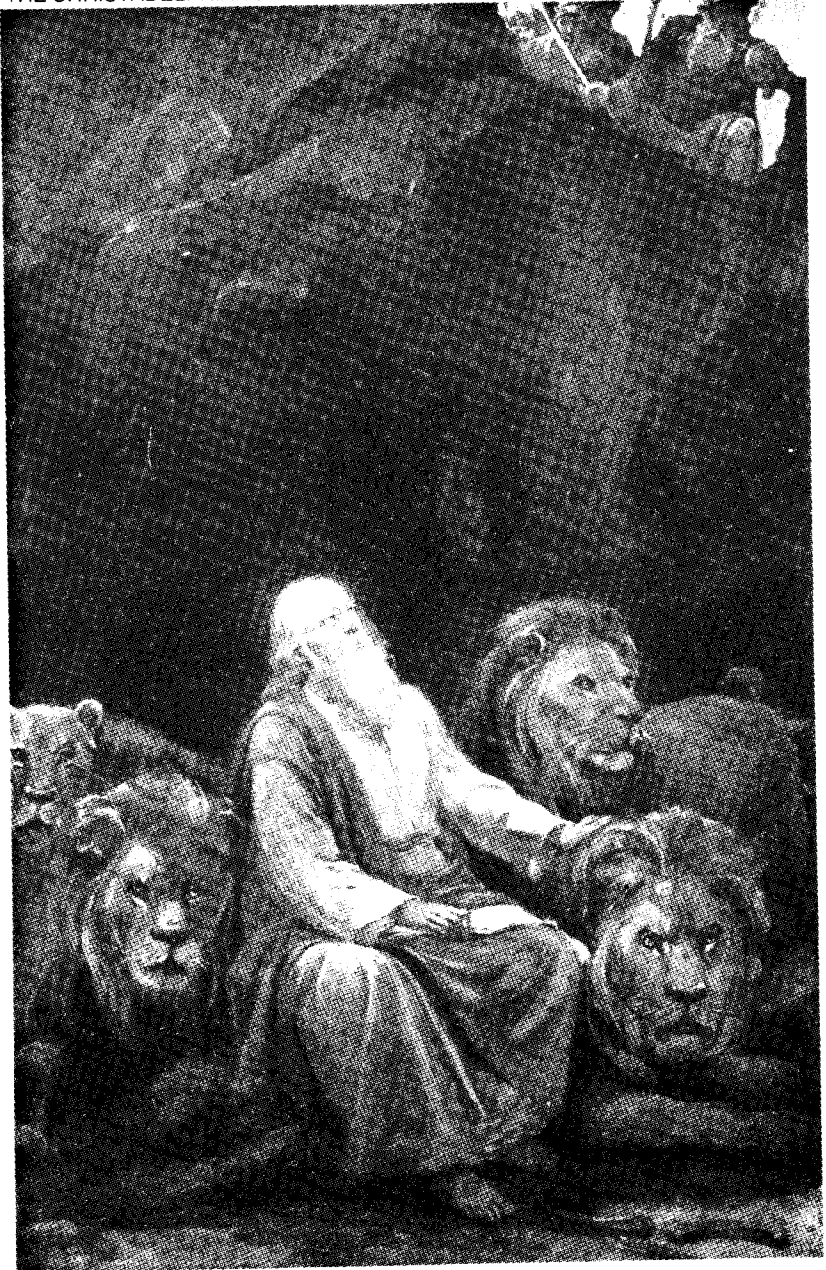
— The persecution that Daniel experienced from his associates foreshadowed the opposition given to the proclamation of the Truth in ages past. This is figuratively described as being delivered unto the merciless rapacity of lions. See 2 Tim. 4:17; 1 Pet. 5:8.

“Now the king spake and said unto Daniel, Thy God whom thou servest continually, He will deliver thee”

— As Daniel was taken to be executed, the King revealed his personal feelings and sought to comfort him. He did so on the basis that only the God Whom Daniel served could deliver him: it was beyond the scope of an earthly monarch to do so. Modern versions have attempted to weaken the King's statement by rendering it as a pious wish: “May thy God Whom thou servest continually, save thee” (see RSV and NIV), but the original does not conform thereto. It is as expressed in the A.V.; and comprises a testimony to the witness of Daniel's worship and dedication. It was probably expressed to comfort the prophet on the basis of the miracles he had performed, though without any real belief on the part of the King that Daniel would be rescued.

The King's Concern — vv.17-18

Having been trapped into consigning Daniel to the lions, and having sealed the mouth of the den to prevent any escape on the part of his faithful servant, the King spends a sleepless night, bitterly regretting the folly that has led him to agree to issue the stupid decree that in his pride he has signed. Convinced that Daniel cannot escape his fate, made most angry at the manner in which he has been trapped, his frustration is so acute that he waves aside any form of diversive entertainment.



Then the king commanded, and they brought Daniel, and cast him into the den of lions.

VERSE 17

“And a stone was brought, and laid upon the mouth of the den” — The den is described as a pit rather than a cage, with a large stone placed on the opening above. In consequence it resembled a grave, so that once the stone was put in place, what happened therein was hidden from sight of any audience (cp. v.20). Thus Daniel’s experience foreshadowed that of the Lord Jesus whose righteousness was such that the grave could not hold him, and who triumphing over it, obtained the “key” to unlock it for those, like Daniel, whose faith and works have conquered the trials that they have suffered (Rev. 1:18). Furthermore, what Daniel endured typed the state of the nation which, figuratively was “cut off in the dungeon” and a stone placed at its entrance to prevent escape (Lam. 3:53). That national grave will be completely opened by the one whose tomb was unsealed by angelic intervention 1900 years ago. Ezekiel was privileged to see the future political resurrection of his people (Ezek. 37).

“And the king sealed it with his own signet, and with the signet of his lords” — The tomb of the Lord was treated similarly, in order to forestall any attempt on the part of the Apostles to steal the body (Matt. 27:66). But in vain: Yahweh brought His son from the dead. In Daniel’s case, the sealing of the den might well have been required by the presidents and princes in order to prevent Darius likewise secretly removing Daniel out of danger; for the King had openly revealed his concern and sympathy for the prophet.

“That the purpose might not be changed concerning Daniel” — This statement can be understood twofold. First, from the standpoint of the lords: they wanted to make sure that Daniel had no hope of climbing out of the den. Second, from the standpoint of Yahweh: to demonstrate His power to deliver. Both purposes were fulfilled. So also with the offering of Christ. Peter, at Pentecost, made this abundantly clear: “Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain” (Acts. 2:23). Yahweh’s purpose was fulfilled in the death of the Lord; but the motivation of the Jewish leaders in delivering him up to be crucified was completely wicked and deserving of the

punishment heaped upon the nation which culminated in AD 70. So also with Daniel and his persecutors.

VERSE 18

“Then the king went to his palace, and passed the night fasting” — Reproaching himself for his folly, Darius returned to his palace to spend a sleepless night of worry. Again, the circumstances of the offering of the Lord was foreshadowed. Pilate, representative of the highest authority in the land, was concerned at the part he played in it (Matt. 27:24).

“Neither were instruments of musick brought before him; and his sleep went from him” — The word “instruments of music” is from the original *dachavan* from a root “to push down”, or “drive out,” and here relates to diversions. The NIV renders: “without any entertainment being brought to him”. It was a sad night for the king and his realm at the folly and injustice shown to a faithful servant, as it was for Jewry during the period the Lord was in the tomb. There was no sleep for them; for unexpected darkness, shattering earthquake, and a split temple deeply concerned them; so much so that it is doubtful whether the normal Passover was held that year.

The Deliverence of Daniel — vv.19-23

At last the King’s night of regret and sorrow moves into early dawn. Rising at the first light of day, he hurries to the den. In tones of anxiety and concern he calls to Daniel enquiring whether the God he serves so conscientiously has extended Himself to save His prophet. To his amazement and joy, the tranquil voice of the prophet assures him that the miracle has been performed, that an angel has protected him from the wild beasts

VERSE 19

“Then the king arose very early in the morning, and went in haste unto the den of lions” — There was similar anxiety in the dawn that followed the sabbath when the Lord died, and his friends hastened to the tomb without hope. So did the King as he made his way to the lions’ den.

VERSE 20

“And when he came to the den, he cried with a lamentable voice unto Daniel” — This shows the measure of his concern.

“And the king spake and said to Daniel, O Daniel, servant of the living God” — In describing Daniel as the “servant of the living God” (Chald. *elahn* the equivalent of the Hebrew *Eloah*, Mighty One), Darius gave expression to the reality of the God Whom Daniel served. The title, though connected with *Elohim*, is first used in Deut. 5:26, and is found constantly in contrast with idol worship, latent or expressed, which, of course, are without life (Ps. 115: 2-9). See Paul’s use of the title in contrast to the idols with which his hearers associated him (Acts 14:15). To the Thessalonian Ecclesia he wrote: “Ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God” (1 Thess. 1:9). It is possible to mouth the name of God without recognising His living reality. The Jews of Christ’s day, though they spoke of God and professed to worship Him, gave Him no reality in fact. In like manner, Paul described “covetousness as idolatry” (Col. 3:5), because it fails to properly acknowledge the existence of the living God. To Moses, Yahweh declared: “Truly I live. . .” (Num. 14:21). This is an expression frequently found throughout Scripture, though its force is lessened by rendering it as “as truly as Yahweh lives”. Better to render it, *Truly Yahweh lives!* When a true Israelite declared, “Yahweh lives and therefore I will do this or that”, he gave expression to his belief that his vow had been made in the view of the living God, and therefore had to be fulfilled (Ecc. 5:1-6).

“Is thy God, whom thou servest continually, able to deliver thee from the lions?” — The King not only acknowledged that Daniel worshipped the “living God”, but that he did so consistently. Daniel’s life was a demonstration of the doctrine he taught. His worship was continuous and consistent. It was not limited to one day a week, or to moments only of prosperity, but “in season and out of season”.

VERSE 21

“Then said Daniel unto the king, O king, live for ever” — This was the common form of salutation addressed to kings in ancient times (see Dan. 2:4). However, in the mouth of Daniel the expression became more meaningful, for he set forth the principle of the possibility of Darius living eternally.

VERSE 22

“My God hath sent His angel” — This, no doubt, was the same angel as had supervised the trial and deliverance of Daniel’s three friends in Nebuchadnezzar’s fiery furnace (see Ch. 3:28).

“And hath shut the lions’ mouths, that they have not hurt me” — Daniel’s faith stood him in good stead at this moment of need, for it was that which “stopped the mouths of lions” (Heb. 11:33). In this, too, he typed the Lord who from the cross prayed, “Save me from the lion’s mouth” (Ps. 22:21). David, who likewise typed the Lord similarly appealed unto Yahweh: “My soul is among lions: and I lie even among them that are set on fire, even the sons of men, whose teeth are spears and arrows and their tongues a sharp sword” (Ps. 57:4). The two-legged lions of history have been more cruel than the fiercest beasts of prey!

“Forasmuch as before Him innocency was found in me” — Daniel’s integrity, his faultlessness in relation to the charges laid against him, and his faith that was greater than his fear ensured his protection from the mouth of the lions, as the Lord’s sinlessness delivered him from the grave (Acts. 2:24). Innocency is rendered from *zaku*, purity.

“And also before thee, O king, have I done no hurt” — Like Paul, Daniel had “exercised himself to have always a conscience void of offence toward God, and toward man” (Acts. 24:16). Daniel, in reminding the King of this, administered a gentle reproach that the law of restraint in prayer that the King had authorised was a foolish one.

VERSE 23

“Then was the king exceeding glad for him, and commanded that they should take Daniel up out of the den” — The “den” was evidently deeply set in the ground with an entrance at the top, and out of which Daniel was now hoisted.

“So Daniel was taken up out of the den, and no manner of hurt was found upon him, because he believed in his God” — Daniel was subjected to a careful examination, and, to the wonderment of all, was shown to have escaped all harm. The cause of his deliverance was “because he believed in his God.” The word “believed” signified more than a mere acknowledgement of God’s existence.

The Chaldean word is *aman* which is the equivalent of the Hebrew word for faith. It signifies, to be "built up or supported, to trust God as one would a parent or a nurse, to render firm belief or trust". Daniel had unflinching confidence in God. In short he had faith (Heb. 11:1); and it was his faith that saved him (Heb. 11:33). Faith is generated by the Word of God (Rom. 10:17), and Daniel was given to the study of the Word (Dan. 9:2). Daniel's early education and study in things divine helped him throughout life into his old age.

The Fate Of Daniel's Adversaries — v.24

Daniel's adversaries are flung into the lions' den and are consumed by the hungry animals. Their fate illustrates the proverb: "The righteous is delivered out of trouble, and the wicked cometh in his stead" (Prov. 11:8).

VERSE 24

"And the king commanded" — Josephus states that the satraps on hearing of the miracle suggested that the lions had been well fed before Daniel had been consigned into their den. Accordingly, the King agreed to test out the theory of the conspirators by delivering them to the beasts.

"And they brought those men that had accused Daniel, and cast them into the den of lions" — This form of retribution conformed to the requirements of Yahweh's law. See Deut. 19:11-13, 19. The narrative does not indicate that the whole of the 120 satraps were delivered to the lions, but only those who had specifically accused Daniel, that is, only the ringleaders. Not all would have accused Daniel, though the leaders represented all.

"And cast them into the den of lions, them, their children and their wives" — This was by order of Darius, not at the request of Daniel, nor according to Divine law (Deut. 24:16). Nevertheless, the head of a family can involve all members thereof in tragedy by his own folly. Yahweh carefully discriminates between the guilty and the innocent. This was illustrated by the judgment on the rebellious in the days of Korah, Dathan and Abiram. In those circumstances all were destroyed, including wives and children (Num. 16:32), except the children of Korah (Num. 26:11). In some way they must have disassociated themselves from their

father's crime, and so were excluded from his punishment. On the other hand, Jezebel and her children were punished (Rev. 2:20-23), because as *her* children they manifested the same wicked characteristics of their mother.

"And the lions had the mastery of them, and brake their bones in pieces or ever they came to the bottom of the den" — Rotherham renders: "And they had not reached the bottom of the den, when the lions seized them". Once the divine restraint was removed to which the lions had been subjected, they acted with all their natural ferocity. Made more hungry than ever through being denied food overnight, they leapt up to seize and consume the bodies of Daniel's accusers. In this type, the lions represent the fierce, rapacious attitude of flesh, especially when it is found in conspiracy against the righteous (Ezek. 22:25). From the influence of such Daniel was protected, but to their terrible ruthlessness, his accusers were consigned. So it was at the first advent of the Lord. The Jewish leaders conspired against the Lord as the leaders of Darius' kingdom did against Daniel, and they suffered a like fate; the Roman lions came against the State and consumed it with terrible slaughter.

The King's Further Decree — vv.25-27

Following the wonderful deliverance effected by Daniel's God, the king issues a decree similar to that of Nebuchadnezzar on his return to sanity. This decree is proclaimed to all peoples and nations under his control.

VERSE 25

"Then king Darius wrote unto all people, nations and languages, that dwell in all the earth" — The terms of this decree again illustrate the extent of the King's authority and power, discounting the theory that the Darius of this chapter is identical with Darius the Mede.

"Peace be multiplied unto you" — Universal peace is promised on the basis of the people acknowledging the principles of worship set forth in the following verses.

VERSE 26

"I make a decree, that in every domain of my kingdom men tremble and fear before the God of Daniel" — That is, God is supreme, and before Him all must fear

and tremble (Rev. 14:7)

"For He is the living God" — He is not a mere idol unable to help His worshippers. He is a living God. See v.20. (Dan. 4:17).

"And stedfast for ever" — His purpose is unchangeable.

"And his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed" — Obviously the King's interest in Daniel's God had been excited by the remarkable miracle, and this had induced him to enquire as to His future intentions. Daniel had evidently explained to him the truth relating to the Divine coming Kingdom on earth, and so the King had incorporated reference to it in his decree. Perhaps Daniel explained to him the dream seen by Nebuchadnezzar and the interpretation of it; as also the vision of the four beasts recorded in Daniel 7 that Daniel had received sometime before the events of this chapter (Dan. 7:1).

"And His dominion shall be even unto the end" — The word "end" is from the Chaldean *cowph*, and signifies "a termination." God's dominion shall extend until there is a termination, an end of all His enemies. This is "the end" referred to by Paul: "Then cometh *the end* when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father. . . for he must reign until he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death" (1 Cor. 15:24-26). That is the termination referred to in the decree of Darius who obviously had learned of this divine purpose from Daniel.

VERSE 27

"He delivereth and rescueth" — He is a Redeemer, caring for the future destiny of His servants.

"And He worketh signs and wonders in heaven and in earth" — These two words are translated from the Aramaic *athiyin* and *thiyimhiyn*. The former word relates to "signals" or "beacons", and so to portents, miracles or signs. The second word is the plural of *temah*, indicating amazement, astonishment, marvel, also implying miracles and wonders. The former word suggests remarkable miracles calculated to attract the attention of people; and the latter to continued wonders capable of holding their attention. Similar expressions were used by Nebuchadnezzar (see Dan. 4:3). These wonders are performed in heaven and in earth; that is among rulers and commoners alike.

"Who hath delivered Daniel from the power of the lions" — Darius saw this as the greatest miracle of which he was cognisant. As Daniel was a type of the Lord Jesus Christ, his deliverance from the power of the lions has its antitype in Christ being delivered from his accusers and the power of the grave (see Psalm 22:13).

It is also, that a den of lions is used as a symbol of a conspiracy designed to destroy (Ezek. 22:25). The decree of Darius witnessed to the influence of Daniel upon the King, particularly in view of the explanation the prophet obviously gave concerning God's purpose in delivering him.

VERSE 28

"So this Daniel prospered in the reign of Darius, and in the reign of Cyrus the Persian" — The conjunction "and" can be legitimately rendered *even*: "So Daniel prospered in the reign of Darius, even in the reign of Cyrus the Persian". This statement then discriminates between Darius the Mede of chapter 6, and Darius the Persian of the Chapter before us.



Summary

The experiences of Daniel foreshadowed those of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Judge of God (Daniel) of the future age (Acts 17:31). As Daniel incited the envy of his contemporaries, so did the Lord Jesus Christ. They were compelled to acknowledge his integrity, and recognise that the only way to attack him was through his worship of Yahweh (John 8:46). The satraps of Darius forced the King by wrong means and evil motives to move against the prophet; as did the Jewish leaders in their hatred of the Lord. The king, like Pilate, acknowledged the injustice of the charge laid against the prophet, but was compelled to submit. Daniel was delivered to the den of lions, a sealed stone closed the opening, as it did in the case of the sepulchre of the Lord. But he escaped the fate that his conspirators had plotted to deliver him. He was brought out of the pit alive; foreshadowing the remarkable resurrection of the Lord. His deliverance witnessed to his faithful righteousness in the sight of God; as did also the resurrection and elevation of the Lord (Rom. 1:1-2). Daniel's adversaries were judged; as was the nation of Judah in A.D. 70. Finally, a decree was issued commanding universal respect for the authority of Yahweh, and for the Kingdom He will assuredly establish at the second coming of the Lord.

In Daniel's experiences recorded in this chapter, he not only foreshadowed those of the Lord, but in fact, he "fellowshipped the sufferings of Christ" (Phil. 3:10), as will all those who are faithful to their calling in Christ. They, too, experience the opposition of "lions", a term denoting "brutish" men, that is men who are completely ignorant of the Divine principles of salvation (Ezek. 22:25; 2 Tim. 4:17; 1 Pet. 5:8). Their experiences are summed up in the words of the Psalmist: "My soul is among lions: and I lie even among them that are set on fire, even the sons of men, whose teeth are spears and arrows, and their tongue a sharp sword" (Ps. 57:4).

This chapter concludes the biographical section of the Book of Daniel. The next chapter goes back in point of time, and outlines the first of a series of visions and revelations made to him of the Divine purpose in the rise and fall of nations until the consummation decreed: even the establishment in glory of Yahweh's Kingdom on earth.

**The Universal Sovereignty
of God
As Revealed
By Prophetic Revelation
— Chapters 7-12**

The biographical section of The Book of Daniel concluded, the balance of the Book records God's visions and revelations delivered unto the prophet. The theme is still one of judgement; but now it is national and prophetic judgment leading to the consummation of the Divine purpose in the earth. This is exhibited in the rise, development and decline of Gentile powers and religions. In a series of visions there is depicted the course of history, the rise of the great Apostacy, the desolations to be poured out upon the Land and People of Israel, the manner in which all nations will be drawn into the Middle East at the time of the end for judgment; and the ultimate manifestation of the Lord Jesus as Michael the Great who shall stand up for the children of Daniel's people.

Incorporated into these visions and revelations are time periods demonstrating that God has not only determined His purpose, but has set time limits for its accomplishment. The visions and revelations recorded are set forth in orderly fashion as follows:

Ch. 7: Developments and Judgments on the Little Horn of the West and its religious order.

Ch. 8: Development and Judgment on the Little Horn of the East and its military might.

Ch. 9: Partial restoration of Israel and Judgment on the nation consequent upon its rejection of Messiah.

Ch. 10: The revival through resurrection and Judgment of the Israel of God.

Ch. 11: The Gentile devastation of the Promised Land, and the Judgment poured out upon the desolators thereof.

Ch. 12: The development of the Time of Trouble, the Judgment upon the oppressors of God's people, and the ultimate deliverance of the faithful.

The angelic ministrations on behalf of Daniel as recorded in these chapters prominently reveal the manner in which these "ministers of God" work in accordance with His decrees, and for the ultimate wellbeing of His saints.

CHAPTER SEVEN

JUDGMENT ON THE WESTERN DOMINIONS

This chapter is the first in the prophetic exposition of Daniel's book. In it the prophet records a dream-vision of four beasts that he received in the first year of Belshazzar. Therefore, chronologically, the chapter goes back in point of time. Daniel sees four beasts arising out of the Great Sea, each in turn striving for the mastery over its predecessor. In succession he sees a lion, a bear, a leopard, and finally a terrible unnamed beast calculated to strike terror in the heart of any who view it. As each beast conquers its predecessor it absorbs some of the characteristics of the one it overthrows. Accordingly, the fourth beast is diverse from all the others though incorporating elements of all those that went before. It possesses ten horns, and in his dream Daniel sees three horns violently torn up and replaced by a single "little horn" which proceeds to dominate all the others. This horn possesses eyes like a man and a mouth speaking great things.

The vision then dramatically changes. The prophet observes thrones of judgment placed in authoritative positions. On these are seated Divine judges supervised by One described as the Ancient of Days. Before these thrones stand an innumerable company of Divine personalities. Their ability to "execute the judgments written" is manifested by "a fiery stream" that issues therefrom. The fourth beast is entirely consumed by this fiery stream but an extension of life is granted the other beasts.

Once more the vision changes, and now the prophet sees one like the Son of Man ascend into heaven accompanied by the clouds of heaven to be presented to the Ancient of Days. To this one is granted universal dominion and glory.

The vision ceases at this point leaving Daniel deeply concerned at his ignorance of its meaning. But there are angels there to help him. Daniel approaches the presiding angel to seek needed information. He is given a brief answer that provides a key to the meaning of the dream (vv.16-18). But hungry for more information Daniel requests a more detailed explanation of the fourth beast, its ten horns, and

particularly the little seeing and speaking horn. He has observed that this "horn" for a period of time has waged war with the saints and has prevailed against them until the appearance of the Ancient of Days, and the outpouring of judgment, at which time, the saints possess the kingdom.

An answer is given Daniel (vv.23-27). It deeply concerns and troubles the prophet as he considers its meaning. However, he does not ignore it because he cannot fully understand it, but ponders the matter in his heart.

The chapter, therefore, is divided into the following parts:

The Dream (vv.1-14); Daniel's concern and first question (vv.15-16); the angel's initial explanation (vv.17-18); Daniel's further enquiry relating to the fourth beast (vv.19-22); the second angelic explanation (vv.23-27); a final summary of Daniel's concern (v.28).

The Dream-Vision of Four Beasts

— vv.1-8

In his dream Daniel sees four beasts answering to the four metals of the Image seen by Nebuchadnezzar in his dream. The four beasts represent the same powers: Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece and Rome. Nebuchadnezzar's dream showed what would "come to pass hereafter" as relating to the Gentile powers (Dan. 2:29). In this dream, additional matters are revealed of great significance to the saints of the Most High, concerning the religious warfare of the ages.

VERSE 1

"In the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon" — The elevation of Belshazzar to power marked a great decline in the rule of Babylon. The restraints shown by Nebuchadnezzar consequent upon the revelations given him by Daniel were relaxed, and the nation declined sharply in morals. Belshazzar's reign terminated the dynasty of Nebuchadnezzar and the seventy year period allocated to it by Jeremiah (Ch. 25:11-12; 29:10).

"Daniel had a dream and visions of his head upon his bed" — The dream he had

was broken up into a series of visions. It appears to have been given in answer to his wonderment as to what the future would reveal.

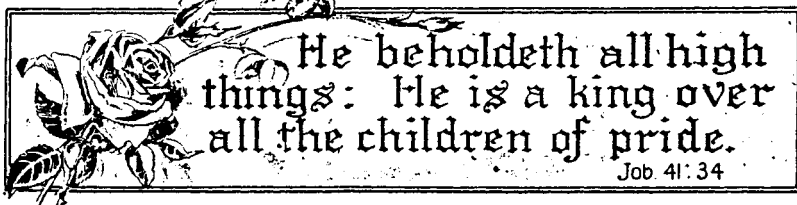
"Then he wrote the dream, and told the sum of the matters" — On awakening, Daniel wrote down a summary of the dream and the significance of the words he had heard.

VERSE 2

"Daniel spake and said" — Daniel did not keep to himself the revelation given him on awakening; he not only recorded the dream, but expounded it to others, so that those of like mind could comprehend better the purpose of God.

"I saw in my vision by night" — Prophetically, night relates to the darkness of Gentile times; as used by the Lord Jesus (see John 9:4-5).

"And behold, the four winds of the heaven strove upon the great sea" — Symbolically, a wind denotes an army on the march (Jer. 4:11-13). The four winds, therefore, represented the armies of the four world powers that successively strug-



gled for the mastery. As the dream was given "in the first year of Belshazzar", Daniel most likely would have been considering the impending changes predicted by Isaiah (Ch. 45) and Jeremiah (Ch. 25:12) requiring the overthrow of Babylon at the hands of Cyrus at the end of the seventy years captivity.

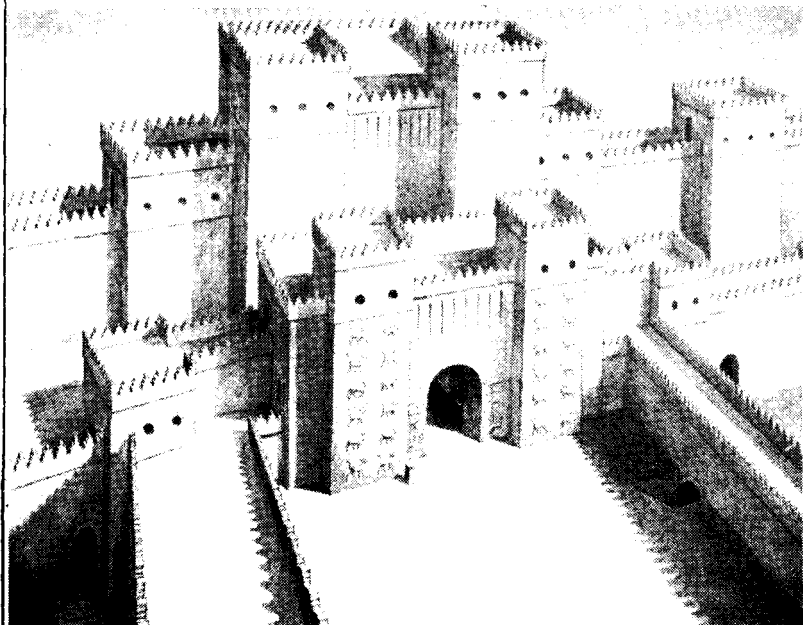
VERSE 3

"And four great beasts came up from the sea, diverse one from another" — Gentile nations are elsewhere symbolised as "beasts" (see Prov. 28:15; Jer. 12:9), tearing each other apart. Among them, Israel is represented as a sheep. Later, Daniel was told that the four beasts represented four kingdoms (v.17). Like the metals on the Image they emerge as world powers one after the other. As each destroyed and absorbed its predecessor, it built into its own constitution forms of government and power that had proved successful in its administration so that the fourth unnamed beast became a combina-

tion of all those that went before it. It is so described in Rev. 13:2: "And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion". Whilst "diverse" one from the other, there was a common element of ruthless anti-Semitism in all four, characteristic of Gentile power.

VERSE 4

"The first was like a Lion." — The lion was the symbol of the Chaldean empires of Assyria and Babylon; the powers responsible for the scattering of the divided kingdom of Israel and Judah. Jeremiah declared: "Israel is a scattered sheep; the lions have driven them away; first the King of Assyria hath devoured him; and last this Nebuchadnezzar King of Babylon hath broken his bones" (Jer. 50:17). It was a common national symbol in the days of the prophet. Archaeologists have unearthed many huge images of lions both at Nineveh and Babylon. See also



Reconstruction of the Ishtar Gate on Babylon's Via Sacra or Processional Way. Alternate rows of bulls and dragons in enamelled relief, flat enamel and brick relief adorned the mural surface of its colourful double gateway. It formed an impressive block of building. On special occasions the King entered this gate in company with his procession of dignitaries.

Jer. 4:7. The lion is considered the king of beasts answering to the gold of the image, the most precious metal.

“And had eagle’s wings” — The huge out-stretched wings of the eagle symbolised the widespread, extensive territory of Assyria which incorporated most of the then known world. Statues of winged lions have been unearthed by archaeologists.

“I behold till the wings thereof were plucked” — As the central administration of Assyria weakened, the provinces of its realm, represented by the “wings” revolted against the domination of Nineveh. This was caused by violent invasions of Scythians, and revolts on the part of Media and Babylonia. In Babylon, Nabopolassar grasped power, and not only asserted his independence, but ultimately dominated Nineveh so as to replace its power and influence. The “plucking” of wings suggests revolution by which this was brought about.

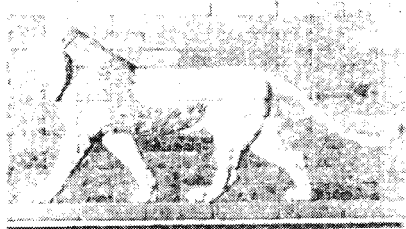


An Assyrian winged lion from excavations at Nineveh illustrative of Daniel’s dream vision.

“And it was lifted up from the earth” — Its rule was transported from one place to another: from Nineveh to Babylon.

“And made stand upon its feet as a

man” — Chaldean influence rose again to power, but from a different centre: from Babylon instead of Nineveh. Statues of standing lions have been discovered by archaeologists.



Lion with wings plucked as depicted on the Processional Street, Babylon.

“And a man’s heart was given to it” — The Babylonian administration was more susceptible to humane considerations than was the brutal Assyrian. This is exhibited in the *Book of Daniel* by the way in which Nebuchadnezzar was influenced by the teaching of the prophet. Bro. Thomas comments: “So long as the government continued in the family of Nebuchadnezzar; which with all its faults was more humane than that which it succeeded” (*Exposition of Daniel*).

The Bear — Symbol of Medo Persia v.5

As this vision concentrates attention more on the fourth beast and its “little horn” only passing reference is given to those that preceded it.

VERSE 5

“And behold another beast, a second like to a bear.” — The addition of the statement, “a second” indicates that the bear came up *after* the lion, so that all the beasts did not make their appearance at the same time. The bear represented Medo-Persia which overthrew Babylon. The vision was given in the “first year of Belshazzar”, that is at the epoch of Babylon’s decline. The impiety of this king was the cause of the down-fall of the nation. The conquest of Babylon took place approximately in the year 536 B.C. It was succeeded by the Medo-Persian Empire. Next to the lion, the bear was the most feared animal found in the Promised Land. Strong, cruel, cunning and greedy, the bear is not as powerful, nor as

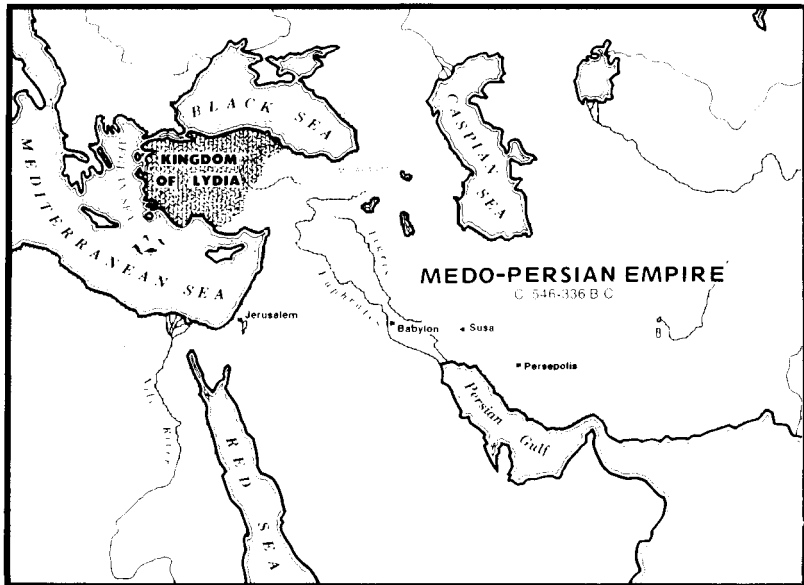
courageous, as the lion, but nevertheless it is an animal to be avoided (1 Sam. 17:34; 2 Sam. 17:8; Prov. 17:12; Hos. 13:8) The bear is omnivorous, eating both vegetables and flesh. Whereas the lion is more predictable, the bear is more cunning, and can hide its intentions. The Medo-Persian rulers were more diplomatic and cunning than the Babylonians. They also were more greedy for prey, and extended their borders far beyond those of the Babylonian Empire.

“And it raised itself on one side” — The Medes preceded the Persians in government over the joint Medo-Persian realm. Cyaxares the Mede perfected his army and waged war on Nineveh. The Medes were noted for their efficiency and ruthlessness in war. Yahweh, through Isaiah, warned Babylon: “I will stir up the Medes against them. . . and they shall have no pity” (Isa. 13:16-18). Median rulers dominated until Cyrus revolted against

the Median tyrant Astyages, and seized power. Characteristically, once in control Cyrus acted diplomatically towards Astyages whom he had overthrown and captured. *In The Medes and Persians*, R. Collins writes:

“Contrary to custom, Astyages wasn’t slain. Cyrus — great-great-grandson of Achaemenes and soon to become the noblest Persian of all — took the old man into the court and dealt with him sympathetically for the remainder of his life. It was an unusual touch of humanity for those savage times and a sign of better things to come” (p.31).

As Daniel reveals, even after Babylon had fallen, Cyrus diplomatically used the authority of the Medes to consolidate his power (Dan. 5:31), but it was not long before Persians controlled the government, and continued to do so for the long period of the Medo-Persian Empire.



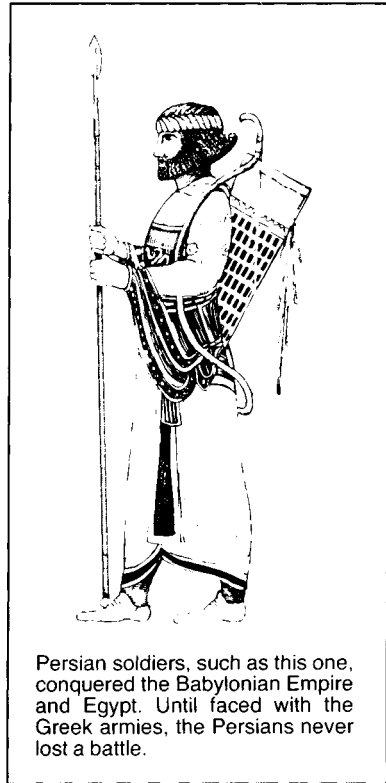
The Medo-Persian Empire conquered over the wealth of Lydia, the culture of Egypt, and the strength of Babylon. Its organisation was such as to establish a monarchy that lasted for centuries.

“And it had three ribs in the mouth of it between the teeth of it” — The description illustrates the voracious appetite of a bear. And the Medo-Persian Empire proved to be such. When Cyrus rose to power there were three powerful rivals contesting for dominion. They were Babylonia, noted for its strength; Lydia noted for its wealth; and Egypt noted for its antiquity and culture. United, they could have beaten Cyrus; but part of Cyrus' genius was his ability to divide and conquer. One by one he conquered these three powers until their bodies were bones in the teeth of the Medo-Persian bear. Firstly he attacked Lydia in western Asia, and in remarkable circumstances this powerful and fabulously wealthy empire was brought under his control; then he turned his hand against Babylon, that most powerful of all ancient fortress-cities, and by diverting the course of the River Euphrates that ran through it displayed his ingenuity and generalship; finally Egypt succumbed to his power. Cyrus dominated the civilised world.

“And they said thus unto it” — Who are “they”? Obviously the angelic “watchers” through whom Yahweh guided the course of history, and the destiny of nations. After the conquests of Cyrus there came the need to consolidate. Cyrus wisely delegated his authority. Over the threefold division of his Empire he appointed three “presidents” of whom Daniel was chief (Dan. 6:2).

“Arise, devour much flesh” — The “bear” was stirred into activity. The rulers who followed Cyrus extended the power and influence of the Medo-Persian Empire throughout the Middle East, bringing distant lands under its control. Cyrus and his successors proved to be geniuses in both military and civil administration. The Persian army was recruited from all captive lands, and became a well organised, superbly trained fighting force. The warriors enjoyed special privileges so that men sought to serve the King as such. The cream of his military forces were the ten thousand “immortals”. These were specially trained Medo-Persian troops, completely loyal to the reigning King, and highly skilled in all forms of warfare. They were dressed in special uniforms and were recognised as the very elite of Medo-Persia. There was always a reservoir of men waiting to be selected to join the “ten thousand immor-

als”, and should one fall in battle, or die from any other cause he was instantly replaced. The “ten thousand” were called “immortals” because their number remained the same. Of the full contingent, one thousand were given the special coveted charge of being bodyguard of the Ruler. They were given a distinguishing uniform, and were considered the very elite among the elite.



Persian soldiers, such as this one, conquered the Babylonian Empire and Egypt. Until faced with the Greek armies, the Persians never lost a battle.

Cyrus inaugurated principles of military and civil organisation that were outstandingly, successful and unique in the ancient world; and this ensued the continued independence of Persia for a considerable period. For example, Darius Hystaspes extended the glory of Cyrus' reign and consolidated even more completely Persian power throughout the world. R. Collins in *The Medes And Persians* describes how he maintained control of his widespread Empire:

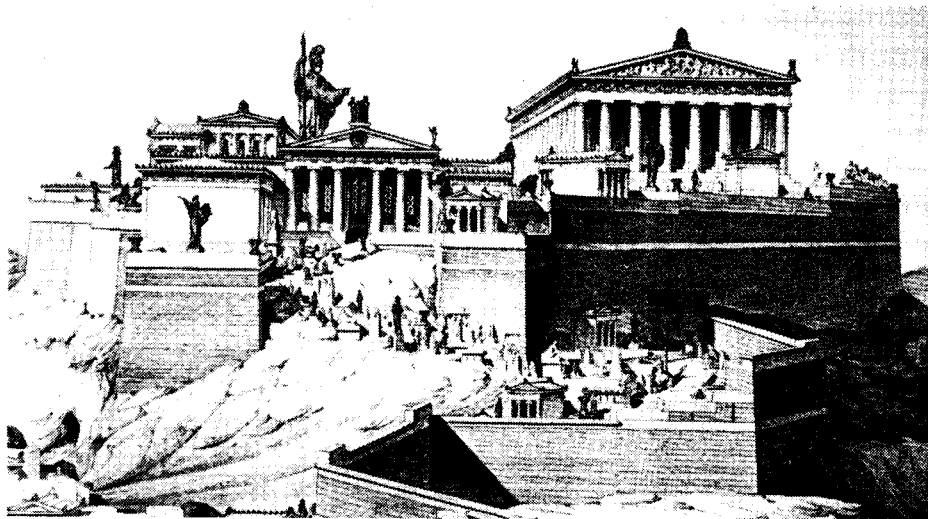
"Lesser empires had fallen apart for lack of a fast-moving message or army. Darius, the management man, made his Royal Road a model of its time. It ran 1,677 miles (over 2000kms) from Susa, the capital near the Persian Gulf, to Sardis in one-time Lydia, almost within sight of Greece. Fresh horses and men waited at all times at post stations along the way. The wheel-ruts were paved in stone and the whole route was marked off in *parasangs* a measure of usually a little over three miles. Strictly speaking, parasang was the measure of an hour's travelling time, which varied in different parts of the trail.

"Along this marvelous road, kept free of bandits and well stocked with inns for food and rest, sped the king's messengers. Day and night they rode, and from Herodotus' description of their dependable service comes a phrase often adapted to postmen in a later day: 'These are stayed neither by snow nor rain nor heat nor darkness from accomplishing their

appointed course with all speed."

The Persians ran the first mails along such roads (Esth. 8:11). The highways assisted the flow of commerce, as well as the rapid movement of Persian armies. In a manner that Babylon never succeeded in accomplishing, the Medo-Persian Empire was able to "arise and devour much flesh". Its influence extended from Greece to India and as far south as Egypt.

A significant feature of the fourth beast as described in *The Apocalypse* is that it is described as having the "mouth of a lion" and the "feet of a bear" (Rev. 13:2). The latter-day manifestation of the Fourth Beast will mouth the doctrines of Rome for it will comprise a confederacy of Catholicism and Communism, but it will be the feet of the Bear that will carry it down into the Middle East as described in Ezekiel 38. For ultimately Russia will dominate Persia (Ezek. 38:8), and so comprise the "King of the North" (Dan. 11:40). The feet of the fourth Beast will



The glory of ancient Greece. A reconstruction of the Acropolis. Athens: centre of ancient Grecian culture where everything was discussed and nothing decided (Acts 17:21). Greece is noted for its democratic divisive form of government, a further decline from the autocratic, dictatorial rule of Babylon (see Dan. 2:39).

carry all confederated with it into the "glorious land" there to be destroyed by Michael the Great (Dan. 12:1).

The Leopard — Symbol of Greece — v.6

VERSE 6

"After this I beheld, and lo another, like a leopard" — The bear was followed by a four headed leopard on the sides of which were pairs of birds' wings. In succession to the Medo-Persian empire came the Grecian; and the leopard is a remarkably appropriate figure for this power. The leopard is perhaps the most handsome of all the beasts of prey, as Greece is considered by many to be the most cultured of nations. As an animal, it is more adaptable, and has a greater range of habits than most other beasts of prey. The leopard is found in equatorial forests, burning deserts, low-lying swamplands and rugged mountain terrain. It is noted for its speed and the unexpectedness of its attack. It has been known, after stalking a prey for some distance, to leap upon it with incredible speed in a pounce some 40 feet (12 m.) long. It is tremendously strong and versatile, and has been known to climb the trunk of a tree carrying an antelope of 250lb. to consume it in the safety of its boughs for a period of some days.

"Which had upon the back of it four wings of a fowl" — These wings would give added speed to a leopard which, in any case, is a speedy animal. In *Exposition of Daniel*, Bro. Thomas writes:

"The Leopard is Macedonian, representing Alexander the Great's dominion and those of his four principal successors who divided it among themselves. The body of the beast represents the power before it was divided; and each head one of the subsequent divisions. The wings represented the position of the Macedonian Heads relatively to the Holy Land."

The agility and ferocity of the leopard and its swiftness suggested by the wings were exemplified in the amazingly rapid and widespread conquests of Alexander the Great. Ascending the throne of Macedonia at the early age of twenty, he had the whole civilised world at his feet ten years later; and it is said that he then "wept because there were no more countries to conquer"

"The beast had also four heads" — At the age of thirty-three Alexander the Great, the founder of the Macedonian

(Grecian) Empire died in Babylon of a drunken orgy, and his widespread Empire which extended from Macedonia to India and as far south as Egypt, was divided into four parts by his successors who were the generals of his army: Ptolemy, Lysimachus, Seleucus and Cassander. These four heads are defined by Bro. Thomas in *Exposition of Daniel* as follows:

First Head: The Kingdom of the South (of Dan. 11), comprehending Egypt, Lybia, Arabia, Coele-Syria, and Palestine, under the Ptolemies.

Second Head: The Kingdom of the North-West, including Thrace, Bithynia, etc., or the Thracio-Macedonian, established by Lysimachus.

Third Head: The Kingdom of the North-East, comprehending the rest of Asia inclusive of Babylon and its provinces; and extending beyond the Euphrates to the Indus. India beyond that river, though allotted to this head, revolted; so that the Indus became its boundary. This was the Macedo-Babylonish Kingdom of the Seleucidae.

This Third Head is described as the King of the North in Daniel 11. Though suppressed during the Middle Ages, prophecy requires it to re-emerge at the Time of the End (Dan. 11:40) when the King of the North is again described as manifested in the political arena, ready to enact the invasion of Ezekiel 38. It is significant, therefore, that in recent times Russia (Ros) has invaded Afghanistan, bringing it into the arena of the King of the North.

Fourth Head — The Kingdom of the West, embracing Macedonia and Greece.

"And dominion was given unto it" — Alexander's conquests resulted in his Empire extending over a far greater dominion than that over which either Babylon or Medo-Persia ruled. The victories by which Alexander extended his influence are described in the symbolism of Chapter 8. In describing the widespread dominions of the Leopard, this prophecy links with that of the Image seen by Nebuchadnezzar, for in regard to the brass Kingdom of the Image, the statement is made: it "shall bear rule over all the earth" (Dan. 2:39). This Alexander did. After he had conquered in the East, he returned to Babylon making it his headquarters whilst in that area. Further details concerning Alexander's victories

and the extent of his rule are outlined in Chapter 8. However, his world-empire did not long outlast his death. The loyalty of his followers had been induced by his ability in wielding the sword, and when that was sheathed by his death, it dissipated. With cold-hearted brutality his successors murdered his mother, wife, brother and young son, and the Empire was divided into four parts by the main generals of his army, symbolised by the four heads of the Leopard. Cassander assumed control of Macedon and Greece, Seleucus took Syria, Babylon and the north east to the Indus; Lysimachus became ruler of Asia Minor, including Pergamos and Thrace; whilst Ptolemy laid claim to Egypt, Palestine and Arabia. Further details of these four heads are outlined in Chapters 8 and 11. See *Exposition of Daniel*, Sect. 5.

The Fourth Unnamed Beast — vv.7-8

No zoo in all the world has housed a beast like the fourth one that now arises from the sea to the astonished view of Daniel in his night vision. It is, comments the prophet, dreadful, terrible and strong exceedingly. It has iron teeth and brazen nails. It is completely insatiable in its ravenous and hideous greed. It has ten horns, three of which are plucked up by another "little horn" that appears among the ten, and is more brutal and determined in its opposition to the saints than any of the others. This horn has eyes and mouth which are exercised particularly against the saints of the Most High. Nevertheless Daniel witnesses the judgment of God poured out upon this fearsome beast; after which he is given a vision of its Judge in heaven being introduced to the Deity as The Ancient of Days. To this Son of Man is granted dominion exceeding that of any of the beasts; at which point the vision fades. Confused at the meaning, Daniel poses a series of questions to the presiding angel, the answers to which complete the prophecy of this chapter. The revelation provides him with food for thought but leaves him deeply concerned. It is significant that Hosea, in predicting the nations that Yahweh warned He would use against His unfaithful people, refers to all four beasts seen by Daniel in his vision, and likewise does not name the fourth beast. "I will be unto them as a fierce lion; as a leopard I will lurk for them by the way; I will meet them as a bear bereaved of her

whelps. . . the wild beast shall tear them" (Hos. 13:7-8).

VERSE 7

"After this I saw in the night visions" — The reference to "night" relates to Gentile times; what historians term "the dark ages".

"And behold a fourth beast" — This fourth beast is unnamed. There is nothing in all the menagerie of fierce, powerful, and untamed animals of the jungle that can match this beast for its formidable and frightening appearance, its insatiable and ravenous greed, and its brutal cruelty. It represents Rome: political and ecclesiastical. It combined and added to the fearsome characteristics of all the beasts that preceded it (see Rev. 13:2). It therefore represented the legs of iron, and feet and toes of iron and clay as described in the Image seen by Nebuchadnezzar.

"Dreadful" — The Chaldean word *dechal* rendered "dreadful" signifies to *slink as in fear or to crawl*. It therefore does not describe an upright or majestic animal as those that preceded it in the vision. Its fearsome appearance is calculated to cause fear in those who are threatened by it. The term is suggestive of the crocodile, rendered "the dragon of the sea" in Isa. 27:1, and identifiable with the dragon of *The Apocalypse* (Rev. 12:9; 13:11). Therein the "Dragon" is representative of Rome in its military power. From the time of Constantine onwards, Constantinople became the headquarters of its military power.

"And terrible" — The word is from a Chaldean root signifying that which is burly, strong and mighty (see also ch. 2:31; 7:19). The image is as here and in 7:19.

"And strong exceedingly" — This fourth beast answers to the fourth metal of the Image which was iron, and related to an empire that would be "strong as iron; forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things. . . it shall break in pieces and bruise" (Dan. 2:40). The reference, of course, is to the Roman Empire. Seven hundred and fifty-three years before the birth of Christ, the city of Rome is said to have been founded by Romulus, its first king. As century after century passed away, its power increased, so that it became "strong as iron" (Dan.

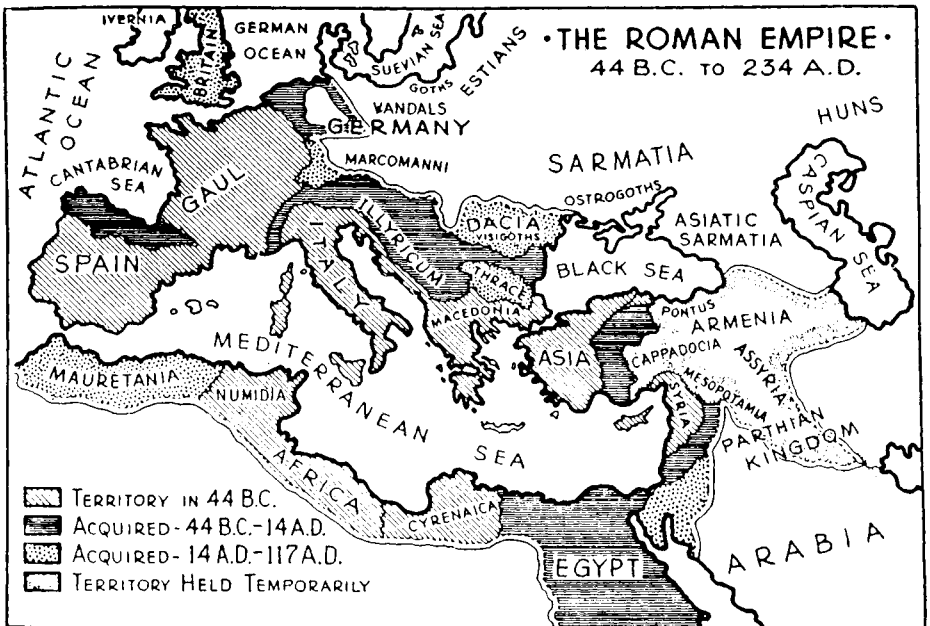
2:40), or "dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly". It is identified with iron, for an historian has recorded that it was "an iron crown which its emperors wore (proverbially the iron crown of Italy); and an iron yoke to which it subjected the peoples which it conquered". Rome's strength rested largely upon her institutions and unrivalled soldiery. Her generals were brave and skilful; her army was extremely well disciplined; and at the height of her power she was well-nigh invincible. And also feared. Rome was brutal in its treatment of those it conquered, and rapacious in its plundering of their territories. An ancient historian, Dionysius Halicarnassus recorded:

"The empire of the Romans pervades all regions of the earth which are not inaccessible but are inhabited by mankind; it reigns also over the whole sea, and it is the first and only one that has made the east and west its boundaries; and there is no people that does not recognise Rome as the universal mistress, or that refuses to submit to its dominion". This aspect of the Fourth Beast is found in Daniel's descrip-

tion, for the term *terrible* is from a Chal-dean word signifying "strong-joined, burly and mighty". It describes the flesh in political manifestation.

"It had great iron teeth" — These "iron" teeth link this Fourth Beast with the fourth metal of the Image of Dan.2. Later on, as Daniel considered the Beast a little more closely, he noted that it also had "nails of brass". He doubtless recognised that the iron and brass of this Beast linked it with the band of iron and brass related to the dream of Nebuchadnezzar as described in Dan. 4:15.

"It devoured and brake in pieces" — Daniel saw this fearful Beast on a rampage extending its conquests, swallowing up territory after territory, reducing all victims to impotence within the borders of its ever-increasing power. It finally turned to the East. In B.C. 168 Macedonia was swallowed up; in B.C. 133 Pergamum was bequeathed to Rome by its king and claimed by the Empire; in B.C. 65 Syria was occupied; in B.C. 30 Egypt succumbed. The Mediterranean was now a Roman Lake, and the rule of the



Emperors extended from Rome, East to Palestine and Egypt; and West to Gaul and Britain. Daniel noted that it devoured what it wanted to consume and destroyed the remainder. Rome conquered for aggrandisement and power and not merely to satisfy its need. It brought all territories of the three previous empires under its control except the Eastern portion of Persia.

“And stamped the residue with the feet of it” — There evidently was a pause between the Beast’s action in “devouring and breaking in pieces” the animals, or empires, that preceded it, and the stamping of the residue with its feet. In fulfilment of what Daniel saw, it is of great significance to note that Rome never fully conquered Persia; indeed, in the epoch of Rome’s power, Persia always remained a thorn in the side of the Empire, and time and again the eastern legions did battle with Persian warriors. The lines of communication between Rome and Persia were too long and the fruits that victory promised once domination was attained were insufficient to warrant a full-scale attack on that nation which could well have battered it into subjection. But Daniel observed that finally the “feet” of this Beast did do this. They “stamped the residue”, or what remained of the previous beasts into subjection; and brought the Leopard (Persia) completely under its domination. That has not yet happened, but ultimately will do so, for the Fourth Beast must be in evidence at the coming of the Lord to be destroyed by him. This the prophecy definitely requires (see Dan. 7:21-22). It is significant that in Rev. 13 this Beast is described as having “the feet of a bear”, for it will be the Russian bear that will carry the Fourth Beast into Persia to fulfil the prophecy given to Daniel, as well as that seen by Ezekiel (Ezek. 38:7).

“And it was diverse from all the beasts that were before it” — In fact, all the beasts were “diverse” from each other (v.3), but this one was particularly so as the subsequent description shows. It was unnamed by Daniel because no normal Beast of creation answers to this one, nor manifests such ferocity as it revealed.

“And it had ten horns” — In this, certainly, it differed from the other beasts described. These ten horns link the fourth beast with the toes of the Image seen by Nebuchadnezzar, representative of the divided state of the Roman Empire.

VERSE 8

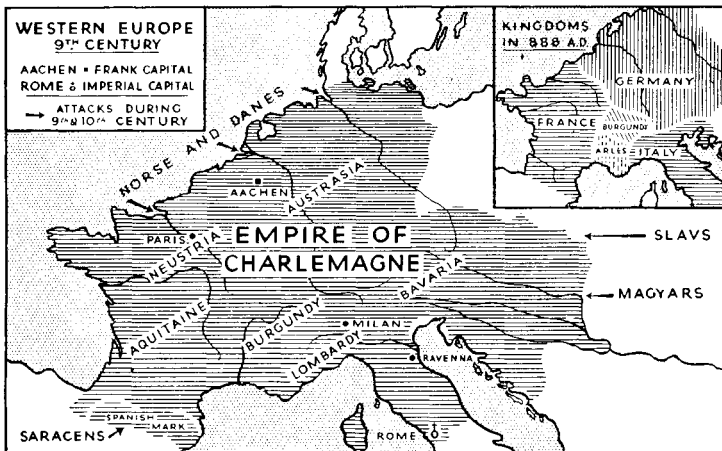
“I considered the horns, and, behold, there came up among them another little horn” — As Daniel was earnestly contemplating the ten horns, he observed another “little horn” growing up among them. At first, this eleventh horn was small in comparison with its fellows; but it grew to be dominant. It was unique in that it was fitted with eyes and mouth, and these identify it as an ecclesiastical horn. It represented the Roman Catholic System that aspired to great power and influence, but only attained it gradually over the course of centuries. The Roman Empire was first divided into two parts: East and West, as represented by the two legs of the Image seen by Nebuchadnezzar. This twofold division was established by Constantine, about 330AD, when he removed the civil and military capital of the Empire to Constantinople, whilst Rome remained the headquarters of the Church. This political division into West and East was consolidated by the emperor Theodosius I (392-395). It was followed by an Ecclesiastical cleavage in the 11th century when the Eastern church divided from the Western church to establish the Greek Catholic Church in opposition to the Roman Catholic Church (the brass and iron of Dan. 4:15; 7:19). Meanwhile, the Western division of the Empire had been weakened by the invasion of tribes of “barbarians” that poured over the borders of the Empire to establish themselves as ethnic groups in the various territories they conquered. These developed into the “ten horns” or “kingdoms” of Western Europe, inevitably weakening the Empire as a whole. Gradually they embraced an apostate form of Christianity. But it was based upon the Arian theory of the unity of God, and was bitterly opposed to the Trinitarianism of the Catholics. The Goths, Ostrogoths and Heruli occupied Italy, and embracing this theory, challenged the authority of the Bishop of Rome whose influence was greatly reduced as a result. In A.D. 476, through the conquering sword of Odoacer the Goth, Rome fell, and the Empire in the West was brought to an end. Opposed by the Arian Goths, the bishop of Rome, or the Pope was greatly reduced in influence, and appealed to the Emperor in Constantinople for help. In answer, the sword of Justinian of Constantinople, was unsheath

ed in his support. The Goths in Italy were defeated and in A.D. 527 Justinian was proclaimed sole Emperor. He supported the pretensions of the Roman bishop, together with his Trinitarian doctrine and other fantasies by force of arms and restored a measure of power to the Pope. In 533 (an important date as we shall see) his victories in Italy were of sufficient significance as to allow him, with the authority of the sword, to proclaim the Bishop of Rome as *Universal Bishop*. In 539 Ravenna was reconquered by Justinian's forces, and added prestige was given to the Pope. In the years 549-554 Justinian published his pragmatic sanctions, a legal code which became the foundation of European Law. These gave the Pope control of Municipal and Provincial Government in Italy. So the "little horn" began to grow, as Daniel saw it. (See *Apocalypse Epitomised* on Rev. 13:1-3). The year 590 saw the elevation of the politically ambitious Pope Gregory I, and the commencement of a new era of increasing influence for the Church. By the year 600 his influence was at its zenith, and the little horn had eyes and mouth! Gregory died in 604 but his influence was such that by then Western Europe recognised the bishop of Rome, the Pope, as the head of the entire Church. The Papacy at that stage enjoyed the military support of the Emperors of Constantinople. In the years 608-610 Emperor Phocas of Constantinople confirmed the decree of Justinian and proclaimed that the Pope was the "head of all the churches". These dates are significant

in view of the time periods of v.25, as we shall see when we consider that verse.

However, it is important to recognise that the "little horn" Daniel saw emerge and grow does not represent Roman Catholicism merely as a church, but as another kingdom, or dominion Catholic character: for the horns are described as kingdoms, not churches. This "little horn" was an ecclesiastical dominion, and is known to history as The Holy Roman Empire.

The full emergence of this dominion in the West (among the ten horns) was partially brought about by the impotence of the Emperors of Constantinople to continue to support the Papacy. From 622 onwards, Mahommedanism began to challenge the Eastern Empire until Constantinople itself was threatened (it fell in 1493). The Pope had to look elsewhere for military support, and he found it in the rising power of the Franks. The rise of the power of the Franks, and the establishment of the Empire of Charlemagne, ultimately given the title of *The Holy Roman Empire*, was assisted by the conquests of Mahommedanism as predicted in Rev. 9 (see *Apocalypse Epitomised* or *Eureka*). The Middle East was quickly conquered by the Arabs reducing the scope and power of the Eastern Roman Empire. They also rapidly overran North Africa: and in the year 700, a Mahommedan general by the name of Tarik crossed the old Gates of Hercules and occupied Gibraltar. Eleven years later in the battle of Xerxes de la Frontera, he defeated the



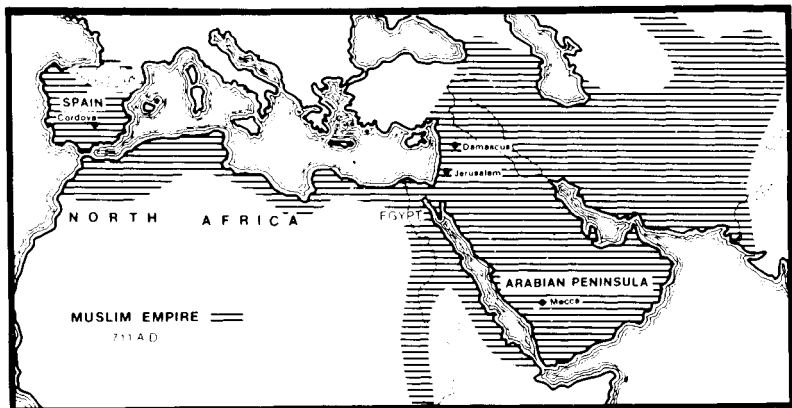
king of the Visigoths, and then moved northwards, crossing the passes of the Pyrenees. The Moslems defeated the Duke of Aquitania, who tried to halt them near Bordeaux, and marched towards Paris.

Thus in two great pincer movements, Moslem forces challenged Constantinople in the East, and Europe, through Spain, in the West. The threat had to be met and defeated, or Europe would be completely dominated by Mahommedanism, for the terms of capitulation laid down by the Moslems was "the Koran or the Sword". However, Yahweh, through His ministering spirits (Heb. 1:14) was guiding the destiny of nations, and the time was ripe for Daniel's prophecy of the "little horn" to have its complete manifestation and development in the emergence of *The Holy Roman Empire*. In the year 732, the Moslems were beaten in a battle fought between Tours and Poitiers in Western Europe. On that day, Charles Martel (Charles the Hammer), a Frankish chieftain, saved Europe from Mahommedan domination. He drove the Moslems out of France into Spain where for the next seven centuries to 1492 they retained power in what was named as the Kingdom of the Moors.

The challenge of the Moslems, both East and West of Europe, weakened the Pope politically and militarily. He had to find an ally with a strong sword to replace that of the Emperors of Constantinople. Ever ready to compromise, the Popes had no scruples in making overtures to the

most promising of the Germanic tribes that had occupied north-western Europe after the fall of Rome. They were the Franks who had defeated the Moslems. A son of the famous Charles Martel was a clever diplomat called Pepin the Short. Intriguing to be proclaimed King with the approval of the other Germanic chieftains, he staged an elaborate ceremony at which Boniface, the great Catholic missionary of northwest Europe, anointed him as "King by the grace of God". The words *Dia gratia* incorporated into the coronation service drew the Crown closer to the Church, and increased the power and influence of both. It was claimed that any who opposed such a King opposed God whose representative on earth the Pope claimed to be! In Pepin, the Pope had secured a champion to replace the Emperors of Constantinople, and provide him with the military backing to enforce the doctrines he proclaimed. The "little horn" replete with eyes and mouth was beginning to assert itself as Daniel saw it.

"Before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots" — Though the Pope had come to terms with Pepin and now had a powerful friend to help him, in Italy itself his position was far from secure. The Arians still dominated the Pope's own country and showed little real respect for "His Holiness" as he delighted to be called. In support of his friend, Pepin invaded Italy in 758, and, as recorded by Gibbon in *The Decline and*



The Saracens extended their power into Spain threatening Europe itself. The Kingdom of the Franks held it at bay, and ultimately developed into the Holy Roman Empire.

Fall of the Roman Empire, he conquered the principalities of the country, and gave to the Pope what became known as "the States of the Church", the three Kingdoms of Italy: the Exarchate of Ravenna, the Kingdom of the Lombards, and the State of Rome. The Pope now enjoyed Temporal Power, and the "little horn" as a dominion had grown to its full height. The States of the Church, granted to the Pope by Pepin, were confirmed by Charlemagne his son. They were represented by the triple crown from now on worn by

the Pope, a token of the "three horns" plucked up by the roots to establish Papal political and temporal power. These States of the Church remained under Papal control until in 1870 they were taken from his authority and the Pope's temporal power was lost. A Millennium, or a Thousand Years of wickedness, was then terminated. In the Conquests of Charlemagne through which the Papal power was further extended, three of the major, independent "horns" or Kingdoms were



uprooted. They were the Heruli, Ostrogoths and Vandals.

In the year 789, the Pope, Leo III, was attacked in a street in Rome and left for dead. He was rescued, and made his way to the camp of Charles, where he asked for help. An army of Franks soon restored his authority and conveyed Leo to the Lateran Palace which ever since the days of Constantine, had been the home of the Pope. That was in December 799. On Christmas day of the next year, Charlemagne, who was staying in Rome, attended the service in the ancient church of "St" Peter. When he arose from prayer, the Pope placed a crown upon his head, called him Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire, and hailed him once more with the title of "Augustus" which had not been heard for hundreds of years. Charlemagne was an enthusiastic supporter of the Papacy. He had conquered the land of the

Saxons in Germany and had built towns and monasteries all over the greater part of northern Europe. Under the rule of this German chieftain, the Holy Roman Empire, Germanic in character, was firmly established. Ultimately it was given the title: "The Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation". Thence onwards, the Emperors of Germany were also crowned Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire.

"And behold in this horn were eyes like the eyes of man" —The "little horn" differed from the others in this particular, for in addition to its temporal, or secular power it also exercised ecclesiastical supervision, overseeing its widespread dominions through its church officials sent wherever they were required. It is significant, that the office of a bishop is styled a See, and that of the Pope, the Bishop of Rome itself the *Holy See* relating to the supervision exercised by such. The "eyes" of the papacy extend throughout the earth and reports are sent back to headquarters in Rome. Such an office is based upon Divine principles, for "the eyes of Yahweh run to and fro through the whole earth" (Zech. 4:10), "to show Himself strong on behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward Him" (2 Chr. 16: 9). The Papacy claims to do likewise. But the eyes of the little horn are not those of God, though the Pope may claim them so to be; but, as Daniel notes, they are the "eyes of man" of flesh. Moreover, the word rendered "man" in this place is *enash*, and denotes one who is weak and mortal. Catholics may imagine the Pope will live throughout eternity, but saints know that he will have an abiding place in hell (the grave)! These "eyes of man" can be linked with the number of the beast, "which is the number of a man" (Rev. 13:18), that is, the number of flesh. It is significant, that in Zechariah's prophecy of the apostasy that establishes its house, or temple, in Shinar or Rome, the statement is made that "this is their resemblance through all the earth" (Zech. 9:6), and in the Hebrew the word rendered "resemblance" is "eye". The eyes of the Papacy extend throughout the earth to discover means of advancing its influence. Zechariah predicted the coming destruction of this power: "Woe to the idol shepherd that leaveth the flock! The sword shall be upon his arm (secular authority) and upon his right eye (ecclesiastical supervision); his arm shall be clean dried up, and his right eye shall be utterly darkened" (Zech.



Pope Boniface wearing triple tiered crown symbolising temporal power over three dominions.

11:17).

“And a mouth speaking great things”

— These “great things” are blasphemies against Yahweh (v. 25; See Rev. 13:5-8). The “voice” proclaims the Papal bulls and decrees that issue forth from Rome. There was a “great voice” that sounded forth decrees from historic Babylon (Jer. 51:55), which, however, was stilled by the conquests of Cyrus typifying the manner in which the great voice of the Papacy will be hushed by the conquests of the antitypical Cyrus, even the Lord Jesus Christ. Then will be fulfilled the prophetic words of Psalm 12:3: “Yahweh shall cut off all flattering lips, and the tongue that speaketh proud things”.

The Ancient of Days & The Judgment

— vv. 9-14.

The pretentious blasphemies uttered by the little horn call for Divine intervention and judgment. Accordingly, the attention of the prophet is diverted to a scene of awe-inspiring grandeur. The thrones of a heavenly tribunal are placed for the supreme Judge and His assessors to take their place. The central throne is like a wheeled chariot flashing forth fiery flames of burning, purging fire. This fiery judgment is not limited to the immediate vicinity of the throne for a fiery stream issues from that centre to the whole world. Before the throne stand vast numbers of Divine attendants, and before them those upon whom judgment is about to be pronounced. Central to the whole theophany is the Ancient of Days: Yahweh in manifestation. His appearance is brilliant; encased in light: His white hair and white garments proclaiming His complete righteousness. Books of record are ceremonially opened and read, and judgment is given according to the evidence written. The fourth beast is totally destroyed, and given to the burning flame; but a more lenient sentence is pronounced against the other beasts not guilty of the extent of blasphemy as manifested by it.

VERSE 9

“I beheld till” — This suggests that the Fourth Beast with its dominant horn will be in evidence at the times of judgment.

“The thrones were cast down” — The statement “cast down” is rendered *placed* in the R.V. or set in the Septuagint. The reference is to thrones of judgment, not those of rulership. The metaphor is borrowed from the solemnity of earthly judic-

atories, and particularly the Great Sanhedrin where the “father” of the consistency sat with his assessors seated on either side of him in the form of a semi-circle, with the accused standing before him. Thrones of Judgment are described in Ps. 9:7; 122:5; 149:9; Matt. 19:28; Luke 22:29-30; Rev. 20:4. These were moveable seats capable of being placed at the place of judgment (cp. Jhn 18:28). The judgment described by Daniel in the verses before us does not relate to the judgment of the household, but that of the Nations. Christ’s victory over the Northern confederacy at Armageddon will be followed by a lull during which an ultimatum will be sent to the nations commanding their subjection to the king in Jerusalem (Ps. 2:10-12; Isa. 14:32; Rev. 14:6-7 etc.). The acceptance or rejection of that ultimatum will decide the future destiny of individual powers. “The nation and kingdom that will not serve Thee shall perish”, declared Isaiah (Ch. 60:12). Various judgments are pronounced in the verses that follow.

“And the Ancient of Days did sit” —

The Ancient of days, as the presiding Judge, is depicted as ceremoniously taking his exalted place on the seat of Judgment reserved for Him. Who is the Ancient of Days? In this chapter He is both Deity (v.13), and the Lord Jesus Christ (v.22). How can He be both? Through the terms of God-manifestation. As a trusted son may represent his father, and, indeed, speak with his authority; so the Son in heaven, and on earth in the future, represents and will represent the Father. Already, to him is granted “all power” in heaven and earth (Mat. 28:18; 1 Pet. 3:22), so that he acts with the full authority and in the name of his Father. That exalted status in the Age to come is offered to the saints under Christ (see Rom. 5:2; 2 Pet. 1:4; Rev. 3:12).

What does the Divine title: The Ancient of Days signify? See the following relevant Scriptures: Job 36:26; Ps. 41:13; 90:2; 102:24-27. The progress of the years means nothing to Yahweh Who changes not, and Who is above and beyond all measurement of time. Nations may rise and fall, may come and go, measured off by epochs and ages (Act. 17:26), but He continues from everlasting to everlasting. He only hath underived immortality, a nature Divine and indestructible, today manifested in the Angels and in Christ; and in the future to be bestowed upon the saints

(1 Tim. 6:15-16; 2 Pet. 1:4). As Son of God, the Lord can trace his ancestry back before the beginning of time (see Micah 5:2), and those who are "born from above" by the Word of truth (John 3:3; 1 Pet. 1:23-25), to be incorporated into the Divine family, will be able to do likewise in a spiritual sense when Divine nature is granted them. Thus the term *Ancient of Days* can apply to Yahweh as well as to Christ and all those approved in him as far as their spiritual ancestry is concerned.

"Whose garment was white as snow" — The garment symbolises both nature and status. One puts on the white garment when baptised into Christ (Gal. 3:26), and his duty thereon is to keep it pure and white (Rev. 3:14; Jude 23:). Ultimately such will be invited to put on the complete garments in the change of nature that shall be offered them (Rev. 19:8 — see notes *Apocalypse Epitomised*). Meanwhile, in Christ, it is possible to keep those garments white by acknowledging any weakness, praying for forgiveness, and seeking the strength to overcome it (see Isa. 1:18).

"And the hair of his head like the pure wool" — The pure white hair of the Ancient of Days answers to the white mitre of the High Priest. On the forehead of the priest was a golden band inscribed with the caption: *Holiness to Yahweh*. The priests had to wear that golden band because, through weakness of the flesh, they did not consistently manifest the holiness to which they were called. But such an artificial appendage was not necessary in the case of the Lord. His sinless life was a constant demonstration of entire dedication unto Yahweh. And from whence did his holiness and perfection of character stem? From the mind. It was there that the battle was fought and won. His flesh, in the days of his mortality, was identical to that of all mankind, but his mind was unique. His Divine conception provided him with the potential to develop the mind of God, and by that means to conquer. He thus was "strengthened" to perform the will of Yahweh (Ps. 80:17). In view of the Godlike character he exhibited, John declared: "We saw his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth" (John. 1:14). In measure, through the Word, those truly "in Christ" can also be strengthened to overcome, though their limitations of mind will not enable this to the measure of the Lord. Nevertheless, they too, must be "begotten from above" (See John 3:3 mg). The vic-

tory for them, as for Christ, will be the conquest of the flesh by a Godly developed mind. By that means they can "lead the captivity captive". Figuratively, the hair of those at one with the Ancient of Days will be "white as snow", because the One depicted in the verse before us is representative of all in Him, and through him their sins though "as scarlet", they can be washed to become "white as snow" (Isa. 1:18).

"His throne was like the fiery flame" — Fire is used as a symbol for the consuming power of the Spirit as manifested through the Elohim (Gen. 3:24; Ps. 104:4). Evidence of the discriminatory nature of the "fiery flame" had been manifested in the trial of Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego. The "flame of fire" slew those who had cast them into Babylon's fiery furnace, whereas they had come out unharmed. Yahweh's judgment is far more effective than that of flesh, and no power will be able to stand before it when it is manifested in the future. It is significant that the Chaldean term here translated "flame" is from a root signifying to *divide up*, and therefore as a flame "split into tongues" as on the Day of Pentecost (See *Strong's Concordance*). These tongues of spirit-flame will divide up to go forth into all the world to bring all parts into subjection to Yahweh. The Cherubic throne as seen by Ezekiel in his vision (see Ezek. 1:26-27) was similarly encased with fire. The Cherubim, as a symbol, relate to the manifestation of Yahweh in judgment, and in Rev. 5:9-10 they are identified with the saints in glory. Ezekiel saw a throne established above the firmament representative of the Davidic throne occupied by the one likened to "a jasper and a sardine stone" (Rev. 4:3), or the Lord Jesus Christ in regal glory as God manifested in flesh. He is depicted in company with 24 elders and 4 beasts or living creatures comprising the Israel of God of the future age (Gal. 6:16). The fire shown in conjunction with the throne indicates the consuming and purging anger of Yahweh manifested through the Spirit. By this the nations will be subdued and purged, and made fit as mortal participants in the Kingdom of God. Isaiah saw this fiery flame proceeding throughout the earth: "Behold the name of Yahweh (the saints in glory, see Acts 15:14) cometh from far, burning with His anger, and the burden thereof is heavy: His lips are full of

indignation, and His tongue as a devouring fire; and His breath, as an overflowing stream, shall reach to the midst of the neck to sift the nations with the sieve of vanity; and there shall be a bridle in the jaws of the people, causing them to err" (Isa. 30:27-28).

"And His wheels as burning fire" — The whirling wheels of fire give mobility to the judgment to be meted out to the nations. It will not be limited to one site, as in the case of the overthrow of Gog, but will go forth to all parts, "rebuking strong nations afar off" (Micah 4:3). The wheels again identify Daniel's vision with that seen by his contemporary Ezekiel. Ezekiel described the Cherubim as going "straight forward" undiverted from the purpose of judgment set before them (Ezek. 1:12). He described the "wheels" as linking the chariot of Yahweh on earth with heaven itself; and their appearance as frighteningly awe-inspiring (vv. 15-24). The Spirit, he declared, was in the wheels; that is, it motivated them and governed the direction in which they were to go (v.20). Who are the Cherubim? In *Phanerosis* and *Eureka*, Bro. Thomas identifies the word with that of "chariot", and aligns the charioteer with the Spirit (see Ps. 18:10). This accords with the expression found in 1 Chron. 28:18 that describes the Ark of the Covenant and the Mercy Seat as "the chariot of the cherubim". The "judgment written", and then to be poured out by the saints (Ps. 149:9), will be sacrificial in its scope (Ezek. 39:17). The nations will be treated as a burnt offering, with flesh consumed by Divine fire, or the Spirit (Rev. 4:5; Lev. 9:26). The Throne, associated with wheels, illustrates its unlimited influence throughout the earth: "Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of Yahweh Sabaoth will perform this" (Isa. 9:7).

VERSE 10

"A fiery stream issued and came forth from before Him" — The NIV renders this: "A river of fire was flowing coming out before him". The word *negad*, rendered "issued" signifies *to flow*, with the idea of *clearing the way* (*Strong's Concordance*). Therefore Daniel must have seen this

river of fire commence to flow from the throne, and then continue to do so. The term is suggestive of the flaming Cherubic sword of the future (Gen. 3:24). That river of fiery spirit which will clear the way, and open it for "whosoever will" to seek the grace and mercy of the One upon the throne, will be operated by the saints who will comprise the Angelic hosts of the future (Luke 20:26). The declaration of the Psalmist: "He maketh His angels spirits, and His ministers a flame of fire" will then apply to them (Ps. 104:4).

The Psalmist refers prophetically to that fire of judgment: "Our God will come and shall not keep silence; a fire shall devour before him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about him" (Ps. 50:3). The judgment seat will be a place of purging fire for saints as well as the world (see 1 Cor. 3:12-13; Matt. 13:40-42).

"Ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him" — The term "stood before" in this place signifies to *rise up and advance to the front*. The vision of Daniel now moves on to illustrate the judgment of the nations, not of the household which precedes this (see 1 Pet. 4:17). In fact, to repeat for emphasis what we have already stated, the saints "execute the judgment written" (Ps. 149:9) and are in this judgment; scene as the assessors and executors of the judgments pronounced; the ministers of the one upon the throne, the Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, those who now advance to the front represent those who are to witness against the mortal nations to be judged. In the court scene presented by the prophet they represent the witnesses for the prosecution competent to testify against the nations to be judged so as to determine the extent of national judgment to be administered. The numerals do not express exact numbers but represent a large undisclosed complete number (Rev. 7:9). In Biblical numerics, *ten* signifies a *completeness* as in 1 Sam. 29:5; Ps. 3:6; 1 Cor. 4:15; 14:19. These "ten thousands", therefore, comprise the large number who are able to testify as to the ungodly practices and cruel oppression experienced at the hands of the beasts now brought before the throne for judgment (see Hab. 2:7). "In her," declares John referring to Babylon the Great (the notable horn of the Fourth Beast), "was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth" (Rev. 18:24). The assessors are those now resurrected and now depicted as standing forth before

the court of justice to witness against their oppressors.

"The judgment was set" — The phrase signifies that the assessors took their seats that the process of judgment might proceed. When a judge enters a court, all stand to honour his status. He takes his seat, and the rest of the court connected with the case does likewise, leaving the defendant standing in the witness box. Then, with the chief judge and his assessors now seated, the case for the prosecution commences. Something like that is depicted in the scene described by Daniel. So now as the court sits all is ready to hear "the judgment written."

"And the books were opened" — We emphasise once more, because it is supremely important, that the scene described is that of *national judgment*. In that regard there are figurative national books of account that record the crimes or otherwise of the nations. Reference is made to such records in Dan. 12:1. The folly of Israel national is recorded in these symbolic books of account. Referring to them, and relating to circumstances after the destruction of Gog, Isaiah declares: "It shall come to pass that he that is left in Zion, and he that remaineth in Jerusalem, shall be called holy, even every one that is written among the living in Jerusalem when the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and shall have purged the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof by the spirit of judgment, and by the spirit of burning" (Isa. 4:3-4). This statement obviously relates to the purifying of Judah in the land: involving a national judgment and purging of sin. Ezekiel, likewise, makes reference to such a judgment, and such symbolic books, in warning that certain will not be found "written in the writing of the house of Israel" and, in consequence, "shall not enter into the land" (Ezek. 13:9). There will be careful discrimination of those claiming to represent national Israel (Amos 9:9), and only those mortals will remain who conform to the necessary requirements (Zech. 13:8-9). In that regard, there appears to be a two-fold application of the parable of judgment in Matthew 25:32. That it applies to the household, those "taken out of all nations" seems beyond doubt, and such a judgment will take place at Sinai where the Lord in glory shall sit as judge over those so called; but also it can apply

nationally, as figuratively set forth in the judgment scene described in the section of Daniel which we are now considering. Yahweh is not indifferent to the crimes and virtues of nations; and the time will come when they shall be judged according to their reaction to His requirements now (see *Elpis Israel*, p. 353).

"I beheld then because of the voice of the great words which the horn spake." — As Daniel had been attracted by the scene of glory presented by the presiding Judge over the court of justice (v.9), so now he was drawn to consider the words of the horn as recorded in the books, and now presented to the court. He learned of the arrogance, haughtiness, pride, blasphemy and violent suppression of saints by the papal system so described. The records of the Inquisition and cruel brutally used by the system against the saints throughout the ages, and the gross wickedness of its teaching and decrees will be recalled (Rev. 13:10,15; 14:10-12). As the prophet listened to this evidence he was moved by increasing abhorrence and hatred of the system, and awaited to learn of the judgment to be pronounced against it. It was the notable "horn" that was mainly guilty of the crimes recorded, but because the other horns had identified themselves with that horn, all were considered as involved.

"I beheld even till the beast was slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame" — The judgment decreed that the Fourth Beast be entirely destroyed, consumed by the burning flame (v.9). That punishment will plunge the city of Rome into the abyss, together with its ecclesiastical organisation, and subsequently will destroy the whole papal system of rule governed thereby (see Rev. 18:21-23). The description of such judgment, however, means that the Fourth Beast be found in political and ecclesiastical power at the coming of Christ, with the "horn" dominant in the organisation. The Papacy is today rising from out of the reverses of the temporary judgment that destroyed its dominion in 1870 as Daniel subsequently learned (Dan. 7:26). In 1870, the temporal power of the Papacy was taken from it, but in 1929, through the Concordat signed between Mussolini and the Pope it was again restored, in measure. Further advancement came in 1957 through the Treaty of Rome, which

brought into existence the Common Market. This is establishing in Western Europe a confederacy of nations in the very area of Charlemagne's Empire. It is forming the Western foot of the image which Nebuchadnezzar was told must exist in the "latter days" (Dan. 2:28). The eastern foot comprises the nations of the Warsaw Pact under the control of the Soviets. In more recent years, the Papacy has extended its influence throughout Europe, and beyond. The blasphemy of its words and decrees is increasing with its power. These will be considered and judgment decreed at the court of Divine justice to be set up in Jerusalem.

VERSE 12

"As concerning the rest of the beasts, they had their dominion taken away" — This implies that the other beasts were not completely destroyed by the Fourth Beast, but only absorbed by it. After the Fourth Beast is destroyed (and it will extend its influence over all the other realms at the time of the end) the subordinate powers will recover their independence and national identity. As such, by the ultimatum that will issue forth from the King in Zion, they will be invited to submit to his authority and rule (Rev. 14:8-10).

"Yet their lives were prolonged." — The Chaldean original of this clause is given in the margin: "a prolonging of life was given them". The destruction of the Fourth Beast (the Russian-Catholic confederacy of the last days) will be followed by the extension of Christ's rule throughout the earth. This was symbolised by the Image seen by Nebuchadnezzar: it was first broken to pieces together by the Divine stone, and afterwards ground to powder and "carried away" as the stone grew into a mountain (Dan. 2:35). As Christ's Kingdom extends throughout the earth, the supervision of cities and nations will be placed in the care of his immortalised associates (Matt. 19:28; Luke 19:17; Rev. 2:26-27; Rev. 5:9-10). However, "the nation and kingdom that shall not serve thee shall perish, yea those nations shall be utterly wasted" (Isa. 60:12).

"For a season and time" — Brother Thomas interprets this period as a thousand years: the Millennium of glory. The "season" he suggests comprises two lunar "times" or years of 360 days each,

making 720 in all. The "time" or "set time" he relates to the period of gestation as in Gen. 21:2. In *Exposition of Daniel* he states: "If, then, we can find a revelation of how long they (the saints) are to reign, we shall have ascertained the duration of the *season and time*. This matter was revealed to John in Patmos. He tells us that he saw one descend from heaven and bind the Dragon, so that the power could not injuriously affect the nations for 1,000 years; and that coevally with that period he saw persons occupying thrones who reigned with Christ as the priests of God (Rev. 20:1-6).

"A season and time, then, is 1,000 years, or two times of 360 years each; and a *set time* of 280 years; of nine months and ten days of years, 280 days being a set time, or period of gestation (Gen. 21:2). For this season and time of 1,000 years the holy ones possess the world as theirs. At the end of that time, sin being eradicated, and death abolished, their priesthood necessarily ceases. They therefore reign no more *as priests*; but the Deity is all things in all the dwellers upon the earth."

The Elevation and Appointment of The Judge vv.13-14

A new vision opens out before the eyes of the attentive Daniel. He is taken into heaven and sees one styled the Son of Man presented to the Ancient of Days by a retinue of the heavenly host. There is granted to this Son complete authority over the nations that he might guide their destiny and establish the kingdom which has already been the subject of the prophet's visions. The events depicted foreshadow the ascension of the Lord into heaven as described in Acts 1:10-11.

VERSE 13

"I saw in the night visions" — The expression "night visions" relates to Gentile times. The Lord Jesus when apprising his Apostles of his impending ascension into heaven, declared that it would introduce a period of prophetic "night" on the earth. "The night cometh", he warned them (see John 9:4-5). The vision now before us takes us to that time. Christ has ascended into heaven and a shroud of gloom encompasses the earth.

"And behold, one like the Son of Man" — This is a title of the Lord Jesus Christ as judge (John 5:25-27). The word "man" is from the Chaldean *anash* signifying man

in weakness and mortality. The Son in heaven intercedes for such of humanity who embrace him in truth. As a descendant of Adam he inherited the weakness of human nature, but through strength derived from Yahweh, he conquered its temptations, and rose triumphantly to Divine nature (Ps. 80:17; Rom. 1:3).

"Came with the clouds of heaven" — These "clouds" comprise the "heavens that rule" (Dan. 4:26), the angelic host who minister for the benefit of saints (Heb. 1:14). When the Lord left the earth, the Apostles saw a cloud "receive him out of their sight". Notice that the expression used is that of a reception: he did not disappear into a cloud, but the cloud "received him". The word denotes a receiving and bearing upwards. The cloud that received him was identical with the one Daniel now observes conduct the Son of Man into the presence of the Ancient of Days. Among the angels who made up the "cloud" were doubtless Gabriel, Michael and others, including the one who was sent to "strengthen" the Lord in Gethsemane. Reference to this joyous company of rejoicing angels is made in Heb. 12:22. Now, triumphantly, they conduct the resurrected and glorified Son into the presence of the great Increate, the Father in heaven.

"And came to the Ancient of Days" — This is a title of Yahweh relating to His purpose with the earth, as we have seen in v.9. But here the title is borne by the Son who sits upon the throne as Judge. Can the Father and the Son have the same Name and Titles? Most certainly they can in the terms of God manifestation. It is Yahweh who will reign on earth (Zech. 14:9). But not Yahweh personally, whom "no man hath seen nor can see", but Yahweh in manifestation in both Christ and the glorified saints (see Rom. 5:2; 2 Pet. 1:4; Rev. 3:12). Accordingly, in the Chapter before us, the Ancient of Days is revealed in three particulars: *Firstly* as Judge on earth (v.9); *Secondly* as Yahweh enthroned in heaven (V.13); *Thirdly* as Christ returned to the earth (v.22). In order of events, the second reference should be first and the first last; but the Divine method is to reveal the final picture first. Accordingly, Isaiah 2:2-4 first describes the Kingdom, and then, the events leading to that consummation. In Rev. 11:15 the coming dominion of Christ is first set forth; and then, in v.18, the manner in which this will be brought

about. This is a principle of prophetic revelation teaching an important fact: that to please God and successfully overcome the flesh, saints must keep their eyes on the ultimate result (see 2 Cor. 4:18). So now the Lord having ascended into heaven is taken to the presence of the Father. Yahweh's throne is set above the heavens, in glory so grand and dazzling as to be beyond the ability of human eyes to behold, or human minds to grasp (see Ps. 103:19; 93:1; 1 Tim. 6:16). Into that august Presence, the Son of Man is conducted.

"And they brought him near before Him" — What a dramatic and historic moment in the purpose of Yahweh with mankind. All other events fade into comparative insignificance to that moment when the triumphant Son is personally conducted into the presence of his Father. Some 3½ years before the Father had proclaimed at the Jordan: "This is My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased" (Matt. 3:17), and again, some three years later, on Mount Hermon He had caused to be announced to the Apostles: "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him" (Matt. 17:5). If the father of the prodigal son could joyfully go forth to receive his son when he, humbled and repentant, made his way back home (Luke 15:20), with what greater delight must the Father in heaven have received his completely obedient Son. He had been with him in all his trials, sympathetically overshadowing his sufferings, feeling for him in those moments of extreme emotion when his sweat was as great drops of blood. At no time did He desert the Lord. "Behold", explained his loyal and loving Son to his Apostles, "the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave me alone; and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me" (John 16:32). But then the presence of the Father was not immediate but remote, and His help was through the ministration of angels. Now the Son is brought into the very presence of the One for whom he had manifested such love that he was prepared to suffer the ignominy and shame of the crucifixion in faithful obedience to the One in heaven. And with what love, too, the Father must have welcomed his "beloved Son in whom He is well pleased". What an epoch of rejoicing, on the part of the heavenly host, must have been that wonderful occasion.

VERSE 14**“And there was given him dominion”**

— Before ascending into heaven, the Lord explained to the Apostles that “all power is given unto me in heaven and in earth” (Matt. 28:18). Peter endorsed this. He wrote: “Jesus Christ is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him” (1 Pet. 3:22). The Father had given complete control of the outworking of His plan and purpose to His Son. Unlike the angels he is not now limited in his knowledge of the Divine intentions (cp. 1 Pet. 1:12), for a complete revelation was given him on his ascension into heaven (Rev. 1:1). The destiny of nations is now under his control, and the angels are his “ministering spirits” to that end. In *The Apocalypse* some of the angels are depicted performing the bidding of the Lord. Some were sent to John in Patmos to supervise the giving of the Apocalypse (Rev. 1:1), and others, under the direction of the Son, have played a part in the development of the Divine purpose throughout Gentile times (e.g. Rev. 7:1). However, at the return of the Lord, the approved saints will be made “equal unto the angels”, not merely in nature but in status (Luke 20:36). This new race of angelic beings will take over the supervision of the nations during the Millennium (Heb. 2:5), and they will constitute the “cloud of witnesses” (Heb. 12:1), who will accompany the Son as he takes over his great power and reigns (Rev. 1:7). The world at large will then “see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory” (Matt. 24:30). Those “clouds of heaven” will be the saints, for with the return of the Lord to the earth, Heaven’s rule will be extended to earth, that Yahweh’s “will may be done therein as it is in heaven”.

“And glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him”

— The word “people” should be in the plural, for it relates to the ethnic groups of humanity. The expressions used are frequently found in *The Apocalypse*. Saints are “taken out” of such (Rev. 5:9-10); and ultimately will be sent back to educate and rule them (Rev. 10:11). See notes on Ch. 3:4.

“His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed” — See Ps. 145:13; Rev. 11:15. Though the Kingdom over which Christ

shall rule will “last for ever” and have “no end” (Luke 1:33), it will be subject to a change of constitution. For a Millennium the saints shall rule over the mortal populations of the earth; but at the end of that epoch, when every enemy has been destroyed, including sin and death, the perfected Kingdom will be delivered up to the Father with “the Son also himself subject unto Him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all. (1 Cor. 15:28).

Daniel’s Concern — vv15-16

Daniel is deeply concerned that he cannot understand the vision. The worthies of old did not look upon the revelation of God with indifference, but with an earnest desire to understand its meaning. They were emotionally moved when they failed to do so. They made it a matter of urgent and fervent prayer. John, like Daniel, earnestly desired to know the contents of the sealed book. The Apocalypse, and wept copiously until it was unsealed and explained to him (Rev. 5:4).

VERSE 15**“I Daniel was grieved in my spirit in the midst of my body”**

— The prophet was greatly troubled by all that he saw; mainly because he failed to comprehend the meaning of the vision given him. It affected his spirit, the sentient element in man by which he perceives, reflects, feels, or desires (see Matt. 5:2; 26:41; 1 Cor. 2:11; 5:3-4; 2 Cor. 7:1 etc.). The word “body” is *sheath* in the Chaldean, because the body sheaths the spirit (the thinking man), as in normal parlance a sword fills the sheath. If a sheath is empty of a sword it is of little value; and if the body is empty of the spirit, or feeling induced by Godly motivation, it, too, is of little value.

“And the visions of my head troubled me”

— The head is the seat of the intellect. Daniel’s eyes had seen the visions, and conveyed them to the brain; but though he had pondered over them he had failed to ascertain their significance. This deeply concerned and troubled him.

VERSE 16**“I came near unto one of them that stood by”**

— There were angels present to supervise the vision as other prophets experienced (See Zech. 4:3-5; Rev. 7:13); and Daniel approached one of these to seek his help in understanding.

“And asked him the Truth of all this” —

James wrote that if any lacked wisdom, let him ask of God (James 1:5-6). Yahweh has made known His will and purpose in His revelation, the Bible, and we are encouraged to study that book by the aid of prayer. Accordingly Daniel sought help that he might know exactly what the vision was all about. Hence the expression "truth of all this". Rotherham renders: *he made enquiry of the matter*. Merely to read or hear of Biblical matters is not sufficient. Exact knowledge is necessary. John was told: "Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of the prophecy" (Rev. 1:3). The statement signifies to have an *exact knowledge* of the matter (Rev. 1:3 — see *The Apocalypse Epitomised*). Daniel was also encouraged by the statement, "the wise shall understand" (Dan. 12:10). Fervent prayer and earnest study will open the mind to the wonderful truths and principles of Divine revelation; but this will not be the case in the absence of either. It is not enough to pray for wisdom, we must prayerfully *study*; it is not enough to study; we must study *prayerfully*. We need to aim at progressive knowledge; to "increase in the knowledge of God" (Col. 1:10). It is not a profound grasp of truth that is required, so much as a developing understanding, "precept upon precept".

"So he told me, and made me know the interpretation of the things" — The angel explained the meaning of the symbols. It is hardly likely that the exposition was limited to the brief outline of the following verses, but enough is found therein to excite the mind to "search the Scriptures" to obtain a better understanding of a vision so important that Daniel was grieved until the key was granted him.

The Angelic Explanation of the Four Beasts — vv.17-18

A general and brief outline of the Divine purpose as exhibited in history is granted the prophet.

VERSE 17

"These great beasts, which are four, are four kings" — The reference is to four dynasties or dominions that would succeed one another.

"Which shall arise out of the earth" — In v.3 the beasts are represented as arising out of the "sea", a reference to the Mediterranean, and a symbol of turbulent nations (Isa. 57:20). Here they are said to arise "out of the earth" illustrating the "earthy" nature of their rule, and the

extension of their influence. Having arisen out of the sea they laid claim to the whole earth, and particularly that portion of the globe surrounding the Mediterranean.

VERSE 18

"But the saints of the Most High shall take the kingdom" — The use of the singular noun *kingdom* indicates that though represented by four different beasts, basically, the Kingdoms are one. The same expression is used in Daniel 4:17 where reference is made to the "Kingdom of men". It matters not what section of humanity is dominant, whether Babylon, Persia, Greece, Rome, or the divided nationalities of today, they are all part of the "kingdom of satan"; the flesh, though under different national control (see Matt. 12:26). Ultimately the "saints of the Most High" shall take over the governing of nations. Normally the title of "the Most High" as used in Dan. 4:17 relates to Yahweh as "Possessor of heaven and earth" (Gen. 14:18-19), and therefore, the great Disposer of nations (see Acts 17:26). However, the term "Most High" in this verse (as in vv.22,25) (second occurrence, but not the first) is in the *plural* lit. *High Ones*. On this Bro. Thomas writes in *Exposition of Daniel*:

"In the seventh of Daniel there are three parties associated together in executing judgment upon the Beasts — the holy ones, the High Ones, and 'the people of the holy ones.' The holy ones are styled 'the saints' in the common version; and the High Ones are termed 'the Most High' in the singular. The Word *saint* signifies a holy one; but it has been so misapplied by the Gentiles that I have preferred the latter, as keeping before the mind the saying, that 'without holiness no man shall see the Lord'. The phrase 'the Most High' in the singular number is in the plural in the Chaldee original. The word there is *elyonin*. This is not accidental, for it occurs four times, in the same chapter, which supply the reason of the expression in the introduction of the Ancient of Days and the Son of Man into the vision. These are the High Ones to whom the holy ones belong; as it is written, 'Ye are Christ's and Christ is God's'".

"The saints of the most High", therefore, can be rendered "The holy ones of the High Ones", those "High Ones" being the Ancient of Days and the one like unto

the Son of Man to whom the dominion was granted on his appearance before his Father's throne as revealed in v.14. Associated with them, though in a subordinate position in relation to the dominion granted Christ, are angels of heaven over whom Yahweh has set His throne. These all comprise portion of "the heavens that rule" (Dan. 4:26). The "holy ones of the High Ones", therefore comprise "the saints of the heavenlies" as described by Paul in Eph. 1:3, in contrast to the two witnesses in general of Rev. 11, or such saints as are referred to in Isa. 13:3, or Dan 7:21.

The Chaldean "illay "High", is found in the singular in ch. 3:26; 4:2,17,24,25, 32,34; 5:18,21; 7:25 (1st occ.). In Ch. 7:18, 22,25 (2nd occ.) the original is *Elyown*, the plural form.

The drama of history, since the days of Babylon, can be summarised in this brief statement of the angel: "The saints shall take the Kingdom". Time may appear long to mortals, but not to the Ancient of Days (see notes on v.9). When the saints are clothed upon with immortality, the 6000 years of human rule will appear as but a brief moment of time in comparison with eternity.

The term "saints" however, is not limited to those who are called to immortality. Israel is a Holy Nation, so that the title can apply to its people, as well as to the saints called to immortality. In this chapter the term is used for various groups, both mortal (v.21) and immortal (v.27). Israel, the holy nation, will comprise the "first dominion" of the universal realm of Christ (Mic. 4:8), and as such will occupy a dominant position among the nations; whilst the glorified saints will comprise the King-priests of the age (Rev. 2:26-27; 5:9-10).

"And shall possess the kingdom for ever" — The Chaldean word *chasan*, or its Hebrew equivalent signifies not merely to possess, but also the strength and wealth that accrues to those so doing. The saints will not passively "possess" the kingdom, but will do so in strength, enjoying its riches. The word "ever" is from the Chaldean equivalent of *olam* and strictly signifies a "hidden period". That period is the Millennium. The saints will "possess" the kingdom for the thousand years of Christ's reign, after which there will be a change of constitution. Priesthood will no longer be necessary as far as earth's inhabitants are concerned, for sin and death will then be no more (Rev. 21:4).

"Even for ever and ever" — Rotherham renders the phrase as "for the age, yea for the age of ages". The Millennium, though an age complete in itself, will be divided into various epochs, even as was the Mosaic age (see Ezek. 46:17; Isa. 66:23). It will, in its completeness, comprise the age of the ages since creation, after which it shall merge into Ad. or eternity.

Further Enquiry Concerning the Fourth Beast — vv. 19-22

Daniel's attention is still rivetted upon the Fourth Beast. The brief explanation he has received does not satisfy his craving for further information. He observes it more in detail, and makes earnest enquiry as to the significance of certain of its features. He is persistent in his request. See Matt. 7:7-10.

VERSE 19

"Then I would know the truth of the fourth beast, which was diverse from all the others, exceeding dreadful" — The word rendered "dreadful", *dechah*, (see v.7), signifies to cringe, as in fear. It describes the effect on Daniel. The beast was so hideous in appearance, so frightening in its brutality, as to cause him to shrink back in fear; to be so affected as to almost immobilise him, causing him to crawl away. This doubtless was due to its hideous appearance, and its violent persecution of the saints, as subsequent verses describe.

"Whose teeth were of iron, and his nails of brass" — Iron and brass in the image seen by Nebuchadnezzar, represented its Roman and Grecian elements. In the vision seen by the King, of the tree cut down, and its Babylonish roots protected by a band of iron and brass, the same metals represented Roman and Grecian ecclesiastical systems illustrating that though "Christian" in claim they are Babylonish in fact. Now the fourth beast is linked with the same symbolism. It describes the divided state of the fourth beast militarily and ecclesiastically. Militarily, the division between West and East was initially established in Rome by Constantine, who subsequently centred it in Constantinople, whilst Rome remained the religious headquarters. This led to the division of the Roman Empire into two parts: West and East. The former was overthrown by the Goths in A.D.476; and the latter by the Ottoman power in 1453. However, the Empire was also divided Ecclesiastically

between Rome and Constantinople. From the establishment of so-called Christianity as a State religion, for many years there was great rivalry between the bishops of Rome and Constantinople. This was ultimately decided in favour of Rome by the decree of Justinian, later confirmed by Phocas. A semblance of unity then existed in the church, which acknowledged the supremacy of the Pope. However, controversy developed over the use of images: Rome endorsing their use, and Constantinople opposing the practice in favour of icons! For some years this was a matter of increasing contention and bitter, sometimes violent, disputes, and in the year 869 following the 8th Ecumenical Council the great Schism took place. Constantinople and its Greek supporters severed connection with Rome and established the Greek Catholic Church. Now there were two churches in apostasy: Roman Catholicism and Greek Orthodoxy. The former continued with its headquarters in Rome; the latter set up its headquarters in Constantinople. The latter city had been styled the *Second Rome*, but when it fell to the Moslems, its churches were turned into mosques, and its worshippers were offered the choice of the Koran or the Sword. The Patriarch of Constantinople (as its Bishop was called) withdrew to Moscow where Greek Orthodoxy had considerable influence, and there set up the headquarters of the eastern Church. In consequence, Moscow was given the title of the *Third Rome*.

However, the religion of both Roman Catholics and Greek Orthodox were forms of Babylonish idolatry though given the caption of "Christian". Their "roots" were in the paganism of ancient Babylonish mythology illustrating the band of iron and brass protecting the roots of the Babylonish tree that had been cut down, as seen by Nebuchadnezzar in his dream.

What is particularly significant about the vision next shown to Daniel is that the Fourth Beast, *as he beheld it* represents its state on the eve of the judgment to be administered to it by the Burning Flame. In other words, there must be a revival of that beast as it existed in the past: a union of religion with political and military power. The present efforts of the Papacy to extend its influence throughout Europe and the Third world; and the manner in which it is wooing the Soviet, are illustrative of its efforts to that end. Moreover in

a later vision (Ch. 8: 23-25), Daniel was shown that Russia will ultimately occupy Constantinople, and with its military power established in that capital will revive the "king of the North". Then, with Catholicism united with Greek Orthodoxy, and the Common Market finally established in power, there will be seen on the political arena the Beast (the union of Western Europe), the false Prophet, (the Papacy in power), and the Dragon (Russian military power in Constantinople) united as required by prophecy (Rev. 16:13). The whole fearful organisation is represented by this Fourth Beast with its Teeth of iron and Nails of brass. As we write, trends reported in regard to Russia, Europe and the Papacy vindicate the prophecy shown to Daniel. When the Fourth Beast is fully manifested, after treading down the remnant of the nations, its ferocious appearance, its teeth of iron (West Europe) and its long, vicious claws of brass (East Europe) will cause all that remain to cringe in fear.

"Which devoured, brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with his feet" — Three times similar statements are made in this chapter (vv.7,23). Moreover, the attention of Daniel was drawn to this aspect of the Beast before he directed his attention to the horns, suggesting that the "treading down" was a dominant aspect of the latter-day prophecy. The significance of this action is emphasised by the nature of the feet of the Beast, for they are the feet of a bear (Rev. 13:2), the latter-day symbol of Russia. And that is exactly what Russia is doing, as witness its ruthless involvement in Hungary, Afghanistan and elsewhere. However, as Daniel was shown, it will accomplish its purpose not only by ruthless aggression, but also by "peace" (Dan. 8:25), and that also forms part of its present policy. But, as yet, the brass and iron do not form part of its power, but will do so before the end.

VERSE 20

"And of the ten horns that were in his head, and of the other which came up, and before whom three fell" — See notes v.8.

"Even that horn that had eyes, and a mouth that spake very great things" — See notes on v.8. Daniel did not hear the mouth speaking great things of righteousness, but those of wickedness. The word "great" signifies *domineering* words suggestive of the Papal bulls that are dogmatically issued by the Vatican for the un-

reasoning obedience of its bemused people. See notes on Rev. 13:5-7.

“Whose look was more stout than his fellows” — This “horn” commenced as a “little horn” (v.8) but grew to exceed its fellows in arrogance and power. Paul described the one mainly responsible as “opposing and exalting himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself (or claiming to be) that he is God” (2 Thess. 2:4). All the pretensions of the Papacy: the claim of infallibility of the Pope; the title claimed by him as the Vicar of God on earth, and the absolute power granted him over the worship of millions, are all illustrations of this.

VERSE 21

“I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them” — A similar descriptive vision was seen by John in Patmos (Rev. 13:4-8. See *Apocalypse Epitomised*). In Rev. 11, this warfare is described in greater detail, but there, the “saints” are represented as “the two olive trees and two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth” (Rev. 11:4). The God of the earth is contrasted with the God of heaven, and denotes the Papacy against whom the “two witnesses” stand, or oppose. As Bro. Thomas clearly shows in *Elpis Israel* Part 3, the “two witnesses” represent religious and political opposition to the Papacy during the “dark ages”, within the midst of which (as a very small minority) there was to be found “the remnant of the woman’s seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ” (Rev. 12:17). The two witnesses of Rev. 11, therefore, do not symbolise the true brethren of Christ, but those who “stand before” or oppose the “God of the earth”. This is shown by the fact that these “two witnesses” do not hesitate to belligerently engage the papacy in warfare (Rev. 11:5). This form of defence or attack (and the “two witnesses” engaged in both), is not open to true saints; and though such saints were found among the witnesses, their warfare was limited to doctrine and teaching. In *Elpis Israel* (pp. 337-343) Bro. Thomas shows that there are three classes defined under the general heading of the “two witnesses”: Protestantism (or religious opposition to tyranny), Communism (or political opposition to tyranny), and a third class, so much in the minority as to

be ignored by the prophecy of Rev. 11: the “remnant” or true brethren of Christ. These three are Apocalyptically defined as “the earth” (Political), the “woman” (Ecclesiastical) and the “Remnant” (true Brethren). See Rev. 12:16-17. He claims that so long as the “Remnant” maintained a faithful witness to the Truth they were protected by those who though they did not embrace the Truth, nevertheless defended the Remnant in its right to proclaim it; but once the virility of their witness declined, and they compromised with the world, such protection was withdrawn (see p. 343).

Therefore, though the term “saints” generally relates to those “called to be such” by embracing the Truth in Christ Jesus, the term of itself only denotes those separated by God for His purpose whatever it might be. The Two Witnesses, therefore, can be styled “saints”, and their continuous opposition to religious tyranny over the centuries enabled the voice of truth to sound forth from the “Remnant”. They were “Saints” in that they had been separated by God for His purpose to restrain the violence of the Papacy, and so permit the Remnant to continue to preach. They were “Saints” in the same manner as the bloodthirsty Medes were God’s “sanctified ones”, or saints, to pour out His judgment on Babylon (see Isa. 13:3). The “saints” referred to in the verse before us, therefore, relate to the “two witnesses” who did not hesitate to vigorously and belligerently attack or resist the Papacy, even engaging in warfare to do so. This is indicated by the word “prevailed”. It implies mutual warfare, likewise described in Rev. 11, in which success attended the arms of the Catholics. But the time came, when as the prophecy states, the testimony of such would be finished (Rev. 11:7); when the doctrine of the Remnant became effete, and their standards of morality deteriorated. They compromised with the world in teaching and practice, and the “beast” was permitted to “overcome and kill” the opposition that previously had prevailed. To summarise: whilst the term “saints” as used in this verse includes the Remnant, it does so only in a minor way. Those against whom the Papacy mainly waged war were those “saints” who refused to conform to the demands of Catholicism (see *Elpis Israel* pp. 337-343).

VERSE 22

“**Until the Ancient of Days came**” — In this chapter, this title is applied to both the Father and the Son (see v.13), not, however, in the terms of Trinitarian doctrine, but in those of God manifestation. Deity in multiplicity, not Deity in trinity, is the Bible teaching (see *Eureka* vol. 1p. 100). Yahweh’s purpose is to manifest Himself in a multitude upon whom will be bestowed His name (see Rom. 5:2; 2 Pet. 1:4; Rev. 3:12). When that multitude is apocalypsed in the earth, Yahweh will be seen manifested therein. Zechariah declares: “Yahweh shall be king over all the earth; in that day there shall be one Yahweh and His name one” (Zech. 14:9). The Hebrew term used for “one” here is *Echad* (see *Eureka* vol. 1, p.102), and it signifies “one” in a collective sense; that is, one in a multitude. Strong’s Concordance derives it from a root signifying *to be united*, that is *to be at one*. The Hebrew term for “one” in the absolute sense of a single person is *yacheed*. Yahweh will be manifested in a large community of immortals who will be one with Him and with each other; and who shall rule on His behalf throughout the earth. In that sense, the title *Ancient of Days*, borne by the Father was bestowed upon the Son when he ascended into heaven, and he will return bearing that as well as other titles. It then will be acknowledged that “his goings forth (family descent, or origin — see Strong) have been from old, from everlasting” (Mic. 5:2). Now bearing the same nature as his Father, the Father’s titles are applicable to him. All such names and titles are to be understood in the terms of God manifestation, not in the concept of Trinitarianism which is a travesty of Bible teaching and common reason. (Christ himself taught: “The Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father” (see Matt. 16:27; 1 Tim. 6:15-16).

“**And judgment was given to the saints of the most High**” — This is a repeat of the title used in v.18 — see notes. The immortalised saints are to “execute the judgments written” as prescribed in Ps. 149:4-9; Zech. 14:5. However, before they do that, they, themselves are first judged, for it is a principle with God that “judgment must begin at the house of God” (1 Pet. 4:17).

“**And the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom**” — See v.27. In this context the term “time” is specific: it sig-

nifies “an appointed time”; the time referred to by Peter, who warned that though it may appear on the surface that Yahweh is “slack” concerning His promises, that is not so; the Lord will come at the appointed time, though many may be taken off guard when it arrives (2 Pet. 3:8-15). Subsequently, Daniel was given time periods that mark off chronologically the epochs of the Time of the End.

The Angel’s Explanation — vv.23-27

The supervising angel explains the vision to Daniel, setting out in order the various aspects of the Fourth Beast.

VERSE 23

“**Thus he said, The fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom upon earth**” — From this explanation it surely is obvious that the four beasts represent four kingdoms or empires, and therefore match the four metals of the Image seen by Nebuchadnezzar, recorded in Ch. 2.

“**Which shall be diverse from all kingdoms**” — The Fourth Beast, in its final, or latter-day manifestation is said to be diverse, or different, from the others, being a confederacy of nations represented by the ten horns.

“**And shall devour the whole earth, and shall tread it down, and break it in pieces**”

— The Roman Empire developed into a world-power, far more extensive than those of earlier history. It was far more ruthless, brutal and tyrannical than those that went before it. Concerning the iron power of Rome, Daniel told Nebuchadnezzar: “forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things; and as iron that breaketh all these, shall it break in pieces and bruise” (the other nations — Dan. 2:40).

VERSE 24

“**And the ten horns out of this kingdom are ten kings that shall arise**” —

The Roman Empire divided among ten nations that arose out of its ruin. They represent the powers of divided Europe. At no stage does history reveal that these ten horns were all standing together at the same time. The prophecy does not require that; merely that it be divided up by ten nations. The numeral ten has the spiritual significance of completeness, and as such can apply to the complete division of the Roman Empire. Political Rome was completely overthrown as to leave no part of it remaining.

“And another shall rise after them” — We have identified this as the Holy Roman Empire that arose out of the ruins of the political Empire of Rome; that is, after the manifestation of the ten horns. In the *Apocalypse*, the “horns” are represented in two states: firstly, as dominated by crowned heads (the various forms of government that ruled over the united pagan Roman Empire); and secondly, ruling in their own right, and so depicted as crowned, cp. Rev. 12:3; 13:1). The former symbol represents the united Empire extended over Europe having subject nations in complete domination; the latter symbol describes Europe divided into several nations having thrown off the political domination of Rome, but linked with it through religion. Out of that state arose the Germanic power known to history as The Holy Roman Empire.

“And he shall be diverse from the first” — This statement repeats the expression used to describe pagan Rome (v.23), suggesting that the horn power is Roman in character, but different from the first pagan manifestation of the Fourth Beast. And different it was.

“And he shall subdue three kings” — See note on v.8. This horn was “little” at first (v.8), but assumed great power after the ten horns obtained their independence, answering exactly to the uprising of the so-called Holy Roman Empire.

VERSE 25

“And he shall speak great words against the most High” — The term “against” is rendered from the Chaldean *letsad* from a root signifying to *sidle off*, to *diverge*, or *at the side of*. It therefore denotes “concerning” rather than “against”. The idea appears to be that he would speak words *concerning* the Most High, which would be a *divergence from the Truth, but would be designed to place the speaker deceptively alongside the Most High*. This is exactly what the Papacy does. Papal Rome does not openly oppose God as did Pagan Rome, and in that regard it is diverse from the first; however, it does claim to be in the place of God, by His side, though its divergence from the truth is only apparent to “the saints of the Most High”. Paul provides a commentary upon these words: “that man of sin will be revealed, the son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all

that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God” (2 Thess. 2:3-4). The titles that Catholicism heaps upon the Pope, his claims through his priests to forgive sins, the so-called infallibility of his utterances, are some of the “great words” spoken in the name of God, but which, whilst seeming to place the Pope at the side of God, are destructive of His truth. The title “Most High” in this verse is different from that of v.18. Here it is in the singular number, *Illy*, the Lofty One, from *alah*, to ascend, be high, supreme. The reference is to Yahweh Himself: the Pope being elevated into speaking on behalf of the Supreme Deity.

“And shall wear out the saints of the Most High” — The original word signifies to “wear out” or afflict in a mental sense. The true saints were more afflicted by the teaching and pressures of Rome than by active persecution.

There came a time when the constant witnessing wore out the true saints; they became tired of the unpleasant separation the truth demanded of them, and the stigma attached to the “peculiar” restraint they had to observe, and the doctrines they had to maintain. In *Eureka*, under the subheading: *How The Two Prophets Destroyed Their Enemies*, forming portion of his exposition of Rev. 11. Bro. Thomas states:

“But in the process of time their power of resistance (that of the two witnesses of Rev. 11) was diminished. This was attributed to the testimony of the One Body being enfeebled by the admixture of traditions which had crept in, and, in so far, rendered it ineffectual. The pastors, whose business it was to keep the light-stand well supplied with the golden olive oil of truth, were deteriorating in faithfulness and aptitude for teaching. Hence, the light grew dim and smokey, and men did not see their way as in former years. In consequence of this enfeebled perception, their christian virtue became too easy and tolerant of the traditions of the apostasy, until at length their individuality converged towards, and was finally lost in, the indefiniteness and confusion of the Lutheran and Calvin novelties of the sixteenth century. This fatal termination of their labours is styled in the prophecy, *the finishing of their testimony* (Rev. 11:7). Their word having lost its power, the energy of their ancient helper, the Earth

(political opposition to tyranny) was enfeebled likewise. When men's hold upon principles is relaxed, they lack that enterprise and force which is necessary for their preservation in this evil world. A worldly and 'charitable' spirit generates indifference, by which the pointedness and sharpness of the truth are destroyed. The word handled in a worldly spirit is always 'charitable' or tolerant of traditions, which make it of none effect. The word being ministered thus, the power of energetic resistance, and of a bold and valiant advocacy of their ancient principles, was wanting, and deprived both classes of witnesses of their efficiency. Hence, the spirit had no longer any use for them; for the protestantized testimony they were now only able to give, was not of that brightness necessary to constitute them the Golden Oil Light of the world."

The opposition of Rome gradually silenced the voice of Truth, and the Dark Ages settled over Europe. This continued until the French Revolution snapped the shackles of Rome, and the "witnesses" arose again to power. With the revival of political agitation and of Protestantism, there was manifested an increasing interest in the Bible, which ultimately led the way to the restoration of the Truth in its purity through the medium of Brother Thomas (see *Eureka* under the section *Revival of the Witnessing for Gospel Truth* Rev. II, Vol. 3p 294-310 *Logos* Edition)

"And think to change times and laws" — The word rendered "think" signifies, *to keep in mind, to hope to do so*. To change times and laws is the prerogative of Yahweh alone, as Daniel records in Ch. 2:21. There the expression "times" relates to changes in the course of history, which are in the control of Yahweh. "He has determined the times before appointed" in relation to the nations (Acts 17: 26). But Catholicism has arrogated to itself the Divine right to change the course of history, and by its political interference with the nations, to mould it according to its policy and caprice. The expression therefore relates to the Papacy's claims, by Divine right, to guide the course of history, by its mischief making in politics. The word "Laws" is in the singular number in the Chaldee, but is used in a collective sense. The Papacy assumes the divine right to change Laws or Decrees as it pleases. Its policy is devious; and what it supports today it may oppose tomorrow.

It hopes to change the national "times" and so to alter "law" to conform to its policy of political and ecclesiastical dominance as to preserve its continuance and authority for ever. In this, however, it will fail.

"And they shall be given into his hand" — The Catholic "little horn" had temporary success against the "saints of the Most High".

This came to a head with the massacre of "St" Bartholomew in 1572 (1260 years from the triumph of Constantine in 312), when every brutal attempt was made by Rome to silence any voice of opposition to its authority, and crush any anti-papal organisation. The forces of the State were used to kill their adversaries, and this they did ruthlessly in their thousands. Every form of cruel and vicious torture was used to force Jews and Protestants to recant (see *Elpis Israel* pp. 343-362).

But why did Yahweh allow the saints to be "given into the hand" of such? In *Elpis Israel* p. 343, Brother Thomas answers this question: "When the remnant ceased to 'contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints', 'the earth' began to fail in its efforts to establish civil and religious liberty in the countries where 'the remnant of the woman's seed' had witnessed for the truth so long. The reactionists on the side of arbitrary power began to prevail against both classes of witnesses, and the holy city (that is religious and political opposition to the Papacy as well as the tiny minority of true witnesses); and to succeed in re-establishing what they call 'order'; that is, such a state of society as existed in France from 1685 to 1789, or in England under Charles II; or of which we have more recent illustrations in the case of France under Louis XVIII and Charles X; and of Italy under Austria and the Pope, etc., in 1815! It is the 'order' established by Satan, when he triumphs over the rights of men, and the truth and righteousness of the untraditionised gospel of the kingdom of God. Satan's adherents sigh for that 'order' in Church as State which will enable them to increase their power, augment their earthly treasures for the gratification of their lusts, and perpetuate their grinding and debasing tyranny over the nations. For a time they appear to triumph. Indeed, their ascendancy is permitted in the wisdom of God; but its *limited* continuance is expressly revealed. The champions of

'order' are destined to preserve their ascendancy until, not 'the earth', but the Lord Jesus Christ shall appear in power, and gloriously accomplish what 'the saints' have hitherto been unable to effect."

The prophecy given to Daniel, as well as that revealed to John in Patmos, placed a time limit on the triumph of the western horn of the beast.

"“Until a time and times and the dividing of time” — The word "time" denotes "a set time", technically a year, which is the obvious appointed division of time whether it be lunar or solar. The phrase, therefore, represents 3.5 years which, according to a Jewish year of 360 days represents 1260 days; and on the prophetic "day for a year" principle (see Ezck. 4:6) measures off a period of 1260 years. This is the period of time allocated to the "little horn" of the west, to "wear out the saints". How does it conform to historical facts? Exactly. There are several important key-years in which vital decrees gradually increased Papal power, but which exactly 1260 years later introduced events that dramatically contributed to its decline.

For example:

● **A.D. 529-533** — Justinian, Emperor of Constantinople, proclaimed legislation which supported building up and strengthened the Catholic Church. In it he proclaimed the bishop of Rome as Universal Bishop. (See *Elpis Israel* p.358).

1260 years later, in 1789-93, the National Assembly of Revolutionary France passed legislation directed to the destruction of Catholic power. (See *Elpis Israel* pp. 358-359).

● **In 539** Ravenna in Italy was conquered by Justinian's forces, and Papal authority installed therein, increasing its power considerably.

1260 years later in 1799, the wars of Napoleon against the Papal countries of Europe reduced the Church's influence.

● **In 549-554** — Justinian's *Pragmatic Sanction* (a term of Byzantine origin signifying a public decree) decreed that Rome, which had been freed by his forces from Anti-Papal Gothic domination, was to be placed under the authority of the Pope.

The Pope was granted control of the Municipal and Provincial government, which greatly enhanced Papal influence and power throughout Italy.

In 1809, 1260 years later, Napoleon

annexed the Papal States. He continued to devastate Catholic Europe with frightful loss of life until in 1814 he finally was defeated and compelled to capitulate.

● **590** — Gregory 1st, surnamed "the Great" was elected Pope. His political skill opened a new era of greater influence for the Papacy.

But in 1850, 1260 years later, during the reign of Pope Pius IX, the authority of the Papacy came under threat. Four years earlier, in 1846, when the spirit of Revolution was fomenting throughout Europe, Cardinal Mastai had been appointed Pope and assumed the name of Pius IX. In spite of his liberalising policy he was opposed by the revolutionaries of Italy. He sought from the Church an official endorsement of the papal claim of infallibility of the Pope. This was refused, and instead a Committee of Public Safety in Italy demanded among other things the abolition of Papal temporal power, the appointment of Rome as the capital of an all-Italian republic instead of the centre of Papal power, and the convocation there of an all-Italian Constituent Assembly. This the Pope rejected out of hand, in consequence of which he was besieged in the Quirinal (his palace in Rome) by menacing crowds of armed men. Firing broke out and a bishop in his entourage was killed by a bullet. Only the presence of a few members of the diplomatic corps saved the Pope, himself, from physical violence (see *The Keeper Of The Keys* p. 260).

● In 1848 onwards, the spirit of revolution swept Europe (see Introduction to *Elpis Israel*), and uprisings were widespread and frequent. It involved Italy, and became so virulent that the Pope was compelled to secretly flee from Rome to Gaeta in Neapolitan territory. In 1850, 1260 years from the accession of Gregory, Church influence was weakened by a devastating challenge from the civil Government of Italy. In *The Keeper of The Keys* Cheetham records: "A long and unavailing tussle ensued with the government of Piedmont, which had adopted a provocatively anti-clerical policy involving, among other measures, the suppression of many religious Orders. Bishops who refused to comply with it were arrested. Neither the warm personal friendship he (the Pope) maintained with King Victor-Emmanuel nor the Vatican's official protests prevented the passage of legislation which, to the detriment of the Church, was



Napoleon's coronation in 1804. He took the crown from the hands of the Pope and crowned himself.

CHAPTER SEVEN

eventually to be extended to the whole of the new Kingdom of Italy" (p.262).

In the midst of such political upheavals developing out of the French Revolution (the resurrected witnesses of Rev. 11:11-13, and the "unclean spirits like frogs" of Rev. 16:14), the Pope made strenuous efforts to preserve the ecclesiastical influence of the Papacy as well as its temporal power.

In regard to the first, he prepared a document entitled: *A Syllabus of Modern "Errors and False Doctrines, to be condemned and refuted"*, as well as a request for church endorsement of the claim of infallibility of the Pope. In regard to the second, he ordered military intervention to enforce his temporal power over those portions of Italy that remained under his political power. In this he was assisted by Napoleon III of France who put his army at the service of the Pope in support of his temporal power.

What is meant by the temporal power of the Papacy? Prior to 1870, the Pope exercised temporal power; that is, in addition to his ecclesiastical authority in the Church, he possessed civil authority as a secular king does, over the Papal States of Italy. As a token of this rule, the Popes wore a three-tiered crown or mitre which indicated their regal authority over the three Papal States of Italy. As becomes such temporal authority he maintained an army which would fight on his behalf when ordered to do so. Their temporal power also enabled the popes to have diplomatic relations on matching terms with other nations. This power had been granted the Papacy by Pepin and Charlemagne when the "three horns" had been broken off as predicted by Daniel. This had permitted the "little horn" of the Papacy to grow into a powerful horn dominating the beast, and exercising international representation. Accordingly, in the days of Pius, Rome itself was the capital of the Papacy but not of Italy, then divided into several different nationalities. However, the wars of Napoleon had weakened the Pope's influence in that regard, and even after he had been deposed, the spirit of revolution which swept through Italy as it did throughout all Europe, eroded Papal influence still further. The chief revolutionary in Italy was Garibaldi, and he agitated for a United Italy, which was only possible by the overthrow of the Pope's sovereignty in the Papal States, and the establishment of Rome as the national capital. The revolu-

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tionary forces of Garibaldi and his associates gradually eroded Papal sovereignty in those States until the Pope's control was limited to Rome and its immediate surroundings. Garibaldi was determined to destroy Papal temporal power and to wrest Rome from the Pope, and he commanded his army to attack the city. At first he was successfully resisted by the Papal army supplemented by French forces. It was the presence of French troops that restrained the revolutionaries, and gave the Pope a breathing space. . . But the decline after the 1260 years predicted by the prophecy was well on its way.



Garibaldi (1807-82) leader of the revolutionaries in Italy who overthrew the temporal power of the Papacy in 1870.

• 600 — The Poppedom of Gregory "the Great" was at its zenith. He reformed the administration of the papal patrimony, insisted that the Apostolic See was the head of all the churches, overthrew the influence of Arianism in Lombardy. In his political intrigue, he never lost sight of his aim of establishing the papacy as the head of a universal church. The Emperor in Constantinople, and Justinian in particular, had earlier decreed that "nothing should be done in the church against the

command and will of the Emperor". Gregory endeavoured to have this set aside, and indeed, in measure, had partially succeeded in doing so, when he died in 604 before it was officially decreed.

1260 years later, the revolutionary wars of Garibaldi had wrested two-thirds of the Papal States from the control of the Pope.

• **A.D. 608-610** — Phocas issued the decree pronouncing the Pope as head of all the churches. Although Gregory had died in 604, his policy came to fruition during the reigns of his successors. The first two, Sabinian (604-6) and Boniface III (607) were so successful in influencing the tyrant Phocas, then ruling in Constantinople, that he issued a decree officially proclaiming the Pope as *Head of all the Churches*. Boniface IV occupied the Papal throne at the time. Having proclaimed the decree in favour of the Pope, Phocas was overthrown, put to death, and Heraclius ascended the throne (610).

1260 years later in 1868-1870, the last remnant of temporal power was taken from Pope Pius when the revolutionaries under Garibaldi finally occupied Rome, and made it the capital of a United Italy. At first, the Papacy opposed him militarily, and with the add of French troops repelled his attacks. But in 1870 war broke out between Prussia and France, and the French troops had to be withdrawn. The Papal forces were defeated, Rome fell to the revolutionaries. The Papacy no longer retained the power to militarily or diplomatically intervene in the international affairs of state. The Pope lacking temporal power, withdrew into the Vatican where he became, as he styled himself: "The prisoner of the Vatican". One historian comments: "The crisis that abolished papal sovereignty was played out at dizzy speed. All of a sudden Pius found himself confined to the Vatican. He did not remain there long, for in the same year he died. Before his death, however, and also in the year 1870, on 18 July, he secured a church vote in support of his claim of infallibility. The formula voted on declared that the Roman Pontiff is infallible 'when he speaks *ex cathedra*, that is, when in the exercise of his office as pastor and teacher of all Christians he defines by virtue of his supreme apostolic authority doctrine concerning faith or morals to be held by the Universal Church'. In the final reckoning 533 bishops voted in favour and only two against this claim, but they too fell on their

knees and submitted." So the dogma of the Pope's Infallibility received the approval of the Church council.

The power of the Papacy to persecute or afflict ceased with the overthrow of the Pope's temporal power. After many years of Catholic decline the prophecy of Daniel relating to the "times, times and dividing of time" had been completed. About the same time also, the Papal Inquisition, that had been set up between the years 1227-1233, and had been responsible for torturing and executing so many of the "saints" also came to an end. According to E. Burman in *The Inquisition*, "the last execution for heresy took place in 1826, when a schoolmaster called Cayetano Ripoll was hanged as an impenitent deist. In a sense, however, the real end of the Inquisition in Spain came on 6 June 1869, when the principle of religious tolerance was made part of the Spanish Constitution."

However, we may add that, according to A. Manhattan, in certain countries including the Catholic countries of South America where power has been vested in the church, persecution and torture have been used to compel conversions. But as far as Europe and the prophecy of Daniel are concerned, the "time, times and dividing of time" terminated with the French Revolution and the overthrow of the temporal power of the Pope in 1870.

VERSE 26

“**But the judgment shall sit**” — The word "judgment" can relate to the tribunal of judges. But who are the judges who sat to consider the blasphemies and brutalities of the Papacy? The angelic "watchers" and "holy ones" of Dan. 4:17 who had earlier sat to consider the arrogance of Nebuchadnezzar, then and issued their decree that humbled him until he acknowledged that "the Most High ruleth in the Kingdom of men". Now, at this terminal period, the angelic counsel again assembles, this time, however, presided over by the Lord Jesus Christ in heaven. The decision is reached that the time has arrived for a change in the condition of the Papacy. Its power to persecute is to be overthrown, in order that it might suffer at the hands of those it previously tormented. The balance of the verse states the consequences.

“**And they shall take away his dominion**” — Who are the "they" who do this?

In *Elpis Israel*, Brother Thomas identifies them with the "saints" of this chapter, or the "two witnesses" of Rev. 11. This is basic to his scheme of prophecy given in the Third Part of his book, and which we believe is the finest outline of Bible prophecy extant. He identifies the "saints" and "two witnesses" as the "earth" and "woman" of *The Apocalypse*. The terms represent political and religious antagonism to the Papacy, which though politically "put to death" in the Massacre of St. Bartholomew in 1572, was resurrected unto political life at the time of the French Revolution, as predicted in Rev. 11:11. From the time of Justinian in 533, the period of 1260 years reaches to the French Revolution in 1793, represented as the "great voice" of Rev. 16:1 (See *Apocalypse Eptomised*). From the French Revolution to 1870 the Papacy was subjected to vigorous opposition and war that was humiliating in its effect to the political influence of the Papacy.

The political significance of the French Revolution of 1793 and the Revolution of 1870 is outlined by Stephen Holt in his book *Six European States: Concerning the French Revolution*, he records:

"That upheaval overthrew the monarchy and destroyed the dominance of the aristocracy and the Roman Catholic Church. The political, administrative and legal reconstruction which followed, particularly under Napoleon Bonaparte, had such far-reaching effects that nothing could ever be the same again".

"The Church has never fully recovered from the setback it received at the time of the great Revolution... The anticlericalism (in France) born of the Revolution, however, continued to be strong; indeed it reached new heights at the end of the nineteenth century and resulted in the formal separation of Church and State (in France) in December 1905." (p.74).

Concerning the Papacy in Italy, he observes:

"The year after Italian troops had finally marched into Rome in September 1870, the Italian Parliament passed a Law of Guarantee assuring the Pope freedom to exercise his spiritual authority. This was a one-sided gesture which successive Popes never recognised. They remained voluntary prisoners within the palace at the Vatican and forbade Roman Catholics to take part in Italian politics or to vote. The relationships between Church and

State were not put on an agreed footing until the Lateran Pacts of 1929 between Mussolini and Pope Pius XI" (p. 193).

Thus the action of the revolutionaries in 1870 "took away the dominion" of the Papacy. This was the culmination of the opposition Catholicism received from the time of the French Revolution of 1789 onwards. Compare this with the comments of Bro. Thomas in *Elpis Israel* p.341.

"To consume and destroy it" — Since the French Revolution until recent times, Communism has manifested consistent hostility towards Catholicism in conformity with the requirements of this prophecy. Following the First World War, according to N. Cheetham in *Keepers of the Keys*, "In some countries governments behaved obstructively; in others Catholics underwent harassment or real persecution." However, in recent years, Catholicism has been attempting to win over the support of Communism, and has found in the Third World (a breeding ground for leftist influence) a measure of success. In addition, in recent months, diplomatic relations have been established between Communist Poland and the Vatican, the firstfruit of such endeavours. Meanwhile, leftist opposition in Europe was felt by all Catholic countries of that Continent, until the Germanic Powers (headquarters of political Catholicism in the past) were overwhelmed by civil and international wars.

"Unto the end" — In *Elpis Israel*, Bro. Thomas saw this as a period of time extending from 1870 to the epoch of Christ's return and the development of the Gogian confederacy predicted in Ezekiel 38. It was his interpretation of this verse of Scripture that led him to write:

"From these premises, then, I think, there cannot be the shadow of a doubt that the Autocrat of Russia, when he shall have attained to the plenitude of his power and dominion, is the subject of the prophecy contained in the thirty-eighth and thirty-ninth of Ezekiel. This personage at present is only 'Autocrat of All the Russias', that is, of Ros, Mosc, and Tobl; while the Emperor of Austria holds the position of Gogue and Magog. But, as we have seen elsewhere, the Austrian and German empire is doomed to extinction by fire and sword; so that when this is broken up the Gogueship will be assumed by the Autocrat, or 'prince of Ros, Mosc, and

Tobl." (*Elpis Israel* p.432).

The Austrian and German empire was Catholic in its constitution, and Daniel had predicted that this system would be "consumed" until the end. This required the overthrow of that power, and the domination of its territory by Revolutionary Russia, which has since come to pass.

But now the attitude of Russia towards Rome is changing, for the time of the end has been reached, and in order to fulfil the prophecies of Rev. 17-18, and for Catholicism to assume the arrogance implied in Rev. 18:7, she must rise in political and international power and influence.

Daniel uses the term *The End* several times of a definite period. See Dan. 8:17,19; 11:35,40; 12:4,9,13. This period, like other epochs, has its beginning and its completion. "Unto the end", therefore, implies an intermediary period from the completion of the "time, times and a half" termination. His words imply, and other prophecies reveal, that during the Time of the End, Catholicism would regain some of its lost power. Daniel's words in Ch. 11:40 reveal that we are in the epoch of The End. He records: "At the time of the end, the king of the south shall push at him..." That prophecy was fulfilled in the First World War by the British Middle East drive against Turkey, clearly showing that the time of The End has long commenced. Its completion will witness the return of Christ and the resurrection (cp. Dan. 12:13). Therefore, the world has reached the "Time of the End", and it is significant that since the completion of the First World War, Catholicism has greatly increased its influence. Commenting on this from a political standpoint, S. Holt in *Six European States* records:

"When the forces of the *Risorgimento* (Revolutionary forces) which united Italy entered Rome in 1870, the Holy See finally lost its power as temporal ruler of the Papal States. These states (located in Italy) consisted of 16,000 square miles and over three million people. They had previously been overrun by Napoleon Bonaparte (who also imprisoned Pius VII) but the *status quo* was restored by the Congress of Vienna in 1815."

In 1871, the new Italian Government as a sop passed the *Law of Guarantees*, which, in return for confiscating the Papal States, offered the Pope a number of privileges, immunities and a financial allowance from the revolutionary Italian State. But Pope Pius IX refused to recog-

nise the law or accept the allowance, and imposed a ban against the participation in politics of all Roman Catholics in Italy.

In 1919, however, the growing threat of Communism resulted in the Papacy lifting the ban on Italian politics. Shortly after, Fascism came to power in Italy, and Pius XI came to terms with Mussolini. The Lateran Pacts of 1929, between the Church and the State, embodied a concordat and a treaty. Concerning this, S. Holt writes (p. 218):

"Mussolini was prepared to go much further than the government of 1871 in that he recognised the Pope was the *temporal* ruler of Vatican City which was to become an independent *sovereign* state. The long dispute was wound up by a generous financial settlement..."

The restored temporal power meant that the Pope could emerge from his self-imposed "imprisonment" and establish a Foreign Office with diplomatic rights and representation in various Governments of the world. It was a most important development, and provided the basis whereby the Papacy has extended its international influence, together with the great increase in numerical support that Catholicism has since obtained. No longer "prisoners of the Vatican", the Popes have since been noted for their extensive propagandist travel, seeking to increase the power and influence of the Church.

The impact of this emergence of the erstwhile "prisoner of the Vatican" and the new political power that temporally gave the Pope was soon evident. When, before the Second World War, Mussolini brutally bombed the Abyssinians into submission, his army was "blessed" by the Pope; and whereas protests were voiced against Italy by numerous countries, the Papacy remained silent. Mr. William Teeling, M.P., a member of a family highly honoured by the Papacy, wrote in 1937 that Pius XI "has thrown his weight on the side of the totalitarian leaders and he has felt that the imperial policy of Italy must mean an advance for his own Church in the conquered countries... He raised no finger to stop Italian bishops up and down the country from going on Fascist platforms and doing everything possible to support Italian armies... The Vatican has thrown in its lot to a very considerable extent with Mussolini, as every well-informed person in Europe knows". "The Pope on numerous occasions specifically

referred to his great loyalty to Italy as an Italian" (from *The Pope In Politics*, p. 129).

During the Second World War, the Pope refused to condemn the Nazi and Fascist challenges. On 14th May 1942 he announced his "full consciousness of absolute impartiality towards the belligerents". W.S. Kerr in *A Handbook On The Papacy* observes:

"The papal claim to be God's vicegerent might be credited if the Deity was indifferent to moral standards. Vatican policy in 1939-45 does not invalidate Bishop Hensley Henson's verdict: 'Not the moral courage of Peter standing before the Sanhedrin, but the cynical expediency of Caiphas as he counselled the condemnation of Jesus has commonly marked the procedure of the Vatican... it is continuing deadness to moral obligation which shocks the student of papal history.'" (p.8).

The Pope then, was bitterly opposed to Communism, but succeeding Popes have changed the policy of the Church in that regard as it has grown in political prestige and power. This is a requirement of Bible prophecy. We are in the period of "the End", the time during which the Papacy will advance in power until it assumes the status described in Rev. 18. Paul made reference to this. He wrote regarding the "coming" of the Wicked One "whom the Lord will consume with the brightness of his coming" (2 Thess. 2:8-9). The term *parousia* used in this place for both the "coming" of the Lord and the manifestation of the Wicked One, does not signify the act of movement from one place to another, but the presence of the one described in a manifestation of great acknowledged power. The Pope and the Papacy are moving towards that development as Scripture requires. It is a significant sign of the times in accord with the prophecy of Daniel.

VERSE 27

"And the Kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the Kingdom under the whole heaven" — This expression denotes world dominion in accordance with Dan. 2:44. *The Revised Version* renders "kingdom" in the plural. All powers on earth, under the heaven are incorporated in the phrase. It is a significant refutation of the heaven-going theories of the churches that the dominion of the redeemed is described by the expression *under* the whole heaven. It is there that Yahweh's true saints will

spend eternity (Rev. 20:6).

"Shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High" — The "people of the saints" are to be distinguished from "the saints" of previous verses. As we have interpreted it, the latter term relates to those who have been used by God to oppose the Papacy in similar manner to the description of the Medes and Persians as Yahweh's "sanctified ones" to reduce the power of historic Babylon. In contradistinction "the people of the saints" relate to the approved believers who shall inherit the Kingdom. They comprise a numerically minor portion of the "two witnesses" of Rev. 11. This is how Bro. Thomas defines the term in *Elpis Israel*" (see p. 338) although in *Exposition of Daniel* he extends it to include the nation of redeemed Israel because, of course, its immortal rulers, as well as its mortal people, will comprise a "whole" in the Age to come, even as the leaders of a nation can represent an entire nation. But primarily and fundamentally, the term "people of the saints" applies to the true "Israel of God" (Gal. 6:16).

"Whose kingdom is an everlasting Kingdom" — See Dan. 2:44. The adjective "everlasting" is rendered from the Chaldean *alam* the equivalent of the Hebrew *olam*, and denotes a "hidden period". This is the Millennium which has beginning and end. At its conclusion it will be delivered up unto the Father that "God may be all and in all" (1 Cor. 15:24-28).

"And all dominions shall serve and obey him" — When the Lord ascended into heaven, he was given power over the nations (v.14; cp. Matt. 28:18; 1 Pet. 3:22); though, as yet, they do not "serve and obey him". The time is coming, however, when they will do so, for "the peoples shall be gathered together, and the kingdoms, to serve Yahweh" (Ps. 102:22). Those that refuse to do so will be "cut off" (Isa. 60:12).

VERSE 28

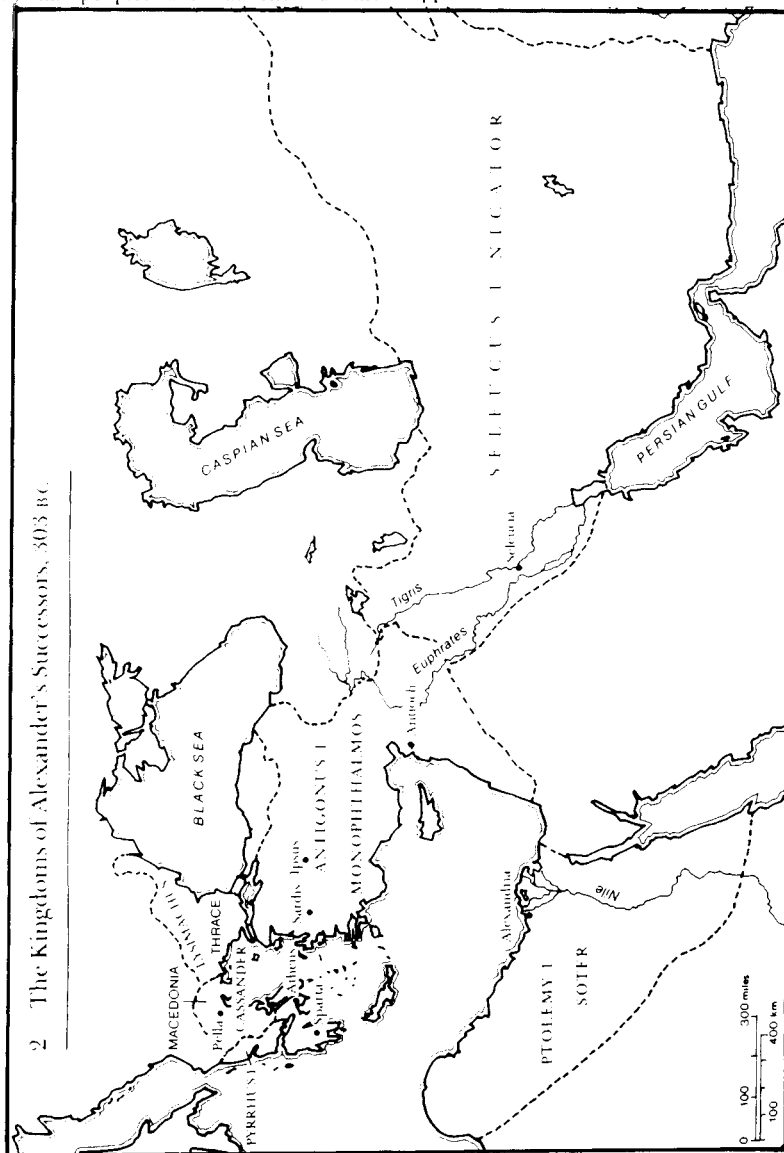
"Hitherto is the end of the matter" — The statement of the angel completed in the previous verse, concluded the vision and the interpretation.

"As for me, Daniel, my cogitations much troubled me" — He pondered the significance of the vision and was troubled because he had thought that the setting up of the Kingdom of God was at hand (see Dan. 9:2). But the revelation granted him implied long epochs of persecution experi-

enced by the people of God at the hands of anti-God forces. He found it difficult to reconcile that with the time periods of Jeremiah (ch 9:2). Moreover, he was doubtless concerned at the references to the tribulation that would be experienced by his people, and saddened at the

thought of suffering imposed on them.

“And my countenance changed in me”
 — The vision aroused his deepest concern. So much did he feel for his people, that it was manifested in his personal appearance.



Alexander's Influence on History and Prophecy

Reference to the fourfold division of Alexander's empire is frequent in the Book of Daniel. The Grecian "leopard" is represented as having "four wings of a fowl" (Dan. 7:6); the he goat's main horn is broken, and in its place are found "four notable ones towards the four winds of heaven" (Dan. 8:8); on the death of the "mighty King" there appears on the stage of history four Kings: "his kingdom shall be broken and shall be divided toward the four winds of heaven; and not to his posterity" (Dan. 11:3-4).

The four-fold division of Alexander's empire played a profound part in the course of history and the fulfilment of prophecy. Two of them are given the titles of King of the North and King of the South (Daniel 11), and though suppressed by "the king" or Ruler of Constantinople (v.36) are destined to arise at "the time of the end" (v.40). In Chapter 8 Daniel predicts that out of one of the four horns would grow "a little horn" which would absorb all the others into its Empire; and in a latter-day manifestation stand up against the Prince of princes (Dan. 8:9-12,23-25), to be ultimately "broken without hands" or human agency, and its territory incorporated into the Kingdom of God.

The historical facts, therefore, are important, and are outlined below.

When Alexander the Great died in B.C. 323, his widow, Roxanne, was with child. When born, her son was named Alexander after his celebrated father.

Pending the growth to manhood of this boy, and after much unrest, an "interim" organisation of the Empire was agreed upon along these lines:

- Philip Aridaeus was titular king. (He was murdered some years later at the instigation of Olympias, the mother of Alexander the Great).

- Perdicas, based in Greece, was regent, and authorised to manage home affairs. (He died a natural death a few years later).

- Five (and a little later, six) main "satrapys" under the trusted generals of Alexander's army with full military power governed different sections of the Empire:

- Ptolemy — Egypt.

- Antipater — Macedonia. He was followed by his son Cassander.

- Lysimachus — Thrace.

- Antigonus — Phrygia, later joined by his son Demetrius.

- Eumenes — Paphlagonia.

- Seleucus — Babylonia. He was younger than the others, and was the last appointed.

Some of the boundaries of influence were ill-defined; each man was anxious to protect what he considered his area, and if possible, extend it at the expense of the others. To that end, they used argument, diplomacy, deceit; they "traded" their women in strategic marriages; and eventually border incidents between the rival armies broke out into open warfare.

Antigonus, especially, coveted the whole Empire. Ptolemy was reasonably content with his "fortress" Egypt, but he kept an eye on Palestine and Syria, seeking an opportunity to move in that direction. Antipater, Lysimachus and Eumenes were too close to each other for individual comfort. Seleucus, away to the East in Babylon, was isolated and uncertain of the attitude of the others towards him.

In B.C. 315 Antigonus killed Eumenes in battle, and extended his control to all the North-east except Babylonia.

In B.C. 311 Cassander (his father now dead) was confirmed in Macedonia plus Greece, and Roxanne and her son were placed in his care. But this signed their death-warrant. Cassander conspired and accomplished their clandestine murders. The boy was in his 14th year.

Now there were five satraps, and no overall, or central, control:

- Ptolemy — Egypt.
- Cassander — Macedonia and Greece.
- Lysimachus — Thrace.
- Antigonus and Demetrius — Asia Minor, Phrygia, Syria.
- Seleuchus — Babylonia and the east to the River Indus.

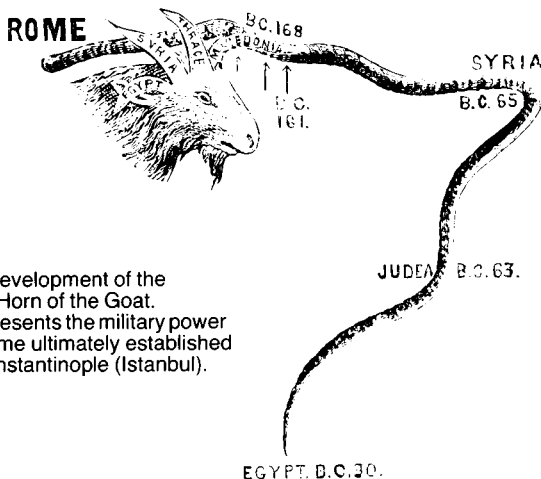
In B.C., 301 a great battle was fought at Ipsus in Phrygia between Antigonus and Demetrius on one side and Cassander, Lysimachus and Seleuchus on the other; Ptolemy assisted with material aid against Antigonus, but refrained from active participation. Antigonus was killed in battle, and Demetrius fled.

Now there were four satraps:

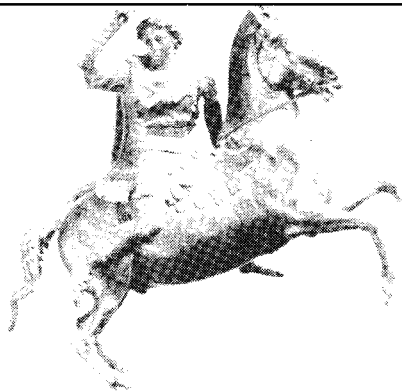
- Ptolemy — Egypt. He gained control over Palestine, but missed out in Syria, which went to Seleuchus. He died peacefully in BC 285, and his successors ruled Egypt until Rome took control in BC 30. He and his successors are styled Kings of the South in Dan. 11:1-35.
- Cassander — Macedonia and Greece. But his hold was an insecure one. He died in BC 297. Rome took control in B.C. 168.
- Lysimachus — Thrace, Asia Minor, Pergamum. He died in battle B.C. 281. Pergamum was bequeathed to Rome B.C. 133. Out of this "horn" came the "little horn" of Dan. 8:9.
- Seleuchus — Phoenicia, Syria, Babylonia to the Indus. The Western section fell to Rome B.C. 65. His title, and that of his successors is given as the King of the North in Dan. 11:1-35.

The prophecy of Daniel 11, relates principally to the struggles and intrigues between the Ptolemaic and the Seleucidæ dynasties as they concern the Eastern Mediterranean countries of Palestine and Syria.

The "time of the end" section of that chapter (vv.40-45) requires the re-emergence of a King of the South and a King of the North in the latter days. The political divisions of the Middle East during the present Century has vindicated Daniel's prophecy and continues to do so. The influence of Soviet Russia in the area of the ancient King of the North is very significant. From notes by E.C.W.



The development of the Little Horn of the Goat. It represents the military power of Rome ultimately established in Constantinople (Istanbul).



Alexander The Great: The Notable Horn of the Goat (Daniel 8:21)

The ambitious Philip of Macedon, father of Alexander, slowly and almost imperceptibly moved into a position of eminence and power at which he aimed from the very first. He had been three years a hostage at Thebes of Greece, and had learned the art of war under the able commander Epaminondas. He established a regular army, larger and better disciplined than that of any other Grecian state. At that time the whole area of what is today called Greece was divided into small, mutually antagonistic states. And in the wars that took place, Philip proved to be the most skilful and successful general, ultimately establishing himself as master of the thirty cities of Olynthia. The Olynthians had sought the alliance of Athens, and the great orator, Demosthenes, had delivered his first great speech against Philip, B.C. 352. The Athenians were divided in their views respecting the policy of Philip, and when convinced of the necessity of opposing him they were too late. The Athenians and Thebans were defeated by Philip at Chaeronea, B.C. 338, and Philip became master of Greece.

War Declared Against Persia

At a congress of all the Greek states, at Corinth, war was declared against Persia, and Philip was appointed General-in-Chief of the Grecian forces. He was soon after assassinated, 336 B.C.; but his son and successor, Alexander, after checking the inroads of the northern barbarians and capturing Thebes, which had revolted after the death of Philip, prepared to carry out his father's plans. The severe punishment he meted out to Thebes — complete destruction — demonstrated to the Greeks the ruthless determination of the young monarch, whom they had accepted as their leader in the room of his father.

Alexander Appointed Head Of The Invasion

Alexander crossed the Hellespont with about 40,000 men; an army so perfectly disciplined, and so superior to any other, that it

could probably, without any difficulty, at that time have conquered the world. Persia was in decline. Though Xerxes its monarch commanded large numbers of troops, they were not the quality of those under Cyrus and his successors. Certainly they were no match for Alexander's soldiers. They were defeated, and the Persians routed. The Persian armies, though large, were a mere militia, the only efficient troops being bodies of Greek mercenaries commanded by Memnon the Rhodian and others. When Alexander, after visiting the site of Troy, had reached the Granicus, a small stream flowing from Mount Ida into the Propontis, Memnon advised the Persian generals to avoid a battle by retreating, to lay waste the country, and destroy the towns in their line of march, so that, for want of provisions, the invaders might be checked. This advice, which might have saved the empire, was rejected as degrading to the dignity of Persia. The Persians were defeated at the Granicus; and as the Greek, Memnon, the only general likely to have been a formidable opponent, soon after died, the career of Alexander was unimpeded until he came to Issus, a town in the mountain-ranges of Cilicia, near the passes called the Syrian Gates.

The Battle of Issus — B.C. 333

In the plain near Issus, Darius Codomannus advanced with 600,000 men. With him were his mother, wives, and harem, for he was certain of victory. The more so as he had among his troops some 30,000 Greek mercenaries. But he was defeated and lost his baggage, and the whole of his family and harem were made prisoners. In that battle Alexander not only defeated the Persians, but the republican southern Greeks, their allies, and the special enemies of his rule. The year was 333, a most significant period as we shall later see. Meanwhile the victory of Issus opened up the whole of the Middle East to Alexander. From there the conqueror passed through Syria. Sidon, the oldest of the Phoenician cities, received him as a deliverer. Tyre resisted, but, after a seven months' siege, it also fell. The Tyrians had retreated to an island off the shore, but Alexander, as predicted by Ezekiel, completed the prophecy already partly fulfilled by Nebuchadnezzar, and "destroyed the walls of Tyre, and brake down her towers, and laid the stones and the timber and dust in the midst of the water" (Ezek. 26:12). He overthrew Tyrian power with ruthless destruction of life. 30,000 were sold for slaves, 2,000 were crucified. In the course of the siege, the island of Tyre was united by Alexander's mole that linked it with the mainland; and the ancient city was completely annihilated as predicted by Zechariah (Ch. 10:3-4). Gaza, as Zechariah also warned, was next besieged, and taken after three months. Meanwhile Alexander marched towards Jerusalem but was diverted from attacking the city. He was conciliated by the High Priest Jaddua who led a company of priests to meet him, and, according to Josephus, showed him the prophecies of Daniel predicting the rise and fall of the Persian empire and the

dominance of the Greeks (Chapters 8:1-7, 20-21; 11:1-3). Alexander was intrigued, and the city was saved.

Egypt next was attacked. It made no resistance, and Alexander founded the city of Alexandria, as a link between the East and the West, and as an emporium of the trade of the East and of India, B.C. 331.

Defeat of Darius

Leaving Egypt, Alexander crossed the Euphrates into Mesopotamia, and met Darius at Gaugamela twenty miles from Arbela, a wide plain between the Tigris and the mountains of Kurdistan. Darius's forces have been estimated at a million, and included 200 scythe chariots and 15 elephants (greatly feared by warriors at that time). He also had some Greek mercenaries; but despite these forces he suffered a humiliating defeat. The Greeks were driven back, and some 300,000 Persians are said to have been slain or wounded in the contest. Darius escaped, but was murdered the following year by a traitor with the name of Bessus (B.C. 331).

Alexander moved east and invaded India but was compelled, by the unwillingness of his troops to pass beyond the Hyphasis (the Sutledge), to return westward, B.C. 325-324. The return was as adventurous as his previous advances. Vessels were built on the Sutledge, and in them the army sailed down the Indus to the Indian Ocean. Thence Alexander and the army proceeded through Gedrosia and Caramania to Persepolis, capital of Persia. This mighty and elegant city was ruthlessly and wantonly destroyed in reprisals for Persian devastation of Greek cities in the past and Athens in particular.

Death of Alexander

Alexander came to Babylon which he had decided to make the seat of his Empire. He received ambassadors from the Carthaginians, the Romans, and three other peoples of Italy. He had grand plans of uniting the people of the East with the West. This was but one of many grand and ambitious plans he made to be put into effect at Babylon, but destiny was against him. Man proposes but God disposes. Daniel had not only predicated Alexander's successes but also his sudden and unexpected death. This occurred at the early age of thirty-three, by a fever, the result of excesses he indulged in at Babylon, B.C. 323.

Meanwhile two powerful States, one in Africa, one in Italy, were gradually extending their territories and consolidating their power, in preparation for a contest to decide the dominion of the West. These were: Carthage in North Africa, and Rome in Central Italy. The rivalry of these two great nations delayed for a time the demise of Greek power. This permitted the fulfilment of the prophecy of Daniel 11:3-4 in the dividing up of Alexander's realm among his generals. But soon Rome exerted itself in the east, and the fourth beast dominated the civilised world.

CHAPTER EIGHT

JUDGMENT ON THE LITTLE HORN OF THE EAST

The original language used in the earlier, original section of Daniel's book was Aramaic or Chaldean (Chapters 2-7). But from Chapter 8 onwards it is Hebrew. The change of language (not discernable in the English version), makes a significant break. Why the use of two languages? Evidently because of the themes recorded therein. The earlier chapters are expressive of Gentile domination; but from now on the prophecies involve the covenant people and their land. For example, this chapter not only depicts the battle between the Ram and the Goat, and provides an angelic interpretation of its meaning; but also describes the dountreading of the Holy Land in the past, present and future, as well as predicting the conquest of the desolating power by the Prince of princes who was put to death by it 1900 years ago. The main theme of the chapter is the judgment to be poured out upon the little horn of the Goat, representative of the eastern section of the Roman Empire. Key verses are 2, 4, 5, 9, 11-14, 19-20, 23, 25.

The Fight between the Ram and the Goat — vv. 1-7.

Daniel records a vision given him of a two-horned ram belligerently extending its influence in all directions until challenged by a he-goat from the west. In the ensuing fight the ram is decisively defeated.

VERSE 1

"In the third year of the reign of King Belshazzar" — Belshazzar was appointed co-regent in the third year of the reign of Nabonidus, approx. B.C. 533, and continued in that capacity until the fall of Babylon in 539. Nabonidus was away from Babylon during considerable periods of his reign, and this vision was given at a time that Belshazzar exercised sole control. The City and Empire were overwhelmed during his reign by the Medes and Persians, the Ram of this chapter. Therefore, (Dan. 5:30-31), the time that Daniel received the vision coincided with

the rapid decline in Babylonian status and influence.

"A vision appeared unto me, even unto me Daniel, after that which appeared unto me at the first" — Concerning this revelation, Bro. Thomas writes in *Exposition of Daniel*, p.22: "It was communicated for the purpose of exhibiting certain important events in the future history of Judah, characterised by the suppression of their religious polity, the destruction of their commonwealth, and subversion of their power for a long series of years; but with the consolatory assurance that God would avenge them, and by a great Deliverer destroy the power that had so long oppressed them. By studying the symbols of this chapter the power will be found to originate in Babylon, and be the same as that presented by the four beasts, but without the introduction of the ten horns and the little horn with its eyes and mouth."

Daniel links the visions of the two chapters (Chps 7 and 8) by his reference to the

previous one as “the first”. The “second” vision of this chapter foreshadow the uprise of the eastern Roman Empire, whereas that of Ch. 7 foreshadowed the history of its western section. Both describe the uprise of “little horns”; in chapter 7 it is an ecclesiastical horn in the west; in chapter 8 it is a military one in the east. The former was based in Rome; the latter in Constantinople. Both originally formed part of the Roman Empire.

VERSE 2

“And I saw in a vision; and it came to pass, when I saw, that I was at Shushan” — In fact, Daniel was in Babylon, but in the vision he found himself in the Medo-Persian palace at Shushan. This implied that Babylon would be overthrown by the power of Medo-Persia, and inasmuch as Daniel was depicted as being in a palace of the latter, that suggested he would be honoured by the conqueror of Babylon (cp. Ch. 6:1-2).

Shush signifies *Lily* from its whiteness, and the abundance of lillies that grow in its neighbourhood.

Shushan was the seat of Persian rule (see Neh 1:1; Esth. 1:2). The mound has been excavated, and its early occupational levels revealed. These excavations uncovered the famous Code of Hammurabi, identified by some with the Amraphel of Gen. 14:1, and if so, a contemporary of Abraham. His Code is the earliest archaeologically known record of a set code of Laws; and the similarity of it, in some respects to the Mosaic legislation, has caused some to claim that the Law of Moses was based upon it. However, there were Divine codes of law before that of Moses, and these predated that of Hammurabi (see Gen. 26:5). Most likely Hammurabi borrowed from those observed by Abraham.

The Palace of Shushan was a winter residence of the great Persian kings. It was a large and beautiful structure, as evidenced by the ruins existent today. They witness to the magnificence of the building in its heyday. Susa became a part of the Achaemenid (Persian) Empire when Cyrus took Babylon and its provinces.

“In the palace, which is in the province of Elam” — The word “palace” is from *biyrah* signifying a fortress or fortified castle. Elam was the name of a region east of Babylonia, extending to the mountains of Media in the north-east, and along the

Persian Gulf to the borders of ancient Persis in the south. It was annexed by Persia about 600 B.C. The Elamites were Semites (Gen. 10:22; 1 Chr. 1:17). Their name is said to signify *Hidden, Distant*, or *Highland*.

“And I saw in a vision” — This appears to be stated in order to re-emphasise that Daniel was still in Babylon, and only transported to Shushan and Elam in vision.

“And I was by the river Ulai” — The River Ulai was a comparatively small river which divided the city of Shushan into two parts. D.J. Wiseman suggests that the present upper Kherkhah and lower Karum Rivers may in ancient times have been a single stream debouching into the delta at the head of the Persian Gulf. The river appears in reliefs of Ashurbanipal’s assault on Susa. Its ancient name was Eulaeus. (See *Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia*). The Eulaeus, or Ulai, was a large artificial canal that connected two rivers, then known as the Choaspes and the Coprates that flowed on the south and east of Susa. It was by this canal that Daniel stood in spirit when he saw the vision.

VERSE 3

“Then I lifted up mine eyes and saw, and behold” — Daniel’s attention was suddenly drawn to the Ram he proceeds to describe.

“There stood before the river a ram which had two horns” — There is no doubting the significance of the ram. Daniel was told that it represented the dual power of Medo-Persia (v.20). It was a very appropriate symbol, for it is said that Persian Kings wore crowns shaped like a ram’s head; and Persian coins or medallions have been found with a ram stamped thereon. The two horns represent the dual powers of Medo-Persia (v.20).

“And the two horns were high” — An uplifted horn symbolises power (Ps. 75:5-6; 89:18,25). The two high horns of the ram represent the extensive power of the Persian Empire which far exceeded that of Babylon. See notes on Dan. 7:5.

“But one was higher than the other” — At first the Medes dominated, but with the advent of Cyrus, the Persian rulers became more prominent until finally the Empire of the Medes and Persians became Persian dominated.

“And the higher came up last” — Daniel must have seen the two horns growing. In other words he must have symbolically witnessed the growth of the Medo-Persian power, and particularly the extensive conquests of Cyrus by which the vast empire was established in its greatness.

VERSE 4

“I saw the ram pushing westward, and northward and southward” — Daniel saw the ram butting with his horns towards the west, north and south. The Persians came from the east and their irresistible advances were, therefore, made in the very directions stated by the prophet. It was Cyrus who advanced in this fashion. In the west, he conquered Babylon, Mesopotamia, Syria and Asia Minor; in the north, Colchis, Armenia, Iberia and the regions about the Caspian; in the south, his conquests took in Palestine, Egypt, Ethiopia and Libya.

“So that no beasts might stand before him, neither was there any that could deliver out of his hand; but he did according to his will, and became great” — Cyrus, son of Cambyses, founded this empire. By his mother Mandane, he was grandson of Astyages, king of Media. He married the daughter and only child of his uncle Cyaxeres, thus succeeding to

both crowns and uniting both kingdoms. Until the time of Cyrus, Media was the most famous of the two in history; the most ancient and most powerful. In his conquests Cyrus even extended his dominion to the East as far as India, but as this is unimportant to the people of the Holy Land, this activity was not shown in the vision.

VERSE 5

“And as I was considering” — Recognising the importance of the visions he received, Daniel gave them proper consideration. He pondered their meaning.

“Behold” — His attention was suddenly directed away from the ram to a new figure, which burst on the scene. In like manner the ancient world was suddenly startled by the menace unexpectedly pre-



Conquests of Alexander the Great



sented by the ambitious and brilliant general ship of Alexander the Great.

“An he-goat came from the west” — This was an appropriate symbol for the Greeks, and Alexander in particular. A legend states that Caremus, their first king, when seeking new habitations in Macedonia, was commanded by the oracle to some goats for his guides. Accordingly, when he saw a flock of goats fleeing from a violent storm, he followed them to Edessa, and there established the seat of his power. The city was called Aegeoe, i.e. Goats’ Town; the people were named Aegeadoe, or Goats’ People and the same name was given to the ocean itself; Aegean Sea, derived from the root, Aigeos, i.e. Alexander’s son was named Alexander Aegus — or Son of the Goat! As Macedonia and Greece are west of Persia, and of Susa, the vision properly represented the goat as moving east from that direction.

“On the face of the whole earth” — Alexander the Great who established the Grecian or Macedonian Empire set his sights on world domination; he was an extremely ambitious man, and highly skilful in the art and discipline of war. He evolved a new form of warfare and strategy with overwhelming success.

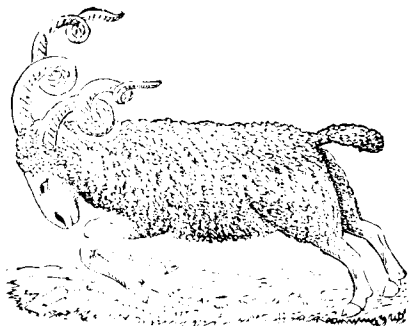
“And touched not the ground” — With

such speed did the goat move with its menacing horn projected in front, that normal obstacles did not hinder it. Its feet did not appear to touch the ground, so fast did it move.

“And the goat had a notable horn between his eyes” — The margin renders the statement: “a horn of sight”. The long, solitary, menacing horn was so prominent that it dominated the vision. It represented the “first King” (v.21), Alexander the Great. The swiftness of his conquests remain today a unique phenomenon of history. In twelve years he had overrun the civilised world. The *Book of Maccabees* records: “He made many wars, and won many strongholds, and slew the kings of the earth.” He went through to the ends of the earth, and took the spoils of many nations, insomuch that the earth was quiet before him; and he ruled over countries, and nations and kings, who became tributary to him” (1 Mac. 1:2-3).

With irresistible fury, in the great and continuous victories of Granicus (334 B.C.), Issus (333 B.C.), Arbela (331 B.C.), and so on, he reduced the mighty empire of Persia to impotence. In this short space of time he conquered Syria, Phoenicia, Cyprus, Tyre, Gaza, Egypt, Babylonia, Persia, Media, Hyrcania, and moved into India.

The Ram —
or Medo Persia
attacked by



the Grecian Goat.
The notable horn
representing
Alexander the Great.

VERSE 6

“And he came to the ram that had two horns” — He did so in belligerent manner. In B.C. 336, Alexander the Great, who had already demonstrated his ability to wage war, was chosen at Corinth to lead the united Greek States against their Persian over-lords. He accepted the challenge with enthusiasm, declared war on Persia determined to avenge the sufferings imposed on his fellow countrymen by the enemy, and destroy its power.

“Which I had seen standing before the river” — The ram, Daniel was later told, represented the power of Persia. The Persians had earlier invaded Greece, and ruthlessly imposed their will on them with great cruelty. Athens, particularly, had felt the scourge of Persia; and now Alexander lusted for revenge. Meanwhile, Persia, though still powerful, was in decline, and her troops were no match for the well-trained Grecian soldiers. In B.C. 334, Alexander was ready, and commenced his attack. He moved across the Hellespont to the river Granicus, behind which the Persian commander had entrenched himself with a force five times as numerous as that of Alexander's.

“And ran into him in the fury of his power” — The barbarous cruelty with which the Greeks had been treated was now to meet just retribution. Alexander had carefully planned his strategy, and trained his troops to that end. He exploited the use of the phalanx in fighting. A phalanx could be of any size, comprising any number of warriors. The foot-soldiers composing it were armed with spears 20 feet long, and when advancing moved forward in a solid line eight ranks deep. The front rank held their spears near the point, the second rank somewhat farther down the shaft, and so on to the rear rank, so that the points of all the spears in the phalanx were in front of the first rank. If attacked from the sides or rear, the phalanx immediately formed a square that bristled with spears on all sides. On each side of the Grecian phalanx were detachments of archers, infantry armed with swords, and bodies of cavalry. These troops were able to move very fast, and it was their duty to sweep round the sides of the enemy army and try to attack it from the rear as the phalanx advanced.

At the head of his troops, Alexander crossed the Hellespont (Dardanelles) and confronted the Persian forces protected

by the River Granicus. This proved only a temporary restraint to the determined Macedonian warrior. The Greeks swam the river, and attacked the enemy with irresistible fury, driving him back in confusion and defeat. The Grecian victory at Granicus in Phrygia (B.C. 334) was the beginning of the end of Persian power.

VERSE 7

“And I saw him come close unto the ram” — Nothing deterred by the stength of the ram, Alexander advanced to Issus on the borders of Asia Minor and Syria. Here there awaited him Darius 111 Codomannus with a huge force. As previously noted, so confident was Darius of victory that he had brought with him his mother, wife and children. He was decisively defeated and the members of his family captured by the Greeks. Rejecting favourable offers of peace, and resisting the temptation to march instantly against Darius personally, Alexander turned south and captured the great Phoenician city of Tyre after a long siege (332), then invaded Philistia and occupied Egypt (a Persian province since B.C. 525), where he founded Alexandria (331). Then, turning north and moving onwards into the heart of the Persian empire, Alexander over-ran Mesopotamia, crossed the Tigris, and outmanoeuvred and overwhelmed Darius at Gaugemela (Arbela). The victory enabled him to capture the important Persian centres of Babylon, Susa and Persepolis (which went down in flames), and Darius fled to Media, south of the Caspian Sea, where he was murdered. Thereupon Alexander assumed the dead man's royal title. It was obvious that no existing power, or commander, could match the might and skill of Alexander, who though only in his twenties, was a genius in the art of strategy and warfare.

“And he was moved by choler against him” — As stated above, the Persians had been ruthless in their treatment of the Greeks, and Alexander sought revenge. Moreover, history records that Darius tried to bribe Alexander's commanders and soldiers to betray him, and his associates, to destroy him. This further provides Alexander's anger, so that he would listen to no terms of peace, but relentlessly pursued Darius as a poisoner and a murderer. Within the short space of twelve years, the whole civilised world was at his feet. He had conquered Syria, Phoenicia, Cyp-

rus, Tyre, Gaza, Egypt, Babylonia, Persia, Media and other parts further east. In 327 and 326 he crossed the Indus and subdued northern and western India. At that stage, compelled by the discontent of his troops to pause in his career of victory, he turned back after invading the Punjab (326). Moving down the Indus as far as the delta he withdrew westwards by the terrible land route through the deserts of southern Gedrosia (the Makran, in eastern Iran Baluchistan and south-eastern Iran), while his fleet, under Mearchus, disappeared for a time into the unknown sea route along the coasts of the Indian Ocean and Persian Gulf. When re-united he returned by land through Gedrosia, Karmania, Persia and Susiana to Babylon.

“And smote the ram, and brake his two horns” — The military power of Medo-Persia was completely overthrown by Alexander.

“And there was no power in the ram to stand before him, but he cast him down to the ground, and stamped upon him; and there was none to deliver the ram out of his hand” — Alexander’s domination of Persia and its possessions was absolute. Persian power was completely broken.

The Appearance and Development of the Little Horn of the Goat — vv. 8-12

The vision depicts that at the height of its power, the horn of the goat is broken, and in its place arise four other horns. Out of one of these four horns there emerges a further “little horn” which grows to great power extending particularly to the south and east including the Holy Land. It dominates the Holy Land, asserts itself against its Prince, destroys its Temple, and casts the truth to the ground, whilst it practices and prospers.

VERSE 8

“Therefore the he goat waxed very great” — The “goat” was a symbol used by Alexander, and therefore to be identified with Greece. His methods of warfare were so successful that they are studied by military strategists to this day, and have been adapted to modern conditions. In consequence of his success in war he became “very great”, but also very arrogant and boastful. He contemptuously set fire to the celebrated citadel of Susa and the magnificent buildings and palaces of Persepolis, and showed utter disdain for the glory and might of Persia. Arriving at

Babylon, he determined to make it his headquarters in the east. In the excess of his triumph he gave himself up to such debauchery as his constitution could not bear. He was seized with a fever, and after an illness of only eleven days he died. This was at the early age of thirty-three, after only about thirteen years’ reign.

Alexander’s conquests are the subject of other prophecies. He completed the devastation of Tyre initiated by Nebuchadnezzar as predicted by Ezekiel (Ezek. 26:7,12 — the reference is to Nebuchadnezzar personally, v.7, but to his successors, including Alexander, called “they” in v. 12). In Zechariah 9 where Alexander’s attack on Palestine, including Gaza, is predicted (v.5), the prophet Zechariah contrasts Alexander the Great as proclaimed by admiring Gentiles, with the lowly King of Israel: Israel’s king is described as riding into his capital on “a colt the foal of an ass” whereas Alexander is always depicted as riding a warhorse (Zech. 9:9). Israel’s Messiah is described as “just” or “righteous”, the chief virtue of a king (2 Sam. 23:3; Isa. 11:3-5; Ps. 45:6-70; Jer. 23:5-6), whereas Alexander was capricious and violently unjust, especially towards those who offended his towering ego. Israel’s King is described as “having salvation”, whereas Alexander could be extremely cruel in victory. He executed 10,000 citizens of Gaza, and dragged the defeated King behind a chariot to his death, to show his contempt of his enemies. Israel’s Messiah King was “lowly”. The word denotes one humbly submissive to the will of his Father (see Phil. 2:5-7), and approachable by all who desired his help. The proud, dashing Alexander was the very opposite of this! Haughty and arrogant. Christ rode into Jerusalem on the colt of an ass, the animal of peace, symbolic of Israel. Alexander rode a warhorse, the symbol of fleshly pride and power. In his day, Alexander, in fulfilment of the prophecy, “waxed very great”.

“And when he was strong, the great horn was broken” — At the height of his power, when his triumphs were at their full, Alexander died of a drunken orgy after a few days’ illness.

“And for it came up four notable ones” — Following his death, Alexander’s empire was divided up between the four generals of his army. Lysimachus ruled over part of Thrace, Asia Minor, part of

Cappadocea, and the countries within the limits of Mount Taurus. Casander possessed Macedonia, Thessaly and part of Greece. Ptolemy obtained Egypt, Cyprus, Cyrene, and ultimately Coele-Syria, Phoenicia and Judea. Seleucus obtained Phoenicia, Syria, Babylonia to the Indus. Of these four "horns" or powers, that of Syria and Egypt (as directly affecting the Holy Land) are described in detail in the prophecy of Daniel 11. The future of the Macedonian horn is almost completely ignored.

"Toward the four winds of heaven" —

This is a figurative expression denoting the civilised world (cp. Deut. 30:4). Of the four parts into which Alexander's empire was subsequently divided, the two that particularly affected the Promised Land (Syria and Egypt) are respectively designated as the Kings of the North and South (see Dan. 11:9,13).

VERSE 9

"And out of one of them" — The "little horn" of the goat grew out of one of the four horns that had appeared following the breaking of the "notable horn". In this, it was unlike the "little horn" of the previous chapter, for it had arisen out of the *midst* of the ten horns.

"Came forth a little horn" — This horn is described in similar terms to that of Dan. 7:8, but lacked the "eyes" and "mouth of a man" that designated the "little horn of the beast". The "eyes" and "mouth" that horn showed it to be Ecclesiastical in character; whereas this horn, is military in constitution. The two "little horns" of Daniel's prophecies, therefore, are different aspects of one power: the western and eastern divisions of the Roman Empire. Whereas the Image of Dan. 2 illustrated that Rome would be divided into two parts, these prophecies symbolised their different characteristics. The "little horn" of this chapter, developed out of the principality of Pergamos, often ignored by historians when treating with the events relating to the dividing up of Alexander's realm, Attalus I of Pergamum (B.C. 241-197), together with Thrace and Byzantium, became allied to Rome, which drew the growing Empire of that city more directly into the east. Attalus III bequeathed his Kingdom to Rome which subsequently annexed it. It can be properly claimed, therefore, that the power of Rome in the

east grew out of the "little horn" of the goat.

"Which waxed exceeding great" — This "little horn", like that of the previous chapter, was only small to begin with but greatly developed in size. Rome steadily grew in power. The military skill and ruggedness of the Roman Legions under the control of good generals became more than a match for the Grecian phalanxes which ultimately succumbed to the progress of the Legions of the growing empire.

"Toward the south, toward the east, and toward the pleasant land" —

The "south" designates the land of Egypt; the east, those of Asia and Persia, and "the pleasant land" that territory granted by promise to Abraham. The word "pleasant" denotes *splendour, beauty*. It is the land for which Yahweh has particular concern (Deut. 11:10-12), and which is so designated (Ps. 106:24; Jer. 12:10; Zech. 7:14; Heb. 11:16). Rome's political influence moved into Palestine not by conquest but by invitation. Once established there, however, it remained to dominate and govern. Macedonia fell to the Romans in B.C. 148 and Achaia (southern Greece) in B.C. 146. In B.C. 133 the last ruler of the Attalid dynasty of Pergamum, which had broken from the Seleucids of Syria, bequeathed the heavily populated province of Asia Minor to the Romans. Pergamum, the former royal capital, became a free city under Roman control. Pompey's campaigns in the east in the 60s B.C. abolished the Seleucid (Syrian) monarchy. Judea was annexed to heavily populated Syria, which Rome used as a buffer against the Parthians across the Euphrates. As a result, all the lands in this part of Asia looked to Rome for military support and leadership. In B.C.40, the Roman Senate appointed Herod King of the Jews, but on the throne of Judea sat Antigonus II the last of the Hasmonean (Maccabean) rulers, newly placed there by Rome's enemies, the Parthians. Herod succeeded, with the backing provided by his friend Mark Anthony, in taking Jerusalem in B.C. 37. Antigonus was executed by the Romans at Herod's request, and, in the same year, Herod married Mariamne, a Hasmonean (Maccabean) princess (one of his ten wives). From 37 until his death in B.C. 4, Herod ruled as King of the Jews, a reign marked by his total loyalty to Rome. Herod showed an

uncanny ability to maintain favour with the Roman leadership, managing, for example, to switch his allegiance from Antony to Octavian (later Augustus) after the Battle of Actium in B.C. 31. His authority was always subject to Rome which had assumed lordship over the whole nation without specifically defeating it in battle. With Rome in "the pleasant land" in the days of Christ, Daniel's prophecy was vindicated.

VERSE 10

"And it waxed great" — The little horn of the Goat, representative of the military power of Rome, became very powerful. As the iron kingdom, depicted in the Image seen by Nebuchadnezzar, it broke into pieces and subdued the other powers (see Dan. 2:40).

"Even to the host of heaven" — The margin renders this as *"against the host of heaven"*. The Hebrew literally signifies "to" or "unto", and therefore to move against the object designated. The "host of heaven" denotes Israel. It is given the title of "the host of Yahweh" in Exod. 12:41, and is described as His kingdom in 1 Chron. 29:11,23. In Isa. 24:21, national leaders are styled "the host of the high ones" as indicative of their status. Israel is pre-eminently "the host of heaven" for its circumstances are supervised by the angelic host (Exod. 23:20-23; Josh. 5:13-15). However, because of the disobedience of the people, Rome was permitted to triumph over this "host", and particularly its leaders to the extent that Yahweh saw necessary. The attack by Rome in A.D. 70 is described as punishment from Yahweh (Deut. 28:49). The Legions are described as "His armies" sent to administer necessary punishment for transgression (Matt. 22:7). Herod, who himself was a Gentile, an Idumean, was but a tool of Rome to bring punishment upon the people. He partly fulfilled the prophetic warning of Deut. 28:43, "The stranger (Gentile) that is within thee shall get up above thee very high; and thou shalt come down very low".

Through the influence and support of Rome, his power became great in the land, whereas that of the nation, and its leaders, was sadly reduced.

"And it cast down some of the host" — The Jewish army was no match for the ruthless, well-trained Legions of Rome. The iron might of the Empire suppressed the Jewish people.

"And of the stars to the ground" — Figuratively, in such a context, the "stars" represent the statesmen and leaders of the people (cp. Dan. 12:3; Luke 21:25). Many such among the Jews were deposed by Rome. Even the appointment of the High Priest was made subject to the confirmation of the Roman authorities. As the antagonism of Rome increased, many "stars" shining in the political heavens were dimmed, and figuratively were cast out of heaven (places of ruling authority) into the political earth. The climax of this antagonism was reached in A.D. 70 when Jerusalem was breached and the Temple destroyed.

"And stamped upon them" — The little horn of the Goat treated the Jewish authorities with utmost contempt.

VERSE 11

"Yea, he magnified himself" — This Rome did in its arrogance, and set its authority contemptuously above that of all others.

"Even to the prince of the host" — This Prince is the Lord Jesus Christ as King or Commander of Israel (Isa. 55:4; Ezek. 21:22-27). The Hebrew words are *sar-hatz-zayad* or, commander of the army, a title that should be compared with that of v.25 where it is changed to Prince of princes (Commander of commanders). But Pilate, as representative of Rome, did not recognise the Lord's credentials as such, nor his claim to be earth's future monarch. He consigned him to scourging and execution by crucifixion. He deemed him guilty of sedition, and despised his claim of kingship. As a mark of contempt he ordered that there should be publicly displayed as the basis of the charge: *Jesus of Nazareth; the king*

of the Jews. Nazareth was despised by Jewry as Nathanael indicated in his question: "Can there any good come out of Nazareth?" (John 1:46). Thus Pilate endeavoured to denigrate the Lord's claim and dismiss with contempt the Jewish leaders, as much as to say: There is the King you deserve!.

"And by him the daily sacrifice was taken away" — The daily sacrifice was offered every morning and evening in the Temple (Exod. 29:38-39); but Daniel's prediction required that it be "taken away". The word thus translated signifies *to be lifted up, to carry away so as to cause to cease*. See Gesenius. (The word "sacrifice" relates to the burnt offering; it is implied but not expressed in the original, where the word does not appear). How did the little horn of the Goat, or pagan military power of Rome, accomplish this? In A.D.70, the shadow institutions of the Law ceased with the destruction of the Temple by

the Roman Legions. In this act of Divine judgment, those Legions are described as the army of the King, i.e. of Christ (Matt. 22:7), so illustrating the power granted him on his resurrection (see Matt. 28:18; 1 Pet. 3:22).

"And the place of his sanctuary was cast down" — The word *miqdash* signifies the holy place, or Temple. In the verse before us this is described as "his" sanctuary, that is, the Messiah's, or that to which the "prince of the host" laid claim. On one occasion in the court of the Temple, the Lord described it as "my house" (Mark 11:17), that is, "his sanctuary". The prophecy, therefore, required the overthrow of the City and Temple of Jerusalem as predicted in Matt. 22:7.

VERSE 12

"And an host was given him against the daily sacrifice" — The word "host" is translated from *isaba* and denotes not only an army but a *period of war-*



The triumphal Arch of Titus in Rome commemorates the defeat of the Jews and the destruction of Jerusalem. This seven-armed candelabrum is one of the spoils of victory.

fare, or an "appointed time". It is so rendered in Job. 7:1; 14:14; Dan. 10:1. It is rendered "war" and "warfare" in Job. 10:17; Isa. 40:2. Gesenius comments that in such a context as the verse before us it "almost always is used figuratively of the wretched and miserable condition" of the ones referred to. The Jewish people and their religion were suppressed by the Roman Legions, and the former made wretched and miserable by being sold as cheap and abject slaves (so many were offered as such, following the destruction of Jerusalem, that they became a drug on the market). However, the power of the "little horn of the Goat" to persecute was limited to an *appointed time* not then revealed to Daniel, but later made known to him (Dan. 12:7). So long as this period continued, the "daily sacrifice" ceased (Dan. 12: 11). Nevertheless, it is destined to be restored at the conclusion of Israel's warfare of "appointed time" (see Ezek. 46:13).

"By reason of transgression" — The transgression of the Jewish people was the cause of Rome's triumph. Their leaders rejected the Messiahship of Jesus and demanded his crucifixion declaring: "His blood be on us and on our children". When Pilate enquired: "Shall I crucify your King?" they answered: "We have no king but Caesar"! Accordingly, into the brutal hands of Caesar they were delivered.

"And it cast down the truth to the ground" — The pagan power of Rome exerted itself against the Christian religion as well as the Jewish people. The "little horn of the Goat" in Daniel's prophecy is symbolised as "a great red dragon" in Rev. 12:3. It is shown in opposition to the Christian religion both true and false in the Apocalyptic prophecy (Rev. 12:7-17. See notes in *Apocalypse Epitomised*). In *Elpis Israel* (p. 392), Bro. Thomas comments:

"The Little Horn, then, is representative of the Dragon's power in the East — that is, of the Roman; which was planted on the Assyro-Macedonian Horn B.C. 65, when it became a province of the Dragon empire. It con-

tinued to wax exceeding great in these countries until it established its dominion over Syria, Palestine, part of Arabia and Egypt. The tenth, eleventh, and twelfth verses present the part it was to enact in the overthrow of the Jewish State; and the twenty-fifth outlines its ecclesiastical policy and its exaltation against the Prince of princes in "the last end of the indignation", when it "shall be broken without hand"; that is, by the "Stone of Israel when he smites the Image on the feet."

Thus Daniel treats of TWO LITTLE HORNS: one being the "Holy Roman" power of the West that came up 'after' the Ten Horns; and the other, the Pagan Roman power of the East that appeared in Syria and Palestine in the latter end of the Macedonian kings, and before the Ten Horns by many centuries. The Little Horns are not representative of races but of powers on certain territories. It matters not whether they be pagan Romans, Catholic Greeks, Moslem Turks, or Greek-Catholic Russians, the power that rules in Constantinople and plants its standard in Assyria, is the Little Horn of the Assyro-Macedonian Horn of the Goat; and begins its career by crucifying 'the Prince of the Host'; destroying Jerusalem and the Temple; setting up a god in Rome whom his fathers knew not; and ends by standing up against Michael, the Prince of princes, who brings him to his end, with none to help him. All the power of the Dragon in relation to Israel and the land of promise is embodied in the Little Horn of the East. The smiting of the Image, the breaking of the Goat's Little Horn, and the binding of the Dragon, are synchronous and synonymous catastrophes; and 'the Stone'; 'the Prince of princes'; 'Messiah, the great prince who stands up for Israel', are but different titles by which the Lord Jesus is designated, who is to descend from heaven and fight the battle of God Almighty against them."

"And it practised and prospered" — The word "practised" denotes to accomplish what is set out to be done. Pagan Rome opposed the Truth in the days of Christ and Papal Rome has



done similarly since that time. The "great red dragon" referred to in Rev. 12:3, represents Pagan Rome, and is there symbolised in hostility to Christianity both true and false. But the "Dragon" is subsequently represented as symbolising Papal Rome, for it superimposed pagan principles upon the name of Christ. After paganism had been overthrown militarily by Constantine, its superstitions, festivals and teachings were adopted by Papal Rome, and in that form it "prospered". Daniel's prophecy, therefore, takes in the whole course of Roman power and influence: first as a pagan, military power in opposition to Christianity, and afterwards, as a paganised, "Christian" military power in opposition to the Truth.

The Period Of The Prophecy

— vv.13-14

Having completed his reporting of the vision, Daniel hears two angels discoursing upon the subject, and particularly upon the period of time to be occupied in fulfilment thereof. Their conversation reveals the limitations of their knowledge of the Divine purpose as endorsed by Christ (Mark 13:32). This is in accord with other sections of the Word. Peter describes the angels as

"desiring" further information of these matters, and particularly of the time periods relating to them. (1 Pet. 1:12). An example of angelic enquiry is given in the angelic conversations now recorded by the prophet.

VERSE 13

"Then I heard one saint speaking"

— The word "saint" in this passage is, in the original, the Chaldean form of the Hebrew rendered "Holy One" in Dan. 4:13. It denotes an angel separated unto Yahweh's labour. The vision now being completed, the prophet represents himself as hearing earnest enquiry by an observant angel as to the length of time to be occupied by the vision, particularly in relation to the desolation. The angel speaking was evidently the one superintending the vision given.

"And another saint said unto that certain saint which spake"

— The word translated "certain saint" is *Palmoni* signifying "wonderful numberer" (see Mg.). *Palmoni* evidently was the speaking angel, as Gabriel was the name of the interpreting angel that appeared unto Daniel on another occasion (ch. 9:21); and Michael, the name of the angelic prince of Israel (see Dan.

12:1). As Palmoni's name implies, he was in charge of the chronological sequence of events, and therefore would be the best qualified to answer the question directed to him relating to the "time of the prophecy: the warfare or time appointed of those matters described in v.12. It is obvious from other references in the Book of Daniel that to certain angelic saints were delegated specific duties, and, with other "watchers", were given charge of such matters (Dan. 4:13).

"How long shall be the vision concerning the daily sacrifice, and the transgression of desolation?" — The question has relation to the vision recorded in this chapter which predicted the victory of Alexander over the Persians. This paved the way for the manifestation of the Little Horn of the Goat which overthrew the Temple, and by so doing terminated the offering of the daily sacrifice. The reference to "the desolation", or, as the margin renders it, "making desolate" is treated further in Ch. 9:27, and will be considered there. Sufficient for the present is it to keep in mind that the Lord quoted the passage in Matt. 24:15, adding the comment: "whoso readeth, let him understand".

"To give both the sanctuary and the host to be trodden under foot?" — The word translated "sanctuary" in this verse is *qodesh* and signifies "holy". It is different from *Miqdash*, in v.11, which is also translated as "sanctuary" but which means "temple". The word *qodesh* can signify holy people, ground, place, city or thing (see Exod. 3:5; 22:31; 30:31; Josh. 5:15). The Lord cited a section of the verse and applied it to the destruction of the holy city, Jerusalem, in A.D. 70 (see Luke 21:24): "Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles".

VERSE 14

"And he said unto me" — Palmoni did not answer the angel who interrogated him, but directed his words to

Daniel, obviously in order that the important disclosure should be passed on to others of "like precious faith".

"Unto two thousand and three hundred days;" — Literally, in the Hebrew, "days" appears as "evening morning." This is a strange expression, and needs some explanation. Firstly, the same expression is found in Gen. 1:5 in describing a full day: "the evening and the morning were the first day". Hence, primarily, it describes a day, particularly in relation to the Hebrew method of counting. But apparently, the same method of accounting for a day was adopted by the Greeks, and so the Apostle, in writing to the brethren of Corinth, declared "a night and a day I have been in the deep" (2 Cor. 11:25). Palmoni's use of this form of describing a day (in contrast to Daniel's use of the word — see Dan. 6:10,13; 9:7,15; 10:4,12) could be related to the power of Greece in relation to Jewry which is the subject of the prophecy, making the commencement day of the time-period the emergence of Alexander's conquest of Medo-Persia. There is, however, a further reason which can be joined with the above. In *Exposition of Daniel* under the Section 11, *The Holy Shall Be Avenged*, Bro. Thomas observes: "But the original is not *yahim*, days; it is *erev boker*, 'an evening-morning'. This departure from the usual mode of expression was not without good reason. The reply was in effect, During a two thousand three hundred *tahmid*¹; that is, Judah's host for its rebellion against Yahweh was to become an evening-morning sacrifice until the end of a period of 2400* years: as it is written, 'His anger is momentary; in His favour is life; weeping may endure for an evening; but joy cometh in the morning' (Psalm 30:5)... This was an evening sacrifice of the nation, in which they eat bread of affliction with bitter herbs, until the time of the morning oblation come, the time of Jacob's trouble (Jer. 30:7), when they will be avenged in the great sacrifice of Bozrah in the day of

* One edition of the Septuagint had 2400 instead of 2300, and Bro. Thomas chose to use that number. However that edition is now acknowledged to be incorrect.

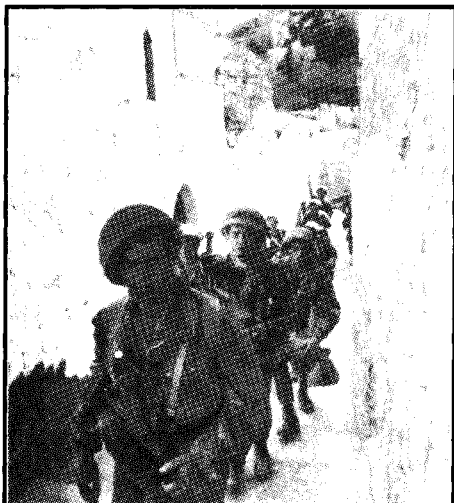
Yahweh's vengeance; and in the year of recompenses for the controversy of Zion (Isa. 34:6-8; 63:1-6; Ezek. 39:17). During the suspension of the Mosaic sacrifices Judah is the *tahmid* which bleeds for its rebellion against the Lamb, slain in the evening and morning oblation from the foundation of the world."

This profound and important statement requires a little clarification. Firstly, from the statement of Bro. Thomas, one might imagine that the Hebrew word *tahmid* is in the text of Daniel. That is not the case. The word is rendered "perpetual", to stretch out, and implies an indefinite extension of time. It relates to offerings made every evening and morning perpetually, and occurs in Lev. 6:20: "A meat (meal) offering *perpetual* half of it in the morning, and half thereof at night." The evening and morning sacrifices of lambs were continual offerings and the expression "evening morning" relates to such offerings. Judah was to become such an offering for the period of time indicated. Further, the expression evening and morning denotes one entire day, or epoch of time, whilst in Dan. 8:14, the word "days" does not appear in the original text. The reference from Psalm 30:5 above limits the long years of Israel's suffering to a single day or epoch of time denoted by the expression "evening and morning". The term before us therefore should read: "unto two thousand and three hundred evening morning" and expresses a period of suffering on the part of Judah of a long "day" of 2300 years reaching through the darkness of night until the dawning of a new morning or epoch. This is exactly what has happened.

The period of adversity extending for a day of 2300 years, therefore, must commence with the vision of this chapter: the emergence of the "goat" (Macedonia, or Grecia) when it "came close unto the ram, and was moved with choler against him" (v.7). There were two notable battles in each of which Alexander was victor. The first was the battle of Granicus in B.C. 334; and then the battle of Issus in B.C. 333.

On the second encounter the defeat of the Persian monarch was absolute. Despite the defeat the year before, he had been able to gather together an army of such extent that he moved confidently against Alexander: so much so that he even brought his mother, wife and family with him. But the ensuing defeat was decisive, and the power of Persia was broken. Victory to Alexander opened the way through the Middle East via Sidon, Tyre, and Palestine to Egypt. At the termination of the period indicated, 2300 years, (from B.C. 333/334 to 1967) the Six Days War gave an overwhelming and unexpected victory to Israel. In the course of that war, as all the world knows now, the Jordanians who had previously annexed Jerusalem, were decisively defeated and driven therefrom, so that, after more than 2000 years domination by Gentiles, Jerusalem was freed and occupied by Israelis. The speed of victory for Israel during the Six Days War matched the speed and success that attended the armies of Alexander. Christ had predicted: "Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled". This prophecy was dramatically vindicated.

"Then shall the sanctuary be cleansed" — The word "sanctuary" is identical with that of v.13, and therefore relates to the holy city, land or people. The word "cleansed" is rendered from *nitzadaq* from *tsadaq* in the niphal) which signifies to be declared just, justified or vindicated from violence or injury. Rotherham renders it as *vindicated*; and Bro. Thomas as *avenged*. But was this accomplished in 1967? Not fully, though a commencement was made. Concerning this question, Brother Thomas remarks in *Exposition of Daniel*: "Let it be observed that this does not teach that the avenging of the holy is to commence immediately... It only gives us to understand that when that period is passed, the next series of events in relation to the holy land shall be the manifestation of things necessary to wrest it from the Gentiles, and to avenge it in their overthrow" (Sec-



In a lightning strike troops move up in Old City streets, during the Six Day War, bringing victory to the Jewish forces, and fulfilling prophecy.

tion 11). We have reached that stage, and events are moving towards a state of things that will culminate in Armageddon. The nation of Israel is rapidly developing towards the condition outlined in Ezek. 38:11. The vindication, or avenging, of the holy is predicted in Ezek. 39:12,21; Zech. 14:21.

The Angelic Interpretation of the Vision — vv. 15-26.

Daniel does not understand the vision, and seeks further enlightenment concerning it. Accordingly, Gabriel is sent to explain it. Overawed by the appearance of the angel, the prophet falls down in a faint. He is revived by the angel, thus typifying his death and resurrection. The angel strengthens him and proceeds to give further explanation, particularly relating to the time of the



The area of Alexander's conquests.

end that will then take place.

VERSE 15

“And it came to pass, when I even I Daniel, had seen the vision, and sought for the meaning” — This repetitive statement implies the keen interest of Daniel in the vision, whilst the preceding clause: “It came to pass” implies that he had spent some time prayerfully pondering its meaning. It was normal for the prophet to display keen interest in the revelations of Yahweh (see Dan. 2:17-18; 9:21-23; 10:21). He set an excellent example for all who desire increased understanding to seek the Divine blessing to that end (see Matt. 7:7; Col. 1:10; 2 Tim. 2:7; James 1:5). Continued prayer for enlightenment is suggested by the words: “and sought for the meaning”.

“Then, behold” — An exclamation of astonishment was drawn from the lips of the prophet by the unexpected appearance of an angel.

“There stood before me, as the appearance of a man” — The Hebrew word for “man” in this place is *geber* which signifies “strength” and actually forms part of Gabriel’s name. The one who now made his appearance manifested an aspect of virility and strength. His subsequent words matched his appearance.

VERSE 16

“I heard a man’s voice” — Here the word for “man” is *adam*. The voice spake on behalf of man calling upon Gabriel to minister for such by explaining in simple terms the meaning of the vision.

“Between the banks of Ulai” — The word Ulai has been said to signify *Peradventure*, suggesting the fulfilment of the vision, in relation to the future. The Ulai was the place where the initial vision was given (v.2). Apparently this speaker was not seen by the prophet, but his voice could be plainly heard. It evidently was the voice of the Spirit speaking on behalf of man, and directing Daniel as to what he should do. This ministration was associated with man because, in fact, “all things

are for the sake” of the “second Adam” whether personal or multitudinous (2 Cor. 4:15).

“Which called, and said, Gabriel, make this man to understand the vision” — Gabriel is compounded of *El Gibbor*, Mighty Warrior, or Warrior of God. See note on “man” in v. 15. This angel’s name is also one of the titles of Christ as given in Isa. 9:6, and rendered “Mighty God”. So, once again, an angelic name or title is appropriated to Christ who has been given “all power” over such. This is the first occasion that we meet with the angel Gabriel. It is obvious, from v.16, that he was under direction of the Spirit; whilst, elsewhere, he described himself as being “in the presence of God” (Luke 1:19). It was appropriate that he who ministered to Daniel in prophetic instruction relating to the coming Messiah (Dan. 9:21-25) should also reveal to Zacharias the impending birth of the Forerunner of the Lord; and to Mary, the impending birth of the Lord himself (Luke 1:19,26).

VERSE 17

“So he came near where I stood” — See Heb. 1:14.

“And when he came, I was afraid, and fell upon my face” — In parabolic manner, Daniel enacted his own death and resurrection. This was appropriate. The explanation to be given would be fulfilled after the death of the prophet, and will culminate at his resurrection.

“But he said unto me, Understand, O son of man” — The title, Son of Man, is used nearly 100 times by Ezekiel as a type of Christ who also appropriated it to himself. Again, in Dan. 7:13 it is used prophetically of Christ whom Daniel also foreshadowed. It is the title of the Lord as judge (see note on Dan. 7:13).

“For at the time of the end shall be the vision” — This is rendered in the NIV as “understand that the vision concerns the time of the end”. The word “time” signifies *set time*; hence a terminal date or period in the development of the Divine purpose. There is

The Angels of Daniel 8

Daniel 8:13-20 describes a most remarkable and dramatic incident in which Daniel is privileged to overhear a conversation between two angels, and then be drawn into the discussion and vision as other of the angelic beings join in.

There are four angels mentioned in this section of the prophecy; (1) *Palmoni*, v. 13, (2) an unnamed holy one, v. 13, (3) Gabriel, vv. 15,16, and (4) the "voice of a man" possibly Michael, v. 16.

1. In verse 13, the "*one saint speaking*" is equivalent to "*that certain saint*" referred to later in the verse, whose name in Hebrew is *Palmoni*.

2. There is one styled "*another saint*" who can most likely be identified as the "watcher" or "holy one" of 4:13 (cp also 4:17).

3. In verse 15, as Daniel sought for the meaning of the vision in the previous verses he was confronted by the "*appearance of a man*" (*Gibbor*), who is later identified in verse 16 as Gabriel.

4. In verse 16, Gabriel is given special permission to explain the vision to Daniel by what is styled "*the voice of a man (Adam)*". Although this angel is not named in that verse, further evidence in the book suggests that this is *Michael*. This is supported by the fact that in ch. 10:21 the only angel named in the Book of Daniel with such authority is Michael: "... there is not one that showeth himself strong with me in these things but Michael your prince". He was Israel's (and hence, Daniel's) prince. Since the prophecy had relation to the treading down of the Holy Land and the Jews, then Michael had authority over such affairs (Zechariah 3:1,2; Jude 9) and was in a position to instruct Gabriel.

Such a consideration is helpful, not merely as an assistance in understanding the narrative, but as a means of making a reality of the Divine presence in the circumstances of our lives today.

frequent reference to such times in subsequent chapters of Daniel (see Ch. 11:27,35,40; 12:6 etc.), and these will be dealt with accordingly. The 2300 days extends to the "end" for it is to "the time appointed". There is a "time of the end" at the termination of the Mosaic era (Heb. 9:26), and another one at the end of Gentile times (Luke 21:24). Both are related to the resurrection: the first being Christ's as the firstfruits; the second, or "afterwards," they that are Christ's at his coming"

(1 Cor. 15:23); a "kind of first-fruits".

VERSE 18

"Now as he was speaking with me, I was in a deep sleep on my face toward the ground" — This figuratively, denotes a state of death. It indicated to the prophet that he would die, and during that time the vision would be fulfilled.

"But he touched me, and set me upright" — Daniel, figuratively,

experienced a resurrection, as part of the ministrations of the angel. He figuratively died and came alive again; and in doing so, typed both the Lord Jesus Christ, as well as those "in him". Christ died and rose again at the end of the Mosaic era through the ministrations of angels (Matt. 28:2); and those "in him" will also be raised, at the end of Gentile times, again through the assistance of angels (Matt. 13:41). It was appropriate, therefore, that Daniel should experience this symbolic resurrection through the ministrations of the attendant angel.

VERSE 19

"And he said, Behold, I will make thee know what shall be in the last end of the indignation" — Actually, there is no word here for "end", but *achariyth* indicates the end, or uttermost part. The end "of the indignation" refers to the final stage of judgment in the outpouring of Yahweh's anger. It indicates that the Time of the End has both beginning and termination. In *Exposition of Daniel*, Bro. Thomas observes: "The time of the end has its beginning, and ending; and period intermediate between the beginning and ending".

This is obvious in that various time periods are given in Ch. 12 as elsewhere; all of which are related to the time of the end. In outlining events relating to that epoch, Gabriel interprets the vision of the Ram and Goat (vv. 20-22) as *introductory* to the time of Indignation.

"For at the time appointed the end shall be" — This reassured Daniel, and will do all like him, that present conditions are terminable according to the set time laid down by Yahweh (Heb. 11:3). Nothing is left to chance or caprice. The angels under the supervision of the Lord Jesus guide the destiny of nations according to the will of Yahweh, and the Divine plan of the ages set down in the Word.

VERSE 20

"The ram which thou sawest having two horns are the kings of Media

and Persia" — Gabriel's explanation of the vision already seen by Daniel is introductory to the time of the end.

VERSE 21

"And the rough goat is the king of Grecia" — This is better understood as the Kingdom of Grecia.

"And the great horn that is between his eyes is the first king" — This describes Alexander the Great. The period of 2300 days commenced at the epoch of his victories

VERSE 22

"Now that being broken, whereas four stood up for it, four kingdoms shall stand up out of the nation, but not in his power" — The details are given in vv. 8-9.

VERSE 23

"And in the latter time of their kingdom" — As noted earlier, after the death of Alexander, the Grecian Empire was divided into four parts. This division was firm after the battle of Ipsus in B.C. 301. In that battle Antigonos, who reigned in Asia Minor was killed, and there followed in that year a formal division of the Empire between the four victorious princes: Ptolemy, Seleucus, Cassander, and Lysimachus. After a period of time these four kingdoms were gradually absorbed by the growing power of Rome. The prophetic image shown to Nebuchadnezzar depicted the fourth power of iron as succeeding the brazen "belly and thighs". This now was fulfilled. In B.C. 168 Perseus was defeated, and his dominion of Macedonia was reduced to a Roman province. In B.C. 133 Rome laid claim to the kingdom of Pergamum which had been bequeathed to it by its King, and it, too, became a province of the growing Empire. In B.C. 63, Syria fell to Pompey, and was brought under Roman control. Finally, in B.C. 30 Egypt also succumbed and was swallowed up by the Empire. This period, therefore, marked the "latter time of their kingdom". The singular number is used to describe the four kingdoms because although divided, in

fact they were all antagonistic parts of one kingdom.

“When the transgressors are come to the full” — At that time, just prior to and during Christ’s ministry, the prevalence of wickedness and irreligion in Judea increased and the spiritual condition of the Jewish people declined beyond reform. Transgressors “came to the full” and all that remained was the outpouring of threatened judgment. Internationally, the four kingdoms of Grecia had been reduced to provinces, and Rome was in the ascendancy. The opposition to, and final rejection of, the Messiah by the Jewish people filled the cup of their iniquity. In a public indictment of their leaders at the conclusion of his ministry, the Lord pronounced a series of frightful woes, preceded by the epithet *Hypocrites!* and concluded by denouncing them in the terms of the verse before us:

“Wherefore ye be witnesses unto your selves that ye are the children of

them which killed the prophets. Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers. Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of Gehenna?” (Matt. 23: 31-33).

“A King of fierce countenance” — This describes the warlike aspect of Rome, and the ruthlessness of the Legions that extended its power. It is a title that Moses used to describe the nation that would scatter Jewry, so that Daniel would have been familiar with it. Moses prophetically declared: “Yahweh shall bring a nation against thee from afar (Rome was at the western extremity of the then known world as far as Jewry was concerned) as swift as the eagle flieth (the flying eagle was a symbol of Rome); a nation whose tongue thou shalt not understand (in structure and idiom Latin is completely foreign to Hebrew), a nation of fierce (warlike) countenance... and he shall besiege thee in all thy gates” etc. (Deut. 28:49-52).

“And understanding dark sentences” — Rotherham

renders this as “skilful in dissimulation” — Rome’s cunning diplomacy, its ability to camouflage its real intentions, was brought to its peak by Augustus (B.C. 63 — A.D. 4. Luke 2:1). He gained the confidence of the people, and changed the Constitution. According to Gibbon in *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, his dissimulation brought about such a change in the Constitution of the Empire as to weaken its foundation and lead to its decline and fall. Rome perfected the policy of dividing and conquering the nations it wished to overcome. This was particularly the case in Palestine. It gained control of that



An ancient mosaic portrays Alexander the Great leading the charge against the Persians.

area without war. Augustus used Herod to his own ends, undermining and dividing Jewry by so doing. He won Palestine by diplomacy and a policy of cunning, and so fulfilled the prophecy of Daniel.

“Shall stand up” — This suggests supreme control such as Rome exercised over the dominions it ruled.

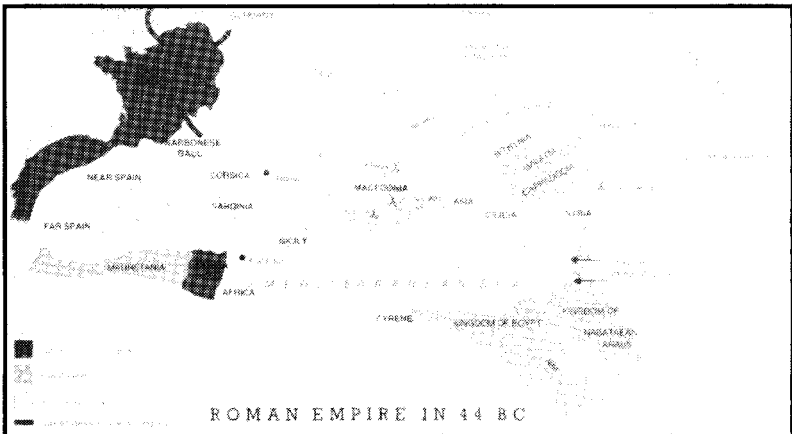
VERSE 24

“And his power shall be mighty” — Throughout Daniel’s prophecies the might of Rome, the fourth metal of the image-vision, and the fourth beast of the vision of Ch. 8, is emphasised. The statement of this clause, relating to the Little Horn of the Goat, answers to the description of the iron monarchy of the Image: “the fourth Kingdom shall be strong as iron”.

“But not by his own power” — The prominence and power of Rome did not stem from its own ability merely, but by that of God Who guides the destiny of nations (Dan. 4:17). In all parts of the Word relating to the uprising of Rome, the point is emphasised that its uprising in power was permitted of Yahweh to discipline His guilty people, particularly because of their rejection of their Messiah (Deut. 28:49). Accordingly, in his parable Christ described the Roman army as “his army” (Matt. 22:7; see also Luke 20:16,19). Christ told Pilate that he

could only put him to death, if he were granted power to do so by heaven (John 19:11). Therefore, in doing what it did, Rome performed the Divine will, as did Assyria before it in punishing the northern Kingdom (see Isa. 10:5). However, the motives of both Assyria and Rome were not to please Yahweh, but for self-glorification. Therefore, after having fulfilled the will of God, they were in turn punished.

“And he shall destroy wonderfully” — The destruction that Rome wrought in Judea and Jerusalem was extraordinary: the nation, city and Temple were overthrown. In warning of the extent of destruction that would take place, the Lord declared: “For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world (*Kosmos* — the political order of Israel) to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days should be shortened there should no flesh be saved...” (Matt. 24:21-22). The destruction wrought on the nation, city and Temple at that time exceeded all that went before as far as Israel was concerned, and will never be equalled. Even the latter-day invasion of Gog will not exceed in violence that of Rome as far as Jerusalem is concerned. For at the conclusion of the war of A.D. 68-70, the nation was overwhelmed, the city destroyed, and the Temple reduced to a smoking ruin; but the conclusion of the Gogian inva-



sion will see the exact reverse: the nation restored to unprecedented glory, the city elevated as the throne of Yahweh (Jer. 3:17), and the Temple rebuilt on a magnitude never previously equalled, to become the "house of prayer for all nations".

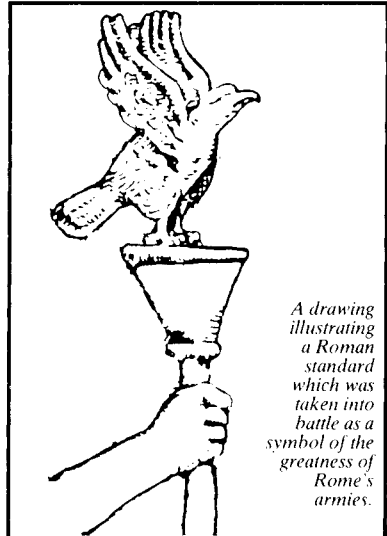
"And shall prosper and practise" — The word "practise" means to accomplish what it has set out to do. Prosperity and success attended the efforts of Rome. At one time it seemed as though nothing would stem the progress of this power.

"And shall destroy the mighty and the holy people" — This was accomplished in A. D 70 in suppressing the first revolt, and again in 135 during the second revolt under Bar-Kochba. The Jews were ruthlessly crushed. At its conclusion, Hadrian changed the name of the city, built a temple to his pagan gods, and banned Jews from visiting the site. To illustrate that he had conquered for all time, he ploughed the Temple site as a field (see Mic. 3:12).

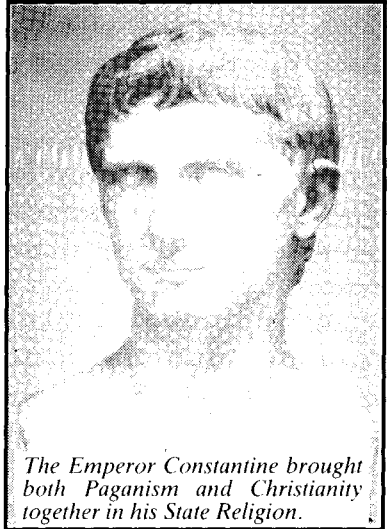
The term "holy people" is a rendition from the Hebrew *am Kadishim* rendered in the margin as *people of the holy ones*. See note on Dan. 7:27.

VERSE 25

"And through his policy also" — It is obvious that though the singular, personal pronoun *his* is used, the reference is not to one individual, but to a succession of individuals occupying comparable positions over the dominion designated. As the "little horn of the goat" it is an outgrowth of one of the four divisions referred to previously, and in view of the statement of v.23 it, too, must reach forward to "the latter time" of its kingdom. Constantine, in A.D. 324, transferred the civil and military administration to Constantinople on the Bosphorus, today known as Istanbul. This then became the headquarters of the "little horn of the goat" whilst Rome remained the headquarters of the "little horn of the fourth beast", already described in Daniel 7. Ultimately a complete cleav-



A drawing illustrating a Roman standard which was taken into battle as a symbol of the greatness of Rome's armies.



The Emperor Constantine brought both Paganism and Christianity together in his State Religion.

age was made in the Empire and it became divided into West and East with Rome and Constantinople as the capitals. Constantine, Justinian and Phocas reigned over the united Empire from Constantinople, each in turn constituting the "he" of this statement. See quotation from *Elpis Israel* in our comment on v. 12, and note the further

comments on p. 406.

"This Little Horn power, or 'King of fierce countenance', is, in the thirty-sixth verse of the eleventh chapter, styled 'the King who doth according to his will'. This federal potentate must be studied in his secular and ecclesiastical characters. His secular, with a hint or two of his spiritual character, is given in the eighth chapter; while his ecclesiastical is exhibited more fully in the eleventh, from the thirty-sixth to the thirty-ninth verses inclusive. His policy was to be of a remarkable description; for 'through his policy he shall *cause craft to prosper by his power*'. Hence, his doings with regard to another, and that person's words and deeds, are all affirmed of this wilful king; for, it is by his power as well as through his policy, that this person is enabled to do. Thus, putting them both together, for they are one in policy and action, the power is thus outlined by the prophet who says, 'And the King shall do according to his will; and he shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god', or ruler, 'and shall speak marvellous things against the God of gods, and shall prosper *till the indignation be accomplished*; for that that is determined shall be done. He shall disregard all the gods of his fathers and the desire of wives, nor shall he regard any god: for he shall magnify himself above all'."

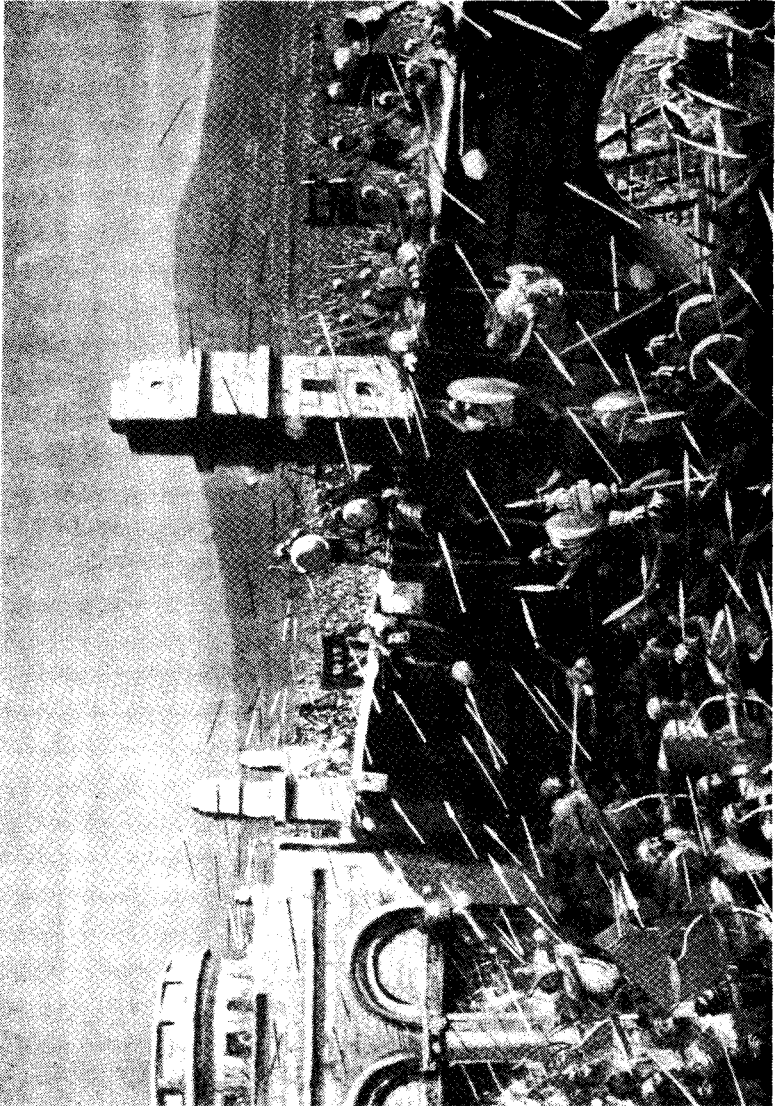
"He shall cause craft to prosper in his hand" — The word "craft" is from the Hebrew *mirmah* signifying "deceit" or "fraud". The R.V. renders the word as *deceit*. In Jer. 9:6 the word is used in relation to false religious teaching; and is appropriate here, for the power referred to is described as "casting down the truth to the ground" (v.12). This has been characteristic of those reigning in Constantinople throughout the centuries, from the time of Constantine onwards. The development of the Roman Catholic Church is directly traceable to the influence of the Emperors of Constantinople such as Justinian and Phocas. It was their support that gave the Pope his authority and power. This was before the establishment of the Holy

Roman Empire in the West by Charlemagne in A.D. 800. Their policy, therefore, caused "craft to prosper". Concerning the endeavours of Justinian and Phocas to that end, Bro. Thomas writes on pp. 408-409 of *Elpis Israel*:

"In a celebrated letter written by the Emperor Justinian to this god of patron saints, dated March 533, and which thenceforth became part and parcel of the civil law, he is recognised as the legal head of all churches of the eastern and western provinces of the empire. 'We suffer not', says the imperial writer, 'any thing that belongs to the state of the churches to be done without submitting it to your holiness, *who art head of all the churches*'. In this way, 'the King, who did according to his will,' 'acknowledged' this 'strange god' as of supreme spiritual authority 'in the most strong holds'.

"The work of recognition thus far advanced by Justinian was perfected by the edict of the Emperor Phocas who began to reign in 603. He also wrote to the Roman Bishop in 604, and *acknowledged* his spiritual supremacy. He was very liberal to the churches, and allowed the Pantheon, a temple dedicated to *all the gods* by his fathers, to be turned into a church, or 'most strong hold, *to all the saints*.' Phocas was a monster in crime, and therefore the better qualified for a patron of the Roman Bishop, who hailed him as the pious avenger of the church. By this kind of flattery a decree was obtained from him by Boniface III, in 606, declaring the Roman god *Universal Bishop*. Two years after, a pillar with a gilt statue on the top of it, was erected in Rome to the honour of Phocas, with the following inscription — *Pro innumerabilibus Pietatis ejus beneficiis, et pro quiete procuratâ, ac conservatâ libertate*. Thus was memorialized the fulfilment of the sure word of prophecy, that the Little Horn of the Goat should 'in his kingdom do honour to a god of guardian saints'.

"When the Bishop of Rome was honoured as a god by the Little Horn of the Goat, the other Little Horn had not yet made its appearance among the



The Siege of Jerusalem, A.D. 70 — The Jews, driven to rebellion by the barbarities of the Roman Procurators, suffered also from civil strife. When Vespasian suspended operations for a year upon the death of Nero the rivalries of Simon bar Gloras and John of Giscala, of the Zealots and the Sicaril ("dagger-men"), were as destructive as the Roman arms. The fearful scenes of riot, famine and torture made the siege of Jerusalem the most terrible in history. In August A.D. 70 the Temple was carried by assault and burnt to the ground, and within a month only three towers and a small piece of wall stood amongst the smouldering ruins to mark the site of the city of Jerusalem.

ten-horned kingdoms of the Beast. There elapsed 266 years from the date of Justinian's letter, and 193 from the decree of Phocas, before this came to pass; for Charlemagne was not crowned Emperor of the western third part of the Roman Empire till A.D. 800*. Upon this occasion, he also 'acknowledged and increased with glory' the Universal Bishop as a god 'above every god' of his dominions.

The traditional policy of the Emperors of Constantine to support the Pope continued to a degree until controversy disturbed the amity and unity of the Church. This led gradually to what history describes as the Great Schism in 1054, the establishment of the Eastern Church, known as the Greek Orthodox Church in opposition to the Roman Catholic Church with its headquarters in Rome (see notes on Dan. 7:8). At the same time the pressure of war weakened the military effectiveness of the Eastern Empire, and the Pope had to look elsewhere for political and military support. He discovered it in the rising power of Charlemagne in Western Europe. This culminated in the establishment of the Holy Roman Empire under the joint authority of the Pope and the Emperor.

In the East, the Byzantine, or Eastern Empire, with its Greek Orthodox Church, came increasingly under the pressure of the Islamic powers. In 1453, Constantinople fell, and the Turks occupied the city. The churches were turned into Mosques, and the people given the choice of the Koran or the sword. The headquarters of the Greek Orthodox Church transferred to Moscow which was given the title of the Third Rome. For a time "the little horn of the goat" was suppressed; but the prophecy before us requires its revival in the latter days. That means eventually that a power occupying Constantinople, and supporting the Papacy, will come down against the Prince of princes to be destroyed by his Almighty power. That power will be Russia. It will occupy Constantinople,

and comprise a latter-day "little horn of the goat."

In *Exposition of Daniel* under the 18th subheading, Brother Thomas declares:

"The prophecy concerning 'the King' in the eighth chapter is evidently descriptive of the Latino-Greek power in its pagan constitution, known in history as the destroyer of Jerusalem, and Judah 'the people of the holy ones'; but with a hint also of its future ecclesiastical peculiarity, as appears from the testimony that 'through his policy he shall cause falsehood to prosper by his power'. These few words are descriptive of the character or nature of the power since Constantine the Great set up its throne in Constantinople to the present hour; and will be so pre-eminently, when its administration shall pass from the Sultan to the Autocrat of all the Russias. As the head of a confederacy of the adherents of the Greek and Latin churches, it will be his policy to cause their priesthoods to be respected as useful co-operators in the subjection of Europe to his will."

Again, he writes:

"But when the Autocrat gains Constantinople, and Russianizes Italy and the West; and having superseded the Ottoman *régime* in Asia, comes as Gog to invade the Holy Land and to besiege Jerusalem, the Little Horn of the Goat will again represent the power of the whole dominion briefly united under one chief, and he the proudest that ever exalted and magnified himself above all the rulers upon earth. In that near future the Little Horn of the Goat will be 'exceeding great', over-shadowing all the sovereignties represented by the Two-Horned, and Ten-Horned, Beasts, and the Pseudoprophet of the Beast. But when it is 'broken in pieces without help' it appears no more as a symbol upon the prophetic page. Its mission in the Holy Land and against Judah ends with its own Pharaoh-like destruction; and the East delivered, future events re-open in the West, where only a Beast, the False Prophet, and the Ten Horns, their Russian Con-

* Actually on Christmas day 799!

stantinopolitan confederacy being dissolved, remain to be ground to powder, and destroyed by fire and sword.

"The 'policy' of the Little Horn king in his Constantinian successorship to A.D. 1453 was, and will hereafter be, characterized by zeal for the baptised paganism known in history as the catholic religion. Justinian of all its crowned heads affords the most striking illustration of Daniel's description of it. His policy was truly ecclesiastical. 'Never prince', says Dupin, 'did meddle so much with what concerns the affairs of the Church, nor make so many constitutions and laws upon this subject. He was persuaded that it was the duty of an emperor, and for the good of the state, to have a particular care of the Church, to defend its faith, to regulate external discipline, and to employ the civil laws and the temporal power to preserve it in order and peace'."

Such a development is in evidence. The Pope travels from country to country stimulating interest in Catholicism, and support for the church; and support is given him even within the confines of Russia itself. The prophecy before us requires this, and more: even an alignment of interests between Catholicism and Communism. Rome

will be with Russia when it descends south "to take a spoil and to take a prey". Most likely an agreement will be entered into between the two systems to lay hold of the "holy places" of the land, and transfer them to Catholic control. This is indicated by the prophetic statement of Ezekiel 36:2 where Edom, as representative of Gentile power at enmity against Israel, declares: "Aha, even the ancient high places are our's in possession". The ancient high places were places of worship. Russia may well make such an offer to the Pope in order to secure Papal support for his attack on the Middle East.

"And he shall magnify himself in his heart" — His policy to cause "craft to prosper" will not stem from his love of the Papacy, but as a means of gaining more prestige and power for himself.

"And by peace shall destroy many" — It is significant that Communist policy today offers peace to the world. The Soviet is foremost in demanding reduction of arms manufacture, and the abandonment of nuclear weapons of war. Its plea for peace is frequently heard, but is hypocritical in view of its own preparations for war, and aggressive action in places such as Afghanistan.

It offers security to the nations which likewise accords with the policy expressed in Daniel's prophecy. In the Hebrew, the word is *shalvah* which signifies "security" or "success, both genuine and false." Rotherham renders the phrase: "By their careless security". Paul predicts a time when the nations shall cry "peace and safety" (or security) only to experience "sudden destruction" (1 Thess. 5:3). The Soviet's offers of peace will not be genuine (no more than they are today) and the world



18th century engraving of the Siege of Constantinople at the moment when the troop of Turkish Janissaries make their final assault.

will be taken off its guard to be undermined to its own destruction. That policy is already in evidence, but Daniel's prophecy requires that it will be given more so after Russia lays hold of Constantinople. In *Exposition of Daniel*, Bro. Thomas writes (p. 58):

"But, for this manifestation to appear, the Ottoman dynasty must of course be driven out of Europe. The occupation of the Dragon's throne by a non-catholic royalty is clearly exceptional. The Ottoman has never, as a matter of fact, 'magnified himself above all'; nor has he honoured the Latin Bishop as a god in his dominion, or shown himself at all a gracious patron of his saints and their temples. The power causing falsehood, or False-Propheticism, to prosper, must hold Jerusalem at the crisis of the accomplishment of the indignation. By False-Propheticism, I mean, *papalism*. Hence, the Sultan must be ejected, that a dynasty patronizing a High Priest who forbids to marry, may come in. When, therefore, the Czar gets possession of Constantinople he will not be hostile to the pope. On the contrary, he will honour and acknowledge him, and be the enemy of the Holy Land.

As to the Ottoman, his existence in Constantinople is exceptional. His mission was to punish the Greek catholics, and the Latins also to some extent, for their excessive superstition and idolatry, with the loss of their sovereignty over "a third part" of the Latino-Greek Babylonian empire; and not to extinguish temporarily or finally the Little Horn Power. As far as the Greeks were concerned, their sovereignty was abolished A.D. 1453. The Greek dynasty of the power gave place to the Turkish, while the horn itself remained. The destruction of the horn is reserved for Michael the great Commander of Judah, after it shall have come under the sovereignty of the king of the north".

"**He shall also stand up**" — The addition of *also* presumes a pause and further action on the part of the latter-day "little horn of the goat". It suggests a lapse of time between the occupation of Constantinople (Istanbul) by Russia

to constitute it the latter-day "little horn of the goat", and his descent south against Egypt and Israel. The order of events thus indicated is (1) occupation of Constantinople by Russia; its growth of power by which its leader is magnified; the alignment between Rome and Russia forming the confederacy of Ezekiel 38, cemented by promises of peace (1 Thess. 5:3); and finally when he is ready, the sweeping aside of the protests of the West (Ezek. 38:13), and the invasion of the south (see Dan. 11:40-45). This will ultimately bring the king of the North, or Gog, against Jerusalem, and the Prince of princes.

"**Against the Prince of Princes**" — This Prince of Princes is the Lord Jesus Christ. When he was put to death by the "little horn of the goat" 1900 years ago he had the title only of "Prince" (v.11); but at this future epoch he will have greatly increased in number by the resurrection and glorification of the saints to earn the title of the Prince of princes. In v.11 his title is *Sar*, but here it is *Sar-sarim*, for other princes are with him. In Rev. 17:14 he is described as "Lord of lords, and King of kings; and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful". At his first advent, he was scourged, mocked, derided and crucified by Jews and Gentiles. An inscription was hung around his neck: *Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews*. He returns to take up his great power and to reign. The modern nations, representative of those who scorned and slew him then, will be gathered to the very place where he was humiliated, now to be put down by his power and dazzled by his majesty. Halleluyah!

"**But he shall be broken without hand**" — A similar expression is used for the cutting out of the stone that destroyed the Image seen by Nebuchadnezzar (Dan. 2:34); and also for the overthrow of the King of the North (Dan. 11:45). In explanation of this statement, Daniel told the king: "The God of heaven shall set up a Kingdom that shall never be destroyed" (Dan. 2:44), and in the next

verse he identified this consummation with the cutting out from the mountain of a stone that itself grew into a mountain filling the whole earth. In Daniel 11:45, the "coming to an end" of the King of the North is consequent upon the standing up of Michael the prince. Therefore, the power that will destroy the "horn of the goat" in its latter-day manifestation will be no human agency, but Divine: even the Prince of princes, providing the nucleus of the Kingdom of God. Authority over the Kingdom of God having been taken from fleshly Jews, it will be given into the hands of the "Israel of God" (Gal. 6:16). The Lord made reference to this, quoting from Daniel's prophecy of the Stone which shall crush all that stands in its way to worldwide dominion (Matt. 21:43-44).

VERSE 26

"And the vision of the evening and the morning which was told is true" — The "evening morning vision" is that of v.14. Daniel acknowledged it as true, though he did not understand it. He used a similar expression in describing the image to Nebuchadnezzar (Dan. 2:45). From hindsight we can endorse his words that the prophecies are true, for the sweep of history has followed the outline of prophecy. So true, indeed, have the prophecies of Daniel proved to be that unbelievers refuse to acknowledge that they were written so long before the fulfilment of many of the things predicted. Particularly those of this chapter. Many claim that the prophet lived in the epoch of Antiochus Epiphanes, some 300 years later, and that he fraudulently set forth in his book that he was contemporary with the fall of Babylon. But such interpretation of his prophecies, and accusations of falsehood against the prophet, do not dispose of other prophecies that were fulfilled long after his time (such as the succession of Empires in the Image-prophecy of Daniel 2). Past and present history thoroughly vindicate Daniel's predictions.

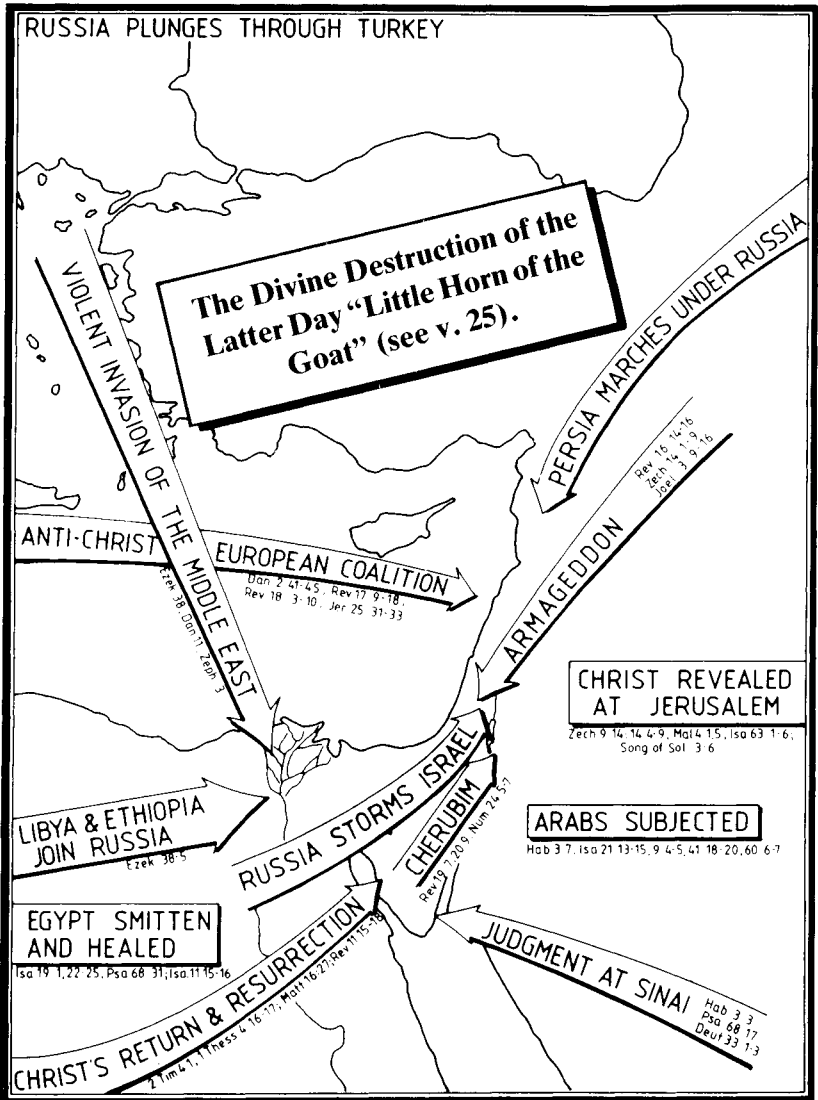
"Wherefore shut thou up the vision" — The vision was closed awaiting its confirmation. See Dan. 12:4.

"For it shall be for many days" — The vision, therefore, extended until the time of the end, far beyond the epoch of Antiochus in which many expositors place it.

VERSE 27

"And I Daniel fainted, and was sick certain days" — Daniel understood sufficient of the import of the prophecy to be deeply perturbed by its implications, particularly those relating to the overthrow of the Jewish State, and the putting to death of its Prince. These things moved him greatly, and affected him physically. He felt faint and sick. In fact, there is no Hebrew word for "fainted"; the expression used leaves it to the imagination to determine to what extent the vision affected him. The word used is *hayah*, and signifies "I became...!" Gesenius declares that the exclamation means: "I was done up and sick". Daniel's perturbation left him weak and faint. He had been permitted to look into the future, and the scenes presented were so appalling, the changes predicted were so great, and the calamities to fall so fearful that they frightened and weakened him. He became overcome and prostrated at what he saw. He felt keenly for his associates and the nation. Like the Lord who wept over the city of Jerusalem because he could visualise its fearful future, so did the prophet. There was nothing detached nor indifferent in his attitude, but a warm, sympathetic concern for the welfare of those near and dear to him.

"Afterward I rose up, and did the king's business" — From v.2 it would appear that he had been sent to Shushan on some business pertaining to the government. What it was we are not informed. In reality, however, even this appointment was from God. He had been sent there for a more important purpose than any which pertained to the rule of Babylon; angelic intervention had manipulated the circumstances so he was sent there as appropriate to receiving the vision of the ram and goat; a disclosure of most momentous concern to the future of his



people, and the development of the Divine purpose. Yet this did not prevent him from attending faithfully to the business entrusted to him. This is the attitude that all true saints will adopt who are faithful to their calling. There are mundane things to which

they must attend; and the unfolding of the Divine purpose in the fulfilling of the prophecies must not interfere with the business and responsibilities of life that they have accepted in trust. We serve Yahweh by faithfully discharging the affairs of this life, even those of a

domestic nature (see Luke 16: 10-12; Eph. 5:22; 6:9).

“And I was astonished at the vision” — He was astonished because, as the next chapter reveals, he had been expecting the imminent restoration of the nation of Israel, and the rebuilding of the Temple in its full glory. That was not to be; and this prophecy revealed it.

“But none understood it” — This implies that he discussed it with others (possibly his friends Hananiah, Mis-hael, and Azariah — see Dan. 2:17), but a true and satisfying solution of it was not found. The general features would doubtless be obvious. For exam-

ple, he was plainly told of the part Medo-Persia and Greece were to play; but then the vision swept on to matters far remote in point of time. The putting to death of the Prince, and his emergence as Prince of princes at the time of the end, probably required additional help to understand; and further revelation was necessary to unravel those matters: a revelation that was later granted him in answer to prayer. God’s truth and purpose gradually unfold and are not absorbed or revealed immediately. Time is required to understand the Divine revelation in its fulness. To that end further visions were later granted the prophet.



The Windswept Sea — Graphic portrayal of the opening visions of Daniel, as recorded in Chapters 7-8. Thus the fury of national ambition is depicted, as the various nations appeared as wild beasts arising from the murky depths of the dark waters.

Now, however, the scene changes, as, in Chapter 9, the prophet gives himself to quiet, meditative and searching prayer, ascending upwards to heaven.

CHAPTER NINE

JUDGMENT ON NATIONAL ISRAEL

Daniel sees the fall of Babylon as a significant sign of the times and searches the prophecies of Jeremiah for further information and guidance. He observes that the event synchronises with time periods announced by the prophet, and believing that the time has come for the complete redemption of Israel, he engages in fervent prayer that such a blessing may come upon the nation in dispersion (see v.22). Gabriel is sent to enlighten him, and actually interrupts him in his prayer to do so. The angel reveals that though the seventy years of Jeremiah's prophecy has come to pass, and the people will return to build a Temple, this will not constitute the final restoration of the nation as predicted by the prophets. The restoration will be limited to seventy weeks of years, and will terminate in the rejection of the Messiah by the people, and the outpouring of desolations upon the nation and land. Meanwhile, Daniel's prayer for the final glory of the Land, Temple and Nation remains recorded in Holy Writ because in due time it will be answered. The chapter can be divided into the following sections: (1) Enlightenment through study — vv. 1-2; (2) Prayer for the peace of Jerusalem — vv. 3-19; (3) Angelic intervention — vv. 20-23; (4) The prophecy of the seventy weeks — vv. 24-27.

Daniel's prayer is similar in theme to the prayer of Psalm 79; and the prophet may have found inspiration to approach Yahweh on behalf of his people by the expressions recorded therein. Psalm 102 applies to this time, and may have been composed by Daniel. It is a plea for Divine intervention on the part of Israel in captivity, and the expressions of the Psalmist obviously suggest that it was composed towards the end of the

Babylonian captivity. It is a plea to redeem Israel from its trouble, expressed by one nearing the end of his life, as Daniel then was (see Ps. 102:11); it expresses the love of the Psalmist for the very dust of Jerusalem (v. 14), the irreversible purpose of Yahweh in regard to Israel's future (vv. 13-22). Gabriel instructs Daniel in the vision of the seventy weeks revealing that there will be further delay until "the set time to favour Zion" (Ps. 102:13) which "a generation to come" will see (v.18). The Psalm is predictive of Messiah's reign (vv. 25-28, cp. Heb. 1:10-12), and expresses Daniel's deep emotion at the lot of his people in captivity.

Searching The Scriptures — vv. 1-2

A dramatic change in the political conditions of the times causes Daniel to seek a fuller understanding of what is involved by studying the prophecies of God's Word. He has particular recourse to the predictions and time-periods of Jeremiah who was contemporary with the younger years of the prophet, and whose impact upon those in dispersion is clearly obvious, for the prophecy of the fall of Babylon had been read in the very streets of that city (see Jer. 51:59-64, and our Introduction pp. 29-30). The fall of Babylon reveals that the progress of history has reached a crucial point as far as the purpose of Yahweh with Israel is concerned. Therefore as representing the nation (as well as typing its Messiah) he decides to approach God in prayer beseeching that the promised favour will now come to Zion.

"In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of the seed of the Medes" — This synchronised with the fall of Babylon (Dan. 5:30-31). That dramatic event was the sign to Daniel that the long-awaited restoration was at hand. His prayer was partially fulfilled, for it resulted in angelic activity on the behalf of his people. See Dan. 11:1.

In our comment on Chapt. 5:31 we give reasons for believing that this Darius was Cyaxares who was granted temporary authority over the province

of Babylon by the diplomatic Cyrus on the fall of the city (see pp. 126-127). Cyaxares was the son of Astyages. Why then is he called Darius? It was not unusual for the kings of the east to have several names (Solomon had three names) and various titles. According to Kitto's *Bible Encyclopedia*, Ahasuerus which signifies *The Mighty or Venerable king* was a title that was used by at least four different kings. In the Bible it is used for various rulers. For example, the Ahasuerus of Ezra 4:6 was Cambyse son of Cyrus, and therefore a younger ruler than the Ahasuerus of this verse.

"Which was made king" — The Darius of this verse did not reign by right of inheritance, but by appointment of Cyrus. See notes on p. 126.

"Over the realm of the Chaldeans" — This statement describes the limited extent of his authority. It did not extend over Persia, but was limited to the conquered territory of Babylonia.

VERSE 2

"In the first year of his reign" — The repetition of this statement implies the importance with which Daniel viewed the elevation of Darius. He saw it as a significant sign of the times. The success of Cyrus had been specifically prophesied by Isaiah (See Ch. 45:1), and its fulfilment alerted the prophet to

the significant times that had dawned upon the world of that epoch.

“I Daniel understood by books” — The change of Government caused Daniel to seek the Scriptures for its meaning. His attitude provides a splendid example for all those of like faith. The signs of the times are messages to the elect of God alerting them to the importance of putting their houses in order (Rev. 1:1). It will behoove those who “love the Lord’s appearing” to become excited by the march of events, and to seek the meaning of any changes that take place in world affairs.

In *Elpis Israel*, Bro. Thomas comments:

“The great incidents of history which have given rise to successive kingdoms and dominions, from the overturning of the kingdom and throne of God and of David, His anointed, in Judea, by the Chaldeans, to the present time, are but events predetermined and arranged in the purpose of God, and revealed in the ‘sure word of prophecy.’ Not a kingdom has been established, nor a king dethroned, but it has formed a move which has contributed to the maturity of the present crisis which will ultimate in the introduction of the kingdom of God. This truth is beautifully expressed in the words of the prophet, saying, ‘Blessed be the name of God for ever and ever; for wisdom and might are His: and He changeth the times and the seasons; He removeth kings and setteth up kings; He giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding: He revealeth the deep and secret things; He knoweth what is in the darkness, and the light dwelleth with him’ (Dan. 2:20-22). It is He to whom all things are subjected; ‘for He ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever He will, and setteth up over it the basest of men’ (Dan. 4:17). This is the reason why men and women with so little wisdom, or rather of so much positive folly and imbecility, are able to rule the nations without ‘setting on fire the course of nature’. When their wickedness and stupidity become obstacles to His purpose, He removes them out of the way,

and introduces other actors upon the stage. In this way, He controls and regulates the world’s affairs; but in every interference He shapes the course of events towards the consummation predetermined from the foundation of the world.”

Motivated by such considerations, Daniel sought the meaning of the change in human affairs, by consulting the books of Scripture. He gave particular consideration to the prophecies of Jeremiah which were recorded in various books (Jer. 25:13; 30:2).

“The number of the years, whereof the word of Yahweh came to Jeremiah the prophet” — Daniel was not indifferent to the time periods set down in Holy Writ. He recognised them as of Divine revelation and earnestly and prayerfully tried to understand and apply them. He had lived through the harrowing days of calamity of which Moses had warned in Deut. 28:36 when both nation and king were taken into captivity; and was keenly aware of the promise of mercy and grace set forth in the Law (Lev. 26:40-45). But when would the restoration take place? Jeremiah had predicted a period of 70 years captivity (25:12,13; 29:10) after which the people would seek Yahweh (vv. 11-13). There had been various captivities, terminating in the final attack in the last days of Zedekiah. But from when did the seventy years commence, and when would the period end?

This engaged the careful, prayerful consideration of Daniel.

The first invasion of Nebuchadnezzar is given as in the year 606 B.C.; and the final attack in the year 589 B.C. After a two years’ seige, in 587, the city finally fell (2 Kings 25:1-5; 2 Chr. 36:21).

The time periods of this chapter are crucial to Bible chronology and to the dating of prophecies throughout Daniel and elsewhere in the Word. It is important to Bible and profane chronology, that the times of Jehoiakim and Nebuchadnezzar coincide. Jeremiah 25:1 records: “the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah King of Judah... was the first

year of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon." The prophecy of Daniel is dated throughout, and this statement of Jeremiah provides a basis of establishing the chronology, as well as interpreting the prophetic time periods. Concerning this theme M. Anstey states:

"In B.C. 571, on the 1st day of the 1st month of the 27th year of Jehoiachin's captivity, Ezekiel prophesied that Nebuchadnezzar should have Egypt as wages for his service against Tyre (Ezek. 29:17).

"Then follows a blank of 9 years to the end of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, very noteworthy as the period containing the 7 years of Nebuchadnezzar's madness, after which we read in Jer. 52:31 that on the 25th day of the 12th month of the 37th year of Jehoiachin's captivity (B.C. 561), Evil-merodach, the son and successor of Nebuchadnezzar, in the year in which he came to the throne, brought Jehoiachin out of prison, and in 2 Kings 25:27 that on the 27th day of the same month he showed him further kindness out of prison.

"The Bible contains no record of the events of the succeeding 19 years, but we learn from Dan. 7:1 that in the first year of Belshazzar (B.C. 541), Daniel had his vision of the four beasts symbolising Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece and Rome, and throwing further light upon the course of the future history of the world, as revealed in the previous vision of Nebuchadnezzar's great image.

"Two years later (B.C. 539), in the 3rd year of Belshazzar, Daniel had his vision of the ram and the he-goat, foreshadowing the coming conflict between Persia and Greece (Dan. 8:1).

"Daniel 5 gives a picture of the fall of Babylon in the year B.C. 538, and the transfer of the Empire of the world from Babylon to Medo-Persia. The accounts of this event are very divergent. One of them represents Cyrus as the nephew and son-in law of Darius the Mede, but he was more probably his cousin and his brother-in-law, having married the sister of Darius the Mede (Astyages).

"In that night,' we read (Dan. 5:30-

31), 'was Belshazzar the King of the Chaldeans slain. And Darius the Median received the Kingdom, being about 62 years old.' There was no battle. Belshazzar was slain in the palace, Cyrus was the conqueror of Babylon, and he handed it over to Darius, who 'received' it from him as his Co-Partner in the Empire of the world.

"The length of the reign of Darius the Median is not stated in Scripture, nor is Darius himself mentioned in profane literature under that name, except in Josephus, but it is clear from Dan. 6:28 that he was succeeded by Cyrus, and from 2 Chron. 36:20-23 that the 1st year of Cyrus was the 70th and last of the 70 years' captivity which began in the 3rd year of Jehoiakim, B.C. 605. Hence, whatever may be the number and the names of the monarchs between Nebuchadnezzar and Cyrus, and whatever the number of years that each monarch reigned, we know that the 1st year of Cyrus was the year B.C. 536, and we may *provisionally* accept the received dates derived from secular history as given by E. A. W. Budge in the British Museum Guide:

561: Evil-merodach
559: Nergal-sharazer (Neriglissar)
556: Labashi-marduk
555: Nabonidus.

538: Conquest of Babylon by Cyrus.

"adding thereto, the name of Belshazzar as Co-Rex with his father Nabonidus, B.C. 541-539, and the name of Darius the Mede as Rex B.C. 538 and 537, with Cyrus as Co-Rex during these two years, and making Cyrus sole King on the death of Darius the Mede, B.C. 536."

The statement above states that "we may *provisionally* accept the received dates derived from secular history." In fact, we believe, with M. Anstey, that Bible history provides a different dating, that history is younger than our calendar suggests. This we will attempt to show in dealing specifically with the prophecy of the 70 weeks. Meanwhile, accepting the received dates as set out above, we note that with the emergence of Cyrus after the appointment of Darius the Mede, the seventy years had terminated.

“That he would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem” — The time had arrived for the desolation of Jerusalem to cease.

Preparation For Prayer — v.3

Daniel's great desire, like that of Paul (Rom. 9:1-3) is for the redemption of Israel. Nothing else moves him as much as that. And now the signs of the times convince him that the time is near for the restoration of his people. This greatly excites him and causes him to turn to Yahweh in prayer. He does so as representative of his people, pleading with God to fulfil His promise. Jeremiah had recorded the assurance given by Yahweh in that regard, and the attitude expected of the people. He wrote: “For thus saith Yahweh, That after seventy years be accomplished at Babylon (the very expressions used by Daniel) I will visit you, and perform My good word towards you, in causing you to return to this place. For I know the thoughts that I think towards you, saith Yahweh, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to make your latter end an object of hope (see Hebrew). And ye shall seek Me, and find Me, when ye shall search for Me with all your heart. And I will be found of you, saith Yahweh, and I will turn away your captivity” (Jer. 29:10-13).

In view of that promise and that requirement, Daniel determines to beseech Yahweh in prayer on the behalf of his people, as invited to do in this prophecy.

However, he recognises that special preparations are required for effective prayer for such an important purpose.

VERSE 3

“And I set my face unto Yahweh Elohim” — In the A. V. this is given as “Lord God”, but, according to *The Companion Bible* it should be rendered Yahweh Elohim. It is appropriate that it should be, for Yahweh Elohim is part of the covenant name of Deity, guaranteeing the continuance of the nation, as well as its final glory (see Exod. 3:14-15). To engage in prayer is to converse with the great Increate who dwells in unap-

proachable light (1 Tim. 6:16). This is a great privilege, and should not be undertaken lightly. Daniel recognised what was involved, and what depended on the successful application of such an approach and appeal. He realised how grievously his people had turned from Yahweh in spite of all His goodness, and therefore gave the matter of prayer his complete concentration. He “set his face unto Yahweh”. He excluded all other thoughts from his mind in order to give himself to prayer. Effectual, fervent prayer requires complete concentration of the mind upon both the subject of petition, and the One to Whom it is to be addressed. Daniel's attitude in so doing was a complete contrast to the attitude of the people when taken into captivity. Yahweh then said of them: “They have turned their back unto Me and not the face” (Jer. 2:27).

“To seek by prayer” — The verb *baqash* signifies to search out, or strive after, and therefore implies the expending of energy. Paul called upon the brethren of Rome to “strive together with him in prayer” in the proclamation of the Gospel (Rom. 15:30). The word he used denotes to agonise in so doing. This requires more than a mere casual approach to God; it requires thought, deep feeling, and conscious effort. In the Garden of Gethsemane, the Lord shed as it were great drops of blood in his prayer indicating the intensity of his feelings. And now, every act of preparation by Daniel showed the measure of his feelings in the requests he prepared himself to make. He was motivated by such consideration as is expressed in the Psalm of David: “Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: they shall prosper that love thee” (Ps. 122:6). The prayer Daniel was about to offer, as recorded in this chapter, had that as its theme. It is similar in request to that recorded in Psalm 79; or that of Nehemiah recorded in Neh. 1:4-11. Daniel's prayer is a very moving pattern prayer for others to follow.

“And supplications” — Prayer can be an expression of praise, whereas

"supplications" (Heb. *Techinnah*, "entreaty") includes specific requests. Prayer is made more powerful if requests are couched in direct language. Mere empty repetitive platitudes may sound eloquent, but lack true power. The Lord warned against such (Matt. 6:7).

"With fasting" — Ezra (8:23); Nehemiah (1:4); Esther (4:16) made similar preparation for prayer. It is helpful in times of deep stress or emotion to restrain normal activity so as to give the mind more completely to the object in view. On the other hand, to fast without purpose is to degrade the act to mere formalism (cp. Zech. 7:5; Matt. 6:16-18). That, certainly, was not the case with Daniel. So high and lofty was Yahweh in his sight that the most meticulous and careful preparations were made for a reverential approach. There was nothing haphazard or casual about it. Heart, mind and body were brought into conformity with the objective in view.

"And sackcloth and ashes" — To wear sackcloth and ashes was to openly reveal a state of inward regret and mourning (Gen. 37:34; 2 Sam. 3:31), repentance (Neh. 9:1-2; Matt. 11:21), and subjection (1 Kings 20: 31-32). Therefore, in complete self-abasement and sincere humiliation, Daniel clothed himself with sackcloth, and sprinkled ashes upon his head. He personally assumed the attitude which Jeremiah had indicated as appropriate to the occasion, and gave himself to fervent prayer (Jer. 4:8; 6:26; 29:13-14). The external appearance of Daniel was now indicative of a mind deeply concerned with the state of the people, and the nation's dire need of the help of Yahweh. He was thoroughly prepared to meet with his God (Amos 4:12).

Daniel's Prayer of Confession

— vv. 4-19

Daniel intercedes for his people, and therefore speaks in the first person on their behalf. He does what every true intercessor must do; what the Lord himself does for the multitudinous Christ. He identifies himself with sinning Israel, being one with the nation and

treating its sins as his sins; its woes as his woes; and therefore sharing its punishment, and generally identifying himself with it. Personally, he is not an idolatrous rebel against the authority of Yahweh; on the contrary he has protested against the wickedness of both the nation and its people; but because of his connection with both he pleads for them in the first person.

VERSE 4

"And I prayed unto Yahweh my God" — This is the covenant title of Deity, which He proclaimed to Moses at the burning bush when He was about to deliver Israel out of bondage to serve and glorify Him (Exod. 3:14). It signifies "I will be Whom I be" or I will become manifested in a multitude. The Name is exclusive to Israel (Exod. 3:15). It reveals that Yahweh has a future purpose with Israel, and, therefore, the nation (though not necessarily all its people) must ultimately be redeemed to glorify Him. Judah's rejection of Christ was followed by the repudiation of the people, and Yahweh, through the preaching of the Apostles, "did visit the Gentiles to take out of them a people for His name" (Acts. 15:14). Accordingly, those Gentiles had to become Israelites by Induction into the covenant Name through baptism (Eph. 2:11-13).

In that way the Name is now provisionally named upon those who embrace Christ (1 Thess. 1:1) though their actual identification with it awaits their approval at the Judgment Seat. "Upon him that overcometh," declared the Lord "...I will write the name of my God" (Rev. 3:12). The future age will witness this in manifestation of Yahweh throughout mankind. Zechariah predicted: "Yahweh shall be King over all the earth; in that day shall there be one Yahweh, and His name one" (Zech. 14:9). The term "one" in that place is *echad* which signifies one in a collective sense; not an absolute unity but a compound unity, like the members of one family, the multitudinous Christ.

"And made my confession" — Daniel, personally, had comparatively little

to confess; but the nation had much. The prophet identified himself with it, and made confession on its behalf, without endorsing its wickedness. He carefully searched the Scriptures to ascertain what was required to act the part of an intercessor on its behalf. The Levitical Covenant (Lev. 26) which anticipated the disobedience and scattering of the nation required that such confession be made as a basis for national redemption: "And they that are left of you shall pine away in their iniquity in your enemies' lands, and also in the iniquities of their fathers, shall they pine away with them. If they shall confess their iniquity and the iniquity of their fathers, with their trespass which they trespassed against Me, and that also they have walked contrary unto Me ... Then will I remember my covenant... and I will remember the land" (Lev. 26:39-42). Significantly the terms of Daniel's prayer are similar to the confession Ezekiel describes as necessary on the part of the nation a preliminary to it being "grafted in again" when the Temple is rebuilt in the Age to come (Ezek. 43:7-11; Rom. 11:23).

"And said, O Lord" — Here again, according to *The Companion Bible*, the Name should appear as Yahweh. This is appropriate to the theme of the prayer which pleads for the redemption of the people on the basis of the Covenant. *The Companion Bible* claims that the Sopherim (the Jewish revisers of the Hebrew of the O.T.) changed the Name in the text in 134 places to "Lord" and "God". In those places, the covenant Name of Yahweh should be restored.

"The great and terrible God" — The word "God" in this place is *El*, and denotes might and power; and when related to the Divine Name as here, it denotes supreme might and power. In using it, Daniel acknowledged that the One to whom his prayer was addressed is not only great, and to be revered or feared; but also that He possesses the power to accomplish that which was requested. Similar use of these titles were by Moses in Deut. 7:21-22; and Nehemiah (Neh. 9:32).

"Keeping the covenant and mercy to them that love Him" — How does one learn to "love" God? Not merely by recalling His promises and protection, though these may encourage love. But by pondering Who Yahweh is, and His compelling characteristics, such as His loving-kindness, graciousness, long-suffering, goodness and truth (Exod. 34:6). These admirable qualities form part of His character, and true Israelites benefit from the fruit of such attributes. In the O.T. the characteristics of Yahweh are expressed doctrinally, and are displayed in His dealings with His nation. In the N.T. they are set forth more compellingly and personally in the character of the Son. "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father", he declared (John 14:9). Therefore, the compassion, tender consideration, and bountiful goodness that the Lord displayed toward others during his ministry on earth are his Father's qualities. He forgave men their trespasses, he extended himself to heal their sicknesses, he manifested thoughtful compassion in their needs, he sacrificed his own convenience to minister to others, he fed them when they were hungry, he condescended in his kindness to raise up those bowed down by affliction. But he was also firm, stern and inflexible in his opposition to hypocrisy (Matt. 23). If we find among our acquaintances a person who voluntarily extends himself in that fashion to help us in our needs, do we not admire him! And the more we come to know him does not our love for him grow greater?

Ponder then the qualities of Yahweh, recall the many blessings received from His hand, bear in mind the warm communion obtained from prayer, blend all His loving characteristics with the great privileges He has extended to us, the benefits He has stored up for our enjoyment in the future, and the contemplation of such things will help to draw out our love for Him. The goodness of Yahweh will draw us to Him, whilst His righteousness, His intolerance of sin and evil will teach us to fear and reverence Him. "Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God", exhorted Paul (Rom.

11:32). However, as we ponder the righteousness of the Father and the sinlessness of His Son, we are inevitably cast down by the recognition of our own shortcomings. But the goodness of God is adequate even for this, for "when men are cast down, then thou shalt say, there is lifting up; and He shall save the humble person" (Job. 22:29). Christ told Peter that he should forgive sins committed against him to the uttermost: "I say not unto thee until seven times; but until seventy times seven" (Matt. 18:22). He who advocated such forgiveness on our part, and taught his apostles to pray: "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us", will surely forgive our shortcomings when we present them to Him for that purpose (see Mark 3:28).

Recognising Yahweh's goodness, Daniel turned in confidence to Him to make his requests. He did so on the basis that Yahweh blends mercy with judgment; and whilst He is just, He is also merciful (James 2:13).

"And to them that keep His commandments" — There must be no presumption in love. It is not mere emotion or feeling without expression, but a manifestation of obedience in order to please the One Whom we both love and respect: "This is love that we walk after his commandments" (2 John 6).

To sum up Daniel's introduction to his petitions, he acknowledged in prayer that any alienation, estrangement and faithlessness in the relationship between Yahweh and His people, does not begin with Him. His faithfulness and fidelity to His people can always be relied upon in all association with Him.

Confession of Sin — vv. 5-15

As intercessor, or advocate, on behalf of his people, Daniel confesses to the national sin.

VERSE 5

"We have sinned, and have committed iniquity, and have done wickedly, and have rebelled" — Daniel lists four forms of evil action, each one worse than its predecessor, demonstrating the

deterioration of Israel's conduct. The term "sin" (Heb. *chata*) signifies "to miss". It denotes the natural tendency of the flesh to fail. It describes action that falls short or deflects from "the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 3:14). Paul aimed at that mark, but did not always attain unto it, as he declared. He occasionally swerved from it, or fell short of it. The negative form of the word is rendered "not miss" in Jud. 20:16 which describes the skill of the 700 Benjamites who could sling stones at an hair breadth and "not miss".

"Iniquity" is a graver offence. It signifies to be perverse, and is rendered *perverseness* in the R.V. The word signifies to take a crooked course, and so more deliberately deflect from the way of righteousness.

To do "wickedly" is even more heinous. The Hebrew *rasha'* implies the breaking down of barriers of restraint or lowering standards of righteousness. It implies the removing or ignoring, of established laws, and therefore a state of flagrant wickedness.

Finally, "to rebel" suggests the final stage of evil: it is to knowingly reject a law, and to actively repudiate the Author of it.

Now it is obvious, that whilst Daniel used the first person in describing this wickedness, as though he, personally, was involved in such guilty action, this was not so. He was not guilty of flagrantly repudiating the authority of Yahweh, nor turning against His Law. How then could he use the personal pronoun *we* and thus include himself in these stages of wickedness? He could only do so as a redeemer or intercessor of his people. He was a member of the nation which had been guilty of this disgraceful conduct, and as his intercession was on its behalf, he identified himself with it. A similar method of identification is used in relation to the Lord Jesus Christ as intercessor and mediator between God and man (1 Tim. 2:5). As such he manifested God to man, and represented mankind to God. He came in sin's flesh to identify himself with sinning humanity, — he did no sin because God was "in him" (2

Cor. 5:19). As head of the multitudinous body of the redeemed for whom he came into the world to save, he is represented as praying: "O God, Thou knowest my foolishness; and my sins are not hid from thee" (Ps. 69:5).^{*} He himself, was without sin, but not those he came to save, and with whom he was head of the Body.

The Lord closely identified himself, as did Daniel, with the nation. Peter declared that he "bare our sins in his own body on the tree". He did this inasmuch as sins are "from within" (see 1 Pet. 2:24; Mark 7:21). Coming "in the likeness of sin's flesh; he experienced the weakness of fallen human nature without succumbing to it. Therefore, in the terms of the Statement of Faith, he was a "sinless bearer of condemned human nature".

"Even by departing from Thy precepts and from Thy judgments" — "Precepts" represent Yahweh's teaching as set down in the Law; "judgments" are the penalties and punishments laid down for certain transgressions. The tendency of flesh is to excuse those who fail, or to weaken the penalties attached thereto because of the consciousness of personal transgression. Yahweh's requirements, even in regard to Ecclesial discipline, are sometimes deprecated as being too harsh. A notable case of this was the saving of Agag. For this, Saul received the stern rebuke of the forthright prophet and judge, Samuel: "Hath Yahweh as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of Yahweh? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of Yahweh, He hath also rejected thee from being King" (1 Sam. 15:22-23).

The punishment given Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5), must have been distressing for Peter in view of his own previous grievous failure in denying his Lord. he could well have received

the criticism or condemnation of some of his brethren, for being the medium of such drastic punishment; but it was so obviously according to the Divine requirements as to close the mouths of his critics. It is not enough to proclaim opposition to error or sin; the seriousness of such must be made abundantly clear by carrying out what the Word requires. Some may weaken the point of doctrine (the precepts of Yahweh), and omit to carry out His judgments in the mistaken attitude of kindness and love. But to do so is no more a matter of genuine kindness or love than the folly of parents who omit to discipline their children and live to deeply regret it later. The greatest kindness and acts of love are frequently exhibited in administering Ecclesial discipline. By such action, the erring party "may learn not to blaspheme" (1 Tim. 1:20), and so be redeemed for the Kingdom. An example of this is recorded with regard to the member of the Ecclesia in Corinth who was guilty of incest. The Ecclesia had winked at this instead of rigorously carrying out the necessary judgment required against one guilty of such criminality. Paul warned "ye are puffed up", and commanded that they disfellowship the party concerned. He even ordered an Ecclesial meeting and added his postal vote to disfellowshipping the guilty party (1 Cor. 5:2-3). The attitude of leniency that the Ecclesia had previously adopted had only confirmed the guilty one in his wickedness; and his example could have spread to others, to their eternal disgrace. Paul's vigorous condemnation, and command that such leaven of conduct be purged out (v.7), brought a consciousness of sin on the part of the one concerned, and a humility that sought the forgiveness of God. This earned the approbation of the Apostle, and the restoration of the repentant sinner (2 Cor. 2:4-8). God's ways are inevitably best, though they may seem harsh to flesh.

^{*} This is a prophetic Messianic Psalm, quoted in the NT as such. See v.9 and cp. with John 2:17; 15:3. See also vv. 8,20,24 etc., also applicable to Christ.

VERSE 6

“Neither have we hearkened unto thy servants the prophets, which spake in Thy name to our kings, our princes, and our fathers, and to all the people of the land” — These strictures did not apply to Daniel personally, but certainly did to the nation and people as a whole. There is in the prophet’s petition an echo of Solomon’s wonderful prayer (1 Kings 8:22-53). There are in it, also, parallels with the prayers of Ps. 79; Neh. 1:6-7; 9:33-34; Jer. 14:7. Even more significant, it conforms to the requirements of the Levitical covenant (Lev. 26:40); and finally, will be required of Israel in the future. One of the great moments at the opening of the Temple of the Age to come at the commencement of the Millennium, will be a gathering of Israel’s representatives therein, to make similar confession (Ezek. 43:7-9), as preliminary to confirming the “new covenant” promised (Jer. 31:31-34).

Daniel’s prayer was not completely answered in his time, and apparently remains on record in Scripture to be completely answered in the Age to Come.

Acknowledgment of Yahweh’s Righteousness — v.7-8

Daniel acknowledges that the judgment administered by Yahweh against Israel is just and in accordance with the requirements.

VERSE 7

“O Lord, righteousness belongeth unto Thee” — Instead of “Lord” read Yahweh as in previous verses. The Hebrew is very more explicit: “To Thee is righteousness; to us shame!” Daniel ascribed no blame, no injustice, to Yahweh. The fault was with Israel. The prophet could have complained that he was not personally involved in the great apostasy, but he does not, for it is the nation that has sinned, and he is a member of it. He, himself, was in captivity through no fault of his own; Jerusalem, the beloved city, was in ruins; the nation had been broken up and scattered into all lands; yet, in spite of the extreme mental agony of the cir-

cumstances, the prophet acknowledged the righteousness, or justice, of Yahweh in all his suffering. This attitude is characteristic of all the faithful (Ps. 22:3-4; Rom. 3:21-26). Such men of faith as he, can see the Divine purpose in suffering; they possess such a vision of coming glory as to see beyond their present agony. Jeremiah, that man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, also acknowledged that in spite of his sufferings, God is righteous (Lam. 1:18). Though unpleasant, the adversity that Daniel’s companions experienced was “for their good” (Jer. 24:5). The benefits of suffering were brought home to Paul through his “thorn in the flesh”. He prayed thrice that he might be relieved of such, but he was told that God’s grace was sufficient, for “His strength is made perfect in weakness”. So Paul submitted, learning to glorify God in tribulation; recognising that in continuing to work for the Truth in spite of his suffering and weakness, he demonstrated to others the motivating power of the Gospel. He made adversity his servant, working for him to achieve glory in the Age to come. His example is set down for others to follow.

“But unto us confusion of faces, as at this day” — The Hebrew expresses this as “unto us, Shame!”

Daniel acknowledged that God was righteous in the punishment administered, for Israel’s conduct was shameful. It was a frank acknowledgment of the facts without any attempt to hide their enormity. The nation’s conduct brought shame upon Daniel personally, as well as upon it, even as unwise conduct on the part of a member brings embarrassment to the family as a whole. “If one member suffer, all the members suffer with it” declared Paul of the multitudinous Christ. As head of that Body Christ suffers with it. That is a God-established law of nature, and has its place in Christ’s relationships with his ecclesia on earth.

David was told that his sin “has given great occasion to the enemies of Yahweh to blaspheme” (2 Sam. 12:14). In consequence, though David was personally forgiven, Yahweh’s abhor-

rence of his unlawfulness was publicly made known by the death of the child, the damaging effect of Absalom's rebellion, and the agony of trouble brought upon the king by his family. Daniel suffered with the nation and on its behalf confessed to the disgrace, shame and ignominy it experienced by its conduct. He personally felt the agony of its shame.

“To the men of Judah, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and unto all Israel, that are near, and that are far off, through all the countries whither Thou hast driven them, because of their trespass that they have trespassed against Thee” — The punishment affected the whole nation. The word used to describe it, “trespass” is from the Hebrew *mahal* and signifies treachery, from a root, to act unfaithfully or covertly. The root signifies “to cover” and suggests the hiding of the sin referred to, and therefore to act hypocritically, as though no sin had been committed. David learned the lesson that to obtain a cover for sin it must be opened up to Yahweh (Ps. 32:1-2). But this Israel, like the Pharisees of Christ's day, had not done.

VERSE 8

“O Lord, to us belongeth confusion of face, to our kings, to our princes, and to our fathers, because we have sinned against thee” — Verse 7 is repeated for emphasis. Yahweh (as “Lord” should be rendered) only is righteous, whilst both leaders and people of Israel had sinned. See Jeremiah's indictment in Ch. 5:31.

VERSE 9

“To the Lord our God (Yahweh our Elohim) belong mercies and forgiveness, though we have rebelled against Him” — This statement frankly declares the real cause of Israel's defeat and dispersion at the hands of the Babylonians: it was the disharmony with Yahweh their unfaithfulness had caused, and not their inability to wage war. Yahweh could easily have overthrown the mightiest nation as He had

the Assyrian in the days of Hezekiah, if the people had turned to Him in faith and obedience.

He pleaded with the nation, explaining this to its leaders — but in vain (see Ps. 81:10-15).

The Divine title in this place expresses certain characteristics of Yahweh. To Him belongeth *mercies*. This word does not express what is usually thought of as being merciful: that is the forgiving or overlooking of transgressions. In v. 4 the word is translated from the Hebrew *chesed*; but here it is from *racham* and signifies “compassion”. However, it is a form of compassion such as is extended by one to another because of the privilege of a special relationship. An extension of the word relates it to the womb. A mother shows great compassion to the fruit of her womb, lavishing upon it all the warmth and care that only a mother can give. The word signifies to love, fondle, to be compassionate. It is therefore suggestive of mother love. A mother endures pain in order to produce her offspring and takes particular pride in the fruit of her womb. More than anyone else she is prepared to lavish self-sacrificing affection upon such. So also does Yahweh upon the people whom He recognises as His sons and daughters upon earth. And as a parent tends to more readily forgive the misdemeanors of his sons and daughters (more so than the faults of other children) so Yahweh does with His children when they seek Him aright. There is need to ponder and treasure this privileged relationship with the Father and avoid acting as did Israel in unnaturally spurning the approaches of their heavenly Father by stubbornly refusing to respond to His love. The time sometimes comes, in human relationships, when nothing remains but for long suffering parents to turn an obstinate child out of the shelter of the home until it learns to respond to the discipline required. How much better are the results when a child by loving obedience, seeks the warmth and protection of its parents. How parents long for such an attitude.

“God is love”, taught John, “not that

we loved God (first) but that He loved us, and sent His son to be the propitiation for our sins" (1 John 4:10). "Doth not nature teach thee?" asked Paul in relation to another subject. It does so also in regard to this matter of divine love. It is imbedded in nature. A mother, in love, willingly sacrifices for the child to which in pain she has given birth (John 16:21). She takes it to her bosom, tenderly cares for it, feeds it, tends to its every need, lavishes her love and care upon it. At first the baby does not respond; it takes for granted all its needs, impatiently demanding its wants without much reciprocal love. What a happy moment for the mother when the child responds with a gurgling smile and a word imperfectly spoken. So recognition of God's goodness on the part of His children gives Him pleasure. With growth, the child comes to a greater appreciation of what has been done for it. With maturity there comes a warm respect for parents, and an obligation to respond in reverential and loving obedience. As youth advances into adulthood, and the child, in turn, becomes a parent, the sense of appreciation and obligation for all that has been done for it in its days of helplessness and inexperience increases; and age looks at youth with the realisation that only experience will teach effectively the lessons of life.

True love therefore, comes with experience; though some seem never to appreciate what has been done for them. This is so with human nature. So few learn to develop a recognition of the benefits received from Him. "Behold, therefore the goodness and severity of God", exhorted the Apostle (Rom. 11:22).

So Daniel in the terms of this prayer, gives expression to Yahweh's many acts of tender love to which the term *rachamim* testifies; a divine love that recognises the need of discipline and value of guidance far more than is the case in normal human relationships. So frequently, parents, in order to gratify their own selfish satisfaction or to avoid disturbance, tend to spoil children, or refrain from discipline, and so heap up a load of future woe.

The limitations of human parenthood in comparison with Divine, is outlined by Paul in Heb. 12:9-11. If discipline is not enforced, and adequate response and reformation to it is not given by children of God, they will be denied the rewards set before them by their loving heavenly Parent: they will not be granted eternal life in His presence.

Let it not be considered that we are straining the use of the word used by Daniel in his prayer, for the principle is expressed in the parable of the lost and found son (Luke 15:24). The father was ready to receive him whenever he returned. Thus, the parable described the relationship and attitudes of the Father and His son, Israel.

"Though we have rebelled against Him" — The ingratitude of children towards parents is proverbial. It is the flesh asserting itself, and refusing to be disciplined. The problem is that parents and children view the objectives of life from such different perspectives that each find it difficult to fit into the thought-pattern of the other. Then follows rebellion. This results mainly through lack of communication. But even where there are attempts at bridging the gap by parents, a stubborn and rebellious child will refuse, in its immaturity, to respond to the parental counsel laid down and conform to that which experience reveals is in its best interests to do. The Law laid down the punishment to be administered to a "stubborn and rebellious son, which will not obey the voice of his Father".

VERSE 10

"Neither have we obeyed the voice of Yahweh our God, to walk in His laws" — Again Daniel prays in the first person, as a mouthpiece for the nation. The word "obeyed" (Heb. *shama*) is rendered "hearkened" in verse 6, "obeyed" in verses 10, 14, "might obey" in verse 11 and "hear" in verses 17, 18, 19. The word means "to hear intelligently", often with the implication of attention, obedience. Daniel was conscious of the importance of hearkening to the word of Yahweh, and three times in this prayer

(vv. 10, 11, 14) he confesses that the nation had not hearkened to their God. The word *shama* was used by Moses in his instruction to the nation: "Hear (*shama*), O Israel, Yahweh our Elohim is one Yahweh" (Deut. 6:4). The people were called to become *elohim* ("mighty ones") in faith, revealing the Divine qualities in a life of obedience to Yahweh. But they failed to respond to the constant exhortation of Yahweh's prophets, and discarded His law. So Jeremiah complained: "Yea, the stork in the heaven knoweth her appointed times; and the turtle and the crane and the swallow observe the time of their coming; but my people know not the judgment of Yahweh" (Jer. 8:7). Daniel recognises the truth of Jeremiah's words and now seeks the forgiveness of heaven.

Though God accepted the plea of the prophet, and moved to rescue His people from Babylon, this failure to hear the Spirit's words was to be dramatically revealed in the day of His Son. Jesus pointed out that many would "hear but not understand" (Luke 8:10). That failure was revealed in the holocaust of A.D. 70 against a nation which refused to hear, and the "king sent forth his armies and destroyed those murderers and burned up their city" (Matt. 22:7). There is a vital need to hearken to Yahweh's Word, accept the precepts that He has laid down, and lovingly to respond to them by showing forth the Divine character in our lives, so that Yahweh will, in turn, "hear" our prayer (see Dan. 9:17-19, 21).

"Which he set before us by his servants the prophets" — The Divine command had been consistently brought before the nation throughout their history. Moses urged them to "hearken diligently unto the voice of Yahweh thy God" (Deut. 28:1). Samuel told their king: "Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams" (1 Sam. 15:22). Isaiah complained to the people: "Thou hearest not; Yea, thou knewest not; yea, from that time that thine ear was not opened: for I knew that thou wouldest deal very treacherously" (ch. 48:8).

Later, Nehemiah would review their sad history, since "they dealt proudly, and hardened their necks, and hearkened not to the commandments" (ch. 9:13-17). One cause of failure was their neglect to separate from the wicked and idolatrous inhabitants of Canaan, notwithstanding that the prophets had warned them of the consequences. Because Israel did not hearken to the prophets' message, the northern tribes had been taken captive by the Assyrians, and now the Kingdom of Judah was under Babylonian oppression.

That same failure is possible today. We refuse to hearken at our peril. To such, the Word will judge at the last day (John 12:48). We need to listen to the "voice of Yahweh our God" which urges us to "come out of Babylon, and be not partakers of her sins" (Rev. 18:4). Modern Babylon is comprised of both religious and social principles: a society in which is seen every departure from the positive truths and practices of the Scriptures.

There is, however, a blessing on those who "hear the words of the prophecy" (Rev. 1:3). We have been given all that is necessary for salvation; and must therefore heed the Divine Voice in the Inspired Writings.

VERSE 11

"Yea, all Israel have transgressed Thy law, even by departing, that they might not obey Thy voice" — Daniel now expresses the gravity of Israel's offence. The nation had ignored the requirements of the Law, and had been unheeding to the Voice of Yahweh as proclaimed through the prophets. This was its condemnation. It was bad enough that it had ignored the Law, for that meant that the punishment listed therein for failure to keep it would come upon the nation; but even worse was its refusal to hearken and heed the Voice of Yahweh. It is very irritating to speak urgent words of warning and reproof, only to find that those to whom they are addressed discourteously turn their backs on the speaker. That was Israel's fault, causing the anger of Yahweh to rise against the ignorant nation.

The word "transgress" (Heb: *abar*) is a primitive root meaning "to cross over"; "to cause to pass by, to violate a law". The same word occurs in ch. 11:10, 40, and is translated "pass through" and "pass over". See also Ch. 11:20 margin. The word "Hebrew" comes from the same root, and means "crosser over". Abraham became a Hebrew by departing from Gentile Ur at God's command and passing over into the Land of Promise; but his seed had reversed the process: ignoring the Voice, and passing over from the way of Truth into a society of lawlessness.

The word "departing" (Heb. *soor*) means "to turn aside, go away, to depart". The NIV translates the verse: "All Israel has transgressed your law and turned away, refusing to obey you." The dire condition of the nation, all twelve tribes, is thus emphasised, and Daniel recognises this in his prayer. The calamity, therefore, had come upon them all.

"Therefore the curse is poured upon us, and the oath that is written in the Law of Moses, the servant of God, because we have sinned against him"

— For the oath referred to, see Deut. 30:15-19; 31:17-27; and the prophecy of Deut. 32:15-42. It was this warning in the Law that was brought to the attention of Josiah when the book of the Law was discovered in the Temple. Reading this, he was moved to institute the reformation for which he is known. His action, and pressure on the people, delayed the outpouring of judgment; but the stupid folly of his successors brought judgment upon the nation, plunging it over the abyss of national annihilation at the hands of the Babylonians: a judgment that involved Daniel and other "good figs" who would, nevertheless, find that their sufferings were for "their good" (Jer. 24:5-6), for the people would be brought again to the land, as a purged and better nation.

The title "servant of God" applied to Moses in several places (1 Chron. 6:49; 2 Chron. 1:3, etc), is commented upon by Paul and contrasted with the title Son of God as applied to Christ (see Heb. 3:5-6). As a servant, Moses faith-

fully performed the commandments of Yahweh, including the solemn warning he gave the people if they sinned. Sorrowfully he told them that human nature being what it is, the nation would, after his departure, turn from Yahweh (Deut. 31:27-30). They were, therefore, without excuse, and Daniel's confession acknowledged this before Yahweh (Deut. 31:27-30). They were, therefore, without excuse, and Daniel's confession acknowledged this before Yahweh.

VERSE 12

"And He hath confirmed His words which He spake against us" — All the warnings of the prophets have been fulfilled in the adversities and, finally, the captivity that had fallen upon Israel (see Zech. 1:4-6). The curses of the Law (Deut. 28:15-36) have had their effect. Nothing is more certain than that God will "confirm" all the words that He has ever spoken, and that no sinner can hope to escape on the ground that God will ignore His threatenings, or that He will be indifferent to His requirements. Paul expressed it in such direct terms: "If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are" (1 Cor. 3:16).

"And against our judges that judged us" — The judges of Israel were their rulers, and therefore were partly responsible for their spiritual and political decline. They were commissioned as "shepherds" (2 Kings 23:22), and had the oversight of the nation.

Those who find themselves in positions of influence must bear some responsibility for the consequences of their word or actions as they affect others. Paul refers to the "loss" that some shall suffer at the judgment seat because their work with others has not passed the test (1 Cor. 3:14-15). He counselled the elders of Ephesus: "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Spirit hath made you overseers, to feed (Gr. *shepherd*) the ecclesia of God" (Acts 20:28). Every member of the ecclesia has some sort of responsi-

bility to their fellows (1 Pet. 2:22) and none can shirk their responsibility for personal dedication and study of the Word.

“By bringing upon us a great evil for under the whole heaven hath not been done as hath been done upon Jerusalem” — See Lam. 1:12; 2:13; 4:6; Ezek. 5:9; Joel 2:3; Amos 3:2. The fall of Jerusalem and the captivity of the people by the Babylonians was the greatest national tragedy to that time. However, this was but a foretaste of an even greater catastrophe, when the Romans destroyed the city and scattered the people in A.D. 70 — because the guilt of Jewry in crucifying the Messiah exceeded all previous crimes (Matt. 23:35; 24:21; Mark 13:19; Luke 21:22). The invasion of the Romans and the consequent dispersion brought such trauma as will never be exceeded (Matt. 24:21).

VERSE 13

“As it is written in the law of Moses, all this evil is come upon us” — No blame is directed against Yahweh; it is freely acknowledged that due warning has been given in the Law, and therefore the nation is without excuse (see Deut. 27:15-26; 28:15-30:28).

“Yet made we not our prayer before Yahweh our God” — The margin renders this: “intreated we not the face of”. The Hebrew signifies “to rub or stroke the face.” This is the action of a child who, recognising its faults against its parent, wants to placate him, to soothe, caress in a gesture of affection, and thus seeks to beseech or supplicate. But as a people Israel had failed to recognise their sin and therefore had not humbly confessed their faults in an attempt to find forgiveness. If they had, they would have learned of the loving kindness of their heavenly Father: “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9).

Yet the curses brought upon Israel were intended to make them aware of their lack, and their punishment was the chastening action of a loving Parent

(Heb. 12:6). However, they had not learned the lesson, and exile was inevitable (Isa. 9:13; Jer. 2:30; 5:3; Hosea 7:7, 10, 14).

“That we might turn from our iniquities and understand Thy Truth” — Yahweh’s purpose in punishing His children was to teach them the lesson of the captivity. If they had responded, they might have avoided the greater judgment of A.D. 70. But they saw no purpose in turning to Yahweh. “In vain have I smitten your children; they received no correction” (Jer. 2:30). To “understand” is a first principle to acceptable worship.

VERSE 14

“Therefore hath Yahweh watched upon the evil, and brought it upon us”

— Daniel would certainly have had his attention drawn to this fact by the witness of Jeremiah (ch. 31:28-30; 44:27). The word “watched” (Heb. *shaqad*) signifies “to be awake; alert; to be on the lookout.” Yahweh has been attentive to Israel’s conduct, and His unslumbering eye has examined their path. He “watched” for the opportunity to perform His word upon His people. Daniel would have learned this from his study of Jeremiah. In Jer. 1:11-12, the prophet was told to examine an almond rod. The term “almond tree” is the Hebrew *shaqed*, from the same root as “watched” in the verse before us. In response to Jeremiah’s observation, Yahweh declared: “Thou has well seen, for I will hasten My word to perform it” (Jer. 1:12). The word “hasten” in this verse is *shaqad*, the word used by Daniel. Jeremiah was shown that Yahweh would bring an evil from the north “which shall break forth upon all the inhabitants of the land” (Jer. 1:14). Daniel witnessed the fulfilment of that prophecy, and acknowledges it in his prayer.

The word “evil” does not mean sin. It often refers to the consequences of sin. Brother Thomas comments in *Elpis Israel*, p. 126:

“Sin and evil are as cause and effect. God is the author of evil, but not of sin;

for the evil is the punishment of sin. 'I form the light and create darkness; I make peace and create evil: I, Yahweh, do all these things' (Isa. 45:7). 'Shall there be evil in a city, and Yahweh hath not done it?' (Amos 3:6). The evil, then, to which man is subjected is Yahweh's doing. War, famine, pestilence, flood, earthquake, disease and death, are the terrible evils which God inflicts upon mankind for their transgressions. Evil is the artillery with which He combats the enemies of His law, and of His saints; consequently, there will be neither peace nor blessedness for the nations until sin is put down, His people avenged, and truth and righteousness be established in the earth."

The RSV translates this expression: "Therefore the Lord has kept ready the calamity and brought it upon us". The NIV has: "The Lord did not hesitate to bring the disaster upon us." So Yahweh was not inattentive to the progress of things, not unmindful of His threatening. Observing the course of events, He had properly done all that He had threatened to do — and, at the right time.

"For Yahweh our God is righteous in all His works which He doeth" — This is a statement of faith, recognising that in all the tragedy of life, Yahweh is just and righteous. His righteousness is vindicated in history, as personally God is seen to be righteous in His law and in His dealings with man. The only cause of suffering is the fact of native sin. It should be a fixed principle with us to "ascribe righteousness unto our Maker" (Job 36:3). In times of distress or despair it is sometimes difficult to do this. Much pondering and faith is required before, in any circumstance, we can truly acknowledge Yahweh as "all righteous." Such an acceptance of facts is necessary as a basis for the atonement, or covering, of the forgiveness of sins that we acknowledge (Rom. 3:23-26).

David recognised this (Psa. 51:3-4), acknowledging his folly against Uriah as an affront to Yahweh. As a result "evil" was levelled against David's house (2 Sam. 12:11); and the king's

life was only preserved upon acknowledgement of Yahweh's righteousness (v. 13).

"For we obeyed not His voice" — "For "obeyed" (Heb. *shamah*), meaning "to hear", see v. 11. The failure to do this is the foundation of all sin. Even the taking into captivity of a righteous remnant at that time was "for their own good" (Jer. 24:5).

An Impassioned Plea for Help — vv. 15-19

Having acknowledged Yahweh's authority and righteousness, and the sinfulness of the nation which had brought it into suffering, Daniel now seeks God's mercy on behalf of the nation and his beloved city. The prophet recognises Yahweh's ability to help in the time of need, and recalls His faithfulness in the deliverance from Egyptian bondage. Yahweh had promised and the promise was fulfilled (Gen. 15:15-16; Josh. 21:45; 23:14). Daniel has an intimate knowledge of the character and fidelity of Israel's God, and his faith shows that trust in Yahweh is never misplaced.

VERSE 15

"And now, O Yahweh our God, Thou hast brought Thy people forth out of the land of Egypt with a mighty hand" — Yahweh's purpose in delivering Israel from Egypt was not merely to save them, but to reveal His glory in them. Daniel repeats the prayer of Jeremiah (ch. 32:20-21), who had already drawn upon the work of Yahweh in the past. Now Daniel seeks a repetition of Yahweh's goodness towards His people, that they might again feel the relief of liberty from slavery, and have opportunity to serve their God in Jerusalem.

This great deliverance of the past, recalled by these two prophets, will yet be eclipsed by the saving work of Messiah. So Jeremiah prophesies: "the days come, that it shall no more be said, Yahweh liveth, that brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; but, Yahweh liveth, that brought up the children of Israel from the land of the north and from all the

lands whither He had driven them: and I will bring them again into their land that I gave unto their fathers" (ch. 16:14-15). This will see the final deliverance of Abraham's seed from spiritual Babylon.

Daniels of this age can recognise their great privilege in being "taken out of the nations as a people for the name of Yahweh" (Acts 15:14), and subsequently, should "remember" from whence they also have been delivered (Eph. 2:11). Such an exercise is calculated to develop an appreciation of Yahweh's saving work, and a response in service to Him.

"And hast gotten thee renown, as at this day" — Better rendered, as in the margin: "made Thee a name" (see also Jer. 32:20). God sought that response in His people, that "they might be unto Me for a people and for a name and for a praise and for a glory: but", He complained through Jeremiah, "they would not hear" (ch. 13:11).

The word "gotten" is from *asah*, to do or to make. "*Renown*" is from *shem*, a name. His Name reveals His faithfulness, notwithstanding even in the adversity of His people. Since He would "by no means clear the guilty" (Exod. 34:7), His righteousness was therefore demonstrated in their captivity, and these characteristics of His Name are recognised by Daniel in this prayer.

The NIV has "a name that endures to this day". That is, in the calamity into which the people had fallen and which had now continued for seventy years, the honour of Yahweh's Name was upheld. His memorial Name (Exod. 3:14-15) ensures that His purpose will be accomplished. As Daniel brought to mind the great deliverances of the past, he prayed that Yahweh might use this further opportunity for Him to extend His "renown" by the salvation of His people again.

"We have sinned, we have done wickedly" — Daniel repeats his national confession of Verse 5, showing how deeply the idea of Israel's failings pressed upon his mind. "Sinned" is from *chata*; "wickedly" is from *rasha* as expounded in v.5.

VERSE 16

"O Yahweh, according to all Thy righteousness, I beseech Thee" — The NIV translates: "in keeping with all Thy righteous acts." Daniel pleads on the basis of Yahweh's righteousness and in recognition of His forgiveness if an approach is made to Him in prayer and full confession made. Since the seventy years' captivity was now nearing its end, Daniel seeks God's "righteousness" in not allowing that time to be exceeded. For God was righteous in His judgments; He will be righteous in the proper time for mercy.

This same principle is upheld in Paul's letter to the Romans, where he speaks of "the righteousness of faith." Daniel was certainly a man of faith, and Yahweh was prepared to hearken unto his prayer as he interceded on behalf of His people. As such Daniel typed the Lord Jesus, who, although he did no sin, stood as a true representative of a people in "captivity to sin and death" (Psa. 68:18). So he intercedes on our behalf, that Yahweh's anger may be turned away (Psa. 85:4-7).

Daniel expresses the same confidence that Solomon confessed in his prayer at the dedication of the temple (1 Kings 8:48-50).

In the verse before us, "Righteousness" is in the plural, emphasising the many proofs of God's past benevolence.

"I beseech Thee, let Thine anger and Thy fury be turned away" — Anger and fury are Divine qualities. They emphasise God's repulsion against sin, and His refusal to compromise with it (Psa. 11:5). Jerusalem and the Temple had insulted His purity, and consequently His "anger and fury" had been unleashed against them (Jer. 7:20). Now was time for repentance and compassion, but Jerusalem was in ruins and seemed still to be lying under the wrath of God.

"Anger" is from *aph*, which refers to the nose, and in this context, to the rapid breathing of one in passion. It expresses the emotion and feeling experienced by the angered. "Fury" is from *chemah*, meaning "to be hot", and speaks of the intensity of the

action. Such fury “comes up in the face” (Ezek. 38:18), which thus appears to change colour — become redder — and clearly apparent to onlookers.

“From Thy city Jerusalem, Thy holy mountain” — The city and mountain is Yahweh’s for He had promised to select a place for “His Name” (Deut. 12:5). This was later revealed as Jerusalem (1 Kings 11:32, 36; 14:21; 2 Chron. 33:4; Psa. 48:2; Matt. 5:35). Though it was then in ruins, Daniel earnestly sought its restoration for Yahweh’s glory.

Yahweh is concerned both with the literal Mount Zion on which the city of Jerusalem is built, as well as the nation itself, which is sometimes spoken of as a symbolic mountain. In Psa. 48:1 the Psalmist anticipates the time when praise shall spring forth from “the city of our God, in the mountain of His holiness.” Isaiah prophesies of the time when “they shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain” (ch. 11:9), and when the faithful will be brought “to my Holy Mountain” (Isa. 57:13; 65:11,25; 66:20).

The climax of all God’s purpose with His holy mountain is described in Ezek. 43:12 in reference to the temple of the future age: “this is the law of the house; upon the top of the mountain the whole limit thereof round about shall be *most holy*.” What makes a mountain “holy”? Bro. Thomas states in *The Mystery of the Covenant of the Holy Land Explained*: ‘According to the law ordained by angels in the hand of Moses, and styled the word spoken by angels’ (Heb. 2:2), mankind are separated into the *holy* and the *unclean*. It constituted the twelve tribes of Israel ‘a *holy nation*, a special and peculiar people’ (Exod. 19:6; Deut. 7:6; 14:2) while it left all other nations mere ‘*sinners of the Gentiles*’ (Gal. 2:15), as all men were originally constituted by the disobedience of Adam (Rom. 5:18) from whom they derive their descent. The national holiness of Israel was constitutional, not inherent. Anything separated by Yahweh from things in general for His own special use is holy, irrespective of the nature or

character of the thing. Hence, things animate and inanimate, animal, vegetable and mineral, solid and fluid, etc. have all been constituted holy by the law. Thus there were holy *utensils*, holy and most holy *places of worship*, holy *mountains* and *cities*, and holy *officials*, though sometimes very unrighteous men.”

In this sense holiness is conferred upon an object because of the use Yahweh has with it. Jericho was declared “holy”, or “devoted” (as the word *accursed* in Josh. 6:17 should be rendered), and all its treasures were to be reserved for God’s use. Although a city or mountain cannot reveal the moral qualities of holiness, it can be dedicated for the Divine purpose; and in the “holy mountain” there will ultimately dwell a people who show the holy character of Yahweh in their lives (Psa. 15,24).

“Because for our sins, and for the iniquities of our fathers” — Again Daniel repeats and emphasises the reason for their distress: it was “our” sins and “our father’s” iniquities that had brought the Divine displeasure. The prophet shows a faithful acceptance of the principle set forth in Deut. 24:16 (cp. Jer. 31:29-30); there is no murmuring nor complaining that Yahweh had been unjust or severe in His dealings with the people. Jerusalem was indeed in ruins and the people were captives in a distant land, but God was just in all that He had done.

“Thy people are become a reproach to all that are about us” — The NIV translates “reproach” as “an object of scorn.” Daniel was not so much concerned for the city and people, as for what they represented to others. The nation in sin and the city in desolation reflected on the greatness and glory of Yahweh. Gentiles, seeing the distress of Jerusalem, might ridicule the God of Israel and despise His salvation. The Edomites did this, and brought reproach upon Yahweh (Psa. 137:7).

There is a clear allusion to the terms of the covenant (Deut. 28:25-29), and a similarity to Jer. 29:18 in a portion of

Jeremiah's letter written to the captives in Babylon (Jer. 29:18).

When Yahweh's people behave inconsistently with His name, they bring reproach upon Him, and scorn upon themselves. Israel's actions reflected against God (Ezek. 36:22); similarly when brethren of Christ act in an unworthy manner, they bring ridicule upon themselves, the community they represent, and the God they claim to worship.

VERSE 17

“Now therefore, O our God, hear the prayer of Thy servant, and his supplications” — As the prayer closes, Daniel re-echoes his opening words (v.3 for notes). In describing himself as a “servant” (Heb. *ebed*, bondman or bondservant), he emphasises his own inferior position and unworthiness, and ascribes honour to God. Thus, humility is the golden thread of this prayer. Three times Daniel is described by the term “servant”: once by Nebuchadnezzar (ch. 6:20), and twice by himself (ch. 9:17; 10:17). A servant is bound to do the will of his master, and Daniel tenders his own faithful servitude as the means for Divine favour.

“And cause Thy face to shine upon Thy Sanctuary” — A Hebrew figure of speech, meaning to “show favour towards”. It is a contrast to the “anger” and “fury” previously displayed (v. 16). The expression on a face indicates the feelings and emotions felt. When His face shines, God's acceptance is portrayed; when it is turned away there is displeasure (Psa. 31:16; 67:1; 80:3,7,19. Compare Psa. 69:16-17; Ezek. 7:22).

These words are quoted from Num. 6:24-26, the blessing which the priests pronounced upon Israel after officiating in the tabernacle. For similar usage of the expression, see Psa. 80:3,7,19.

The NIV translates the statement: “For your sake, O Yahweh, look with favour on your desolate sanctuary”. The word “sanctuary” is from *miqdash* (see notes on ch. 8:11), and was used to describe the tabernacle (Lev. 12:4;

16:33; 19:30; 20:3; 21:12, etc), and later used of the temple (1 Chron. 22:19; 2 Chron 20:8, etc). Daniel and his people were exiles in Babylon, and would turn lovingly towards Jerusalem and the temple, with desire for their restoration. True believers in every age continue to “pray for the peace of Jerusalem” (Psa. 122:6).

“That is desolate” — Heb. *shemen*, to be laid waste and desolated. Denied access to the temple, the faithful remnant could conduct worship only in their hearts, being unable to fulfil the requirements of the law nor the offering of sacrifices. The sad Lamentations of Jeremiah would have been a constant reminder to Daniel of the ruined state of Jerusalem.

“For the Lord's sake” — Daniel seeks the honour of His God, and has in mind the testimony of Scripture that emphasises the relationship of Yahweh's works to His Name. A person's credibility and the honour of his name depends upon the veracity of his word.

VERSE 18

“O my God, incline Thine ear, and hear; open Thine eyes, and behold our desolations” — Daniel pleads earnestly for God's attention and favour. To “incline” implies the action of one who must bend over to hear the weakened whisper of someone desperately sick. Daniel desires Yahweh to bend down that He might attentively listen to the supplication being offered. This same expression was used by Hezekiah when he sought relief from the attack of Rabshakeh (Isa. 37:17; 2 Kings 19:16). Significantly, in his hour of crisis Hezekiah sent for Isaiah that he might join his prayers to those of the king. Now, in the days of Daniel, there was no longer a king in either Israel nor Judah.

The word rendered “desolations” (Heb. *shamem*) was used in relation to the terms of the covenant (Lev. 26:22, 31, 32, 34, 35, 43). It occurs 25 times in Ezekiel, 11 times in Jeremiah and 6 times in Lamentations. It aptly describes the dread and devastation of

those times which had brought the people into such a desperate plight.

“And the city which is called by Thy Name” — It bore the name of Yahweh in the sense that it was His city — He was the owner. He said as much to Solomon: “I have chosen Jerusalem, that My name might be there; and have chosen David to be over my people Israel” (2 Chron. 6:6). This ownership was extended to the temple, the inhabitants of the city, and those in the Land in general (see Deut. 28:10; Jer. 7:10, 11, 14, 30; 14:9; 25:29).

In the N. T., ownership is attached to the ecclesia for Yahweh has purchased it with the precious blood of the eternal sacrifice (1 Pet. 1:18; 1 Cor. 6:20). It becomes the spiritual Jerusalem, and will have His name upon it (Rev. 3:12).

“For we do not present our supplications before Thee for our righteousness, but for Thy great mercies” — If we were to do so, nothing would be accomplished, since *our* righteousnesses are as “filthy rags” (Isa. 64:6). Rotherham renders it: “For not on the ground of our own righteousness are we causing our supplications to fall down before Thee, but on the ground of Thine abounding compassions”. The word “present” literally means *to fall down*, i. e. to lay down one’s request or petition before a superior, — so as to ask as a suppliant (Genenius). Daniel opened his heart before Yahweh: he humbly and submissively prostrated himself before the Mighty One of Israel, as the only source from whence his people might seek strength and comfort. Daniel confesses the utter unworthiness of the nation he represents, placing all his faith and trust in the unchanging character of Yahweh. The prophet understood that Israel should not be rewarded by Yahweh, for they were not righteous — and they were undeserving of *mercy* on any grounds of merit. However, he recalled the many *mercies* Israel had received in the past from their God (cp. Neh. 9:16-19).

The word “great” is from *rab*, signifying “abundant in size, number and quality.” Such were the Divine mercies

that they were too innumerable to list.

VERSE 19

“O Yahweh, hear; O Yahweh, forgive; O Yahweh, hearken and do” — The prayer concludes upon a note of awe and reverence for the majesty of God, together with a practical example of faith in Yahweh’s ability to accomplish all things. He is a God who can “hear... forgive... hearken... do...” True prayer draws inspiration from a knowledge of the character and attributes of Yahweh. The spiritual vision of the supplicant must be centred fully upon Him. Thus, acceptable prayer requires men to be emptied of Self, and to plead for the cause of righteousness.

“Hear” is from *shama*, “to listen intelligently, to heed, to obey,” so rendered in verse 10. Daniel urges Yahweh to a greater response than He had received from the people.

“Forgive” (Heb. *calach*) is used extensively in Lev. 4-6 in relation to the sin and trespass offerings. Israel had both sinned (fallen short of the Divine glory) against Yahweh, and had trespassed against Him, in robbing Him of the services which were rightly His. This same failing was condemned later by Malachi, when the nation failed to provide Yahweh with due respect, honor and obedience (Mal. 3:8). See *Expositor*, Vol. 6, Nos 1,2 for further information concerning the offerings.

“Hearken”, from the Hebrew *qashab* means “to attend to anything.” Gesenius says: “the original idea I consider to be that of sharpening; that is, to prick up the ears; an expression taken from animals.” It is translated “attend” in Prov. 4:1, 20; 5:1; 7:24, Yahweh called upon Israel to hearken unto Him (Hos. 5:1; 2 Chron. 20:15), but they refused and were delivered into captivity. Now, on the basis of the promise Yahweh had made, and the mercy which He was prepared to extend unto them, Daniel, as intercessor, pleads that God might not close His ears to the prayer, but that He would “hearken and do.”

“Defer not,” — “Do not delay”

(Roth, NIV). The Hebrew *achar*, according to Strong, means “to loiter, by implication to procrastinate”. The same word is translated “tarry” in Hab. 2:3 — a statement which Daniel could well have had in mind as he offered this prayer, for just as Yahweh had not tarried in sending the Chaldeans against His people when it required, so Daniel now prays that Yahweh will not tarry in delivering them from the Chaldeans, now that the seventy years was about to end.

Daniel was desperately anxious to witness Yahweh’s work. Clearly aware of the signs of the times, he was confident that the end of the seventy years would see the fulfilment of Yahweh’s promised word (v.2, cp. Jer. 25:12; 29:10). It is an attitude commended by God. Those, like Daniel, will be constantly scanning the declared word, to be acquainted with His promises; they will urgently and continually beseech the Divine action to be performed; they will live in awareness of the

unfolding Divine program, and their prayers will be pregnant with such feeling. We therefore, must “take heed” until the “day dawn” (2 Pet. 1:19).

“For Thine own sake, O My God: for Thy city and Thy people are called by Thy Name” — Yahweh’s honor was pre-eminent in Daniel’s mind as he brings his beautiful prayer to an end. It is one of the model prayers of the Bible, and, like the “Lord’s Prayer”, it is based upon God-centred principles. As the Lord’s Prayer begins and concludes with glory to God, so this prayer does likewise. As the Lord’s Prayer concludes with the words: “for Thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory forever”, so the same sentiments are found at the end of Daniel’s. Every true son and daughter of the living God desires, above all else, to see the fulfilment of Yahweh’s purpose in the earth, for the honor and glory of His name: Num. 14:21; Psa. 72:19; 79:9; 31:3.

Daniel’s Intercessory Prayer

Daniel’s earnest prayer reveals that he had a deep appreciation of the wonderful balance of the Divine character: He is a “great and dreadful God” (v.4, Deut. 10:17) and a God of “mercies and forgiveness” (v.9, cp. Exod. 20:6; Deut. 7:9). There is both “goodness” and “severity” (Rom. 11:22), for both complement each other, and reveal the righteousness which is essentially God-ness.

In his prayer, Daniel showed an attitude of trust and resolute persistence, revealing no signs of despair. He was confident that Yahweh’s Will was best, notwithstanding whatever circumstances there may be. In some 68 years of waiting, Daniel had not lost hope. His faith was based upon a firm foundation of knowledge and belief. His prayer reveals him as being humble, yet determined; grateful for past blessings, yet still hopeful for future comfort; confessing human weaknesses, yet confident in Yahweh’s strength; submissive to the will and purpose of Yahweh, yet steadfast in petitioning the Deity on behalf of His people and city.

It is a prayer which demonstrates abject humiliation before God, blended with qualities of firm and unshakeable conviction in the Personage and Power of Yahweh.

Nine Principles of The Prayer

This is a model prayer that can assist the believer, as he feels the impact of failure and sin, and desires to rise to greater fellowship with Almighty God. It has three foundation principles: Its Character, Object and Supplication.

ITS CHARACTER

The prayer reveals special qualities of expression, which are purifying to the mind and inspiring to the heart, Recognising them, and making them part of our own approach to the Throne of Grace, can strengthen our prayer and make us more responsive to the work of God in our lives.

1. Contrition. There must be a recognition and confession of sin (vv. 5-8), a frank admission that the present calamities are often the merited consequences of sin (v. 16). Forgiveness is only possible after repentance (Acts 3:19) and confession (1 John 1:9).

2. Earnestness. A most striking feature of this prayer is its short, passionate phrases, its repetitions, its intensity of desire. Daniel does not waste words, nor use meaningless phrases. Every expression carries its own power and strength.

3. Faith. In his distress, the prophet seeks his God, though it is against his God that the sin has been committed. Faith confesses that there is no help but in God. Faith persists in pleading with God, and relies on His mercy. Faith will bring Hope!

ITS OBJECT

The prophet seeks Divine pardon for the nation's failing. He knows that forgiveness brings in its train all the best blessing. He understands that God will reward the fervent prayer of a righteous man (James 5:16). So he keeps this object in view as he expresses his prayer.

1. The Turning Away of God's Anger. This is possible when there is basis for so doing. Sin fractures our relationship with God, and causes Divine retribution. How powerful, mighty and awesome is the Divine Anger. It can bring a flood (Gen. 6), pour down plagues (Exod. 7-12), destroy cities (Gen. 19) and scatter nations (Dan. 9:12). Acknowledgement of sinfulness and confession of repentance can reverse such a mighty force.

2. The Awakening of God's Sympathy. The prophet asks God to "incline Thine ear and hear; open Thine eyes" (v. 18). Forgiveness is not merely the negative cessation of God's anger; it is the positive restoration of His kindness and sympathy. It brings real and vibrant Fellowship.

3. The Practical Assistance of God. Daniel seeks the reaction of God in visible manifestation. "Cause Thy face to shine" (v. 17), "hearken and do; defer not" (v. 19) are earnest practical petitions. God is a ready help in time of need, and will respond to the earnest seeker. He will answer prayer (Matt. 6:6).

ITS MERIT

Daniel has no plea of merit. We can ask for nothing because of our own righteousness. All our pleas must be found, as Daniel found his, in the character and works of God.

1. God's Righteousness. This is a plea, because it implies His faithfulness to His promises of forgiveness (Lev. 26:40-44); and because righteousness is more honoured by the forgiveness which destroys sins, than by the anger which only punishes them (Isa. 45:21).

2. God's Honour. Jerusalem is "God's holy mountain", the city that is "called by His name" (v.19). God is dishonoured in the humiliation of His people, and He is glorified in their restoration (Num. 14:13-16).

3. God's Mercy. Expressed in verse 18. All prayer depends upon this, and without it prayer would be empty, vain words. God's mercy is that wonderful quality that covers sins: "keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin" (Exod. 34:7).

The Angel Gabriel Intervenes

— Vv. 20-23

Daniel's prayer is dramatically interrupted, and God's answer is brought to him. Gabriel is despatched from heaven to grant the praying-prophet "skill and understanding" concerning the matters of his prayer. There is both comfort and concern in the message! Daniel was seeking the restoration and glorification of Jerusalem and his people, and is now informed that Yahweh is already attending to that matter. But the regathering at the end of seventy years would be only partial and incomplete. The things for which Daniel really longed were yet a long way off!

VERSE 20

"And whiles I was speaking, and praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel" — Before he had ended his prayer, the answer came. There was a rapidity in the answer to Daniel's prayer, for "our

Father knows what things ye have need of, before ye ask him" (Matt. 6:8). Daniel is startled by the event, as he was mentally engrossed in the exercise of "speaking, praying, confessing..." He mentions "my sin", thus acknowledging his own weakness before that of the nation. In this he acted as the High Priest who offered "first for himself, and then for the errors of the people" (Heb. 9:7). The sinful condition of the people was pre-eminent in his mind, as he expressed his prayer.

"Presenting my supplication before Yahweh my God for the holy mountain of my God" — The positive aspect of Daniel's personal prayer. It properly follows the confession, and seeks the co-operation of God in the desired aim. He bore in mind the ultimate glory of God and the elevation of His holy mountain. His whole desire lay in the day when the law should go forth from Zion and Yahweh's Word from Jerusalem (Isa. 2:2-3). His attitude follows that of King David (Psa. 27:4,13).

Divine Titles in the Book of Daniel

The Divine Presence is demonstrated throughout Daniel's life, and forms an important part of this book. It is seen in the preparation of the young captive for his future appointments. The *elohim* overshadowed his experiences and prepared the prince of the eunuchs of Babylon to extend friendship to his young charge (ch. 1:9). Throughout his long and dramatic life Daniel was visited by visions, angels and circumstances that directed his path in conformity with the Divine wish. At the end, about to die, Daniel heard the comforting voice of the *elohim* once again: "Go thy way, Daniel... thou shalt rest and stand in thy lot at the end of the days" (ch. 12:9-13). Reference to the role of the angels in chapter 8 is outlined on page 201. However, it is important to carefully observe the significance of the Names and Titles of Deity found within this prophecy: the work and titles of the angels; and the various words for "man" and "men", as they reveal the manifestation of Deity in flesh.

TITLES OF DIETY

Yahweh (Translated LORD) — The Divine Name, memorialising His purpose: "He Who Will Be (Manifested)". Where this Name appears is emphasising the development of the Divine Will. Occurs in 9:2,4,10,13,14 (2),20.

Adon (Trans. lord) — Signifies a ruler, dictator, master. Occurs 1:10; 10:16.

Adonai (Trans. lords, plural) — A group of rulers associated together. Occurs 1:2; 9:3,4,7,8,9,15,16, 19 (2). The Sopherim Version replaces this word for "Yahweh" in 1:2; 9:3,4,7,9,15,16,17,19 (3).

Rab (Trans. Lord) — Refers to a captain, chief, lord or master, from a basic meaning "to be large", thus important. Occurs 2:10, in regard to the notable men of Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom.

Mare (Trans. lord) — Emphasises the domineering aspect of a lord or master. Occurs 2:47; 4:19,24; 5:23.

EI (Trans. God) — The word refers to power, strength, might, whether of Divine or Fleshly origin. Both aspects are contained in the prophecy of Daniel: 9:4 (prayer of Daniel); 11:36 (prophecy of the nations).

Eloah (Trans. God) — Means "Mighty One" (singular). A particular representative of Heaven despatched for a specific mission. Occurs 2:18,19,20,23,28,37,44,45,47; 3:15,17,25,26,

28 (2), 29 (2); 4:2,8; 5:3,18,21,23,26; 6:5,7,10,11,12,16,20, 22,23,26 (2).

Elohim (Trans. God) — Mighty Ones (plural). A title of the composite group of Divine Beings, operating on behalf of Yahweh in the performance of His will. Occurs 1:2 (3),9,17; 9:3,4,9,10,11,14,15,17,18,19,20 (2); 10:12; 11:32,37.

THE WORK AND TITLES OF THE ANGELS

Angel — Heb. (chaldee) *malach*, occurs 3:28; 6:22.

Watcher — Heb. (chaldee) *geer*, occurs 4:13,17,23.

Holy One — Heb. (chaldee) *qaddish*, occurs 4:8,13,17,18,23, 5:11; 7:18,21,22 (2),25,27; 8:13,24.

Gabriel — Heb. *gibbor El*: “The Mighty Warrior”, occurs 8:16; 9:21.

Palmoni — “Numberer of Secrets”. Translated as “that certain saint” 8:13.

Michael — “Who like El”, occurs 10:13,21; 12:1.

REFERENCES TO THE ANGELS AT WORK

Throughout the Book of Daniel reference is made to the open, and sometimes silent, work of the angels in performing the Divine will. We have listed below some of the incidents recorded by Daniel, and suggest the reader investigates this further. A valuable study that can help in personal appreciation of the angelic labours on one's own behalf will result.

In dreams — 2:1; 4:5; 7:1.

In night visions — 2:19; 8:1,2.

He that revealeth secrets — 2:29,30.

Voice from heaven — 4:31.

Hand sent from Him — 5:24.

His angel — 6:22.

He delivers — 6:27.

Ten thousand thousands ministered — 7:10.

Clouds of heaven — 7:13.

One of them that stood by — 7:16.

Palmoni (that certain saint) — 8:13.

Watcher and Holy One — 8:13, 4:13.

MAN

Adam — from a root meaning “red”, related to the earth. Occurs 8:16,17; 10:16,18.

Enosh — Mortal man, essentially weak, sickly. Occurs 2:10,38,43; 3:10; 4:16,17,25,32,33; 5:5,7,21; 6:7,12; 7:4,8,13; 10:7.

Ish — Male, upright. Occurs 9:7,21; 10:5,11,19; 12:6,7.

Gibbor — Valiant man, Warrior. Occurs 2:25; 3:8,12 (twice: certain, men), 13,20,21,22,23,24,25,27; 5:11; 6:5,11,15,24; 8:15.

SPECIAL TITLES

Messiah. Occurs in ch. 9:25,26. The title occurs only twice more (Jn. 1:41; 4:25). It means “The Anointed One”, and implies a Prince who was to come as Leader. At first the term *anointed* related to anyone anointed with the holy oil. It was applied to the High Priest (Lev. 4:3,5-16), and figuratively to Saul’s shield (2 Sam. 1:21). But the designation as used both by Daniel and John especially refers to Christ who, as the Promised Prince, is to restore Israel to more than her pristine prosperity. Israel will yet see her Messiah who was “cut off, but not for himself,” and mourn for him.

Messiah The Prince. Occurs ch. 9:25. In his outline of “the seventy weeks of years” Daniel refers to two princes who are as opposite in character as light is to darkness. There is Messiah the Prince, who was to be “cut off” or crucified, “but not for himself”, for he shall have nothing (see margin. As far as the flesh is concerned he would be without hope, but for the power of God). Then there is “the prince who, for his own behalf, shall cause reproach to cease” (ch. 11:18), whom Brother Thomas, in *Exposition of Daniel*, interprets as the Roman Consul, Scipio, who challenged Antiochus and destroyed his power (see page 50).

Michael Your Prince. In ch. 10:13, the angel Michael appears to Daniel in a remarkable vision of glory, received by the side of the great river, Hiddekel. Michael, meaning *Who Is Like El?* is described as “one of the chief princes”. He was evidently placed over the affairs of Israel (Exod. 23:20-23; Josh. 5:14 mg), and was especially involved in the events of Daniel’s prophecy, being termed: “Michael your prince” (verse 21). In the last reference to this angel in Daniel (ch. 12:1), the work of Michael is assumed by the Lord Jesus, then made “superior to the angels” (Heb. 1:4). Thus Christ will be known as “Commander” (Isa. 55:4): “Prince of Princes” (Dan. 8:27) as indicative of his high office.

Stone Cut Out. Title in Dan. 2:35,45, referring to the power of the multitudinous Christ that will destroy the Kingdom of Men in the latter days. Being of stone, there is a relationship with the earth, for Christ (and his brethren) have a common experience of human nature; yet being cut out “without hands” indicates the Divine moulding of the character of the Lord that properly equipped him to be the “captain of our salvation” (Heb. 2:10).

God of Heaven. A title of domination: 2:18,19,28,37,44.

Notice its repetition in the circumstances of the dream of Nebuchadnezzar. In his desire to promote the majesty of Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar challenged Yahweh, and lost! His empire was shown to be greatly limited, because the "Eloah of Heaven" had thus decreed! Though Nebuchadnezzar prided himself in being "a king of kings" (ch. 2:37), Daniel revealed that such a position was only at the allowance of the greater power: The Eloah of Heaven (v. 37). The monarch, on another occasion, was forced to honor the "King of Heaven" (ch. 4:37), with almighty power and direction. But his grandson, Belshazzar, ignored the majesty of the heavens, and came to his downfall. Daniel told him that he had "lifted himself against the Lord (*mare*) of heaven" (ch. 5:23).

God of Daniel; of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. Heb. *Eloah*. See ch. 2:28,29; 6:20,26. Prominently used on two occasions in which both Daniel, and his friends, were subjected to extreme trial. The latter faced the fiery furnace; Daniel was committed to the den of lions. In both cases, faith was victorious, and the gentile monarchs (Nebuchadnezzar and, later, Darius) recognised that in the titles they ascribed to the men of God. They realised that these Jews had a powerful *Eloah* superintending their affairs, and preventing their damage.

Ancient of Days. In ch. 7:9,13,22. See notes on pages 159. The *Ancient of Days* is Yahweh as Judge. He sits and presides with authority. The title emphasises His origin and destiny: from everlasting to everlasting! Underived immortality, indestructible, eternal. Manifested in the Lord Jesus Christ, Yahweh's authority is conferred upon the Son, whose decisions will bring about the Kingdom.

One Like Unto the Son of Man. In ch. 7:13, associated with the Ancient of Days. Thus a title of the Lord Jesus Christ as judge. "Man" is from the chaldean *anash*, (Heb. *enosh*), signifying weak, sickly, emphasising the mortality with which Jesus had to battle. As such he understands our needs, and can now intercede on our behalf. In Dan. 7:13 he appears with "the clouds of heaven", a description of the resurrected saints. Both "son of man" and "clouds of heaven" refer to the multitudinous Christ, once struggling in weakness against sin, but now in majestic immortality they appear before the Ancient of Days to receive the Kingdom.

Great and Dreadful God. Mentioned in Daniel in his intercessory prayer: Ch. 9:4. "God" is *El* in Heb. signifying "strength, power". It is part of the introductory address to "Yahweh, the Power that is Great and to be Feared", by which Daniel shows his realisation that God had the ability and power to effect His purpose. Significantly, Moses has previously used

this title (Deut. 7:21-22) when warning the people of the challenge of the Gentiles. Israel was to show no fear to the nations, for the "great and dreadful El" was at hand to support and strengthen the arm of faith. Daniel takes up this refrain and draws upon the same power in his significant circumstances.

God of Forces. A reference to apostate figures (ch. 11:38), worshipped by the Emperors of the Roman power. "God" is *eloah*: mighty one, but only such in the minds of the deluded. The word "forces" is better translated "protectors" (mg). The protectors of this god are the saints of Catholicism, called upon by its adherents in time of need; the "St. Patricks, St. Peters, St. Christophers" and so forth of which the Catholic Church is full. The so-called immortal souls of these "saints" are supposed to protect their devotees, and to them candles are burned.

Prince of the host. Occurs ch. 8:11. Heb. *sar-hatz-zayad*, "commander of the army." The title occurs in the context of aggression by the "little horn of the goat": the military power of Rome. This developed against the Jewish people, and since they rejected their "commander" the power of Rome was, for a time, victorious. Christ was crucified and the "host" was exiled. Notice, however, the contrast in verse 25.

Prince of princes. ch. 8:25. This title develops out of the vision of the "prince of the host" (verse 11) which refers to the vanquished forces of Israel and the loss of their Divinely-appointed commander (the Lord Jesus Christ). But as "Prince of princes" he re-appears to renew the combat against "the man of sin" and to secure the victory. The title "of princes" indicates that the army supporting him, are themselves like him (1 John 3:2): immortal, invincible, glorious. They are princes by achievement and appointment (Rev. 5:10), having conquered sin in their lives. Now, as Yahweh Elohim, they stand supreme in all the earth.

The Most High God. Heb: *Elah Elyon* (or Chaldee: *Illei*), in ch. 3:26; 4:2, 17, 24, 25, 32, 34; 5:18, 21; 7:18, 22, 25 (twice), 27. A Mighty One superior to the monarchs of Babylon. The term "Most High" is in the plural in the original Chaldee, and refers to the manifestation of Yahweh in His saints. In context, the title will be seen in contrast to the powers of earth. So in ch. 5:21, the Kingdom of Men is subject to the overriding angelic control. When used in ch. 3:26 by Nebuchadnezzar after the incident of the fiery furnace, it is done so on the background of the "fourth" man visible in the furnace, and who was "like a son of god." The angelic presence saved three Jews, and revealed to the king that there was an angelic power superior to his.

VERSE 21

“Yea, whilst I was speaking in prayer” — We are not informed how long the prayer continued. It is probable that we have only the substance of it, and that Daniel has recorded only the topics on which he dwelt more at length. The subject was of great importance and it is reasonable to suppose that a day had been devoted to an examination of the prophecies, to meditation and to solemn prayer.

“Even the man Gabriel” — Gabriel had already appeared to him (ch. 8:16 — see notes on page 201). The word “man” is from the Heb. *ish*, defining a great person. Gabriel is revealed as an angel to whom is entrusted important announcements of the Divine purpose to mankind (see also Luke 1:19,26). The angels are “ministering spirits, sent forth to minister to them who shall be heirs of salvation” (Heb. 1:14, where “ministering” relates to a public servant; one who renders a service). The re-appearance of Gabriel in Daniel’s life would have been most comforting, if startling, to the praying prophet. It was visible evidence of Yahweh’s interest in Daniel’s plea.

“Whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning” — Daniel recognises a further Divine intervention in his life and is encouraged by the continuing Hand of Providence. See ch. 8:1,16.

“Being caused to fly swiftly” — The word “fly” is from *yaaph*, “to tire”; while “swiftly” is from *yeaph*, “fatigue; utter exhaustion”. It would be incongruous to relate this condition to the angel. The construction of the original text is difficult, but the NASB version translates the phrase: “came to me in my extreme weariness”. So intense had been Daniel’s prayer, so utterly absorbed was he in pleading, that his physical state had been affected to this extent. Real prayer can cause this, as the petitioner involves himself completely in his exercise. So the Master, in the Garden of Gethsemane (Luke 22:44), “being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground”.

“Touched me” — Daniel was absorbed in prayer, requiring the angel to make him aware of his presence.

“About the time of the evening oblation” — A significant time for prayer. Though the altar was in ruins, the prayers of faithful Jews continued to be offered instead of the evening sacrifice (Psa. 141:2). This was at the ninth hour of the day, about 3 p.m.

The oblation relates to the obligatory morning and evening sacrifices described in Num. 28:1-8, but in captivity, Israel was unable to maintain such rituals. Ezra also pleaded at the time of “the evening sacrifice” concerning the sins of his people (Ch. 9:1-5). Whilst prayer should not be restricted to “special times” and should be a constant companion in our daily life (as was the experience of Nehemiah — Ch. 2:4; 4:4, etc), it is very helpful to recall certain events and to figuratively join in prayer with others. If absent from one’s ecclesia, it is good to bow in prayer when our ecclesial-companions would be so doing — such as at the usual time of the Memorial Meeting.

Daniel’s practice was to engage formally in prayer three times each day (ch. 6:10). The final prayer, at the “time of the evening oblation” points forward to the Lord’s offering at the end of the Mosaic dispensation (Heb. 9:26), as the complete, and real, sacrifice provided for salvation. Ezra likewise pleaded at the “time of evening sacrifice” (Heb. *minchah*) concerning sins of his people in “mingling themselves with the people of those lands” (Ezra 9:1-5).

VERSE 22

“And he informed me, and talked with me” — Daniel’s prayer was thus answered. He gained knowledge concerning his plea for Jerusalem’s liberty. Yahweh will respond to prayers uttered sincerely, for wisdom (James 1:5-6), when such a plea is accompanied by an earnest study of His revelation. The Hebrew word translated “informed” is *biyn*, meaning: “to separate mentally; to distinguish. the RV has: “instructed me”. The word

“talked” is from *dabar*, signifying, “to arrange, to speak”. So Gabriel set out the Divine program concerning Jerusalem to assuage Daniel’s anxiety.

“And said, O Daniel, I am now come forth to give thee skill and understanding” — Note margin. The NASB and NIV versions have: “to give thee insight and understanding.” The knowledge that Gabriel was to impart was not for mere curiosity, but to enable him to understand the Divine purpose and to prepare his life accordingly. He had previously been given “skill” to challenge the Chaldean Wise Men (ch. 1:17), but now had to gain an insight into the future work of God that others might be encouraged thereby. He had to “understand and “consider” the vision (ch. 9:23), in order to benefit. A great blessing attaches to the Apocalypse (the counterpart of Daniel in the New Testament) subsequent upon a careful consideration of its message (Rev. 1:3).

Such a wisdom comes from the Word of Truth, properly studied, intelligently understood, and enthusiastically embraced. It will give us wisdom beyond that available to the world with all its “wise,” since “we speak wisdom among them that are perfect (Gr. *telios*, mature)... not the wisdom of this world, but the wisdom of God” (1 Cor. 2:1-10). It is essential to develop beyond the “milk” of the Word, found in the elementary principles of the Word, and enjoy the “meat” found in the deeper teachings of doctrine and prophecy. This will make us “skilful” in righteousness (Heb. 5:12-14), manifesting a maturity of discernment which finds favor with God.

VERSE 23

“At the beginning of thy supplications the commandment came forth” — The moment that Daniel’s desire was strong enough to shape itself into words, the answer was on its way! Though he was interrupted in prayer (vv. 20, 21), Gabriel expresses that the Divine reaction to his supplications was immediate. His prayer began with the acknowledgement of the Covenant Name of Yahweh, and the confession

of the people’s failings (v. 4-5). At that moment Gabriel received instruction to enlighten the prophet concerning these matters and does so in a way that emphasises the Divine willingness to heed the actions of faithful men. See Isa. 65:24; Heb. 1:14; Psa. 103:20.

“I am come to show thee; for Thou art greatly beloved” — Daniel is three times given this title (ch. 10:11, 19). He thus stands with John, to whom was given the Apocalypse (John 21:20, 24). The word for “beloved” is *chamad*, and signifies “desirable one”; an object of great pleasure. His faith, diligence, and unswerving loyalty to the Truth brought such a response from the angel. Yahweh takes delight in those who are upright (Prov. 11:20), who deal truly (ch. 12:22), and who are constant in prayer (ch. 15:8). Such imitate the character of His “beloved” Son (Matt. 3:17).

“Therefore understand the matter, and consider the vision” — The answer given would go beyond the immediate concern of the prophet, to matters of great importance concerning his people. It needed, therefore, his concentration upon what would be revealed. Some translations rearrange the statement: “Consider the matter, and understand the vision” (R.V.); “Give heed to the message and gain understanding of the vision” (NASB). Christ also endorsed this angelic exhortation (Matt. 24:15), thus confirming the importance and benefit gained by an understanding of these prophecies.

The Prophecy of the Seventy Weeks — vv. 24-27

Daniel’s anticipation of an immediate relief of the crisis of Jewry would not be realised. But in setting out the Divine program, Gabriel revealed that a certain time period would elapse before Messiah would appear, and taught Daniel that Yahweh would further discipline His people; provide a sacrifice for sin; and ultimately destroy the Gentile oppressor. The prophecy, therefore, has a double application, reaching to the epoch of the Second Advent. Daniel was expecting the manifestation of full

glory in his time, but is told that the complete period of time commenced from the establishment of Israel in the Land (when the Jubilee year commenced) until the final glorification would be achieved. As a typical fulfillment of Daniel's plea for Israel's salvation, he is told of the primary victory of Messiah at his first advent, accomplishing the successes of verse 24. Then, as though to show the reason of this long delay, the explanation of verse 25 is added, leading to the crucifixion of Messiah. His work of overcoming the sin-power during the seventy weeks prophesied, illustrate the ultimate destruction of Israel's enemies.

VERSE 24

"Seventy weeks are determined" —

The Hebrew is literally "seventy sevens" (*shibiyim shebuwah*), translated by Bro. Thomas in *Exposition of Daniel* (p. 31), as "Seventy heptades", a period of 490 years. Daniel anticipated the salvation of Jewry after seventy years, according to the prophecy of Jeremiah (ch. 9:2; Jer. 25:13; 30:2). He is now told that the 70 years of Jeremiah was but a limited restoration, for the oppressor would rise again. At the close of seventy-sevens, however, one would arise who would bring the complete restoration for which Daniel longed.

The "seventy weeks" are divided into three periods: a seven weeks, a sixty two weeks (v.25), and a one week (v.27). In all cases the word "weeks" is from the root word *sheva*, "seven", indicating a complete period of time. On a day-for-a-year principle, a week of seven days indicates a period of seven years. The principle is established in Gen. 29:27; Num. 14:34; Mic. 7:15. Thus, Daniel is informed about a period of 70 x 7 (490 years) made up of a 7 x 7 (49 years), a 62 x 7 (434 years), and a 1 x 7 (7 years).

The word "determined" signifies "to cut off; to decree" (Heb. *chathak*). This significant 490 years is divided into three specific sections, each one carefully distinguished, whilst the whole defines a special period which would conclude with the cutting off of

Messiah.

"Upon thy people and upon thy holy city" — To answer Daniel's question concerning the people (v. 15) and the city (v. 16). Jerusalem is spoken of as "thy" (Daniel's) city because he represented the nation whose capital was then in ruins.

In *Exp. of Daniel* (pp. 31-35), Bro. Thomas suggests six particulars to be accomplished during the period of 49 years, stating: "Daniel learned that there were six particulars to become accomplished facts before an army should be given to the Romano-Greek Babylonian Little Horn, against the evening and morning sacrifice for the suppression of it, and the destruction of the holy city and people, and the consequent abolition of the Mosaic law and constitution. These important particulars may be thus ordinarily presented: (1) The perfecting of Judah's transgression; (2) The causing to cease from sin-offerings; (3) The covering of iniquity; (4) The bringing in a righteousness of ages; (5) The sealing of the vision and prophet; (6) The anointing of the Holy One of holy ones".

"To finish the transgression" — The first of six particulars to be accomplished during the period of 490 years.

"Finish" is from the Hebrew *kala*, meaning "to restrict", or restrain by enclosing or separating. The crucifixion of Christ was the culmination of their transgression against God. Their rebellion against God would be "restricted" or controlled by bringing that age to an end. Christ challenged them to fulfil these terms: "Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers" (Matt. 23:32). The Roman Power was permitted to overshadow Judah as a means of bringing their rebellion against Yahweh to a head. At the trial of Jesus, the heaven-sent King of the Jews, the people shouted "Away with him; crucify him; we will not have this man to rule over us." They preferred the Roman Caesar, and this decision concluded the period of Divine mercy. The Lord of the Jewish vineyard would "come and destroy these husbandmen, and shall give the vineyard to others"

(Luke 20:16). Their outward observance, but inward contempt, of Yahweh's requirements would cease, and the nation again be exiled into Gentile lands. This occurred within the generation of those who so vigorously and foolishly rejected Messiah the Prince.

“And to make an end of sins” — The Hebrew for “end” is *chatham*, indicating “to seal up, to complete, to finish”, as in the margin. The word is used as “mark” by which an action is prominently displayed as completing a process. Bro. Thomas renders the phrase: “to cause to cease from sin offering”. This was accomplished by the Lord individually at his first advent, when his offering superseded those under the Law. Concerning offerings for sins, for both priest and people, Christ offered “once, when he offered up himself” (Heb. 7:27), and that was “at the end of the age when he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself” (ch. 9:26). Christ’s work as the sin offering was “sealed up” or completed by his resurrection (Rom. 1:4-5; 4:24-25; Heb. 10:14, 18; 9:14-15).

Some render “sins” in this phrase as “sin” (offering), from the Hebrew *chata*, meaning “to miss the mark”. It is rendered “sin” about 170 times, and “sin offering” about 120 times. The death and resurrection of Messiah brought an end to sin offerings under the Mosaic Law (Heb. 9:26). His offering was complete, whereas the blood of animals was merely typical. Instead of the repentant sinner bringing his offering to the priest and putting his hand on the head of the animal to identify himself with the death of the animal, as was the requirement of the Law, it is now essential to recognise Christ as the all-embracing offering available to those of faith who identify themselves with his work (1 John 1:9).

“And to make reconciliation for iniquity” — More literally, “to cover iniquity”. “Reconciliation”, from the Hebrew *kaphar*, means to cover, to overlay as with pitch (Gen. 6:14), and hence to provide forgiveness. The word is elsewhere rendered “atone-

ment”. Since by man sin has entered the world, it was necessary to provide a means by which that separation between sinful man and his God might be removed. Bro. Thomas explains it thus: “A good conscience is without shame or fear. Transgression of law, or sin, converts a good conscience into a bad one, and develops shame and fear. Before he sinned, Adam’s conscience was good; he was naked, but not at all ashamed, or afraid of the presence of the Elohim; but immediately after, his conscience being defiled, shame and fear caused him to hide himself, because he was uncovered. This teaches us that sin needs to be covered. Adam felt this, and undertook to cover his own sin in the best way he could devise, being ignorant of the manner in which sin is covered by Divine appointment. But the Lord God stripped him of his own device, which did not recognize the principle of blood-shedding in the covering of iniquity. He taught Adam to shed the blood of a lamb, and to cover his nakedness with its skin. This was the lamb slain at the foundation of the world, and represented him who is the Lamb typically slain from the foundation of the world. Adam and his wife were in this way clothed by Yahweh Elohim; and being thus clothed, their iniquity was expiated or covered.”

But though forgiveness was achieved, and mankind stood again in relationship with Deity, the animal sacrifices could not remove the blot of sin. Such a sin-covering was only typical, and anticipated the provision of one whose obedience would produce life, and provide hope of resurrection for those who aligned themselves with him. The Lord Jesus was the “Lamb slain from the foundation of the world” (Rev. 13:8). Through his death we are “reconciled”, and through his life we are saved (Rom. 5:10; 2 Cor. 5:18).

Daniel sought the forgiveness of his people (ch. 9:16). Gabriel now reveals the means by which this would be accomplished: through Messiah the Prince.

“And to bring in” — A specific and direct action would go beyond fulfilling

the request of the prophet that the people be forgiven. Now, the revelation of Divine salvation is revealed. As three negatives have been stated ("finish transgression", "end sins", "reconcile iniquity"), so three positive principles follow ("everlasting righteousness", "sealing the vision", "anointing the most holy").

"Everlasting righteousness" — The atoning work of Christ would not only cover sins, but also provide a justification for "the ages" (Heb. *olahm*, "everlasting"). *Olahm* refers to a concealed or hidden period, not necessarily to time without end. The Mosaic age is referred to in Exod. 27:21; 28:43, but justification was limited by the "blood of bulls and goats" (Heb. 9:13). Messiah, by his sacrifice and resurrection, was to introduce an age of "better righteousness" by which he would become the mediator of the New Covenant (v. 15).

The word "righteousness" (Heb. *tsedeq*) signifies to be justified, made righteous. Sinners are accounted righteous on the basis of their faith when they are baptised (1 Cor. 1:30; Phil. 3:9).

Bro. Thomas comments: "If Messiah the Prince had not been cut off for his people 'a righteousness of ages' could not have been brought in. Faith in the things of the Kingdom could not have been counted for righteousness to life in the future ages of glory without a propitiatory or mercy seat, sprinkled with blood. The cutting off of Jesus provided this indispensable *kaporeth*, or cover for sin: so that he being slain and raised from the dead, the means of a sinner's justification, styled 'The Righteousness of God', was brought in or completed within the period appointed" ("*Exposition of Daniel*, p. 34).

This statement is the antithesis of the "first negative": to conclude the transgression. Instead of the filling up of transgression, there would be the extending of righteousness, by which a person would become accounted righteous or holy.

"And to seal up the vision and

prophecy" — By this statement Daniel is told that any further revelations would be unnecessary when the Messiah appears. Every vision and prophecy of the past would be fulfilled in the Lord; and this was the Divine seal upon his ministry. He confirmed the promises (Rom. 15:8), and completed all the typical foreshadowings that had previously revealed the progressive Divine purpose.

However, the word "prophecy" is in the masculine gender, and is better rendered "prophet" (Heb. *nebiy*). Jesus was the prophet who should come (Deut. 18:15; John 7:31; Luke 7:20). He bore the seal as the prophet of Yahweh, for "him hath the Father sealed" (John 6:27); and on him the visions of the Old Testament prophets focussed (John 3:33; 6:27).

The second of the "negatives" referred to the "sealing up of sins", and finds its counterpart in the "sealing of vision and prophet". The offerings were to cease for the complete sacrifice had come; similarly the vision and prophet revealed that the perfect manifestation of all God's workings with mankind were fulfilled in his life, death and resurrection.

The Lord Jesus has the power to unseal, or reveal, that which was previously hidden (Matt. 28:18; Rev. 5:5-6), and will do so completely at his Second Coming.

"And to anoint the most holy" — All the appurtenances of the Tabernacle and Temple foreshadowed Messiah in different aspects. The Most Holy contained the Ark of the Covenant, the golden Mercy Seat, and the overshadowing Cherubim. It spoke of the final glorification of Christ as the perfected mediator, the manifestation of the Divine Covenant, and the means by which the cherubim of saints will ultimately find true union and glorification with their Mercy Seat. To "anoint" the most holy was to consecrate it for worship (Exod. 30:26). By this means those who came in contact with the Tabernacle and its furniture would be constituted "holy", or separated for Divine pleasure (v. 29).

The anointing consecrated an object

or person to some special office, and was used in the appointment of prophet, priest and king. Messiah was to fulfil all such offices, and in such a way as to provide the means by which others might also be so elevated. (Heb. 1:9; Matt. 3:17; Psa. 45:6). For Yahweh to anoint an object or a person is for him to acquire it for his own use or purpose. Bro. Thomas renders the phrase: "the anointing of the Holy One of holy ones" by which he shows the extension of the anointing to a further manifestation in called out ones. He comments: "This personage was the Messiah, a name signifying an anointed one. There have been many anointed ones, but the one here referred to was to be pre-eminently such; and to be anointed within the limits of the seventieth heptade (week); that is, some time between the end of the sixty-ninth and the end of the seventieth, as appears from verse 25. Believing that Jesus is Messiah the Prince, we are at no loss where to place the anointing... Luke 3:23; Acts 10:38. This fixes the baptism and anointing at three years and a few months before the crucifixion. Thus, 'God anointed him with the oil of gladness above his associates' (Psa. 45:7). He is therefore the Holy One of all these associates, or the Holy One of the holy ones, as I have rendered the text; The Most Holy, Holiest of all" (*Exp. Daniel*, p.35). The anointing also rests upon the multitudinous Christ (1 John 2:20,27; 5:7; John 6:63; Eph. 6:17).

As the final of the six statements, this one appropriately connects with the third negative ("make reconciliation for iniquity"), which expressed the work of "covering iniquity". The positive principle is here expressed, inasmuch as those who have been "covered" are now invited to be "anointed", and to ascend to heavenlies in Christ Jesus (Eph. 2:5-6).

VERSE 25

"Know therefore and understand" — Since Daniel might question the reason for a delay, he is now informed of the tremendous work that Yahweh will accomplish for His people. Mes-

siah will be sent not merely for the salvation of Israel but to effect the complete overthrow of the serpent-power, the fulfilment of Gen. 3:15. Gabriel desires to awaken the interest and attention of Daniel to the importance of the explanation he is about to give concerning the six features of the previous verse. The word "know" is from the Hebrew *yada*, which signifies to ascertain by seeing; hence to develop knowledge. "Understand" is from *sakal*, to be circumspect; to have intelligence in a matter. It is different from the word "understand" in verse 23, which is from *beyn*, to separate or distinguish mentally. Thus, Gabriel first invited Daniel to actively investigate for himself the meaning of what was being told; whereas now he is to be instructed in matters of fact.

"That from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem" — This decree was to come from the power then in control of the holy land. Daniel realised that the period of seventy years captivity foretold by Jeremiah was almost over, and anticipated the restoration of Jerusalem (verse 2). Cyrus of Persia authorised the rebuilding of the Temple (Ezra 1:1,2); but it was Artaxerxes who fulfilled this prophecy concerning the city (Neh. 2:1,12).

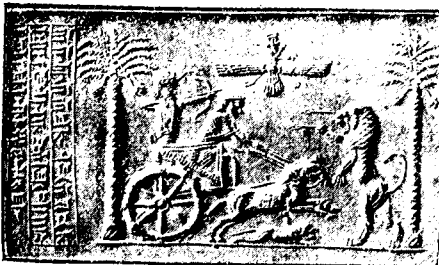
There is considerable diversity by historians in setting out Persian dynasties and dates, and it is difficult to provide accurate times for this period. The word "Artaxerxes" is a title (meaning *chief-ruler*) given to all the Persian kings. Some, therefore, think that the ruler referred to in Nehemiah, and the Ahasuerus of Esther, is Darius Hystaspes. Others think he was Longimanus, who followed Xerxes and Artabanus. This period of Persian history is acknowledged by most historians and commentators to be the most difficult in the whole realm of Bible Chronology.

Rollin places the reign of Artaxerxes Longimanus at BC473-425, others list it as BC465-423. Some, therefore, identify the Artaxerxes of Nehemiah's record as this king, and consequently, the 20th year of his reign would be BC



Historical Record of the Fall of Babylon

Left: Cylinder of Cyrus, inscribed with an account of his capture of the city of Babylon. Below: Cylinder Seal inscribed with the name of Darius, King of Persia.



445 (when Nehemiah first visited Jerusalem). This dating allows for the decree of Cyrus in BC 536, the completion of the Temple in BC 516, and then a long break until BC457 when Ezra returned, and 13 years later for the visit of Nehemiah.

This is the normal dating of the Books of Nehemiah, Malachi & Ezra.

However, there are difficulties with the normal dating, as it requires too long a period of time between when Ezra was born and when he returned to Jerusalem. This problem is solved by accepting the Artaxerxes of the decree as being Darius Hystaspes. The considerable confusion over Persian dating allows this, and the reasons given are set out in the "Revised Dating" sections on pp. 250-252. The 490 years then are dated from BC 502, and, adjusting the suggested 45 years difference, conclude in AD 33, with the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ (dating his birth from AD 1).

"Unto the Messiah the

Prince” — This title identifies the personage who would accomplish the six features of verse 24 already mentioned. *Messiah* means an anointed or consecrated one. It is synonymous with the Greek word *Christ*, and was the title that Peter used in his great declaration: “Thou art the Christ (Messiah)” (Matt. 16:16). He, thus identified Jesus with the fulfilment of Daniel’s prophecy and the one who would perform the tremendous work of salvation. The disciples later enquired as to the time when the Christ would “restore again the kingdom to Israel” (Acts 1:6).

He was to be also anointed as Prince, as one of royal dignity. Thus the prophecy anticipated the coming of the great leader of Israel, for whom Daniel had prayed in verse 17: “cause Thy face to shine upon Thy sanctuary”.

The Messiah is given three different titles in Dan. 8,9. In ch. 8:11 he is styled “the prince of the host” (*sar tsaba*). In ch. 8:25 he becomes “the Prince of princes” (*sar sarim*). Now, in this verse, he is “Messiah the Prince” (*mashiyach nahgid*). Furthermore, in Ezekiel’s description of the Prince in the Kingdom Age, he uses the term *nahsi* (Ezek. 45:16 and elsewhere in ch. 46, 48). Why such changes? Bro. Thomas explains:

“If *sar* means prince in the sense in which the Son of Man is a prince royal ... why is he not (in ch. 9:25) styled ‘the anointed *sar*’? ... I take it that there was design in the variety, each word (*sar* and *nahgid*) being adapted to the Son of Man in the part he was represented as enacting at the time; thus, while breaking the Russo-Gogian confederacy he is called *sar* (ch. 8:25 as a military title); when making expiation for iniquity his military character is veiled, and he is styled the anointed most holy one, or *nahgid* (ch. 9:25), and when elevated to the throne of Israel, he is termed *nahsi* (Ezek. 45:16): so that a *sar* anointed becomes a *nahgid*, and a *nahgid* elevated to his throne becomes a *nahsi*” (*Exposition of Daniel*, p. 42).

“Shall be seven weeks” — Seven *sevens* (see v. 24). This is a period of 49

years, during which Ezra and Nehemiah endeavoured to rebuild and restore the wall of Jerusalem, and to reconstitute the nation. They were perilous and troublesome times as forecast in this verse, and fulfilled in Ezra 4:1,4; Neh. 2:19; 4:1,8 etc. Thus, this period represents the first Jubilee period of the 490 years divided off to emphasise the time of the decree, and the period of the rebuilding.

“And threescore and two weeks” — Sixty-two *sevens* (see v. 24). A period of 434 years which extended beyond the revival of Jewry in the times of the Maccabees which followed Nehemiah, to the domination of the nation by the Romans. It was a period of great expectation for Jewry. They sought a leader with pomp and splendor to overthrow their enemies, when they would be “holpen with a little help” (Dan. 11:34). The time period introduced the advent of Messiah, and the proclamation of John the Baptist as forerunner.

“The street shall be built again” — The word can signify the broadspace, a spacious open area capable of allowing a large gathering of people. Instead of the heaps of rubble that was the scene in Jerusalem at the time of the prophecy a restoration was promised. The city would once again be laid out in orderly streets and squares, providing a typical fulfilment of Zechariah’s prophecy: “the streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing” (ch. 8:5). The area is described in Ezra 10:9 as the court before the Temple, and this would be restored to its former condition (Neh. 8:1,3,16).

“And the wall” — The Hebrew *charuwts* signifies a trench, from something cut in or dug out. The word is rendered in Isa. 28:27 as “threshing instrument”. Hence it suggests a form of defence. The prophecy describes the city being developed both within (“street”) and without (“wall”) so as to be thoroughly and entirely rebuilt. This was fulfilled in the days of

Revised Dating For Daniel's "Seventy Weeks" Prophecy

The prophecy is to be dated from the "decree to restore and to build Jerusalem" (Dan. 9:25), which Nehemiah indicated was in the "20th year of Artaxerxes the king" of Persia (Neh. 2:1). This is usually accepted as being the year BC 445, and the king at the time as being Artaxerxes Longimanus who ruled Persia between BC 465 and 423. In accordance with this, it is suggested that the original decree of Cyrus was in BC 536, the completion of the Temple in BC 515, and then a long break until BC 459 when Ezra returned to Jerusalem.

However, in *Story of the Bible* (May 1963, Vol. 7, p. 24-27) Bro. H. P. Mansfield points out a number of difficulties with this method of dating. He suggests that the Artaxerxes who gave the decree to restore and build Jerusalem was Darius Hystaspes, the king of Persia in the time of Ezra, Nehemiah and Esther, and makes the following comments:

If we accept Artaxerxes Longimanus as the regent of the decree, then Ezra would have been 128 years of age when he came from Babylon, and at least 141 when he walked in procession at the dedication of the wall, for he was the son of Seraiah (Ezra 7:1), who was slain by Nebuchadnezzar (2 Kings 25:8,18-21). Ezra would therefore have been at least one year (or probably older) in the year BC 587, when Nebuchadnezzar finally overthrew Jerusalem.

In addition, Neh. 10:1-13 shows that of the 30 priests and levites who returned with Zerubbabel in BC 536, 20 of them signed the covenant with Nehemiah. Accepting the normal dating, they were all still alive 91 years after their return from Babylon, though even then they had already been heads of their families in the days of Zerubbabel!

The Artaxerxes of Nehemiah's time reigned at least 32 years (Neh. 5:14; 13:6). No other Persian king before Longimanus did this, except Darius Hystaspes, and in the Apocryphal Book of 1 Esdras, Artaxerxes is identified as Hystaspes.

Artaxerxes, Darius, Ahasuerus etc. are titles, not personal names, and the Persian kings were in the habit of using several of these, so that one king might use all three titles. This, indeed, is the case, we believe, and this could mean that the Darius of Ezra, the Artaxerxes of Nehemiah, and the Ahasuerus of Esther, all relate to Darius Hystaspes who reigned for 36 years from BC 521 (according to recognised dating). As Ezra left Babylon in the seventh year of this king (Ezra 7:7), this would only be 72 years after the final destruction of the city by Nebuchadnezzar.

The identification of Artaxerxes, Darius and Ahasuerus with Darius Hystaspes also eliminates most difficulties otherwise associated with the record.

There is still a problem, however, with the dating in Daniel 9:24. The "seventy-sevens" (490 years) stretches from "the going forth of the commandment to restore Jerusalem" (v.25) until the death of Messiah (v.25). This commandment was that issued to Nehemiah by Artaxerxes (Neh. 2:1), which was in the 20th year of the king, and approximately BC 501 — thus about 534 years before the death of Christ (44 years longer than the prophecy requires) if we accept the normal dating for history.

There is, however, some doubt concerning the normal dates of the Persian historians. If the Scriptural account is accepted, it means that the history of the world is about 44 years less than profane history gives it between the issuing of the decree of Nehemiah 2 (the commencing date for the 70 weeks prophecy of Daniel) and the death of Christ.

In support of this claim, the following statement of a chronologer on this period of time, is of importance:

"The actual chronology of this period has never yet been accurately determined. The received chronology, though universally accepted, is dependent on the list of the kings, and the number of the years assigned to them in *Ptolemy's Canon* (of kings and dates). Ptolemy (AD 70-161) was a great constructive genius. He was the author of the Ptolemaic system of Astronomy. He was one of the founders of the Science of Geography. But in Chronology he was only a late compiler and contriver, not an original witness, and not a contemporary historian, for he lived in the 2nd century after Christ. He is the only authority for the chronology of this period. He is not corroborated. He is contradicted, both by the Persian National Traditions preserved in Firdusi, by the Jewish National Traditions preserved in the *Seder Olam*, and by the writings of Josephus" (*Romance of Bible Chronology*, Martin Anstey).

Ptolemy set out to catalog the kings in world history. But in the Persian reigns he had no means of accurately determining the length of some, nor the years during which they ruled. The records were very vague, and have never been substantiated. His task would be equivalent to somebody today attempting to determine the length of reign of kings over 500 years ago without any authentic records to provide a proper basis. Ptolemy therefore made his own chronology, and this conflicts with Daniel's period of time.

Ptolemy's chronology does not agree with the (1) National traditions of Persia, (2) the national traditions of the Jews, (3) the testimony of Josephus, and (4) well-authenticated events such as the conference of Solon with Croesus, and the flight of Themistocles to the court of Artaxerxes Longimanus, which make the suggested times of Ptolemy's chronology impossible.

Thus, it is better to rely on the chronology of Daniel 9 which shows that 490 yrs would end with the appearance of Messiah,

the prince. Whatever Persian monarch gave the commandment (some say Cyrus, others Darius Hystaspes, and others again Darius Longimanus), it is certain that the prophecy focuses on the first advent of the Lord. At the time of his birth, some in Israel were "waiting for the consolation of Israel" towards the end of the "threescore and two-sevens" period (Luke 2:25,38). Daniel's prophecy must have excited their interest, and their anticipation heightened, as the period of 483 years drew nigh. Though they knew not the "day nor hour" they were commended for a devout and earnest expectation of the coming Messiah, and were rewarded in seeing "the Lord's Christ" (v. 26).

The Significant Seven

It is important to note that the prophecy of 70 weeks is based upon the number seven. There is 7 weeks (7 x 7 years), 62 weeks (7 x 62 years) and 1 week (7 years). Seven is the number of the covenant. The Hebrew *sheva* is translated both "seven" and "oath". The prophecy was the confirmation of the oath given to Abraham, and to be confirmed in the work of Messiah (Heb. 6:17-20). It was to this that Zacharias gave expression at the birth of his son, in acknowledging the coming of one who would "perform the mercy promised to our fathers, and to remember his holy covenant; the *oath* which he sware to our father Abraham.." (Luke 1:72-73). In keeping with the promise, Daniel forecast the coming of Messiah during the 70 weeks period, culminating in the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus on Golgotha's hill.

Nehemiah, as the ecclesia set itself to develop internal strength and provide external protection against its enemies (Neh. 2:20; 6:15).

"Even in troublous times" — The rebuilding project, superintended by Nehemiah, attracted the antagonism of Samaritan and Ammonite opposition. Outright attacks, verbal ridicule, treacherous intrigue were all parts of the wiles of the adversary (cp. Neh. 2:19; 4:1,7; 6:2). The Jews are not strangers to opposition and trouble from their enemies, but this was a time of extreme pressure, which would occur within the first 49 years of the prophecy. It was typical of the days of "Jacob's trouble" which are yet to occur as part of the second "rebuilding program" at the coming of Christ (Jer. 30:7).

VERSE 26

"And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off" — This period of 434 years after the first 49 years concluded, prepared the nation for the first advent of Messiah in order to "confirm the promises made to the fathers" (Rom. 15:8). The sacrifice of Messiah was not to occur within this period, but "after" and as the prophecy continues to reveal, there would be another seven years (v. 27). The events of this remarkable period from BC 413 to AD 21 are described in more detail in Dan. 11:1-39.

The words "cut off" are from *karath*, commonly translated, to be cut down, to destroy with the idea of a violent death by the agency of others. It refers to one who was assassinated, murdered by a mob, or appointed to death by a

Detailed Chronology of Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther

By H. P. Mansfield, "Story of the Bible", Vol. 7, page 28

In which Bro. Mansfield suggests that Darius Hystaspes was the Persian monarch during the period of 36 years, embracing Ezra to Nehemiah. If correct, then Hystaspes would have given the commandment "to restore and build Jerusalem" (Neh. 2:1,12) in his twentieth year.

Day	Mth.	Year	King	Reference	Event
		2	Darius	Ezra 4:24	Rebuilding of Temple recommenced.
		3	Ahasuerus	Est. 1:1-5	Vashti deposed.
4	9	4	Darius	Zech. 7:1	Instructions regarding fasts.
		6	Ahasuerus	Est. 2:8-16	Esther brought to Shushan.
3	12	6	Darius	Ezra 6:15	Temple completed.
14	1	6	Darius	Ezra 6:19	Passover observed.
		10	Ahasuerus	Est. 2:16-18	Esther's marriage.
1	1	7	Artaxerxes	Ezra 7:1-9	Ezra leaves Babylon.
9	1	7	Artaxerxes	Ezra 8:15-21	Ezra halts 3 days at Ahava.
12	1	7	Artaxerxes	Ezra 8:31	Ezra leaves Ahava.
1	5	7	Artaxerxes	Ezra 7:9	Ezra arrives at Jerusalem.
4	5	7	Artaxerxes	Ezra 8:33	Vessels delivered to the Temple.
20	9	-	Artaxerxes	Ezra 10:9	Assembly at Jerusalem.
1	10	-	Artaxerxes	Ezra 10:16	Assize begun to assess heathen marriages.
1	1	-	Artaxerxes	Ezra 10:17	Assize finished.
		12	Ahasuerus	Est. 3:7	Haman casts lots.
13	1	12	Ahasuerus	Est. 3:12	Posts go out.
15	1	12	Ahasuerus	Est. 5:1-8	Esther's appeal.
16	1	12	Ahasuerus	Est. 5:8	Esther's banquet.
23	3	12	Ahasuerus	Est. 8:9-14	Mordecai's posts.
13	12	12	Ahasuerus	Est. 9:1-12	Massacre day.
14	12	12	Ahasuerus	Est. 9:15-17	1st Purim.
15	12	12	Ahasuerus	Est. 9:18-27	2nd Purim.
		9	20 Artaxerxes	Neh. 1:1	Hanani's report.
		1	20 Artaxerxes	Neh. 2:1	Nehemiah leaves for Jerusalem.
25	6	20	Artaxerxes	Neh. 6:15	Wall finished.
1	7	-	Artaxerxes	Neh. 8:2	Public reading of Law by Ezra.
2	7	-	Artaxerxes	Neh. 8:13	They read of dwelling in booths.
15	7	-	Artaxerxes	Neh. 8:18	Feast of Tabernacles.
21	7	-	Artaxerxes	Neh. 8:18	Completion of Feast.
22	7	-	Artaxerxes	Neh. 8:18	Day of solemn assembly.
24	7	-	Artaxerxes	Neh. 9:1-2	Heathen wives put away.
		32	Artaxerxes	Neh. 13:6	Nehemiah returns to Jerusalem after leave of absence.

The above chronology, which gathers together most of the references to time periods in these contemporary books, is based upon the suggestion that Darius, Ahasuerus, and Artaxerxes are titles assumed by one king — Hystaspes. Sometimes a slight confusion is apparent in a few cases where months are numbered according to their position on the calendar instead of from the time when the king began to reign. For example, "Adar" of

Ezra 6:15 is the 12th month of the sacred year, whereas the "first month" of Ezra 6:19, is the first month of the ensuing year. But both occurred in the 6th year of Darius, for his sixth year overlapped the Jewish sacred year. The above chronology is an attempt to synchronise the events of Ezra, Nehemiah and Esther, and appears the most logical and consistent when all problems are considered.

The dates and events of the Book of Esther fit in exactly with the reign of Darius Hystaspes. Hystaspes occupied the first 2 years of his reign in overthrowing Gomates, and other pretenders to the throne of Persia. The 3rd year was thus a year of peace (cp. Est. 1:3). Babylon revolted against him twice; once in the 1st year of his reign, and again in the 4th. On this 2nd occasion, the siege was a tedious affair, lasting nearly two years (Herod. 3:151). This brings us down to the 6th year of Hystaspes, and explains how it was that though Vashti was divorced in the 3rd year of Ahasuerus, he was not married to Esther until his 7th year (Est. 1:3; 2:16). He was busily engaged in the Babylonian war.

There is nothing in the character of Ahasuerus that does not fit all we know of Darius from classical literature. In fact, the reference to tribute and money matters, to the postal service, and above all his friendly disposition towards the Jews, agrees exactly with what we know of Darius, the organiser of the Empire who issued the decrees of Ezra 6:6-12; 7:12-26.

The extent of Persian rule under Ahasuerus (Est. 1:1) also agrees with that under Darius Hystaspes. He conquered India in 508 BC, divided the Empire into Satrapies, assigning to each its governor, and fixing the tribute which was to be paid him by the several nations. He ruled over the full extent of land indicated in Esther 1:1. Herodotus writes concerning Hystaspes: "The Indians, who were more numerous than any other nation with which we are acquainted, paid a tribute exceeding that of any other people" (see Est. 10:1). Herodotus speaks of the tribute he exacted from the nations "and the isles of the sea" (again see Est. 10:1). Herodotus (Book 3:96), Thucydides (Book 1), and Plato, all state that Darius Hystaspes subdued all the islands of the Aegean Sea, and Diodorus Siculus (Book 12) states that they were all lost again by his son Xerxes before the 12th year of his reign. The later kings of Persia held none of these islands. In view of Est. 1:1; 10:1 this evidence is conclusive both for the identification of Ahasuerus as Hystaspes, and against his identification with Xerxes. It is usual to identify Ahasuerus with Xerxes because of the similarity between the old Persian name Khshayarsha, the Hebrew Achashverosh (Ahasuerus), and the Greek Xerxes. But the identification is of no force, for the word in any form, and however spelt, is simply the Persian word Shah, and might be applied to any monarch who sat on the throne of Persia — "Romance of Bible Chronology".

judicial decree. It would not naturally or properly be applied to one who had lived out his days, and died a peaceful death.

"But not for himself" — The margin rendering of "and shall have nothing" is supported by RV, RSV, Roth., NASB, NIV and other versions. The RV has an explanatory note: "there shall be none belonging to him". Bro. Thomas renders it, "though nothing will be in him", and the Septuagint has

"And there is no condemnation (*krima*) in him". The sense is that he was innocent of transgression, and the violent cutting off by the Jews was unjustified. They, themselves, admitted "never man spake like this man" (John 7:46), and he challenged them: "Which of you convinceth me of sin?" (ch. 8:46). Thus his death could not be justified by wicked works, for he did none. He was the sinless victim of Jewish envy.

THE SEVENTY WEEK PROPHECY DATED FROM 20th YEAR DARIUS HYSTASPES

This chart accepts that the Darius of Ezra, the Artaxerxes of Nehemiah and the Ahasuerus of Esther are titles referring to Darius Hystaspes, the monarch of Persia who married Esther, and assisted in the restoration of Jerusalem.

BC Historic Event	Ezra	Neh.	Hag.	Zech.	Esther
538 1st year of Cyrus (538-530) and decree to build Temple	Ch. 1				
537 Altar erected in 7th month	3:1-7				
536 Temple foundation laid, 2nd month	3:8-13				
Samaritan opposition occurs	4:1-5				
529 Cambyses (530-522). The work stopped	4:7-24				
522 Gomates (Smerdis)					
521 Darius Hystaspes					
520 Temple work resumed	5:1-2				
1st of 6th month			1:1-11		
24th of 6th month			1:12-15		
21st of 7th month			2:1-9		
8th month				1:1	
24th of 9th month			2:10-23		
11th month				1:7-6:15	
Letter of Tatnai; Response to proceed	5:3-17				
518 9th month				7:1-14	
516 Temple finished					
3rd of 6th month	6:15				
515 Esther marries Darius Hystaspes, 10th month					2:16
Ezra journeys to Jerusalem; Temple service	7 to 10				
511 Haman's plot — 1st month					3:7
Purim established; 14th, 15th of 12th month					ch. 9
502 News from Jerusalem 9th month (Esther being queen in Persia)		Ch. 1			
Decree to rebuild the walls		2:1-8			
501 Nehemiah goes to Jerusalem, 1st month		2:9			
Opposition of Sanballat but walls built in 6th month		2:10-7:4			
Law read. Tabernacles held in 7th month		ch. 8			
490 Nehemiah returns to Shushan, Persia		5:14; 13:6			
486 Nehemiah returns to Jerusalem; Malachi Prophecies		13:6			
486 Xerxes reigns in Persia (486-465).					
465 Artaxerxes Longimanus (465-423).					

Accepting these dates, the decree of Dan. 9:25 would have occurred in BC 502. The 49 years of "7 weeks" concluded in BC 453. A further 434 years ("62 weeks") concluded in BC 19. The further 7 years ("1 week") con-

weeks”) concluded in BC 19. The further 7 years (“1 week”) concluded in BC 12, thus being 490 years from BC 502. Since accepted history is some 44 years longer than actual period, (see Bro. H.P. Mansfield’s suggestions) this BC 12 becomes AD 33 (i.e. 33 years after Jesus was born), and which would correspond exactly with the death of Messiah.

THE SEVENTY WEEKS PROPHECY DATED FROM 20th YEAR ARTAXERXES LONGIMANUS

This chart is on the basis that Artaxerxes Longimanus was the king during whose reign Ezra and Nehemiah were permitted to return to Jerusalem; whilst Esther had earlier been married to Darius Hystaspes.

Dating from BC 538 — BC 465 as per previous chart.

BC	Historic Event	Ezra	Neh.	Hag.	Zech.	Esther
465	Artaxerxes Longimanus (465-423)		7:1			
459	Ezra goes to Jerusalem; Temple service		7 to 10			
446	News from Jerusalem in 9th month Decree to rebuild the walls			ch. 1 2:1-8		
445	Nehemiah to Jerusalem; 1st month Opposition to Sanballat; Walls built in 6th month Law read; Tabernacles in 7th month			2:9 2:10-7:4 ch. 8		
443	Nehemiah returns to Shushan		5:14; 13:6			
430	Nehemiah returns to Jerusalem; Malachi Prophecies			13:6		

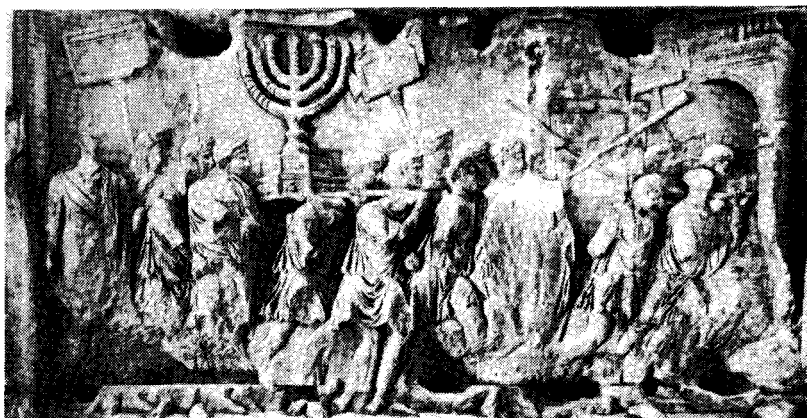
According to this reasoning, the decree of Dan. 9:25 occurred in BC 446; the “7 weeks” concluded in BC 397; the next “62 weeks” in AD 37 and a further week in AD 44.

Following the margin, “and shall have nothing”, the prophecy suggests a further feature of Messiah’s death. He would have no successor, none to continue, as indicated in Isa. 53:8, “who shall declare his generation (it would not continue) for he was cut off out of the land of the living”. He came as Messiah the Prince to reign, but did not manifest his rule as people expected, and so was cut off, and the nation was given over to the prince of its choice (John 19:15): Caesar! Consequently the kingdom promised would not be realized at his first advent.

“**And the people of the prince that shall come**” — Since the Prince is the Lord Jesus Christ, he is here seen in a different role. Previously he was “cut off”, “having nothing”, but now he has

a people, and a company of destroyers. Though killed by wicked men, his sinlessness meant that the grave could not hold him (Acts 2:24); he was resurrected to become “he that liveth and was dead” (Rev. 1:18), and of whom Peter testifies, that “he is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him” (1 Pet. 3:22). He can thus command nations and armies to do his will, as did the elohim in the past (Dan. 10:12-13).

Following the crucifixion of Jesus by “wicked men” (Acts 2:23), it was determined that punishment should be rightly executed against the “city and sanctuary” that had rejected the Divine mercy. This action was described in parable when “they that



A relief from the triumphal arch of Titus, erected in Rome (in either the late first or early second century A.D.) to commemorate the conquest of Palestine by Titus in A.D. 70 and the destruction of Jerusalem's Temple: the relief shows Romans carrying sacred and precious objects from the Temple.

were bidden to the wedding would not come" (Matt. 22:3). Such was the attitude of the Jewish nation to the first advent of Messiah the Prince. Consequently, the king (God) being wroth, sent forth "his armies" to destroy the murderers, and burn up their city (v. 7). The armies of his parable are the "people of the prince" of Daniel's prophecy: fulfilled in the Roman legions which were sent by Divine decree in AD 67-70 to destroy Jerusalem and scatter the nation.

God uses Gentile powers to discipline His chosen. Nebuchadnezzar is described as "Yahweh's servant" (Jer. 25:9). Cyrus, king of Persia was "His anointed" (Isa. 45:1). Similarly the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans is, from the Divine viewpoint, "the coming of the Son of man" (Matt. 24:27). The Lord Jesus being the Prince; the Roman armies were "his people", and executed his will.

"Shall destroy the city and the sanctuary" — AD 70 saw the greatest devastation of the Jewish commonwealth in all history. Jesus gave his Olivet Prophecy on the basis of Daniel's forecast (Matt. 24:15), and described the terrible vengeance that

would be wrought: "For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be" (v. 21). Like a sudden inundation, the Roman armies swept all before them, and left Jerusalem in ruins and the nation writhing



A coin of Vespasian (A.D. 69-79) bearing the inscription *Iudaea Capta*; it depicts a weeping Jewess (symbolizing the Jewish people) and the victorious emperor.

in exile. The word "destroy" is in Hebrew *shachath*, which means "to decay, so as to ruin". The Roman oppression commenced very soon after the death of Christ, following the rebellion and Jewish revolts that spasmodically increased. As the Roman governors faced more and more agitation, they were forced to exercise tighter control over Judea. Finally, Titus took his armies to Jerusalem, surrounding the city in siege, and after protracted delay, finally completed the task and destroyed the city.

"Sanctuary" is from the Hebrew *Qodesh*, for which see comment on Dan. 8:13.

"And the end thereof shall be with a flood" — There would be no salvation, no avoiding the ravages of the Roman armies. The ferocity of the siege in AD 70 was as a result of the constant revolts that Jewish insurrectionists had maintained over the previous forty years. It was a repetition of the Assyrian flood, that earlier swept over Judah, so graphically described in Isa. 8:7-8.

The word "end" used twice in this verse is the Hebrew *qets*, meaning "extremity" (i.e. time). A certain time period had been marked out, and this would bring Judah's Commonwealth to an absolute finish.

"And unto the end of the war desolations are determined" — Moses had foretold of this terrible time: Deut. 28:63-68. The Roman devastation continued past AD 70, to finally conclude in AD 132-5, when the Jewish revolt under Bar Kochba was suppressed, and Jerusalem became a Roman Colony with the changed name of Colonia Aelia Capitolina. The Temple destroyed, the Romans erected a new temple on Mt. Moriah, and dedicated it to Jupiter.

The terrible end of Jewish hopes is graphically depicted by the word "desolations" (Hebrew: *shamem*), meaning wasting, ruin. It has remained in that condition since AD 135; and only revived in our times as a sign of the impending return of the Prince!

The word "determined" (Heb. *charats*) means, to cut, engrave, as

from a sharp, pointed object. Thus, it is applied to the exact discrimination between justice and injustice; to decide, to pass sentence. The desolations against the city and sanctuary were settled or determined by God as by a decree or purpose. The exact determination and judgment of heaven was meted out because of what had been done to His Son, the Messiah Prince. Similarly there is a "set time" to favor Zion (Psa. 102:13), and, accordingly, the ages have been "cut" or determined by God to fulfil His purpose (Heb. 11:3).

VERSE 27

"And he shall confirm the covenant with many" — The word "confirm" is literally "to make strong" (from the Heb. *gabar*). The covenant is the Abrahamic, which awaited the offering of Christ in order to make it sure. Paul explains that Jesus Christ "confirmed the promises made unto the fathers" (Rom. 15:8), and this extended beyond the Mosaic covenant which was fulfilled and concluded in the death of Christ. The offering of Christ established the "everlasting covenant" (Heb. 13:20), which was the purpose for which he was sent (Gal. 3:15-19).

Rotherham adds the definite article: "the many", which describe those who respond to the message of God's Word: ch. 12:2. Being responsible to fulfil His will, they will be raised and gathered before the judgment seat of Christ to testify as to how they have reacted to the covenant embraced. Those who have graced the covenant with works of faith will have the covenant fulfilled in immortality (Rom. 2:10).

"For one week" — The final seven years of the "70 week prophecy", relates to the period from AD 26-33, (common dating) during which the "covenant would be confirmed". The work of confirmation was introduced by John Baptist, concerning whom his parents were told "he shall go before him (Messiah) in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the dis-

obedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord" (Luke 1:17). John was commissioned to fulfil the cry of Isa. 40:1-8, and called the people to "return" in order for the greater work of Messiah to be achieved. He declared: "I am not the Christ, but I am sent before him" (John 3:28), "He must increase, but I must decrease" (v. 30). John saw his work as an essential, complementary role to that of Messiah; both co-operated in the confirmation of the covenant. When the Lord presented himself at Jordan following his forty days in the wilderness, John announced: "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (Ch. 1:29). That work took three and a half years, and at the end his words were realised on Golgotha's hill, as the Messiah was offered as the final act to confirm the covenant.

John's ministry began in the 15th year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar (Luke 3:1). According to the *Companion Bible*, "Augustus died in AD 14, but Tiberius was associated with him for two or three years. This would make Tiberius' fifteenth year AD 26". We are not told when John died, but it certainly was not beyond the mid-way point of Jesus' ministry. Their minis-

tries were not consecutive, for they overlapped considerably. Therefore it cannot be said that this seven years was $3\frac{1}{2}$ for John, and $3\frac{1}{2}$ for Jesus; nor does the prophecy permit this. The period is not two half-weeks, but one week (of 7 years)* containing the combined work of John and Jesus.

"And in the midst of the week" — The word *chetsiy*, rendered "midst" means "half, to divide". The Septuagint has: "in the latter half of the week". Using the suggestions above with regard to the ministries of John and Jesus forming this week of labour, the prophecy now indicates that the week, being divided, would see "the sacrifice and oblation" ceasing. Gabriel says that "he shall cause" his to occur. At the beginning and end of Jesus' ministry he deliberately examined the Temple and condemned it as a "house of merchandise" (John 2:14-22; Luke 19:45-48). This laid the basis for his condemnation of the people, which concluded in his sacrifice, and the final desolation of the Temple. Thus the whole of that period from the "midst" of the week until the "end" of the week (Sept: "latter half") was engaged in the Messiah's investigation of the Temple

* Some suggest that the "one week" of this verse should commence with the baptism of Jesus, and conclude seven years later with the message of the Apostles to the nation of Jerusalem, as recorded in Acts ch. 1-7. This would permit of $3\frac{1}{2}$ years of the Lord's ministry, and a further $3\frac{1}{2}$ years of apostolic proclamation until the death of Stephen. This view is based on the terms of Dan. 9:24, which relate the activity of Daniel's people including the preaching in Jerusalem at Pentecost, with the rejection by the Jews of Jerusalem of the testimony of Stephen, when the Gospel was taken to the Gentiles, and the seven years concerning the "people and the city" concluded.

There is, however, a problem with these dates. Some maintain that the birth of Jesus occurred no later than BC 5, and probably BC 6. In support of this, it is claimed that Herod the Great died in the year we call BC 4. Before his death, he ordered the murder of "all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time when he had diligently enquired of the wise men" (Luke 2:16). The birth of Jesus was thus in that period from BC 7-4. Using this chronology, when Jesus began his ministry at "about 30 years of age" (Luke 3:23), it would be between AD 23-25, and he would have died between AD 26-28. This, however, has difficulties with later history, which uses AD 33 as the crucifixion of Jesus. In order to overcome some of these problems, we have adjusted the dating of this period to conform to the easily-recognisable times. None can be precise with our current knowledge of Old Testament dating.



Well-constructed roads, such as this one, were travelled in ancient Times. Roman soldiers were able to move with great speed to areas under attack. Many of these roads are still used today.

and its eventual destruction. By this critical examination of the people "he caused" the events which brought the 490 years of Daniel's prophecy to an end.

"He shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation" — The oblation was in the form of a sacrifice, usually bloodless and voluntary (Isa. 1:13). It is suggested that the sacrifice with its attendant bread offering is implied. This was superseded by that of Christ's. The word for sacrifice is *zevach*, meaning "to slaughter". Bro. Thomas suggests this verb is not used of the priests as slaughtering victims in sacrifice, but of private persons offering sacrifice at their own cost. For "oblation" (Heb. *minchah*), see notes on Ch. 9:21.

"To cease" — The word is *shabath* in Hebrew, which means "rest". The sacrifices would rest for a time, but will be restored when Christ returns and offerings are presented on the Altar in Jerusalem (Ezek. 44:15; 45:22). Moses

prophesied that the land would enjoy a sabbath, lying desolate, with the people exiled in enemy lands (Lev. 26:33-35,43). For two millenia this has continued, but the time is at hand for a reversal, and the establishment of the Kingdom will witness the revival of sacrificing, and the renewing of the land, which shall "blossom as the rose".

"And for the overspreading of abominations" — The marginal rendition is very different, showing the perplexity of the translators: "Upon the battlements shall be the idols of the desolator". The R.V. has: "Upon the wing of abominations". The word rendered "overspreading" is *kanaph*, which literally means "a wing" so called as *covering*, or because it covers, or hides. The word therefore denotes anything having a resemblance to a wing, as an extremity, a corner. The Greek equivalent, *pterugion* is used in Matt. 4:5 as "pinnacle", i.e. a winglet, extremity. Thus it could relate to the Temple porches which spread out like wings. In his prophecy of the end, Jesus directed the attention of his followers to these words of Daniel which predicted his own death, declaring: "When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand)" (Matt. 24:15). He referred to evidence of this "abomination" which should appear in the Temple. The Roman banners were triumphantly attached to a prominent part of the Temple in the years following his crucifixion, in order to re-inforce Roman domination over the Jews, and to emphasize that the revolts then occurring could not succeed. Josephus declares that when the city was taken in AD 66-70 the Romans took ensigns into the Temple, and setting them over the eastern gate, offered sacrifices to them and made Titus Imperator (*Jewish Wars*, bk. 6, ch. 6, pr. 1).

On the standards of the Roman Legions were featured the golden eagle with outstretched wings, grasping a thunderbolt. These eagles were sanctified in the Temple of Mars, and were recognized as the symbol of

THE EAGLE



The sacred bird of the Roman legions, the eagle was said to bring on lightning and thunderstorm. It was featured on the standards of the armies, as the Romans marched in conquest.



Rome, of which Moses made reference in Deut. 28:49.

Since the commencement of Gentile "overspreading", many powers have continued to perform this function. The Lord prophesied that "Jerusalem shall be *trod*den down of the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled" (Luke 21:24), interpreting Daniel's description of the *overspreading of abominations* to continue for nearly two thousand years. Brother Thomas comments: "Since the 'days of vengeance' which came upon Judah thirty-eight years after the ending of the seventy weeks, various 'abominations' have rested like a covering wing upon the land. These have all been of a desolating character, such as the Romano-Greek, Persian, Saracen and Ottoman abominations".

The word in this verse translated *abominations* has reference to any-

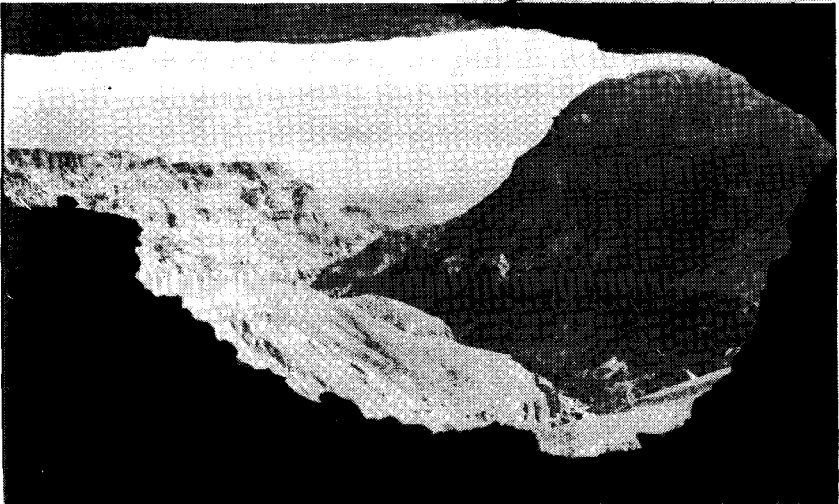
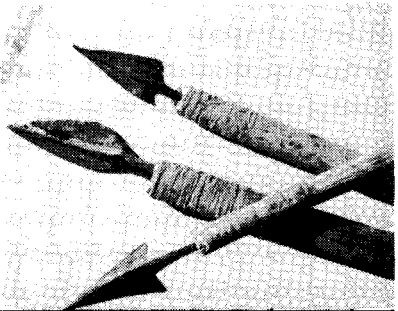
thing held in abhorrence, as things unclean, filthy garments, idols. After their victory in AD 70, the Romans erected the image of a swine over the southern gate of the Temple, whilst an image of Jupiter was placed on the site of the Temple itself. Jerusalem became a pagan city, and the holy things were desecrated.

"He shall make it desolate" — This refers to the Temple, as the centre of worship. Jesus had earlier forecast that the rejection by the people of himself would fill up their iniquity and bring about the "desolation of their house" (Matt. 23:38). They had made the Temple a "den of thieves" (Luke 19:46), so that it no longer represented the purity of Divine worship, and consequently God would remove them. The Roman desecration that occurred in AD 70 was little different from the spiritual degradation that had been introduced by the people of God themselves!

This judicial action of God is repeated whenever His people ignore their responsibilities. Speaking to the ecclesias of Asia, the Lord Jesus warned that unless they took stock of their spiritual state, he would "remove their lightstand out of his place" (Rev. 2:5), and "spue them out" (ch. 3:16). Yahweh will not tolerate apostacy, and will allow a "strong delusion that they should believe a lie" (2 Thess. 2:11) to cover those who reject His Truth. In course of time, such would be "made desolate".

"Even until the consummation" — The complete end of the Temple in Jerusalem has not yet been achieved, for Jesus said that "There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down" (Matt. 24:2). As yet part of the Temple wall remains standing, but Daniel gives further details in ch. 11 concerning the advent of the king of the north in the latter times, when the Gogian power will establish 'the tabernacle of his palace' in 'the glorious holy mountain' (v. 45). At this time of extreme trouble for Jewry (Jer. 30:6-7; Ezek. 37), Russian success will seem assured, as if the

Right: Arrows found in the Bar Kochba caves, in the eastern Judean desert. Bottom: A view from inside one of the caves. The Bar Kochba caves, west of the Dead Sea, were used as rebel hideouts in the last stages of the revolt against the Romans in 135 A.D. These almost inaccessible caves are set in steep gorge walls, often hundreds of feet from the ground. When they were explored in 1960-61, a good deal of invaluable material and evidence was discovered: fragments of the Bible and Hebrew prayers on parchment or papyrus; letters (one from Bar Kochba himself) and various documents in Greek, Aramaic, Hebrew, and Nabatean; coins, vessels, weapons, and even fabrics and articles of clothing.



Roman "overspreading of abomination" has continued. Jerusalem will be completely desecrated, and in the turmoil that will follow, every stone will be overturned.

At the time of this final consummation, however, the punishment of the desolator shall be due, and will come swiftly: "he shall come to his end, and none shall help him" (Dan. 11:45).

"And that determined shall be poured upon the desolate" — The prophecy begins and ends with Jerusalem desolate — but Daniel's prayer remains to be answered. He sought restoration for the "city and people" which were then a "reproach" (ch. 9:16,19), and was told that great events would occur before that should be achieved; that the city and people

would yet be subject to greater desolations — but when the "consummation" of vengeance upon Israel's enemies has come, all that determined concerning Jerusalem shall be "poured out" (to flow forth, like a river; from Heb. *nathak*) upon the city that had been desolate. "That determined," in this context refers to the eventual restoration of the people and city by the work of Messiah at his second advent, when he shall redeem "all things."

The margin gives a different interpretation of this phrase: "that determined shall be poured upon the desolator." This is supported by the R.V. and Rotherham. Taking this rendering, the prophecy declares that Divine vengeance will be issued forth upon the powers that have desecrated His people and city. Though Rome,

and those which followed, were used as the instrument of Yahweh to punish Jewry for their rejection of His Son, they had gone beyond what He desired, and therefore would be punished in turn. Yahweh is jealous for Jerusalem and Zion, and is displeased with the Gentiles that "help forward the affliction" (Zech. 1:15). By going beyond what is appropriate in the punishment of Israel, the nations will yet experience the judgments written; therefore that which the prophets

determine shall be poured out upon them. The fourth beast brought desolations to Jewry in AD 70, and it will again be seen in its fulness when the Russian Gogue comes into the Holy Land — but then the wrath of God will appear, and the "beast slain, his body destroyed and given to the burning flame" (Dan. 7:11). In this vision, the powerful Cherubim of glory, energised by the Spirit, will extend its power to remove all that offends, and to establish the Divine Kingdom on earth.



Roman soldiers lead captives before their emperor — from the first century Roman sarcophagus.

Summary of Chapter 9

The chapter commences with Daniel in prayer. Encouraged by his examination of the prophetic books, he pleads for Yahweh's mercy upon His people, and the city of His Name, which was then in ruins. He sees, in the signs of the times, evidence that the period of exile was about to end, and urged for that to be hastened. He earnestly looked for the redemption of Zion. Though the prayer of Jeremiah (ch. 14:17-22) had not been realised, (ch. 15:1-3), Daniel had laboured to change the hearts of the people, and in this he had been successful. Shortly after Daniel's prayer, the decree of Cyrus was issued, and the exiles returned home. But the words of Gabriel now indicated that a greater salvation was yet to come, and that required the preparation of Messiah the Prince as the means for personal and national redemption. In achieving that, however, the principle of sin had to be revealed, and victory over the flesh was to be demonstrated — for only by this means could everlasting righteousness be achieved. Many years would elapse before the final greatness would return to Zion, and meanwhile, the "seed of the serpent" would continue to crush Israel and the Truth. Yet

the covenant would be confirmed (v. 27), and in the final scene, all that is determined shall be poured out: both in the destruction of the sin-power, and the elevation of Jerusalem.

In all this long period, Yahweh would be constantly at work. In overthrowing the literal Temple, He would lay the foundations for the spiritual (v. 27). The work of Messiah provided for a "holy temple in the Lord" (Eph. 2:20), which, though at present it suffers from the antagonism of the world, will yet rise to greater glory. Daniel's faith is strengthened as the angel explains these events in the next chapter, and he is given a grand vision of the saints in power.

As we view the tragedy of present-day spirituality, and remember that we suffer a "falling away" by some, and a growing pressure from the world on others, we can, nevertheless, be encouraged by an accurate understanding of the Divine program, as revealed to Daniel, and anticipate the coming of the Day of Glory, when all the prayers of the faithful over the long years of history, will be answered in the coming of Messiah and the elevation of Zion.

CHAPTER TEN

JUDGMENT ON SPIRITUAL ISRAEL

Two years have passed since the great vision of the "Seventy Weeks" and the coming Messiah was given to the prophet. Daniel is now about 90 years of age, and faces the last days of his life. He is to experience the final vision recorded in his diary. His has been a long, difficult life. Torn from his beloved homeland, when but a teenager of about 17 years; taken as a captive-slave to the world's greatest metropolis of his day; and there, in Babylon, he has his honesty and Godliness tested in the fire of adversity, affliction and challenge. Yet, under the care and wisdom of Heaven, Daniel became confidant and adviser to the King, a leader and example to the small company of faithful Jews, and a recorder of vision, prophecy and deed, for posterity.

He has seen mighty rulers come and go — Nebuchadnezzar, Evil-Merodach, Neriglissar, Labashi-Marduk, Nabonidus, and his co-regent son, the profligate Belshazzar! Then came that memorable night that brought Babylon, and all its evil, to an end, as Daniel read the writing on the wall. The Medes and Persians came to stay, and Daniel served under Darius the Mede (ch. 9:1), and into the first year of the sole reign of Cyrus the Persian.

Through all these changing scenes, Daniel remained steadfast to his God, yet was highly esteemed in the kingdom. Darius had made him Chief-President, causing the jealousy and anger of his contemporaries. He had to endure the ordeal of the lions' den at about 86 years old!

News had come from his beloved homeland over the years of the deteriorating kingdom in Judea: the short and tragic reigns of Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin and Zedekiah; of the destruction of Jerusalem; of the prophecies and deaths of Jeremiah, and (in Tel Abib) of Ezekiel.

The prophecy of the “seventy weeks” had greatly perplexed him. He now realises that, though a return of the people to Jerusalem would occur, it was merely a limited restoration — the full glory promised to Israel must await the coming of the Messiah many years hence. So the old prophet, realising that “the time appointed was long”, is so physically affected, as to be prostrate in mourning (ch. 10:2). He desperately sought for the restoration of his people, but had been told earlier that a Temple that would be established, would also be destroyed, and his people again dispersed (ch. 9:26-27). What was to be the end of it all?

Yet the prophecy that revealed the coming devastation of the city and sanctuary, also promised One who would “confirm the covenant” and provide the means by which faithfulness will be rewarded. Daniel is now told by Gabriel that, though the literal temple would be overthrown, Yahweh was establishing the foundations of a spiritual temple, which would come to glory, and Daniel will see it. Despite his impending death, and the years that would roll by — depicted in the experiences of Chapter 10 — Daniel has great cause to be “strengthened” (v.19) and encouraged. Daniel’s record of this experience can encourage his friends in every age, as they view the depressing world scene about them. Though mourning and death may be for this moment, “joy cometh in the morning” (Psa. 30:5).

Daniel Mourns — vv. 1-3

Daniel had eagerly consulted the records of Jeremiah to learn of the limit to Israel’s captivity (ch. 9:2). He was excited at the impending prospect, and had “set his face to seek” the pleasure of God upon his people. Then came the revelation of the long “seventy weeks” of waiting until Messiah would come, and even then, that advent would introduce a period of further devastation for Jewry. Now, for many months, he had pondered the implications of that vision. He wondered if he would see any

goodness upon Israel! Babylon had been overthrown by the Medes and Persians, but still Jerusalem was in ruin, and the people captive. When would Yahweh act? In such a solemn mood, this man of great spiritual fervour feels the emotion of his faith and the tiredness of his age — and is reduced to mourning for three full weeks.

“In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia” — Cyrus reigned jointly with Darius the Mede for two years, commencing from the fall of Babylon (see

Dan. 5:30-31; 9:1). Therefore though this is his third year, it was the first year of his sole reign as monarch; and the year in which Daniel died (ch. 1:21). This is confirmed by the Septuagint rendition: "In the *first* year of Cyrus". But as the year opened, Daniel realised it was most significant. Cyrus was in full command, and his name and purpose had been declared 174 years before his birth: Isa. 45:1. The gates of Babylon had been thrown open, and, as Daniel realised, Cyrus was appointed of God to deliver his people. It was a most significant year!

"A thing was revealed unto Daniel"

The word "thing" (Heb. *dabar*), used twice in this verse, means a word, matter, decree. God blessed Daniel with a "word" vision so that he might fully understand His purpose, and be prepared for the future. It was a message of comfort and hope for the prophet.

The word "revealed" (Heb. *gala*) means to uncover. It is used of Balaam (Num. 24:4,6) to indicate that he saw something that was otherwise hidden, or covered. In Amos 3:7 the prophet declares that "Yahweh will do nothing *but He revealeth (gala, uncovereth) His secret unto His servants the prophets*". The book of Revelation is the "unveiling" (Gk. *apokalupsis*), or "revealing" by the Lord Jesus of the events which then were "shortly to happen".

"Whose name was called Belteshazzar" — The use of this Babylonish name indicated that he was still resident in Babylon. The name was given him by the Babylonian chief of the eunuchs (ch. 1:7) as a means of securing his allegiance to the Gentiles. Now, at the end of his life, that scheme was seen fruitless, since, though *they* "called him Belteshazzar", the divine record first mentions "Daniel".

"And the thing was true" — Notwithstanding apparent reverses or delays in the divine program, Yahweh's "set times" will occur exactly as planned. Things may appear differently to us, but that does not make them false. The word "true" comes from the Hebrew *emeth*, faithful. It

expresses that which is dependable; which is certain because God has declared it, whatever might appear to the contrary. Daniel was confident in the matter declared. He had experienced distress before, as he had striven to understand the visions (ch. 7:28; 8:27), but had never doubted the reliability or accuracy of the message. Daniel's friends in this age will similarly manifest a trusting disposition towards the revealed Word, recognising that "the ages have been so thoroughly adjusted by God's command, that not from things then manifest the things now seen have come to pass" (Heb. 11:3, Diag.).

"But the time appointed was long"

— It went beyond his life-time, therefore its consummation required his resurrection. The word "appointed" (Heb. *tsaba*) relates to an assembled host gathered usually for war. The RV translates it as "warfare"; Rotherham as "a great warfare"; and the word is found in the militant title of Deity: Yahweh *Tzvaoth*. Gesenius suggests: "And the edict is true and (belongs to) a long warfare", on which many calamities would be experienced. The warfare would be engaged between the desolating power (ch. 9:27) and the covenant-friends of Messiah. It would last for 2,500 years, as the vision of Jesus Christ in the Apocalypse revealed (Rev. 6:9-11).

Throughout the ages the saints have been involved in the "warfare of faith". It commenced with Abel and continues until Christ gives them the victory (Rom. 6:3; 1 Tim. 1:18). We have been given the opportunity to "fight the fight, maintain the strife, strengthen'd with the bread of life" in our struggle against the forces of evil, both within and without. It requires us to "love righteousness" and "hate wickedness" in following the footsteps of the Master (Psa. 45:7).

"And he understood the thing and had understanding of the vision"

— The Septuagint has: "he had great power and understanding in the vision was given him". Rotherham has: "he marked the word and had understand-

ing." Previously Daniel did not fully understand the message (ch. 7:28; 8:27), but now it would open up to him and explain some of the concerns that the prophet had earlier expressed. He carefully considered the message, weighing its content through the exercise of his intellect; then wisely and prudently grasped the significance of the message. Thus, his "knowledge was increased" (ch. 12:4) at the end of his days, as he was taught that judgment follows his resurrection. Similarly, our knowledge of the visions of the prophets is greatly enhanced by the evidence of history — but we need to seek a full understanding of the principles of personal responsibility as we face the impending judgment. (Rom. 14:10; 2 Cor. 5:10).

In this year Cyrus issued his decree for the "building of the house at Jerusalem" (Ezra 1:1-2). Daniel was still a man of influence in the Persian Court (ch. 6:25-28), and his fearless exposition of truth throughout his life would have continued in his service under Cyrus. His words most likely influenced the monarch in the decree made, as did Nehemiah's later (Neh. 2:6).

VERSE 2

"In those days I Daniel was mourning" — He saw preparations made for the captives' return, accomplished under Zerubbabel (Sheshbazzar, Ezra 1:8-11). What great emotions he would have experienced! All his life he had waited for this moment, and now the year of liberty had arrived! No wonder the old prophet mourned that he would not participate therein. He was not the only one to mourn, for Nehemiah, a few years later, "sat down and wept, and mourned certain days, and fasted, and prayed before the God of heaven." The feelings of these faithful men are an example to all who "mourn for Zion" and long to be party to the glory promised.

"three full weeks" — The margin has "weeks of days" to distinguish the phrase from the weeks of years in chapter 9. Daniel set aside twenty-one days

to beseech God for understanding of His purpose, and that he might know concerning the return of his people to their ancient land. About the same time Daniel commenced to fast, the angelic manipulators of world affairs went forward to arrange the politics of the nations so as to cause Cyrus to issue his decree that would result in the release of the Jews (v. 13; Dan. 4:35; Psa. 103:20).

Daniel found benefit in his personal sacrifice to worship Yahweh. It was a time of intense spiritual activity for the aged prophet. Although sometimes faculties and physical endurance may weaken with advancing age, dedication and sense of purpose can remain strong and firm. This was the case with Daniel to the end of his life. Let elderly brethren and sisters take courage in this example. They may be conscious of the weakness of the flesh, and feel that their efforts are meagre — but should not be discouraged. Yahweh sees our endeavors for His glory, and will "remember us for good" (Neh. 13:31) despite physical limitations, provided we apply ourselves to His will.

VERSE 3

"I ate no pleasant bread, neither came flesh nor wine in my mouth, neither did I anoint myself at all, till three whole weeks were fulfilled" — Because he was so anxious for understanding he entered into a period of fasting, during which he lived on coarse or unsavory food, and drank nothing but water. This was done to restrict any fleshly interference as he concentrated his mind towards God. He lived on ordinary bread or vegetables, and practised the most rigid abstinence. Even personal comfort and cleanliness, gained from the anointing of the body with oils, was neglected under extreme pressure of mind. He gave himself up to a course of life which was expressive of deep grief. This attitude follows that of David's who, for seven days, separated himself from those about him, until at the death of his son, he "arose from the earth, and washed and anointed himself, and changed his apparel" (2 Sam. 12:20).

Daniel manifested an attitude of self-denial and abject humility before Yahweh. Denying himself of the pleasantries of life, he gave himself over wholly to Yahweh. In this he was symbolically declaring his sorrow for the sins of his people whilst, at the same time, patiently awaiting the salvation of Israel; even though he now understood that he must die before the deliverance of the nation would be accomplished. Daniel's fasting is different from the hypocritical "fasting" of the Pharisees. He made no ostentatious show to impress others by his righteousness, but his actions were an outward manifestation of a true inner disposition of Godliness.

The Vision of the Multiple Man

— vv. 4-6

As a young man, Daniel outlined a vision of a metallic man to King Nebuchadnezzar (ch. 2). It was terrible in aspect, brilliant in appearance, and majestic in power. But the image was voiceless, and lifeless: it was a metal image that depicted the destiny of the Kingdom of Men.

Now, in his last year, Daniel is given another vision of a man, composed of different parts. Its glory outshines the former vision of the king: for now Daniel sees the magnificent spiritual army, the Kingdom of God manifested in His people, energised by spirit-power. With what grandeur and splendour, his three weeks of fasting and entreaty were answered! As Daniel gazes at the living vision before him, he is overcome by its wonder.

VERSE 4

"And in the four and twentieth day of the first month" — The month is Abib, or Nisan, the time appointed for the Passover celebration (Exod. 13:4-7). Fourteen days before the Jewish families should have selected their Passover lambs: ten days before the Passover should have been offered. But the people of Israel were in a state of bewilderment and disorganisation (cp. 9:15-16). Daniel saw his people in exile and distress, and pleaded for their deliverance from Babylon, as Moses

had achieved deliverance from Egypt. His mind was set on the fulfilment of Yahweh's promises. He was like those that "wait for their Lord" and who "long for his appearance" (2 Tim. 4:8).

"As I was by the side of the great river, which is Hiddekel" — The ancient name for the Tigris (Gen. 2:14), known to the Assyrians as *Iddiklat* indicated in the Septuagint: "the great river, which is Tigris Eddekel". Rotherham has: "the same is Tigris". The name signifies "The darting arrow". Daniel was brought to this area so that the vision of Yahweh's future purpose might be impressed upon him (as Jeremiah earlier had visited the Euphrates for a special Divine purpose, Jer. 13:1-4). In ch. 12:5-6 he would see two angels standing on both sides of the river, as if guiding its course; and was thus shown that Divine Power would gain the victory over the anti-typical Tigris, the Gentiles; and was told that there is a time limit to the power of the nations represented by the river, at the conclusion of which, the "darting arrow" of Yahweh, seen in the Multitudinous Christ, will subdue it (v. 7).

VERSE 5

"Then I lifted up mine eyes, and looked" — He had been in deep contemplation, perhaps with his eyes fixed on the waters. Suddenly, he was disturbed by a voice, and looked up to see an amazing figure.

"And, behold a certain man" — This was a vision, styled in v. 18 "the appearance of a man", and, in v. 16, "like the similitude of the sons of men". It was a symbolic representation of the Multitudinous Christ, the saints in glory. The margin renders the phrase: "one man" or, more literally, "the man of one", described by Bro. Thomas as "the man of the One Eternal Spirit" (*Eureka* vol. 1, p. 168). Daniel had earlier seen a vision of "the Ancient of Days" sitting in judgment (ch. 7:9-10). Some 600 years later, John saw "one like unto the Son of man", the sight of whom was so dreadful that he "fell at his feet as dead". This is the one who declared himself as

“he that liveth and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore” (Rev. 1:12-18). But the vision reveals that though he is “a man of one,” he is composed of many, having the voice of a multitude (Dan. 10:6). He is the symbol of the multitudinous Yahweh, whose “Name is One” (Zech. 14:9), the perfected ecclesia in glory, which though composed of “many members” (1 Cor. 12:12), yet all energised by the Spirit (Eph. 2:22), and in perfect harmony with the Father and Son (John 17:22). This vision of glory was so immense, so majestic, so wonderful, that the prophet felt numbed at its presence (Dan. 10:8).

In representing the great multitude of the redeemed in the symbolic appearance of ONE MAN, Yahweh emphasises His essential unity: “He who shall be our mighty ones is the One who shall be” (Bro. Thomas’ literal rendering). Those, therefore, that form part of that multitude are extensions of His character and outlook. Isaiah defines the coming manifestation in two ways, both in harmony: “I who will be (*ani Yahweh*) the first *one* and the last *ones* (*eth acharonim*)” (ch. 41:4, lit. Hebrew). Thus, the One Eternal Spirit is to be manifested in a great multitude, every one of whom will be a manifestation of Himself. Then to emphasise the absolute Oneness of Deity, Isaiah declares (ch. 44:6, lit. Hebrew): “I the first *one* and the last *one*.” These two passages are not contradictory, but complementary. Although Yahweh purposes to manifest Himself in a *multitude* of the glorified redeemed, it must be recognised that He is the *One* “out of whom” the redeemed are developed (1 Cor. 8:6): “For both he (Christ) that sanctifieth and they (the saints) who are sanctified are all out of One (Yahweh)” (Heb. 2:11). The Lord prayed, “that they may be made perfect *into One*” (John 17:21-23).

Thus the “Man of the One”, whilst symbolising *all* the redeemed, also reveals the Oneness and Unity of the Eternal Spirit, self-styled Yahweh. Since He is the only source of everlasting life, the matter could not be under-

stood in any other terms, for “Yahweh is the only One having, or possessing, immortality” (1 Tim. 6:16).

The word “man” is *ish* in Hebrew, referring to a great man, in contrast to the ordinary.

“**Clothed in linen**” — Public nakedness is a symbol of sin and shame. As a symbol of a defiled conscience, Adam and Eve recognised their state, and endeavored to cover themselves (Gen. 3:7). Symbolic nakedness is a state of ignorance and rejection of the Divinely-appointed covering, found only in Jesus Christ (Acts 4:12). Thus, baptism is a figure of the proper covering, that removes the effects of sin (Gal. 3:27). The Lord warns the generation of his second advent not to appear naked, for such will be rejected by him, their shame being obvious to all (Rev. 16:15).

Daniel observed that the Man was clothed in linen. The priests were commanded to cover their nakedness with *linen* clothing (Exod. 28:42); the curtains, coverings and veil (ch. 36:8,35) of the tabernacle included “fine twined linen,” whilst the whole area was enclosed with a wall of linen (ch. 38:9). Linen is a fabric woven from yarn made of the fine fibres of the flax plant, merged together. Since the bleached fabric was often flashing white, the term “whiteness” (*shesh*) also means linen. This flashing whiteness represents the “righteousness of saints”, developed out of the tribulation of life, and washed in the “blood of the Lamb” through prayer and obedience (Rev. 7:14). This requires that these saints manifest a life of Godliness, following the example of their Lord and Master in his total dedication to fulfilling his Father’s will (Matt. 5:20; 1 Pet. 1:14-16; 2:21). Hence, “fine linen, bright and pure” symbolises the “righteous acts of saints” (Rev. 19:8, Diag. cp Mat. 5:20).

Thus, to be “clothed in linen” is a description of the Office and Nature of the glorified Body of Christ, standing in immortal triumph.

“**Whose loins were girded with the fine gold of Uphaz**” — Having been

covered with the "fine linen" of Christ typically in baptism, the Man of the One now demonstrates his strength. His loins are "girt about". Long robes worn in the Eastern countries impeded progress in running or similar exertion unless they were gathered around the waist to give the greatest freedom of movement. A man about to engage in action would gird himself in this fashion. Speaking of the work of Christ, Isaiah declared: "righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins and faithfulness the girdle of his reins" (ch. 11:5). His activities in the kingdom will be *strengthened* by righteousness and faithfulness manifested in laws of wisdom that will emanate from Zion through the instrumentality of the saints. Paul urges us to "have our loins girt about (i.e. strengthened) with truth", so that our activities and labors will be dictated by the instructions of the Word (Eph. 6:14; cp. 1 Pet. 1:13).

The "fine gold of Uphaz" was the best quality available. The term occurs in Jer. 10:9, but the locality is uncertain. Gold is a symbol of a tried faith (Lam. 4:1-2; 1 Pet. 1:7), without which "no man can please God" (Heb. 11:6). Faith binds and completes the girdle, and becomes the strengthening principle of the active Man of One. Such a faith comes from "hearing the word of God" (Rom. 10:17; Psa. 12:6), and by which a believer acts. Gold was the metal featured particularly in the Most Holy Place of the Tabernacle, symbolising the principle by which eternal life will be achieved. The cherubim (corporate body of the saints) was of solid gold, as was the mercy seat (the Lord Jesus) out of which it was constructed (Exod. 37:6-9); and the whole picture spake of the Multitudinous Christ in glory obtained through a tried faith.

VERSE 6

"His body was like the beryl" — The word "beryl" is from the Hebrew *tarshish*, signifying "to break, subdue, destroy". The beryl, or tarshish stone, was one of the gems in the High Priest's breastplate, representing the tribe of Dan (compare Exod. 28:17-21 with

Num. 2:25). Dan means "to judge" (Gen. 49:16-18; 1 Cor. 6:2), so that the body of the Multitudinous Christ, being "like the beryl", will perform the judgments written (Psa. 149:6-8) as the saints take control of world rulership.

Although, in the breastplate, the beryl is the tenth stone listed, its order changes in Rev. 21:20, where it appears as the eighth stone in the New Jerusalem foundation. Comparing this list with the tribes of spiritual Israel listed in Rev. 7:5-8, it will be noted that the tribe of Dan is omitted and replaced by the tribe of Levi as the eighth tribe, represented by the beryl. Levi is the priestly tribe, and this Apocalyptic symbol takes us beyond the time of judgment (Dan) to the perfected leitical community of the Millennium.

Both judgment and priesthood will be manifested in the Man of the One. The beryl stone thus points forward to a time when flesh is to be judged (Dan), subdued (Tarshish) and taught (Levi).

"And his face as the appearance of lightning" — Daniel sees the flashing, brilliant light emanating from the countenance of the figure; John's vision saw one "like the Son of man" with a "countenance as the sun shining in his strength" (Rev. 1:16). The radiations of light from Christ, the Sun of righteousness (Mal. 4:2), will destroy the forces of darkness. Divine Power will beam forth to crush the kingdom of men (Dan. 2:44), scatter the enemies (Psa. 144:6), and protect His people (Zech. 9:14). See also Isa. 30:27; Rev. 19:11; Joel 3:10; Ezek. 38:19-23). Similarly, the appearance of lightning was manifested in the cherubim as it moved forward on its victorious march (Ezek. 1:13).

"And his eyes as lamps of fire" — Eyes are the means of perception and discernment. Becoming aware of their transgression, "the eyes" of Adam and Eve were "opened" (Gen. 6:7), by which their mental discernment was enlivened. Yahweh can "open" the eyes of men and women (Num. 22:31), and has provided the spiritual vision to

enable His servants to discern and comprehend the Truth (Mat. 13:16). All called to the Truth must never be “blinded” to the Truth, but must maintain the clear perception of God’s way so that they can become the seeing and judging eyes of Yahweh in the future.

The angels are the eyes of Yahweh, keeping a vigilant watch over His creation (Gen. 18:21), protecting His saints (2 Chron. 16:9), and determining the affairs of the nations (Dan. 4:17). The eyes are the symbol of intelligence (Matt. 13:15-18; Eph. 1:17-18; Acts 26:18). The future Man of the One (the glorified saints) will constitute the “eyes of Yahweh, which run to and fro through the whole earth” (Zech. 4:10). The cherubim of Ezekiel’s vision is “full of eyes round about”, so as to be fully aware of all that is happening on every side (ch. 10:12). The complete vigilance by the saints in the Kingdom will provide perfect government: “Thy teachers shall not be removed into a corner any more ... (but shall say) This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left” (Isa. 30:20-21).

The Hebrew word for “eyes” is *ayin*, the 16th letter of the Hebrew alphabet. The word is also translated “fountain” (e.g. Gen. 16:7, etc), for the eyes become a fountain when tears well up through emotional stress. To the Hebrew, the eyes are the fountain of the body; whilst wells are the fountain of the earth. From the appearance of the eye, the character of a person can often be seen — as the fountains of the earth determine the quality of the land. The Lord Jesus was the eyes of Yahweh on earth, and offered himself as a “well of water springing up into everlasting life” (John 4:14), and by which a person can “see” the Kingdom of God (ch. 3:3).

The eyes of the Man of the One appear “as lamps of fire”. John, in Rev. 1:14, describes them as “a flame of fire”, flashing forth with anger and judgment (e.g. Ezek. 22:21,31; Heb. 12:29; Rev. 19:12). The symbol of the “lamp” indicates the source of the anger: the Spirit of God, which emanates from the throne of God (Rev. 4:5), and directs the work of the saints.

Energised by the Spirit, they will manifest the mind of God in retributive punishment on evil, and protection around those who trust in Him.

“And his arms and his feet like in colour to polished brass” — Arms and feet are the active members of the body: used for working and walking, here outstretched in energetic and furious operation. The arms portray the Multitudinous Christ in acts of mercy and judgment (cp. Deut. 33:27; Jer. 25:31; Joel 3:11-13), whilst the feet depict the movement of the saints marching forth to subdue the oppressors (Psa. 72:4), to discipline the rebellious (Zech. 14:4), and to bring “good tidings” of the gospel of the New Age (Isa. 53:1; 52:7. cp. Rom. 10:15).

The colour (appearance) of the arms and legs is that of polished brass. The metal is first purified by fire and smoothed by friction, so as to reveal the beauty of the brass (Num. 31:22-23). It is subjected to stress, agitation, and refining in order to produce the finish of “polished brass”. Since brass symbolises flesh, polished brass speaks of flesh after the trial and affliction of the Divine treatment. Goliath, man of flesh, clothed his mind in a “helmet of brass” (1 Sam. 17:4); Rehoboam replaced his father’s shields of gold (faith), with replicas of brass (flesh — 1 Kings 14:26-27). Though the Man of the One was associated with flesh nature as was Christ (Heb. 2:14), yet they all have been purified by the fire of trial and the polishing of Yahweh’s Word (Heb. 5:8-9), and now, in vision before Daniel, stand resplendent. The flesh, which formerly housed the emotions of sin, has now been clothed upon with immortality, and stands glorious in Spirit-nature (Luke 24:39, cp. also: 1 Cor. 3:13-15; 1 Pet. 1:3-9; 4:12-16).

“And the voice of his words like the voice of a multitude” — Daniel heard the commanding, awesome and regal words of his Multitudinous Man thundering forth. This composite body of saints will speak forth words of wisdom, instruction and reproof to all the world (Ezek. 43:2; Rev. 1:15). The voice of words was heard on Mt. Sinai

to bring the people of Israel into covenant relationship (Exod. 19:3,8), instructing them in "right judgments, true laws, good statutes and commandments" (Neh. 9:13). The voice of heaven was heard at the Jordan, when Jesus submitted to "all righteousness" on his own behalf and that of his people (Matt. 3:15); and later on the Mount of Transfiguration (2 Pet. 1:18). The voice of words will judge the responsible at the last day (John 12:48-50), and those approved will carry the authority of that voice into the Kingdom. The "voice of a multitude" in the saints will declare the everlasting gospel to the governments of the nations, calling upon them to submit to the wish of Heaven (Rev. 14:6-7). It is one voice, though a multitude expresses it, since it conveys the will of Yahweh, which every member of that multitude has first heard, understood and obeyed — and now becomes the immortal vehicle of its sound in the Age to come.

This "certain man" represents the saints in glory, associated inseparably with their Master. They are seen in immortal glory, perfected through trial, active on Yahweh's behalf, responsive to His will. Yet, each member of that composite body has striven to reveal those glorious principles during the days of his probation. We are members of the Christ-body (1 Cor. 12:12-27), performing our individual tasks for the common good (Eph. 4:15-16). The perfection portrayed in the vision is to be striven for now — being "clothed" with Christ, developing a "tried faith", carefully "judging" our lives, seeking the "spirit word" to guide us, with arms and feet acting in conformity with the testings of Yahweh, and, finally, speaking forth the clear, wholesome words of life. If these qualities be found in us, however limited, there is the basis for their perfection when the great Man of the One is formed to stand upon the earth.

Daniel's Symbolic Death — vv. 7-9

The prophet watched the vision in amazement, and was so affected that he became faint. He is now told the reason for the vision. It is to explain the work of

the angels on behalf of the faithful. Though Daniel knew that the great restoration was yet far off, his personal future is now revealed to him in symbolic actions. An angel informs him that he will be part of this "Man of the One", through death and resurrection. His work, prayers and example on behalf of his people are not in vain. Yahweh performs a great work, even then amongst the nations — but a greater work is in the perfection of saints, and Daniel is to typify this company in the experiences that now befall him.

VERSE 7

"And I Daniel alone saw the vision: for the men that were with me saw not the vision" — It was exclusively Daniel's privilege to understand the vision of glory. We are not told who were the bystanders — perhaps the ordinary attendants of Daniel who was an officer of rank in the court of the King of Persia. The word for "men" is *enoshim*, weak, sickly, mortal; in contrast to the *ish* of v.5. These men fled from the scene, not understanding what was happening.

A similar incident occurred to Saul on the road to Damascus (Acts 9:3-9). Yet there are differences. Daniel was a man of faith, with a real perception of truth. The vision given to him was to strengthen and enlighten. Saul was a bigotted unbeliever, bent upon the persecution of saints. The vision to him was to rebuke and convert. He was blind for three days, to emphasise the spiritual blindness in which he had formerly lived.

But in both cases, the bystanders saw no vision, but experienced perplexity and fear.

"But a great quaking fell upon them, so that they fled to hide themselves" —

This was the experience of the soldiers at the tomb of Christ: "for fear of him (the angel) the keepers did shake, and became as dead men" (Matt. 28:4). In Saul's case, "the men which journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing a voice, but seeing no man." Like people today, who hear a voice in the procla-

mation of the Truth by the servants of Yahweh, but, being blind, they cannot discern the "man Christ Jesus." They will remain so until he is manifested in glory, and then their dumbness shall be turned to remorse, and they shall say: "Surely our fathers have inherited lies, vanity, and things wherein there is no profit" (Jer. 16:19).

The bystanders around Daniel, however, fled from the scene. They symbolised the attitude of the generation which will see the appearance of the multitudinous Christ, and which will flee "to the holes of the rocks, and to the caves of the earth, for fear of Yahweh, and for the glory of his majesty, when he ariseth to shake terribly the earth" (Isa. 2:19-21). Today, the world's people are bystanders; then, they will feel the effects of fear as they see this wondrous Man of the One appear upon Mt. Zion.

VERSE 8

"Therefore I was left alone, and saw this great vision" — He contemplated the tremendous vision alone. Often those of faith, when their eyes are upon the Divine vision of glory, are deserted by family and friends! Even the Lord experienced this (Matt. 13:57; John 16:32). Nevertheless Daniel kept his eyes on the vision; and as he had often been favoured with similar manifestations, he waited to receive the communication he assumed would follow. Being alone, he foreshadowed the individual as he works out his destiny. Although we shall be gathered together before the Lord, our salvation is an individual matter. No man "can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him" (Psa. 49:7). As servants of Yahweh who face death (as typified in this verse) go to their resting-place alone, so each one will "bear his own burden" (Gal. 6:5) when he stands at the Judgment Seat.

"And there remained no strength in me" — Daniel was emotionally affected by the experience, as on former occasions (ch. 7:28; 8:27). But this time, he was to undergo an enacted parable, in which his death, resurrec-

tion, judgment and glorification were typed. The word "strength" (Heb. *kowach*) signifies "firmness, vigour". He was completely overcome, as was John, later (Rev. 1:7). In the presence of Divine theophany, mortal man is subject to fear (Matt. 17:6).

"For my comeliness was turned in me into corruption" — "Comeliness" is from the Heb. *howd*, grandeur, beauty. Gesenius renders it: "bright complexion". The NASB has the phrase: "my natural colour turned to a deathly pallor." Daniel felt weak and turned deathly pale. Typically, he experienced the deterioration of mortality; felt the effects of advancing years; recognised the imminence of death — for the grandeur and beauty of youth was "turned into corruption". It is the inevitable destiny of mortal flesh (Eccl. 12:3-8). Wisdom urges us to "redeem the time" and to apply ourselves to wisdom while we have opportunity.

The word "corruption" (Heb. *mash-hit*) means "destruction" or "that which is a destroyer." It speaks of the effects of sin in our mortal nature, which thus "destroys itself." Apart from the hope of resurrection, which Daniel was about to typically experience, complete and eternal annihilation would be man's destiny.

"And I retained no strength" — Repeated in vv. 16,17 to emphasise the weakness of flesh, and the typical onset of death. It was as though his body became lifeless. Again the Heb. is "*Kowach*".

VERSE 9

"Yet heard I the voice of his words" — Notwithstanding that he lacked strength, and was "in a deep sleep", Daniel was aware of the voice of the Vision, as his "words like the voice of a multitude" continued to sound forth. The voice of the "Man of the One" symbolically sounded forth in Abel's cry, as Yahweh warned Cain: "the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground" (Gen. 4:10). Jesus explained that Yahweh "is God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; for He is not a God of the dead, but of the living:

for all live unto Him" (Luke 20:38). Yahweh's voice of witness continues to sound forth on behalf of His people, notwithstanding that many of them presently sleep, awaiting the trumpet sound (1 Thess. 4:16). The Apocalypse represents the voice of the slain witnesses continuing to "cry with a loud voice, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?" (Rev. 6:10). Those who are sleeping in the graves without strength, will soon "hear his voice, and shall come forth" (John 5:28). Meanwhile, their cause is maintained before God to be effected on the resurrection morn.

"And when I heard the voice of his words, then was I in a deep sleep on my face, and my face toward the ground"

— Daniel enacts his death-state. Previously, he lost his strength and vigour, like a desperately sick man. Now he figuratively dies. The Hebrew word (*tardaymah*) is from the same root word as that used when Eve was taken out of the side of Adam whilst he was also in a "deep sleep", figurative of the development of the Bride through the sacrifice and death of the Lord.

Daniel's Symbolic Resurrection

— vv. 10-11

Daniel now undergoes a unique and amazing experience. Prostrate as though dead, he feels a touch that causes him to revive, though still affected by weakness. He is lifted up by strong hands, to hear a majestic, powerful voice. He trembles! Thus he enacts in type the drama of the resurrection, when many will be brought to judgment, though still shackled with the weakness of mortality. Paul expounds on this in 1 Cor. 15:42, declaring that the "resurrection of the dead ... is sown in corruption" i.e. the first event in the resurrection process is a renewing of the former corruptible existence (Rom. 8:11). It is only after judgment is pronounced that immortality is granted. Daniel is to acknowledge these stages in his experience.

VERSE 10

"And, behold, an hand touched me"

— One Hebrew authority comments on the word "behold" (Heb. *hinneh*) that it is "an interjection, demanding attention: behold! lo!". It occurs five times in this chapter: vv. 5,10,13,16,20, and is indicative of the great drama Daniel experienced. He felt the powerful touch of an angel, probably Gabriel, who had previously instructed Daniel (ch. 9:21), and now returned to outline this further vision. Gabriel's action typifies that of the Lord at the resurrection when he shall symbolically "put forth his hand" to open the graves and bring forth the responsible from all ages. See Dan. 8:18 for a previous incident in which Daniel was strengthened by Gabriel.

"Which set me upon my knees and upon the palms of my hands" —

The Hebrew is very graphic: "Set me tottering on my knees" (RV mg). The words "set me" (Heb. *nuwa*) signifies to waver, to move to and fro, to vacillate. Gesenius translates it: "and caused me to reel (i.e. to stand reeling and trembling) upon my knees and hands." Daniel was gradually restored to health, being partly raised up and enabled to move, though in a feeble and tottering manner. It speaks of the emergence from the grave at the resurrection — enacted again by Lazarus at the sepulchre of Bethany when he came forth "bound hand and foot with graveclothes: and his face was bound about with a napkin" (Jn. 11:44). The same process is indicated in Matt. 27:52, when "many bodies of the saints which slept arose, and came out of the graves..." The reforming of each person from the dust will require a certain marvellous procedure before they all stand before the Lord for judgment (1 Cor. 15:28).

VERSE 11

"And he said unto me, O Daniel, a man greatly beloved" — See notes Ch. 9:23. The word "man" is *ish*, a great man in contrast to the *enoshim* (v.7), weak men, who previously surrounded him. Daniel typifies those who will be "raised incorruptible" (1 Cor. 15:52) since his character was loved of God,

and his future was assured. The Lord Jesus was "greatly beloved" (Matt. 3:17), and those who follow his steps are similarly beloved (2 Pet. 3:14). We need to seek the response of Yahweh and to act in such a way that He will look upon us with favor. That will be the case with all those who "love Christ's appearing" (2 Tim. 4:8).

"Understand the words that I speak unto thee, and stand upright" — Twice before Gabriel had been sent to assist Daniel: once to explain the vision of the Ram and He-goat, and of the treading underfoot of the sanctuary (ch. 8:15-18); and then to give him "skill and understanding" concerning the seventy weeks that would elapse before Messiah should "confirm the covenant" in his death and resurrection (ch. 9:21-23). Now it is Daniel's own death and resurrection that is being illustrated and explained in the light of the then current and future world events. He is required to "stand upright", as though to present himself before the angel. It is possible that the angels of heaven will be present at the resurrection of the dead, as they were at Christ's sepulchre (Matt. 28:2-5; Luke 24:4). When the graves are opened around the world, and the wondrous work of reforming is undertaken, the angels who have overshadowed our lives (cp. Luke 4:10; 12:8; Matt. 18:10) may be present to assist in preparing the saints for the impending judgment.

The word "understand" (Heb. *biyn*) urges Daniel to consider deeply what he was experiencing. The word means "to separate mentally; distinguish accurately". It occurs 25 times in this book, indicating its significance and importance: for Daniel, and his readers, must carefully meditate and perceive the Divine purpose in the lives of His servants. It is "the glory of God to conceal a thing; but the honour of kings to search out a matter" (Prov. 25:2), by which instruction they will continue to seek out the meaning and significance of these events (see also ch. 10:1,12, 14).

"For unto thee am I now sent" —

The reason is now given for the command to Daniel to "stand upright." The resurrection will involve only those who know of God and are responsible to fulfil His will. Daniel was thus privileged. Others, who are as the "beasts that perish" will never see light, and their graves will never open (Psa. 49:19-20).

"And when he had spoken this word unto me, I stood trembling" — Despite the reassuring words of the angel, Daniel feels his weakness. Typically, his mortality still cleaves to him (Rom. 8:11). The resurrected will still possess earthy, corruptible nature, until the judgment is completed. Daniel, though approved of God, manifested a proper humility and recognition of weakness, that should be the attitude of all the faithful. We need to "work out our salvation with fear and trembling" (Phil. 2:12). Being in contact with the high and holy things of Yahweh, we should never presume upon His graciousness. Pomposity and pride should not be found in saints, for "the fear of Yahweh is the beginning of knowledge" (Prov. 1:7). "Trembling" (Heb. *ra'ad* means to shudder, more or less violently — Strong).

Gathered by the angels in preparation for the Judgment Seat of Christ, we will, like Daniel, "stand trembling". Daniel, however, now heard some encouraging words from the angel.

Divine Response and Revelation — vv.12-15

As Daniel stands trembling before the angel, he hears words of commendation and revelation — so remarkable that he is visibly affected. He learns that during the period of his personal preparation and prayer to Yahweh, when it may have seemed that his words were unheeded, the Elohim were diligently working on his behalf. Similarly, when we stand before the Judge of all the earth, it will be revealed how the Hand of Providence has been effective in ordering the circumstances of our lives. Sometimes, the affairs of kings and nations are arranged to benefit Yahweh's people.

VERSE 12

“Then said he unto me, Fear not, Daniel!” — These words were intended to calm his trembling. Yahweh understands such nervousness, and reveals the loving consideration of an understanding Father. In all our trials and tribulations He will care for us. To the patriarch He said: “Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield and thy exceeding great reward” (Gen. 15:1). When Jacob was in need of re-assurance, He declared: “Fear not, to go down into Egypt...” (Gen. 46:3). Notice, however, the subtle difference in the attitude of those who believe, and others who, by force of circumstance, are compelled to submit: “In every dominion of my kingdom, men tremble and fear before the Elah of Daniel” (Dan. 6:26). Yahweh’s servants can rest in confidence of His care; but the Gentiles must learn to humiliate themselves before Him. When the saints are rejoicing in His mercy, a Divine ultimatum will issue forth to all the nations: “Fear God, and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven and earth, and the sea and the fountains of waters” (Rev. 14:6-7).

“For from the first day that thou didst set thine heart to understand, and to chasten thyself before thy God” — Yahweh did not delay to act immediately upon Daniel’s request. Twenty-one days earlier (v.2), God commissioned Gabriel to superintend the events that would culminate in Daniel’s understanding. Yahweh acknowledged two characteristics of the prophet as worthy of commendation: he had *set his heart* and had *chastened* himself. The word “set” (Heb. *nathan*, also v.15), means “to give, place, fix, plant”. Daniel’s desire to understand the Divine purpose was so intense, that he had “fixed” his heart and mind on it. This reveals conviction, determination and resoluteness so firm that nothing could turn him from his desire. Similarly the Lord “set” his face to go towards Jerusalem (Lk. 9:51), in an act of absolute fixation.

The other characteristic was that of

chastening. The Hebrew word *anah* means “to afflict, to abase oneself”. It represents the sort of humility which commends itself to God: He “giveth grace unto the humble... humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord and he shall lift you up” (Jas. 4:6,10). The word does not occur elsewhere in Daniel, and in the same tense it occurs only in Ezra 8:21, “that we might afflict ourselves before our God, to seek of him a right way for us, and for our little ones, and for all our substance.” This verse emphasises a full and complete humiliation before the Almighty.

These qualities will be sought at the Judgment Seat as our attitude to the Truth is exposed. There needs to be a two-fold development: firstly, mentally, in the preparing of heart (mind) to understand the Divine will, and, secondly, in a practical outworking of humble acts of faith. This attitude will find commendation in the Age to come. There shall then be granted a revelation of how Yahweh has worked in individual lives as well as the national development of His program (2 Cor. 5:10).

“Thy words were heard” — We are not specifically informed to what these related. But Daniel, recognising that seventy years had been fulfilled, anticipated the deliverance of Israel — and fasted and prayed to that end. Yet, although Daniel’s words were heard, they were not immediately answered. He needed to trust in faith, and patiently await the “set time to favour Zion.” Any seeming delay in Yahweh’s purpose must not be taken to mean that faithful prayer is unheeded, or that the needs of saints are disregarded by the Most High. Joseph had to wait “until the end of two full years” before gaining release from his unjustified confinement in prison. Yet, throughout what must have seemed an interminable delay, his faith never wavered (Gen. 40:20-41:1). We must learn to wait for Yahweh’s pleasure; yet, at the same time, not hesitate to “continue instant in prayer” (Rom. 12:12), and “give Him no rest, till He establish, and till He make Jerusalem a praise in the

earth" (Isa. 62:7). It is this characteristic that will find approval in the Day of Assize.

"And I am come for thy words" — Moffat renders this: "for the sake of your prayers, I am here." The expression has a peculiar tenderness. In this sense Gabriel's work was dependent upon the prayers of Daniel. Wise, thoughtful prayers avail much (Jas. 5:16). They caused a great famine to cease in the days of Elijah (v.18); and forced the unjust judge to act on behalf of a humble widow in the parable of the Lord (Lk. 18:5). Such is the power of prayer.

VERSE 13

"But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me one and twenty days:" — It had taken the angel 21 days to arrange the political world so as to bring the policy of Persia into conformity with Yahweh's purpose, for which Daniel had been praying. At the beginning of this period Daniel had turned to God mourning, fasting and praying for the restoration of his people (vv. 2-3). His prayers were immediately heard and acted upon, though he was unaware of the angelic work during that period. In order to accomplish this, circumstances had to be re-arranged so that the prince of Persia would voluntarily act in a certain manner. It was in this year that the decree of Cyrus took place. Thus "God rules in the kingdom of men" (ch. 4:17,32), through the silent manoeuvring by the Elohim of events and people in power. We cannot always see the manipulations of Divine hands amongst the nations, although we understand the ultimate Divine purpose with this earth and mankind. We pray for the coming of Christ, but are ignorant of the specific arrangements within the world scene that must be organised to permit that great event to occur properly.

The word "prince" is the Hebrew *sar*, the head or captain; in this case it refers to Cyrus (v.1) who was induced by circumstances to issue the decree of Ezra 1, that permitted the return of the exiles to commence. Ezra records this

incident: "Yahweh stirred up the spirit of Cyrus" (Ezra 1:1). Although the king did not realise that he was doing the bidding of the Monarch of Heaven when he gave his decree, it was, nevertheless, because of the political events that Yahweh controlled.

The word "withstand" (Heb. *amad*) is used of Azariah and his fellow-priests (2 Chron. 26:18) who stood in the way of King Uzziah as he was about to enter the Temple to offer incense. So the angels invisibly act to arrange the affairs of human government. An unseen angel stood in Balaam's way to prevent him frustrating the Divine purpose, which was his intention (Num. 22:32, although a different word is here used), and in this manner Divine actions dictate personal and national events. Such major incidents, which change the course of destiny, appear to occur in "natural" ways, requiring time to organise. This labour is part of the "ministering" of the Elohim on behalf of the saints (Heb. 1:14).

"But, lo, Michael" — The archangel, principally in charge of Israel's affairs (Exod. 23:20, cp. Josh. 5:14 mg; Jude v.9 with Zech. 3:1). His name signifies "Who is as El". It is probably his work to which reference is made in Ezra 5:5 to "the eye of their God was upon the elders." The angel thus observed the activities of the Jews on behalf of Yahweh in the heavens. Michael's work as "your prince" (Dan. 10:21) is to be taken over by the Lord Jesus Christ himself, when he appears for the salvation of Israel (ch. 12:1).

"One of the Chief Princes" — The margin has: "One of the first". Michael has certain authority and status, for which he is known as the "archangel" over Israel (Jude 9). There is a system of angelic hierarchy which will also be established with the immortalised saints in the Kingdom (Matt. 19:27-28; Luke 19:11-27). As stars differ in glory (1 Cor. 15:40-41), so there will be a differing of status amongst the priests of the future. Some will be privileged to "sit on the Master's right hand, and left hand as prepared of the Father" (Matt. 21:23).

“Came to help me” — In carrying out Yahweh’s purposes, the elohim work together in harmony, and with consultation among themselves. This is evident in the first works of creation: “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness” (Gen. 1:26; 2:18). The circumstances of the assistance Gabriel required from Michael are not revealed. However Ezra 1:1 records that “Yahweh stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it in writing.” This was achieved by the Divine control of events. Josephus claims that Cyrus was shown prophecies of Isaiah and was “seized with an earnest desire and ambition to fulfil what was written” (cp. Isa. 44:26; 45:13). The elevation of Daniel just prior to Babylon’s fall (Dan. 5:29) would contribute to this. The Cyrus Cylinder records his policy of religious tolerance of many gods, but in regard to Yahweh, he gave special assistance. Such circumstances required angelic manipulation.

“And I remained there with the kings of Persia” — There was only one king, Cyrus, but his kingdom was administered by lesser “kings”, the policy-makers of Persia (cp. Dan. 6:1,2). The Septuagint, Rotherham and others translate the word “remained” (*yathar*) as “I left him there, beside the kings of Persia.” *Yathar* means, to hang out and over; to be redundant; to remain or be left. If this rendition is accepted, the subsequent actions of the angel follow logically: v. 14, “now am I come”; v. 20, “now will I return”. Daniel’s prayers over the past 21 days had been heard by the Elohim (v.12), and they had arranged for Michael to continue to order the affairs of Persia on Israel’s behalf, while Gabriel, the “communicator” explained these things to Daniel.

VERSE 14

“Now I am come” — As soon as was conveniently arranged, the angel promptly came to Daniel to explain the processes being undertaken in conformity with his prayer.

“To make thee understand what shall befall thy people” — Daniel knew of the prophecy of Jeremiah that after seventy years, Israel would return from exile (ch. 29:10; 30:3); he anticipated the day when his people would “be in rest, and be quiet and none shall make them afraid” (ch. 30:10); the time when “the Branch of righteousness would grow up unto David” (ch. 33:14-16). What then of the further prophecy of seventy weeks of years (ch. 9:24) that appears to delay the salvation of Israel? Hence Daniel’s fasting and prayers for enlightenment. A servant of God is always deeply concerned for the welfare of his brethren (cp. Eph. 5:25; 2 Cor. 12:15). And to the anxious heart, God will reveal His purposes: “Surely Adonai Yahweh will do nothing but He revealeth (*qalah*, uncovers) His secret (*sowd*, confidential plans) unto His servants the prophets” (Amos 3:7). They may not comprehend the Divine scheme in all its detail, but they are able to perceive the development of these plans and be strengthened thereby (Rom. 15:4; 1 Cor. 10:11).

“In the latter days” — This term is different from “the last days”. In *The Last Days of Judah’s Commonwealth* Bro. Thomas describes them as “two distinct, or separate and remote periods of time. A course of centuries intervenes which keeps them as distinct as the north and south poles of the earth.” In *Herald of the Kingdom and Age to Come* (Aug. 1859, p.175), he defines: “The *last days* were the ‘days of vengeance’ upon the Jewish people and rulers of the 42nd generation (AD 70); but the *latter days* are the days of the restitution of all things pertaining to Israel and the saints, as all the prophets from Moses have fore-shown.” Gabriel thus reminded Daniel that the elohistic activities in his days would bring only a limited fulfilment of the prophet’s prayer, and that “many days” would transpire before the “latter days” would see the complete fulfilment. There has been a long night of Israel’s eclipse, during which those like Daniel could remain steadfast in hope

because of these words of Gabriel.

“For yet the vision is for many days”

— The vision is that of the *Certain Man*, the multitudinous Christ (v. 5-6), and many days would elapse before that vision would become a reality on earth. This allows for the “long-suffering of God” to give others opportunity to conform to His saving Truth whilst His purpose was being worked out amongst the nations (2 Pet. 3:9). However, the “vision” of future glory was one which can sustain and encourage, for where no vision is held, people perish (Prov. 29:18).

VERSE 15

“And when he had spoken such words unto me, I set my face toward the ground” — In the face of such a revelation Daniel acknowledges his weakness and submission before Gabriel.

Figuratively, he was still clothed with the feebleness of mortality after his symbolic resurrection (v.10), and could not look upon the Divine Glory. This will be the experience of humble saints at the Judgment Seat, faced with the realisation that, at last, after many days, the vision has “come”!

“And I became dumb” — Heb. *alam* signifies “tongue-tied”. Daniel was awed into silence in the presence of the Messenger from Heaven.

The Judgment Seat Enacted

— vv.16-17

Another angel now appears. He touches Daniel's lips as if to hear the prophet's words. Daniel responds, acknowledging his inadequacy and weakness, and manifesting submission and humility, as his heart is exposed to the judging eye of the angel.

VERSE 16

“And, behold, one like the similitude of the sons of men” — An angel comes to reveal a different aspect of the work of Christ with the saints. Gabriel was the teacher and instructor; this angel is involved in judgment. He stands figuratively for Christ (v.5, Rev. 1:13), who applied the term “Son of

man” to himself in connection with judgment (Jn. 5:27). Refer to notes on Page 238.

Note the significance of the different Hebrew words for “men” in this chapter. Those who were with Daniel, but who saw no vision and experienced “great quaking” (v. 7) were *enosh*, weak, mortal, sickly. In vv.11,19, Daniel is addressed as a “man greatly beloved”: *ish*, great, exalted. Of the “Man of One” (v.5), the word is also *ish*, but in vv.16,18, it is *adam*, for, in both cases, the angel represents Christ's humanity and fellow-feeling with those over whom he is judge. Thus, Daniel's high esteem in the sight of Yahweh is illustrated in the use of *ish* (vv. 17,19); Messiah's essential humanity is emphasised by the use of *adam* (vv. 16,18); and the ultimate victory of the multitudinous Christ is shown by the use of *ish* (v. 5).

“Touched my lips” — Previously unable to express himself (v. 15), Daniel was now required to speak before this special angel. Isaiah previously confessed by silence his hopelessness, until he felt a “live coal from the altar” on his lips, and his iniquity and sin were purged (Isa. 6:5-7). Now Daniel felt the angelic “touch”, indicating concession, approval and the granting of power to speak. Similarly, those gathered to the judgment seat shall “every one of us give account of himself to God” (Rom. 14:12).

“Then I opened my mouth, and spake” — His reticence was allayed, and he addressed this heavenly Being, confessing his weakness and fear. Daniel represents all the faithful who will stand before the Judge of all the earth and be invited to speak! Their humility, like Daniel's, will be evident as with fear and reverence they face their Advocate, and respond with an appeal for his loving-kindness. Others, in their boastfulness, will loudly protest “Lord, lord, have we not prophesied... cast out devils... done many wonderful works” (Matt. 7:22), only to hear the sad response: “I never knew you.”

“And said unto him that stood

before me" — His fear removed, Daniel replied to the Judgment Angel, but acknowledged his lowly condition.

"O my Lord" — The first words uttered by Daniel during this experience reveal an attitude of reverence and humility. The prophet does not adopt a casual or familiar attitude with this Divine Representative. There is no impertinence nor disrespect such as is sometimes sadly heard today when Yahweh and His Son are referred to in irreverent terms.

"By the vision" — The manifestation of Divine glory brought to his mind the strivings required to attain unto it, and his deep concern as to whether it will be granted. The tremendous glory that awaits us is so much greater than the small trials we are called upon to endure, that it seems almost beyond compare. So Paul declared: "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us" (Rom. 8:18)

"My sorrows are turned upon me" — The Hebrew word translated "sorrows," *tsiyrim*, means writhings, throes, pains. It is used of a hinge being moved under pressure (Prov. 26:14), and of the pangs of childbirth (Isa. 21:3). Daniel's distress was not overdramatised, but genuine. He was very aware of his weakness.

The word rendered "are turned" indicates to turn one's self about, to turn back. The same phrase occurs in 1 Sam. 4:19, "her pains turned upon her;" thus, came upon her. We should poetically express the idea by saying that they "rolled" upon and over us, like the surges of the ocean. The NIV translates the phrase: "I am overcome with anguish because of the vision." The majesty of the vision will cause a similar reaction within the minds of those summoned to the Judgment Seat of Christ. They will realise that they cannot face the Judge upon the basis of self-justification or self-merit.

"And I have retained no strength" — Heb. *kowach* signifies firmness, vigor, force. Daniel was made con-

scious of his mortal weakness. Four times he expressed this sentiment: when he saw the vision (v.8); when he heard the voice (v.8); when he was called upon to speak (v.16); when he confessed to his state (v.17).

VERSE 17

"For how can the servant of this my lord talk with this my lord?" — Humbled to the dust in the presence of the angel, Daniel readily acknowledged his lowly position. There was no personal justification (1 Cor. 1:29). His disposition was similar to that of Job, who was awed at the voice and power of Yahweh: "Behold, I am vile; what shall I answer thee? I will lay mine hand upon my mouth" (Job 40:4). The Psalmist wrote: "And now, Lord, what wait I for? My hope is in Thee... I was dumb, I opened not my mouth" (Psa. 39:7,9).

"For as for me, straightway there remained no strength in me, neither is there breath left in me" — This is not part of Daniel's address to the angel, but a note which he added to the record to indicate his condition at the time. "Straightway" (Heb. *attah*) means, at this time. He emphasises what occurred as he discoursed with the angel. The word "remained" is different from the word in v.8 (Heb. *sha'ar*) and v. 13 (Heb. *yathar*). Here it is *amad* which means to stand, continue, remain. He feels deprived of brethren, his consciousness so numbed that he seemed to be without it. This is possible in a state of shock or depression. His experience is typical of those who, in abject humility, will stand before Christ in the day of judgment.

Approval and Reward is Granted — vv. 18-19

The Divine messenger now expresses words of commendation to the prophet. Daniel is encouraged to be strengthened in his position, and feels the effect of the Divine mercy in his life.

VERSE 18

"Then there came again and touched me one like the appearance of a man" — This is probably Gabriel, since,

in v. 20, he determined to return to the political activities in which he was previously engaged (v. 13). He had "the appearance of a man (Heb. *adam*), whereas in ch. 8:15 he is described as *geber* (valiant, mighty). In the earlier encounter, the angel instructed Daniel in the mighty events concerning the cleansing of the Sanctuary and the development of the nations. Now, in ch. 10, he is associated with the personal judgment involving the prophet himself. When Jesus taught the people he spoke the words of Yahweh: "My doctrine (teaching) is not mine, but His that sent me" (Jn. 7:16; cp. Jn. 6:63). He was the Son of God. But when he sits to judge his people, it is as a Son of Man (Jn. 5:27), the one who "was to look upon like a jasper and sardine stone" (Rev. 4:3), the representation of flesh made spirit-nature. In the use of the different titles, Gabriel foreshadows the two aspects of the Lord.

"And he strengthened me" — Suddenly, Daniel became aware of a feeling of peace and well-being. The touch of the Divine hands transferred a power that allayed Daniel's fears, and prepared him to receive further communications with entire calmness. Typically, he was granted the approval of God which led to the granting of immortality (v. 19). This joy will be experienced by all the redeemed when the words of commendation are heard: "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter into the joy of thy lord" (Matt. 25:21). At long last, the weaknesses and disappointments of life, the failures and trials will dissipate into the shadows, as the comforting voice of the Master expresses his approval — and we will be strengthened in heart.

The Hebrew word *chazaq*, rendered "strengthened" and "strong" appears only in vv. 18,19 of this chapter. Elsewhere (in vv. 8,16,17) the word for "strength" is *kowach*. The "strengthening" here is accomplished in two stages: (1) "He touched me ... and strengthened me" (v. 18); and (2) "I was strengthened ... thou hast strengthened me" (v. 19). The first

typifies the verdict of approval given following judgment; the second, the granting of immortality, as the final blessing of Yahweh for faithful endurance.

VERSE 19

"And said, O man greatly beloved, fear not" — Daniel was encouraged by the angel as commendation was given to him. The word for "man" is *ish*, a great man. Daniel's standing before Yahweh is thus established. He was great, for his faith had overcome his fear; his love of Israel had continued throughout his life in Babylon; his desire for Yahweh's righteousness had removed his own insufficiencies. He was also greatly beloved ("highly esteemed" — NIV) in the eyes of God (see notes ch. 9:23; 10:11). Then he was told to "fear not", for which see notes on v. 12.

"Peace be unto thee" — Heb. *shalom*, which signifies peace, unity, health, completeness, safety. This is the only occurrence of the word in Daniel's prophecy. It formed part of the blessing pronounced upon Israel by the priests (Num. 6:26), and is expressive of the oneness that will exist between the One Eternal Spirit and the Multitudinous Christ in the coming day of glory.

"Be strong, yea be strong" — Heb. *chazaq*, *chazaq*, repeated for emphasis, and to remind Daniel to draw completely upon his spiritual resources to manifest faith and courage — not only in believing the message of the angel, but in accepting without doubt the glorious future promised to those who remain steadfast in the faith. Realising that time would yet elapse before the consummation of these things, Daniel could have become despondent. But Yahweh's purpose is firm, His determination exact; He will bring it to pass at the appropriate time. Meanwhile, the saints must develop the characteristic of "be strong" as they await the "set time to favor Zion."

"And when he had spoken unto me, I was strengthened, and said, Let my

There is No Delay in the Divine Purpose

In chapters 2, 7 and 8, Daniel was given an outline of future world events, but he did not understand the long period of time required for the outworkings of the visions and the salvation of his people. Though he anticipated the expiration of the Seventy Years' Prophecy of Jeremiah's record, he was in "sorrow" (ch. 10:16) when he realised the limitation of that prophecy.

Gabriel had been assigned to ensure the fulfilment of Jeremiah's prophecy, and it was necessary for him to "fight" with the kings of Persia to achieve this end. Angelic arrangement of circumstances is suggested in the record of Ezra 4, where Artaxerxes stopped the Temple building, for this was subsequently reversed by Darius (ch. 6).

Eventually, the course of the kings of Persia would conclude, and in accordance with the visions of Nebuchadnezzar and Daniel, the angels Gabriel and Michael would organise the growth and development to power of the Kingdom of Grecia.

Today, the affairs of the nations are in the hands of the Lord Jesus Christ. We do not know the names of the angels delegated to organise these affairs in order that the prophecies of the "Scriptures of Truth" (Dan. 10:21) and the Divine Plan might be brought to a successful conclusion: but the effectiveness of their work is evident. The nations are being turned around in accordance with the ancient prophecies — and sometimes, when events occur which seem to delay the process, a reversal soon occurs! *Palmoni* (see p.238) has the "time-chart" and there will be no real delay, no variation from the divine calendar, for at the time appointed "He shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: whom the heaven must receive until the restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began" (Acts 4:20-21). Therefore, with Daniel, we must "fear not ... (but) be strong, yea, be strong" (Dan. 10:19).

lord speak; for thou hast strengthened me" — Daniel acknowledged that the Word of God provided him with the strength needed to face the pressures of life, and to comprehend the wonders to be learned from Yahweh's revelation to mankind. Paul said, "I can do all things through Christ which *strengtheneth me*" (Phil. 4:13). John declared, "Whoso keepeth His Word, in Him verily is the love of God *perfected*" (1 John 5). Spiritually fortified by the words and compassion shown towards him by the angel, and with his

faith energised by greater resilience, Daniel calmly and submissively awaited the next words from the angel. Similarly, Christ's identification with humanity and understanding of our need, will be comforting to us at the Judgment Seat. To hear his commendation and feel the bestowal of immortality that will strengthen us beyond comprehension, will be the grand experience of the faithful: "They that wait upon Yahweh shall renew their strength: they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not

be weary; and they shall walk and not faint" (Isa. 40:31).

The Overshadowing Work of the Angels — vv. 20-21

The Divine messenger tells Daniel of the continuing work of the Elohim amongst the nations. This is essential if the ultimate salvation of Israel is to be achieved. After his personal experiences that day, by which Daniel was instructed concerning his own future, the angel concludes the conversation with the assurance that Yahweh desired the final glorification of Daniel's people. In this is seen the culmination of the Divine purpose, in the destruction of flesh and the elevation of the spirit.

VERSE 20

"Then said he, Knowest thou wherefore I come unto thee?" — The *Jerusalem Bible* re-arranges the text of these two verses: "Do you know why I have come to you? It is to tell you what is written in the Book of Truth. I must go back to fight against the Prince of Persia; when I have done with him, the Prince of Javan will come next. In all this there is no one to lend me support except Michael your Prince." The decree of Cyrus, which had already been proclaimed, confirmed the purpose of the angel. Daniel's mind was opened to the angelic ministration that would continue forth, laboring to bring the whole Divine purpose to a consummation. Daniel was urged to seek for understanding, and to interpret the signs of the times in view of the workings of Providence. The constant exhortation of Scripture is to be awake to the events that contribute to the salvation of Yahweh's people: "Watch therefore; for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come" (Matt. 24:42); "watch thou in all things" (2 Tim. 4:5); "Blessed are they that hear the words of this prophecy" (Rev. 1:3)

"And now will I return to fight with the prince of Persia:" — The word "now" (Heb. *attah*) can mean "henceforth", and the NIV renders it as "soon". Gabriel was to return to the management of Persia's affairs, but

first he would explain his work to Daniel. Michael had been called to assist in the angelic activity in Persia (v. 13), but now the angels had to undertake further work. Circumstances had occurred which might frustrate the angelic plans unless they were counteracted, and Gabriel's presence was necessary to secure the safe return of the exiles to their own land, including the rebuilding of city and temple. The angel was involved in a "fight", for Israel had received strong opposition, and Yahweh's power was needed to advance His purpose. Cyrus had to be moved to fulfil the decree for the restoration of the temple.

"And when I am gone forth" — Daniel had earlier been reminded that the political affairs of the nations were controlled by the Elohim (ch. 2:20-22; 4:17, 25, 35, 5:18). But, perhaps influences were still at work in Persia which may have opposed Yahweh's purpose, requiring further activity by the Divine messengers. The words of Gabriel can give confidence to all believers, especially in times of extreme adversity, that the Elohim continue to work on our behalf. Paul wrote concerning the pagan Roman times: "The powers that be are ordained of God" (Rom. 13:1-6), and "we know that all things work together for good to them that love God" (ch. 8:28).

The *Jerusalem Bible* renders this phrase: "when I have done with him". Gabriel would ensure the completion of his responsibility in this matter.

"Lo, the prince of Grecia shall come" — God had raised up Cyrus to execute His purpose (Isa. 45:1), and he would remove the kings of Persia and cause Greece to prevail when His purpose required it. Gabriel had been entrusted with the supervision of these affairs. But it is obvious, now, that a long period of time was forecast, since Daniel witnessed only the beginnings of the Persian reign. He had watched, excitedly, as Babylon was threatened by the rising Cyrian power, and witnessed the thrill of the victory over Babylon. Now, however, Gabriel advised him that Greece would replace Persia;

and this would not be until over two centuries of Persian rule would pass by! This was achieved by the brilliant victories of Alexander the Great against Persian resistance. Details of this will be given in Chapter 11.

VERSE 21

“But I will shew thee that which is noted in the scripture of truth:” — “Scripture” is from the Hebrew *ka-thab*, writing (RV, NIV, NASB). These “writings” had not previously been expressed in Bible prophecies, and must refer to the instructions of Yahweh to His angels. By these “writings” the angels were directed to carry out His purpose, and Gabriel now explained them to Daniel in great detail, recorded in chapters 11-12. Similar “writings” are contained in Heaven’s books, as indicated in Rev. 20:12, “the books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.” The Psalmist comments: “In Thy book all my members were written” (Psa. 139:16).

Already Daniel witnessed the writing of Heaven upon the great wall of Babylon’s banquet hall (Dan. 5:24) which spelt out the doom of the dominion. Thus, the “ages have been framed by the *word* of God” (Heb. 11:3), so that events transpire according to His pre-determined plan. Daniel was now to become privy to this marvellous writing.

It is significant that the revelation was given to Daniel after he was typically “raised from the dead”. Similarly, after the granting of immortality, the worthy will understand the hidden “writing” of Heaven that has ordered the political events of past times (cp. 1 Pet. 1:12).

“And there is none that holdeth with me in these things” — Gabriel emphasised to Daniel that it was only Divine intervention that would accomplish his hopes. The margin renders the phrase “strengthening himself”; NIV: “no one supports me”. It was Gabriel and Michael who were in

charge of the operation, and not the clever schemes of men. The kings of Persia and Grecia made decisions for their own benefit, and were not truly governed by a desire for Yahweh’s honor and purpose — though those decisions were used by the angels to achieve their ends. Daniel was not to look to the kings for salvation — but to the skills of the Elohim, who “stood alone” in executing the great scheme “noted in the writing of truth.”

The book of Daniel provides marvellous examples of the way in which the Elohim work, either individually or in harmony. They are Creatures of Power, of the same Divine nature as the Deity they serve; hence He “maketh His angels spirits; His ministers a flaming fire” (Psa. 104:4). These glorious Beings are “the eyes of Yahweh ... that run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect (Hebrew complete) toward Him” (2 Chron. 16:9). Believers can take courage in such things; and ponder the activities of the Elohim in these last days.

“But Michael your prince” — In v. 13 Michael is referred to as “one of the chief princes”, but here is identified as “*your* prince.” He was the special guardian of Israel, and had charge of its affairs. It would be appropriate that Michael represented Yahweh in (1) the dealings with the patriarch Abraham in the establishing of the Abrahamic Covenant (Gen. 15:18), and negotiations over Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen. 18); (2) the discussions with Moses on Sinai (Exod. 24-31); (3) speaking “mouth to mouth” with Moses (Num. 12:7-8); (4) obstructing Balaam on his way to Balak (Num. 22:22-35); and (5) appearing to Joshua as “captain of the host of Yahweh” (Josh. 5:14). It was certainly Michael who stood before Joshua, the high priest, of Zech. 3 in the events that transpired following the return from Babylon (see Jude 9).

Working together for the salvation of Israel, the activities of the Elohim are to be outlined by Gabriel in the concluding chapters of the prophecy.

Five Stages in Daniel's Typical Resurrection

Ch. 10:8-19

In this remarkable enactment, Daniel is brought before the Angelic Beings, representatives of Yahweh. He undergoes five different stages that reveal the process by which he will become part of "the certain man," the "man of a multitude" he had seen in vision. This would involve his death, and his subsequent typical resurrection to immortality. The same order is revealed in 1 Cor. 15 in Paul's discourse on the resurrection, and in Ezek. 37 in which the prophet sees the process of the national resurrection of Israel.

Stage 1: THE TASTE OF DEATH (vv.8-9). Being left alone, Daniel feels his strength ebb away, and his appearance is turned into corruption. He falls into a deep sleep, typical of the death of the saints.

Stage 2: THE RESURRECTION MORN (vv.10-11). He is visited by the angel, who touches him, and sets him upon his feet. But he remains trembling. Typically, being resurrected, but still mortal, he feels the continuing weakness of flesh.

Stage 3: GATHERED FOR JUDGMENT (vv.12-17). Daniel's heart is revealed, as the angel speaks concerning his previous desires. The angelic work on behalf of Daniel is revealed. Though Daniel was dumb, the touch of the angel restores his speech, and he confesses his weakness. He speaks about his faith, his humility and his desire to be strengthened.

Stage 4: WORDS OF APPROVAL (v.18). The comforting assurance of the angel is now heard. Daniel is encouraged and strengthened.

Stage 5: MADE IMMORTAL (v.19). The Divine Voice of power is expressed, as Daniel is strengthened. He feels the power in his being, resulting from the angel's words. The terms of approval by the angel are now accompanied by the physical reaction felt by Daniel, as typically he is given eternal life.

A Summary of 1 Cor. 15

1. The literal resurrection of Christ, basic to the Gospel — vv. 1-11.
2. The literal resurrection of believers proved by Christ's resurrection — vv. 12-19.
3. The order of the Resurrection — vv. 20-28.
4. The folly of Apostolic Sacrifice if there be no resurrection — vv. 29-34.
5. How and to What a body shall we be raised? — vv. 35-44.
6. The analogy of the first and second resurrection — vv. 45-49.
7. The change that must take place — vv. 50-54.
8. The challenge of the resurrection — vv. 55-58.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

JUDGMENT ON ISRAEL'S OPPRESSORS

Of the many prophecies in the Scriptures of future events, none is so detailed as those now before us, nor any with such obvious and precise fulfilment. Gabriel continues his exposition of the passing world scene, giving special attention to its effect upon Daniel's people. His words are in answer to Daniel's earnest, fervent prayer (ch. 9), and provide details of the vision recorded in ch. 8. Chapter 11 contains a portion of those things which the angel said were in the "writing of truth" (ch. 10:21), and which he came to disclose to Daniel. The revelation also embraces the 12th Chapter, and the two comprise the last recorded communication that was made to Daniel in the last years of his life. Thus, it details major events that would transpire with respect to Israel from Daniel's death until he "stands again in his lot at the end of the days" (ch. 12:13).

The first part of the chapter is dominated by a "mighty king" (v. 3) known to history as Alexander the Great. In only a few years Alexander conquered the entire civilised world of antiquity, from Italy in the west to the Indus in the east. After brilliant military achievements and voyages of discovery, in which he subdued all opposition, Alexander died in the year BC 323 when a mere thirty-three years old. Immediately, his empire began to disintegrate, and in the course of incessant war, all against all, there emerged a series of sovereign monarchies each with its own dynasty. His four generals divided the territory of the Grecian Empire into four kingdoms over which they ruled. They continued to quarrel amongst themselves, allowing the rising power of Rome to enter into the Middle East. See Pp. 181 to 185 for more details.

The wars and policies of two of the Grecian Kingdoms are outlined in vv. 5-35; they become the Seleucid Empire, known as the King of the North, and the Ptolemy Empire of Egypt, which became the King of the South. These two powers were to dominate Biblical events, and recur throughout history, until the final clash on the mountains of Israel, yet future (see vv. 40-45).

In Elpis Israel (pp. 398-403) Brother Thomas provides a paraphrase of Daniel 11:1-35, with a historical outline of this period of history which occupied some 250 years. This is further elaborated by Brother Roberts in his booklet on Daniel 11, which forms the basis for the following exposition. Brother Roberts stressed the undeniably Divine nature of the record. Against those who suggest Daniel 11 was the result of forgery, or that Daniel lived after the events described, he wrote:

“The fulfilment (of chapter 11) 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. 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 principle. There is not a single sound argument against the authenticity of Daniel. In support of it, the evidence is overpowering.

“The eleventh chapter describes the wars and intrigues of the Greek monarchs of Syria and Egypt (so far as they bore on the Holy Land), from the third year of Cyrus, down to the absorption of Syria by the Roman Empire. Had the writer been a historian with knowledge of the events and their times, he would have given us the names of the various actors in the drama, such as Xerxes, Alexander, Ptolemy, Philometer, Philadelphus, Antigonus, Antiochus Theos, Antiochus Epiphanes, etc., as such names always loom largely with human narrators. Instead of that, the prophet describes these individualities by the colourless designation, ‘King of the north, King of the south,’ etc., befitting the exalted nature of the Divine point of view, from which the greatest of kings are seen but as insignificant officials of the moment.”

The Authority of the Prophecy

EVIDENCE FOR ITS SUPPORT & OBJECTIONS
COMMENTED UPON BY BROTHER ROBERTS

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. 24:15). 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 was 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 the 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 thus: "Ananias, Azarias, and Misael (known in Babylon as Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego — RR), 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 con-

nected 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 of 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 deliver but their own souls by their righteousness" (Ezek. 14:14,20). So also in 27:3 — (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 till 400 years after Ezekiel's day? The book of Daniel was received by the body of Jews long before as the work of the Daniel mentioned by 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 of Daniel are 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 xi., sec. 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 the 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 Heb. 11, who, enumerating Bible instances of faith, says time would fail him to tell all. If it be insisted on as 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 in Moses to him! This is proof that they do not really think the silence of the son of Sirach is evidence against Daniel. Besides, 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, though he obtained his information on a personal visit to Babylon. Therefore, it was argued, Daniel must be wrong, who assigns such a prominent place to 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 Chaldee 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 one by one as effectually as mist before the noon-day sun.

The book of Daniel stands out before us as the great prophetic chart of earth's history — proved, not only by the technical considerations rehearsed in the foregoing, but by the actual realization of its extended forecast in the leading lines of history for over 30 centuries, including.

Chapter 11 Summarised

The events outlined by Gabriel reveal the following progression:

1. v. 2: The ram (Persia) pushes westward against the he-goat (Greece) BC539-336. See p.187.
2. vv. 3-4 The rise, demise and successors of Alexander the Great. BC336-301. See pp.181-185, 191.
3. vv. 5-30: The development of the Kings of North and South; their rivalries, diplomacies, and internecine warfare.
 - (a) vv. 5-9: Division of the Greek Kingdom into North and South;
 - (b) vv.10-19: Excursions, victories and defeats of Antiochus the Great;
 - (c) v.20: The rise and fall of Seleucus Philopator;
 - (d) vv.21-30: Antiochus Epiphanes in conflict with Ptolemy Philometer and Ptolemy Euergetes;
4. vv. 31-35: The revolt under the Maccabees.
5. vv. 36-39: The Little-Horn power controls the north, south and the Holy Land (See pp.192-196), and the rise of the Papacy, being a development from, and associate of, the Little Horn Power of Rome.
6. vv. 41-45: Re-emergence of, and continuation of, the enmity between the kings of north and south; the ascendancy and final overthrow of the king of the north.

The Development of the Grecian Power — vv.1-4.

The downfall of Persia and the establishment of Greece were important elements in the Divine plan. Gabriel shows Daniel how the elohim would re-arrange the world scene to provide for the final solution. The cause of Abraham's seed would require important, world-wide crises to occur. It was necessary that two mighty powers be encouraged: the King of the North, and the King of the South, and they would develop through the early death of Alexander of Greece, allowing for the division of his kingdom into four parts, two strong and two weak.

VERSE 1

“Also I in the first year of Darius the Mede” — Gabriel reminds Daniel that two years earlier (cp. ch. 10:1; 9:1), when the prophet sought for Divine revelation, the angel was already at work. This was BC539/538 (see pp.215-217). Daniel had prayed for Yahweh's mercy on his nation, after learning of Jeremiah's prophecy of the 70 years' captivity, and now was to receive further details.

“Even I, stood to confirm and to strengthen him” — Apparently the mind of Darius was not wholly decided on what should be done with regard to Israel. He was in a difficult position in Babylon. It was not he who had conquered the city, but Cyrus — and Darius was merely a puppet ruler in a hostile environment. He may have faced adverse influences, perhaps counsellors of his realm who advised against the proposed measures. But, unseen by Darius or any others in his realm, Gabriel “stood by his side” to confirm him in his purpose, and to secure the execution of his plan.

The word “confirm” (Heb. *chazaq*) means, to be strong; defined as “to be strong in a prevailing degree, by soundness and cohesion of every part, so as to be firm and compact.” The word “strengthen” (Heb. *maoz*) has reference to “a fortified place, a defence.” Gabriel determined to set Darius firmly in his place, so that his purposes

should be achieved. Isaiah had earlier proclaimed that Yahweh would strengthen the Persians: “for Jacob my servant's sake, and Israel mine elect” (Isa. 45:1-4). God gave them power to over-run Babylon, and to establish their control. But, with his work accomplished, Darius was, after only two years, removed to make way for Cyrus, who would organise the return of the exiles.

In this comment by Gabriel, Daniel learnt first-hand that the favor shown him by Darius was by angels motivated.

VERSE 2

“And now will I shew thee the truth” — Gabriel would outline the background to events that would occur. See ch.10:21.

“Behold, there shall stand up yet three kings in Persia” — Since the prophecy was given in the reign of Cyrus (ch.10:1), three kings would follow him: *Cambyses* (known also as Ahasuerus, Ezra 4:6), *Smerdis* (Artaxerxes of Ezra 4:7), and *Darius Hystaspes* (mentioned in Ezra 4:5; 5:5 as Darius). At this time the Persian Empire was bigger than all that had preceded it, and included Assyria, Babylonia and Egypt as well as Persia (modern Iran) and Anatolia (modern Turkey). Darius enlarged it further, and in BC492 invaded Thrace, his first European province. Next was Greece, and he had already experienced their unruly subjects who lived along the seaboard of Anatolia within the boundary of his Empire. Darius knew he had to conquer Greece if he was to have peace on his western border, but in the ensuing contests, the armoured Greek spearmen proved more than a match for their opponents. The battle turned into a massacre: 6400 Persians dead against 200 Greeks. New invasion plans were put in hand to destroy this tiny Grecian uprising, but Darius died before the invasion force was ready and it was his son Xerxes who led the main force of the empire against Greece in BC 480.

“And the fourth shall be far richer

than they all:” — Xerxes was noted for his fabulous wealth, and this description agrees entirely with his case. He inherited the wealth accumulated by the previous kings, and increased his resources enormously. This wealth enabled him to accomplish his expedition into Greece, which furthered the Divine purpose as outlined by Gabriel.

The wealth of the Persian monarchs was promised by God: “I will give thee (Cyrus) the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of secret places, that thou mayest know that I, Yahweh, which call thee by thy name, am the God of Israel” (Isa. 45:3). Cyrus collected a vast amount of wealth by the conquest of Lydia, and the subjugation of Croesus, its rich king; by the conquest of Asia Minor, of Armenia, and of Babylon.

Cambyzes increased that inherited wealth by plundering the temples wherever he went. For example, on his return from Thebes, Egypt, he caused all the temples of that city to be pillaged and burnt to the ground. But he saved from the flames gold to the amount of three hundred talents, and silver to the amount of two thousand and five hundred talents. He is also said to have carried away the famous circle of gold that encompassed the tomb of king Ozymandias, being 365 cubits in circumference, on which were represented all the orbits of the several constellations (*Universal History*, 4, 140).

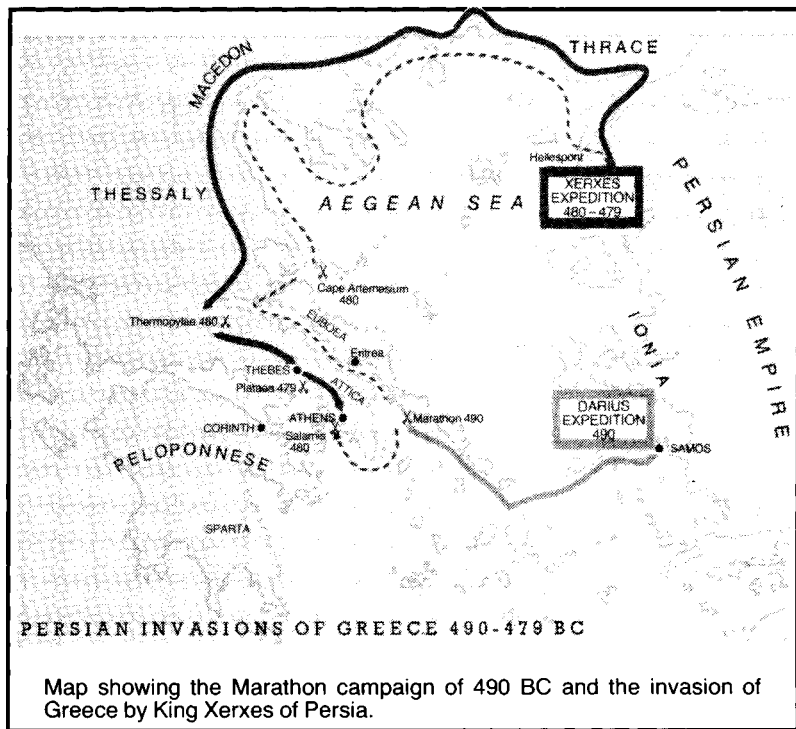
This was further increased by the conquests of Darius and by his heavy taxes on the people. So burdensome were these taxes, that he was called by the Persians, “the merchant,” or “hoarder.” One of the first acts of Darius was to divide his kingdom into provinces for the purpose of raising tribute. According to Herodotus, “during the reign of Cyrus, and indeed of Cambyzes, there were no specific tributes; but presents were made to the sovereign. On account of these and similar innovations (the taxes of Darius-Ed.), the Persians call Darius a merchant, Cambyzes a despot, but Cyrus a parent.” He claims that the sum of the tribute under Darius was

14,560 talents. Besides this sum received from regular taxation, Herodotus enumerates a great amount of gold and silver, and other valuable things, which Darius was accustomed to receive annually from the Ethiopians, from the people of Colchis, from the Arabians, and from India.

All this vast wealth was inherited by Xerxes, the son and successor of Darius, and the “fourth king” of this prophecy. Xerxes was four years in making provision for his celebrated expedition into Greece. In searching his realm for soldiers, he recruited the largest army (according to Herodotus) ever massed together. His invasion aroused the hatred of the Greeks against the Persians, which was later avenged by Alexander (cp. ch.8:7).

“And by his strength through his riches he shall stir up all against the realm of Grecia” — Xerxes inherited from his father, not only the fabulous wealth, but also a burning desire to overcome his Grecian enemies and incorporate the city-states of Greece into his empire. He raised an immense army of over 5 million men, supported by 300,000 Carthaginians and 200 ships. This huge army marched round the northern shore of the Aegean, annihilated a small Greek unit that tried to stop it at the pass of Thermopylae and took and burnt Athens. The Persian fleet was less successful: it went down to defeat at the hands of the Athenians at the Battle of Salamis. Xerxes was by no means dissatisfied with the results of the Campaign: all Greece, except the Peloponnese, was now under his control. Leaving enough men behind to complete the job the next year, he departed for Persia as winter was setting in.

The embattled Greeks put forward every man they could for the campaign of BC479. Under the leadership of the Spartans, who had the biggest and best army in the peninsula, they fielded a force of perhaps 40,000. It was enough to put them on a near equal footing with the Persian corps that Xerxes had left behind. The two armies met near Plataea. The Persian cavalry circled



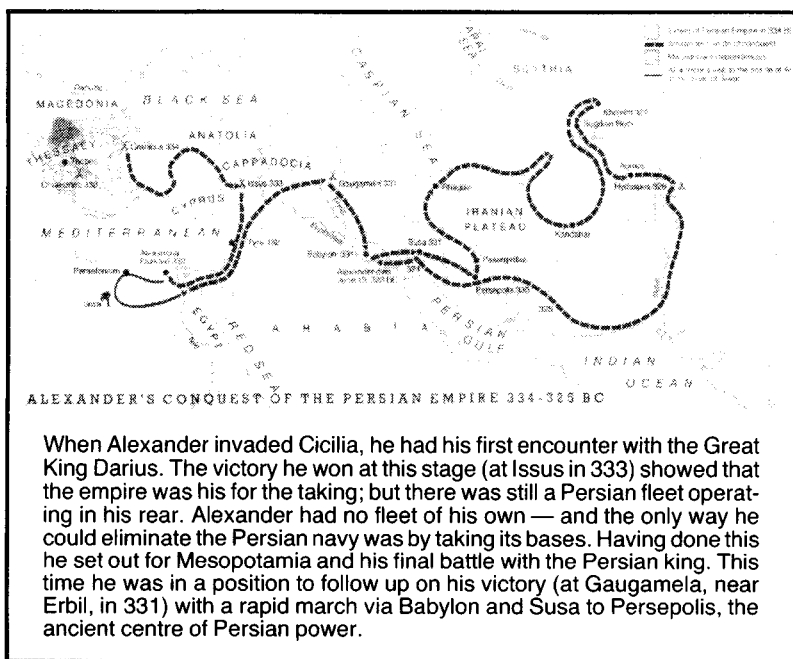
round the Greeks forcing them to pull back into the foothills and the Persians were foolish enough to allow the main clash to develop there. Under these circumstances, the Greeks gradually turned the battle into a one-sided slaughter. This battle introduced a period of intense fighting, as challenge and revolt continued.

VERSE 3

“And a mighty king shall stand up” — The remaining portion of Persian history is ignored, as being unimportant for the purpose in hand, and attention is now given to events in Greece. Verse 4 shows that this king is Alexander the Great, for to no other is it applicable. Alexander ruled from BC 336-323 (see pp. 181-185; 188-191). Thus, Gabriel connected together the events in the days of Xerxes with the

later invasion of the Persian Empire by Alexander. In a letter to the Persian monarch, the young warrior said: “Your ancestors entered into Macedonia, and the other parts of Greece, and did us damage, when they had received no affront from us as the cause of it; and now I, created general of the Grecians, provoked by you, and desirous of avenging the injury done by the Persians, have passed over into Asia.”

“That shall rule with great dominion” — Young renders this phrase: “hath ruled a great dominion”, whilst the NIV has “rule with great power.” Alexander was a ruthless ruler over a great empire. The inspired description is very apt; it is more strictly applicable to Alexander the Great than to any prince of ancient or modern times. The whole world, except Greece, was subject to the power of Persia; and it was



the determination of Darius and Xerxes in invading Greece, to add that to their empire, so having the earth under their control. When, therefore, Alexander conquered Persia, it was as though he subdued the world! It is claimed, that when he had conquered Persia, he sat down and wept because there were no more worlds to conquer. Daniel had previously prophesied that Greece should “bear rule over all the earth” (ch.2:39), and this “dominion” was given to it by divine wisdom (ch 7:6).

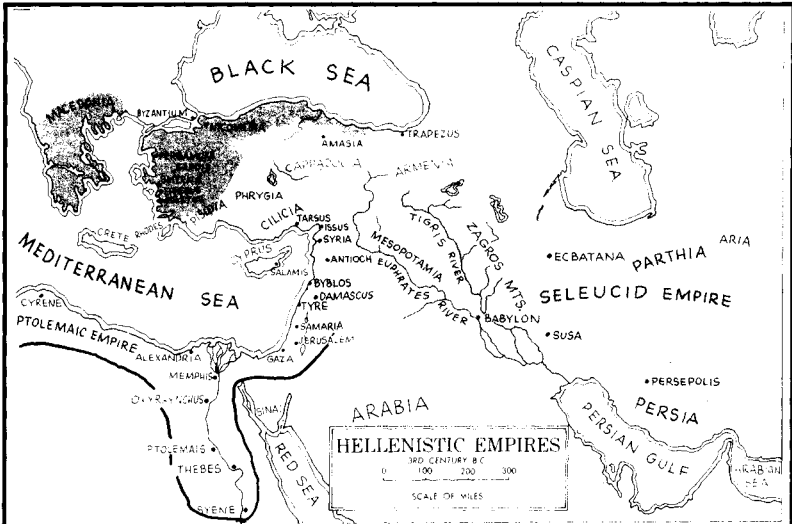
“And do according to his will” — This had been foretold earlier in the exploits of the ram (ch. 8:4), and is now stated of the “notable horn” of the goat which destroyed the ram. Alexander was completely autocratic; an absolute sovereign. In all his amazing activities he followed his own determination, and felt that everything was to be subordinate to it. It is said that this passage was shown to Alexander by the high-

priest of the Jews, and that these prophecies did much to conciliate his favour towards the Hebrews.

VERSE 4

“And when he shall stand up” — Bro. Thomas comments: “having suffered no defeat” (*Elpis Israel*, p.398). He would fully establish his power, and at such a time “his kingdom shall be broken.” Thus, his kingdom would not gradually diminish and decay, but some event would occur to rend it into four parts, whilst at the height of his might. Alexander was only 33 years old, when, in June BC 323, he died of a fever following a drunken orgy on the eve of what would have been his greatest moment.

“His kingdom shall be broken and shall be divided toward the four winds of heaven” — The word “broken” is from the Hebrew *shabar*, to burst. It was earlier prophesied that the great horn of the goat would be “broken”



Alexander's Empire was finally split into 4 areas after civil war and many rivalries between his successors. But it was the Ptolemaic (King of the South) and Seleucid (King of the North) Empires that became significant in the history of Daniel 11.



Alexander Coin found in Persepolis, Persia

(ch. 8:8), which was accomplished in Alexander's death; now it is stated that the Kingdom of Greece would also be "burst or split asunder."

After his death, Alexander's brother Aridaeus followed with Perdicas as regent. Antipater succeeded Perdicas in BC 321, but the unity of the empire was gone, and there was a struggle for power. In 321 Ptolemy Lagus took possession of Egypt; Cas-

sander assumed the government of Macedon in 317; Seleucus Nicator took possession of Syria in 311. In 305 the successors of Alexander took the title of kings, and in 301 there occurred the battle of Ipsus in which Antigonus, who reigned in Asia Minor was killed, and then followed in that year the formal division of Alexander's empire between the four victorious princes: Ptolemy, Seleucus, Cassander and Lysimachus. The battle of Ipsus had been fought between Antigonus and his son Demetrius on the one side, and the four generals on the other. Antigonus had aimed at universal sovereignty.

In the division, Seleucus Nicator obtained Syria, Babylonia, Media and Susiana, Armenia (a part of Cappadocia) and Cilicia. His kingdom, in name at least, extended from the Hellespont to the Indus. Lysimachus extended over part of Thrace, Asia Minor, part of Cappadocia and the



Alexander defeating Darius III, King of Persia in 331 B.C. The battle of Arbela (more properly Gaugamela) resulted in the destruction of the last army of Persia. After the victory there was no further organized resistance, and Alexander seized Susa and Babylon.



The death of Alexander the Great at Babylon in 323 B.C. Alexander's death, in his 33rd year, put an end to the Macedonian subjugation of the East and left his empire a prey to his ambitious generals.

countries within the limits of Mt Taurus. Cassander possessed Macedonia, Thessaly, and a part of Greece. Ptolemy obtained Egypt, Cyprus and Cyrene, and ultimately Coelo-Syria, Phoenicia, Judea, and a part of

Asia Minor and Thrace.

Thus the original kingdom was split into four.

“And not to his posterity, nor according to his dominion which he ruled”— See details on p.181. Alexander's son was born after the king's death, and was murdered with his mother at the age of 13 years. Additionally, the kingdom over which Alexander ruled, was broken up into many pieces. The only other occurrence of the word “dominion” (Heb. *moshel*) is in Zech. 9:10 (although the Hebrew word is used elsewhere), in which reference is made to Messiah's “dominion” being “from sea even to sea and from the river even to the ends of the earth.” Significantly, Zechariah's prophecy is against the background of the invincibly marching armies of Alexander - but the prophet foreshadows a greater warrior, of Yahweh's appointment, yet to appear!

“For his kingdom shall be plucked up, even for others beside those” — Besides his son, Alexander's only legal heir was a half-witted brother, Philip Aridaeus. Within a few years, Alexander's mother, Olympias, murdered Philip and his wife, Eurydice; Olympias was killed by Cassander, who also had Alexander's wife Roxana and their son Alexander murdered. Thus the family of Alexander the Great was brought to an abrupt end.

The phrase, “beside those” means: separated from, or to the exclusion of. “Those” are his posterity, and the kingdom would be divided to the exclusion of those to whom it should be given. The murders committed fulfilled the terms of this prophecy.

Conflict Between the Kings of South and North — vv. 5-9

Alexander's empire began to disintegrate immediately. Years of internal strife followed, as the six generals of his army struggled for supremacy. Eventually, four generals obtained control, and the kingdom was divided. But the record now ignores other divisions of the empire to concentrate on two: those which affected the people of Israel.

Seleucus Nicator, who controlled Syria, Armenia and east to the River Indus, becomes known as "the King of the North," and Ptolemy Soter, who obtained Egypt and Libya, assumes the title of "King of the South." These two areas were being prepared by the Elohim for future events in relation to the Holy Land, and Daniel is therefore introduced to this area of activity.

VERSE 5

"And the king of the south shall be strong" — Ptolemy Soter took over control of Egypt, and later, after battles had been fought in BC 313-301 at Gaza and Ipsus between Antigonus and three other generals (Cassander, Lysimachus and Seleucus), he took of the spoils from the defeat of Antigonus and added Cyprus and the northern coastal areas as far as Phoenicia. So he became "king of the South" — thus designated because of its relation to the Holy Land.

"And one of his princes; and he shall be stronger above him, and have dominion; his dominion shall be a great dominion" — The NIV translates: "But one of his commanders will become even stronger than he and will rule his own kingdom with great power." This introduces the other "strong prince" who would play an important part in later developments: the king of the north. This was Seleucus Nicator, who assumed control over Syria, Babylonia, Media, etc. and who reigned from Antioch in Syria. Earlier Seleucus was subservient to Antigonus, and when required (in approx. BC 316) to give account of the revenues of his government, thought it wise to abandon his province. He took refuge with Ptolemy in Egypt, and served under him in his Mediterranean fleet as an admiral (hence, "one of his princes"), but after the battle in BC 313 he recovered possession of Babylonia. In BC 312, the Seleucid dynasty began, and after victories in BC 301, Seleucus became master of most of western Asia.

VERSE 6

"And in the end of years they shall

join themselves together" — "They" refers to the kings of the north and south, whilst the phrase, "the end of years" means, "after a certain course or lapse of years." Originally, relationships between Ptolemy Soter (south) and Seleucus Nicator (north) appear to have been reasonably peaceful. But after Ptolemy abdicated in BC 285 (and died 2 years later), and Seleucus was murdered in BC 280, frequent war erupted. Especially was this the case between Ptolemy Philadelphus (second king of Egypt) and Antiochus Theos (third king of Syria). An uneasy peace was declared in BC 252.

"For the king's daughter of the south shall come to the king of the north to make an agreement" — To seal the peace, a contract of marriage was arranged between the two houses. It was agreed that Antiochus Theos should put away his former wife, Laodice, and her two sons, and should marry Berenice, the daughter of Ptolemy Philadelphus. Ptolemy accordingly brought his daughter to Antiochus, bestowing with her an immense dowry. But such a "diplomatic union" was doomed to failure, and the seeds of trouble were already laid in Antiochus' eldest son, Seleucus Callinicus.

"But she shall not retain the power of the arm" — i.e. Berenice's interest and power with Antiochus. Shortly after this peace and union were concluded, Ptolemy died (BC 246), and was succeeded by his son Ptolemy Euergetes. Immediately he received news of Ptolemy's death, Antiochus put away Berenice and the son she had borne him, and recalled Laodice.

"Neither shall he stand, nor his arm" — His "arm" relates to his seed; that which extends from him. Laodice, being restored to favour and power, feared lest, in the fickleness of his temper, Antiochus should again disgrace her and recall Berenice; and conceiving that nothing short of his death would be an effectual safeguard against such a contingency, she caused him to be poisoned. Neither did his son by Berenice succeed him in the kingdom,

for Laodice so managed affairs as to secure the throne for her eldest son, Seleucus Callinicus (BC 246).

“But she shall be given up” — Berenice was murdered by Laodice.

“And they that brought her” — Her Egyptian women and attendants, in endeavouring to defend her, were slain with her.

“And he that begat her” — Note the margin: “whom she brought forth.” Berenice’s son was murdered at the same time by order of Laodice.

“And he that strengthened her in these times” — Her husband, Antiochus, together with those who supported Berenice, faced treachery and death.

VERSE 7

“But out of a branch of her roots shall one stand up in his estate” — This branch out of the same roots (parents) with Berenice was her brother Ptolemy Euergetes. He had no sooner succeeded his father, Ptolemy Philadelphus, in the kingdom of Egypt, than, burning to avenge the death of his sister, Berenice, he raised an immense army, and invaded the territory of the king of the north.

“Which shall come with an army, and shall enter into the fortress of the king of the north” — Ptolemy Euergetes set about avenging the death of his sister and invaded Asia in BC 245-244. He prevailed against the king of the north, Seleucus Callinicus, who, with his mother, Laodice, reigned in Syria.

“And shall deal against them and shall prevail” — The invasion was successful, and Ptolemy conquered Syria, Cilicia, the upper parts beyond the Euphrates, and almost all Asia. During the course of this campaign, Laodice and her son, Seleucus, were killed. The king of the south thus came into the dominion of the king of the north, but did not completely destroy the northern power. The word “deal” means, to make war.

VERSE 8

“And shall also carry captives into

Egypt their gods, with their precious vessels of silver and of gold” — Hearing that a sedition was raised in Egypt, requiring his return home, Ptolemy plundered the kingdom of Seleucus, took forty thousand talents of silver and precious vessels, and two thousand four hundred images of the gods, among which were the images which Cambyses had formerly taken from Egypt and carried into Persia. He restored them to their original temple and for this Ptolemy was surnamed “Euergetes,” or *The Benefactor*.

“And he shall continue more years than the king of the north” — The king of the north, Seleucus Callinicus, had been captured by the Parthians who revolted against him, and died a prisoner in BC 226, through a fall from his horse. Ptolemy Euergetes survived him for four of five years, having reigned 25 years.

VERSE 9

“So the king of the south shall come into his kingdom, and shall return into his own land” — Summarising the events detailed in v.8. Thus the king of the south invaded the kingdom of Syria on account of the wrongs done to his sister, and then returned to Egypt. This occurred in BC 244.

Further Victory for Egypt — vv. 10-11

The prophecy now introduces Antiochus III the Great, who opened his career by quelling a rebellion on the Tigris, and then attempted to extend his authority over all the territories that Alexander the Great had at one time conquered and united. He met with varying success. In a major battle at Raphia in BC 217 he lost Palestine and certain Lebanese regions, but by making concessions to his royal colleagues in Pergamum and Bythinia he succeeded subsequently in retaking an area in Asia Minor. Between 212 and 203 he conducted major campaigns in Armenia, Mesopotamia, Media, Parthia, Hyrcania, Bactria and India. In 205 he assumed the title of “great king”, according to the custom of Alexander and the early Persian rulers.

Summary of Events in Daniel 11:5-35

SELEUCIDS		PTOLEMIES	
Verse 5	312-281: Seleucus (I) Nicator	Verse 5	323-285: Ptolemy (I) Soter
6	281-261: Antiochus (I) Soter 261-246: Antiochus (II) Theos 246: Poisoned by first wife Laodice who then killed Berenice and son.	6	285-246: Ptolemy (II) Philadelphus 252: Daughter Berenice married to Antiochus (II) Theos
7	246-226: Seleucus (II) Callinicus	7-8	246-221: Ptolemy (III) Evergetes
10	226-223: Seleucus (III) Ceraunus poisoned, replaced by brother	9	245: Defeats Seleucus (II) Callinicus 244: Returns with booty to own land
11	223-187: Antiochus (III) the Great 218: Attacked Ptolemy (IV) Initial success; then retreats		221-205: Ptolemy (IV) Philopator
13	198: Antiochus (III) attacks, conquers	12	217: Defeated Antiochus (III) at Raphia; tried enter Temple at Jerusalem; Stricken and died
15	Palestine and Coele-Syria; lays siege to Sidon	14	205-180: Ptolemy (V) Epiphanes Roman guardians in youth General Scopus, Macedonians, Syrians plot against him; Romans protect him
17	192: Attacks Greece, Jews help	17	193: Marries Cleopatra, daughter of Antiochus
18	190: Defeated at Thermopylae; huge indemnity. Daughter turns against him. Murdered while robbing a temple.		
19	187-175: Selucius (II) Philopator taxes heavy to pay Rome. Poisoned.		180-145: Ptolemy (VI) Philometor marries his sister Cleopatra II
20	175-163: Antiochus (IV) Epiphanes	22	170: Attacks Antiochus (IV); defeated
21	170: High Priest Onias murdered.	23	Deceitful Peace Treaty signed (on both sides).
23	169: Attacks Egypt; Garrisons.		
24	Acquires, distributes land, property Plots further conquest	25	Prepares defensive Army. Defeated in 169; Own Court turns against him.
25	Prepares Army for attack.	26	Dethroned, exiled by own Court
27	169: Treaty; deceit in heart	27	169-164: Ptolemy (VIII) Evergetes
28	169: Desecrates Jerusalem; kills, enslaves thousands		169: Treaty with Antiochus (IV); (Brothers Ptolemy (VI) & (VIII) co-operate for a time, then in opposition). Rome re-instates Ptolemy (VI), who dies in 145. succeeded by infant Ptolemy (VII); murdered by Ptolemy (VIII)
29	168: Attacks Ptolemy (VIII); to re-instate Ptolemy (VI). Victorious.		
30	But stopped by Rome. Murderous attack on Jerusalem on return		
31	Forbids observance Law; Sacrifices; Temple profaned with statue of Jupiter Olympas.		
32	"Hellenistic" Jews co-operate; Maccabees arise 167		
33	Many Maccabee followers killed		
34	166: Maccabees have great success		
35	In war following, great trials, many deaths; but final success. Jerusalem freed.		

VERSE 10

“But his sons shall be stirred up” — The sons of Seleucus Callinicus were Seleucus Ceraunus and Antiochus Magnus. Both entered with zeal upon the work of vindicating and avenging the cause of their father and country. The elder, Seleucus, first took the throne. He assembled a great multitude to recover his father’s dominions; but being a weak and pusillanimous prince, both in body and estate, destitute of money and unable to keep his army in control, he was poisoned by two of his generals after an inglorious reign of two or three years. His more capable brother, Antiochus Magnus was thereupon proclaimed king, who, taking charge of the army, retook Seleucia and recovered Syria, making himself master of some places by treaty, and of others by force of arms. A truce followed.

“And shall assemble a multitude of great forces” — Against Egypt. In such a war they would naturally summon to their aid all the forces they could command. Thus whilst both sides concluded treaties for peace, they prepared for war (cp. ch.8:25).

<p>A Calendar Designed</p> <p>In BC 238 the Egyptians produced a calendar which set the duration of the solar year at 365 days and 6 hours, and they put the odd hours together to form one intercalary day every four years.</p>
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“And one shall certainly come” — In BC 218 Antiochus attacked in battle Nicolaus, an Egyptian general, and recovered Syria from the dominion of Ptolemy of Egypt.

“And overflow” — Moving his troops through the passes of Libanus into Galilee — like a torrent !

“And pass through” — Through the land of Syria. Coming into Galilee, Antiochus possessed all the area of Reuben, Gad and Manasseh in Palestine.

“Then shall he return” — With winter approaching, Antiochus determined to return to Ptolemais and put his forces in winter quarters, awaiting the spring. By then, however, Ptolemy Philopator had regrouped and strengthened his army and defences.

“And be stirred up” — With the spring, Antiochus resumed his march southwards as far as Raphia on the Egyptian border. But now, with his supply lines greatly extended and his troops tired, he suffered a disastrous defeat, and was compelled to retreat to his fortress at Ptolemais. Ptolemy followed, and easily recaptured his lost territory along the Mediterranean coastline. BC 217.

“Even to his fortress” — At Ptolemais, to which Antiochus had to retreat.

VERSE 11

“And” — Brother Thomas renders, “Thus” (*Elpis Israel*, p.399).

“The king of the south shall be moved with choler” — Rotherham has, “be enraged.” Ptolemy Philopator succeeded his father, Euergetes, in the kingdom of Egypt, and was angered at the threat of invasion by Antiochus from the north. With Antiochus’ attack against his provinces in Syria and Palestine, Ptolemy, in fury, determined to counter with a great army the progress of the Syrian king.

“And shall come forth and fight with him, even with the king of the north:” — With Antiochus the Great. There were frequent, almost constant, wars between the two kingdoms. This exasperated Ptolemy Philopator, who, assembling a large army, marched to Raphia, near Gaza, to engage Antiochus in battle.

“And he shall set forth a great multitude” — Antiochus the Great. His mighty army consisted of 62,000 foot soldiers, 6,000 horses and 102 elephants.

“But the multitude shall be given into his hand” — Into the hand of Ptolemy Philopator, whose army con-

sisted of seventy thousand infantry, five thousand cavalry, and seventy three elephants. In the battle fought at Raphia, Ptolemy gained the victory. ten thousand of the army of Antiochus were slain, four thousand taken prisoner, and with the remainder of his forces Antiochus retreated to Antioch. The *Historians' History of the World* (Vol. 4, p.572) describes the incident: "In the beginning of the war, Antiochus obtained some advantages over the Egyptian troops; but shortly after in a great battle fought at Raphia, near Gaza, he was completely defeated, with great loss; and Ptolemy obtained a large extension of influence in Palestine and Syria. Humbled by this defeat, and alarmed at the progress of Achaeus in Asia Minor, Antiochus was anxious to make peace with Ptolemy; and the Egyptian king, although he had every inducement to prosecute the war, being equally anxious to return to his licentious pleasures, was ready to receive his overtures. In consequence a peace was concluded by which Coele-Syria and Palestine were confirmed as belonging to Egypt."



Antiochus IV featured on a coin.

**The King of the North Subdues
Palestine — vv. 12-13**

Weakness in Egypt caused by the

uncontrolled indulgence in pleasure by Ptolemy, gave opportunity for the king of the north to strengthen his holdings. There was peace in the south, but the pursuing of power in the north. BC 217-198.

VERSE 12

"And when he hath taken away the multitude, his heart shall be lifted up" — Ptolemy lacked the prudence to make a good use of his victory. Had he followed up his success, he could have become master of the whole kingdom of Antiochus; but content with making only a few menaces and threats, he made peace that he might be able to give himself up to uninterrupted indulgence of brutish passion. Thus, having conquered his enemies, he was overcome by his vices, and, forgetful of the great name which he might have established, he spent his time in feasting and lewdness.

His heart was "lifted up" by his success, but he was far from being strengthened by it, for through his foolish actions he caused his own subjects to rebel against him. This was especially revealed in his activities with the Jews. Coming to Jerusalem, where he was well received, he first treated the inhabitants kindly, and offered sacrifices. But later, Ptolemy desired to see the inner sanctuary, but was, with great difficulty, restrained by the priests. Burning with anger, he retired from the city, threatened the whole nation of the Jews with extinction, and immediately commenced a terrible and relentless persecution.

"And he shall cast down many ten thousands" — In Alexandria, where Jews had resided since the days of Alexander, and enjoyed the privileges of favoured citizens, 40,000-60,000 were slain in the persecutions of Ptolemy against the Jews. But pride and self-confidence destroyed him; for the rebellion of the Egyptians and this massacre of the Jews, led to the ruin of his power.

"But he shall not be strengthened by it" — He returned to Egypt, and gave himself up wholly to luxury, sloth, and

	Daniel 2	Daniel 7	Daniel 8	Daniel 11
Babylon	<i>Head of Gold</i> — King of Kings; Power; Glory — v. 32,37,38	<i>Lion</i> — Eagle's wings; Wings plucked; Man's stance, heart — v.4		
Persia	<i>Breast, Arms of Silver</i> — 'inferior' to Babylon — v. 32,39	<i>Bear</i> — One side raised; 3 ribs between teeth; devoured flesh — v. 6	<i>Ram</i> — 2 Horns; higher came last; pushed west, north, south; None could deliver — v. 3-4	
Greece	<i>Belly, Thighs of Brass</i> — Bore rule over earth — v. 32,39	<i>Leopard</i> — 4 Fowl wings; 4 Heads; dominion given. — v. 6	<i>He-Goat</i> — from West; one notable Horn; cast down and stamped on Ram. Horn broken; 4 Horns came. — v. 5,8	<i>King of the South and King of North</i> (two of He-Goat Horns). Rivalry; fighting. — v. 1,35
Rome	<i>Legs of Iron</i> — Broke and and bruised other parts. — v. 33,40	<i>Fourth Beast</i> — Dreadful; Iron teeth; devoured and brake. — v. 7,23	<i>He-Goat</i> — Little Horn from one of 4; spread South, North, Holy Land; "Daily" taken away; Sanctuary cast down — v. 6,11	<i>King</i> doing according to his own will. — v. 36
Europe	<i>Feet and Toes of Iron, Clay</i> — Kingdom divided — v. 41,43	<i>Fourth Beast</i> — 10 Horns — v.7,24		
		"Little" or eleventh horn of the <i>Fourth Beast</i> — 3 of 10 Horns subdued by 11th Horn; speaks against Most High; Wears out saints 1260 days — v.24,25	<i>Sanctuary and Host trodden Underfoot</i> by Little Horn King 2,300 days — v.12,14; 23,25	<i>Development of King</i> from Political to Religious sphere. v. 37,39. Final Battles Kings North, South — v.40,45
Christ	<i>Little Stone Cut</i> without Hands; destroys Image. <i>Fills Earth</i> — v.44	<i>Divine Judgment</i> consumes 11th Horn — v. 24,27	<i>Little Horn King Broken</i> — 'Without hand'; Sanctuary — v.25	<i>Divine Intervention</i> ; 'None shall help him' — v.45

voluptuousness, which caused some of his people to rebel, and greatly weakened himself in the affections and confidence of the rest. He died from intemperance and debauchery in about BC 203, and was succeeded by his son, Ptolemy Epiphanes, a child of about five years old.

VERSE 13

“For the king of the north shall return” — Following the death of Ptolemy Philopater (approx BC 203), his five-year-old son, Ptolemy Epiphanes, succeeded him. In the north, Antiochus had suppressed rebellion in his kingdom, reduced and settled the eastern parts of his dominion, and was enjoying a period of leisure. The young Epiphanes was under the guidance of a Roman guardian for some years, but later fell under the influence of worthless men, and his profligacy brought Egypt to a low state financially. Seizing this opportunity, Antiochus rebuilt his army, and when the time was appropriate, he attacked.

“And shall set forth a multitude greater than the former” — Antiochus raised a mighty force. He had obtained considerable support and acquired great riches in his eastern expedition, and set out against Egypt, expecting to have an easy victory over the infant king.

“And shall certainly come after certain years with a great army and with much riches” — In BC 198 the battle of Panias was engaged, in which Antiochus recovered his lost possessions of Coele-Syria and Palestine. But subsequent complications entered into the affairs of these kingdoms, and new actors were introduced upon the stage of history.

The King of the North Extends his Power — vv.14-20

Around BC 200 the world was in turmoil. The dominance of the kings of north and south was being challenged on several fronts. Egypt continued its

warfare against the Syrians in the north and the Ethiopians and Abyssinians in the south, and this impoverished the kingdom. The Ptolemy family no longer ruled unchallenged, and with the advent of child-kings, others had to assist as guardians. The Historians' History reports: "Here the bright pages in the history of the Ptolemies end. Though trade and agriculture still enriched the country, though arts and letters did not quit Alexandria, we have from this time forward to mark the growth of only vice and luxury, and to measure the wisdom of Ptolemy Soter by the length of time that his laws and institutions were able to bear up against the misrule and folly of his descendants."

There was also trouble in the north. Antiochus the Great (BC 223-187) faced constant war: in Galatia to the west; in Media and Persia, Bactria, Parthia and India to the east; Egypt to the south; and struggling against the influence of the rising Roman nation in Italy.

VERSE 14

“And in those times there shall many stand up against the king of the south — The “times” were when Ptolemy Epiphanes reigned in Egypt. Antiochus was not the only one who rose up against the infant-king. Agathocles, his prime minister, having control and power in the affairs of the kingdom, was so dissolute in the exercise of his power that the provinces previously subject to Egypt rebelled. Egypt itself was disturbed by seditions. At the same time Philip, king of Macedon, entered into an agreement with Antiochus to divide the dominions of Ptolemy between them, each proposing to take the parts most convenient to him. Scopos, who commanded the Egyptian army, tried to take advantage of the youth of Ptolemy, but was thwarted by the vigilance of Aristomenes, one of the king's ministers.

“Also the robbers of thy people shall

exalt themselves to establish the vision” — A new power is now introduced, as Gabriel addresses Daniel personally: “Thy people,” the Jews. In the west was rising a small power that was destined to increase rapidly in strength and vigor, until it should control the affairs of the world and exert a mighty influence amongst the nations. It was the power of Rome, which would eventually destroy the Jewish people and scatter them abroad; thus becoming the “robbers of thy people.” Bro. Thomas translates the phrase: “breakers of thy people.”

Already Rome had infiltrated its power into the circumstances of Egypt. Deputies of Rome became the guardians of Ptolemy Epiphanes during his minority. Three deputies were appointed who warned the kings against warring with Egypt. The deputy Emilius, after delivering the message, proceeded to Alexandria to stabilise Egyptian affairs as much as possible. Thus, Rome began to meddle with the affairs of the Middle East. Brother Thomas comments:

“They appointed three deputies who were ordered to acquaint the king with their resolutions and not to infest the dominions of their royal pupil; for that otherwise they should be forced to declare war against them. The deputy Emilius, after delivering the message of the Roman Senate, afterwards proceeded to Alexandria and settled everything to as much advantage as the state of Egypt would then admit. In this way the Romans began to mix themselves up with the affairs of Egypt, Syria and the Holy... But, though destined to be ‘the Breakers of Judah,’ the assurance was given to Daniel, saying ‘they shall fall.’” (*Exposition of Daniel*, p.50).

By this means Rome would “establish the vision” by becoming more prominent than any other in Daniel’s prophecy. Their first involvement in the affairs of these kingdoms is here referred to as being the establishment,

or demonstration, of the truth of the vision, before the power was fully revealed.

“But they shall fall” — Rome would not succeed against the Divine purpose, and ultimately would themselves be destroyed.

VERSE 15

“So the king of the north shall come” — In BC 198, Antiochus the Great recovered the territories of Coele-Syria and Palestine (v.13). In doing so he defeated Scopus, General of the Egyptians, who, endeavouring to maintain the king of the south’s influence in the region, was unable to resist famine in the land, and was forced to surrender. Antiochus vanquished the army of Egypt at Paneas, near Caesarea Philippi, then took Sidon and Patara, and made himself master of the whole country.

“And cast up a mount, and take the most fenced cities” — Attacked by Antiochus, Scopus fled with 10,000 men to Sidon where he fortified himself, but from whence he was expelled by Antiochus. In turn, the king of the north so entrenched himself that he could not be dislodged; his conquests were secure. The reference is to Sidon especially, which Antiochus took by casting up a mount against it. He also took Jerusalem, proving too strong for the Egyptian base there.

“And the arms of the south shall not withstand” — Shall not be able to resist nor dislodge him from his entrenched position. The word *arms* signifies “heroes, warriors, commanders.”

“Neither his chosen people” — Those whom Ptolemy selected to carry on the work. He sent the choicest of his forces to withstand Antiochus — including three of the most distinguished Egyptian generals.

“Neither shall there be any strength to withstand” — A complete defeat faced the southern forces, as Antiochus carried all before him. The three

generals despatched to rescue Scopus, who had entrenched himself in Sidon, were unable to assist. After the famine which caused Scopus to surrender, the remaining forces returned to Egypt.

VERSE 16

“But he that cometh against him shall do according to his own will” — Antiochus came against Scopus, drove him out of the regions, forced him to take refuge in Sidon, then besieged him and forced him to surrender. This marked the end of Egyptian conquest and influence in the Holy Land.

“And none shall stand before him” — Not even the challenge of Ptolemy, the forces of Scopus, the choice and select armies sent out from Egypt, nor the three generals who endeavoured to retrieve the situation. Gabriel had carefully manipulated the circumstances which occurred exactly as prophecy had foretold.

“And he shall stand in the glorious land” — The land of Daniel’s desire! It was a “land of ornament” (mg), for the Hebrew word means, “splendour, beauty,” and was given to the land upon which Yahweh’s eyes always rested (Deut. 11:12). In contrast to Egypt, it was blessed by Divine goodness of “milk and honey,” becoming “the glory of all lands” (Ezek. 20:6,15). The prophecy of Gabriel now directed Daniel’s attention to the “glorious land,” for all the events of north and south were made important because of it! It remains “the glorious land” to the end of the chapter (vv. 41,45) when Michael the great prince of Israel will stand up and establish the Divine kingdom therein.

“Which by his hand shall be consumed” — Because of the continuing invasions through the land. The *Historians’ History* records: “Antiochus invaded Judea with an army, overthrew the Aetolian leader, Scopus, commander of the Egyptian forces at Paneas near the sources of the Jordan, and subjugated the coast, including the fortified town of Gaza. The inhabitants

of Jerusalem and Judea gladly welcomed the rule of Syria, which was at first mild and conciliatory, though it soon became even more oppressive than that of Egypt.”

The immediate consequence of the wars was extended desolation, as the conflicting armies ravaged the land through which they trod.

VERSE 17

“He shall also set his face to enter with the strength of his whole kingdom” — Antiochus determined to bring the whole resources of his power into destroying Egypt. He was temporarily diverted from that purpose by wars in Asia Minor and Greece, where the Romans opposed him.

“And upright ones with him;” — Bro. Thomas translates these phrases: “He shall also set his face to enter into Greece with the strength of his whole kingdom, and Israelites with him” (*Exp. of Daniel*, p. 50). This was also the case, as is illustrated in *Israel and the Nations*, p.132: “The conquests won by Antiochus III on the eastern and southern frontiers of his empire were not enough for his ambition. He set himself to expand his dominions in the north and west as well... Both Rhodes and Pergamum sought the help of Rome against Philip (king of Macedonia), and Rome took up arms against him... the Roman general Flamininus proclaimed independence for all the Greeks in 198 BC, and defeated Philip decisively... in 197. The Romans withdrew their armies from liberated Greece in 194. But some of the Greek states, united in the Aetolian League, resenting the restrictions which the Roman gift of liberty imposed on them, invited Antiochus to come over from Asia and ‘liberate’ Greece from her ‘liberators.’ In 192 Antiochus landed in Greece.” It was to be a disastrous expedition.

Josephus records the activities of Antiochus in the Holy Land with the “upright ones”, a phrase applied to the Jewish people. Having successfully defeated Scopus, Antiochus sought to

win the Jews over to his support: "the Jews of their own accord went over to him" (*Ant. Josephus*, 12:3:3). It was better having a settled land than one constantly at war. The Jews are described as "upright" at that time.

Antiochus probably anticipated that in his proposed invasion of Egypt he would be accompanied and assisted by the Jews.

"Thus shall he do:" — Emphasising the veracity of the prophecy. He would adopt the policy here stated, by giving his daughter in marriage with an Egyptian prince, and so accomplish the ends which he had in view. This was a further stroke of policy, made necessary by his new wars with the Romans, and by the division of his forces in a new direction. Though, naturally, he would have been inclined to carry his conquests into Egypt, because of the challenge from the Romans, Antiochus considered the benefits of uniting the Egyptians to himself so as to strengthen his hands against Rome. Thus, he proposed an alliance, by which he connected his own family with the royal family in Egypt by marriage.

"And he shall give him" — Antiochus would give to Ptolemy the opportunity to form a matrimonial alliance that would, for the time at least, secure the neutrality or friendship of the Egyptians.

"The daughter of women" — The daughter of Antiochus, Cleopatra. He negotiated a marriage between her and Ptolemy Philopater, then about 17 years of age. This contract of marriage was entered into shortly after the defeat of Scopus (BC 197), and included the terms that the marriage should take place as soon as the parties were of suitable age, and that Coele-Syria and Palestine should be given as a dowry. The marriage occurred in BC 193, when Antiochus was making preparation for his wars with the Romans. Bro. Thomas comments: "Thus the land of Judah was given over as a bribe to bind Cleopatra to her father's interests, that she might influence Epiphanes either to remain neutral, or

to declare against the Romans, his protectors." However, the ruse failed, as did his expedition (see v.18). When her father was defeated at Thermopylae, she sent congratulations to the Roman Senate.

"Corrupting her" — Mg. "to corrupt." The scheme of Antiochus involved political devices: the employment of bribery and corruption. He gave Coele-Syria and Palestine as her dowry on condition that he receive half of the revenue. But the main design was for political support, for which he expected his daughter to employ artifice to influence her husband.

"But she shall not stand on his side, neither be for him" — Instead, she became attached to her husband, and favoured his interests rather than the crafty designs of her father.

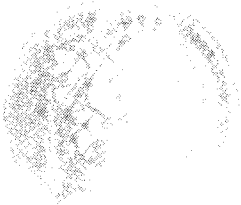
VERSE 18

"After this shall he turn his face unto the isles and shall take many" — After making peace with Egypt, Antiochus the Great fitted out a large fleet of ships, subdued most of the maritime places on the coast of the Mediterranean and took many islands, including Rhodes, Samos and Colophon, and those around Greece. This he accomplished to strengthen his power against the rising threat of Rome. In BC 191 on the island of Euboea, he married Eubia, a young lady of great beauty, and gave himself up for a long time to festivity and amusements — then entrenched himself strongly at the pass of Thermopylae. Afterwards, when driven from that stronghold, he sailed along the coast of Thrace, and obtained a large part of Greece.

"But a prince for his own behalf" — Lucius Cornelius Scipio, a leader of the Roman armies, led the attack against Antiochus, when he had declared war against the Romans. In this war Scipio was successful, and achieved personal fame and glory: "for his own behalf."

"Shall cause the reproach offered by him to cease" — This was the reproach offered by Antiochus to the Roman power. The conquests of Antiochus

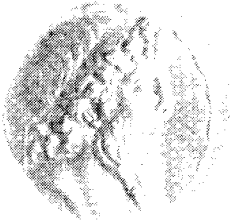
Late Hellenistic Rulers



Alexander I Balas



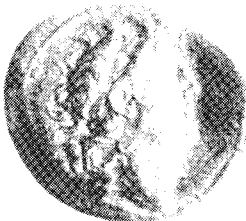
Antiochus VIII
and Cleopatra



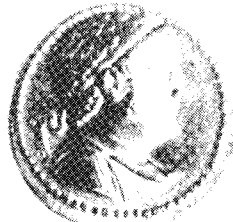
Demetrius II



Antiochus IX



Tryphon



Ptolemy IV



Antiochus VII Sidetes



Arsaces

had brought disgrace to Rome, and his victories appeared to insult the majesty of the Roman name. All this was reversed by the victories of Scipio. *Israel and the Nations* records: "in 190 Antiochus' fleet was destroyed in a naval engagement in the Aegean, and a large Roman army crossed into Asia under the command of Scipio, brother of the conqueror Hannibal. The army which Antiochus raised to meet the Roman force was cut in pieces at the Battle of Magnesia, and Antiochus accepted the Roman conditions of peace." They were crippling conditions, requiring, among other things, the payment of 15,000 talents over twelve years.

"Without his own reproach" — Without any reproach to Scipio. There would be no discomfiture nor any imputation of lack of skill or valour, so that he would conduct the war as to secure an untarnished reputation.

"He shall cause it to turn upon him" — The reproach and shame which Antiochus formerly cast upon the Romans would return to rest upon himself. This occurred in successive defeats of Antiochus in several combats by water and land, and in his final and complete overthrow at the battle of Magnesia. After being several times overcome by the Romans, and vainly suing for peace, "Antiochus lost all presence of mind, and withdrew his garrisons from all the cities on the Hellespont, and, in his precipitate flight, left all his military stores behind him" (*Jahn's Hebrew Commonwealth*, p.248).

VERSE 19

"Then he shall turn his face toward the fort of his own land" — He was at a loss how to raise the tribute of 15,000 talents, the "heaviest known to ancient history." It required desperate measures. Antiochus had learned that religious temples contained huge wealth. On the way home, he passed through the province of Elymais, in which was the temple of Jupiter Belus. In the dead of night he broke in to obtain all

its treasures. But religious fervour brought about his undoing; the people rebelled and murdered him and all his attendants.

"But he shall stumble and fall, and not be found" — He died in BC 187, attempting to plunder the temple of Elymais. The battle of Magnesia broke the might of the Seleucid kingdom for evermore!

The prophecy relating to Antiochus the Great terminates here, and concludes a minute and accurate account of the circumstances of his time.

VERSE 20

"Then shall stand up in his estate" — The tax-raiser who succeeded Antiochus the Great was his son, Seleucus Philopator, who reigned BC 187-175. His kingdom consisted of Syria, Cilicia, Palestine, Mesopotamia, Babylonia, Media and Persia.

"A raiser of taxes in the glory of the kingdom" — Seleucus Philopator set himself the task of raising the annual levy demanded by his Roman overlords as a war indemnity. He raised money from many new sources, even sending his minister, Heliodorus, to Jerusalem to plunder the temple.

The Hebrew word for glory, *hehder*, means honour. The kingdom referred to is the Holy Land, of which its honour and glory was the temple in Jerusalem. There was much discord and strife at the time. The high priest was one, Onias, reputed to be a godly man. But amongst his enemies was "Simon of the tribe of Benjamin, who was appointed overseer of the Temple, (and he) strove in opposition to the high priest, to bring about some unjust thing in the city." Onias resisted, and Simon went off to Apollonius, the governor of Coele-Syria and Phenicia, to whom he revealed "that the treasury in Jerusalem was full of immense sums of money, and the common store was infinite...and it was possible to bring it all into the king's hands" (II Macc.3:1,7). However, the purposes of this traitor and the king, were frustrated.

"But within a few days" — The reign

of Seleucus Philopator lasted only eleven years. It was shortly after he sought to plunder the temple in Jerusalem to get the money deposited there, that he died.

“He shall be destroyed, neither in anger, nor in battle” — He was treacherously poisoned by one he trusted: Heliodorus, his minister, who attempted to usurp the crown.

The Power of Antiochus Epiphanes, King of the North — vv. 21-27

Antiochus IV Epiphanes ruled from BC 175 until his death in 163 (p. 301). His reign marks a turning point in Jewish history. Striving vigorously to restore the strength of the Seleucid Empire, he founded more new Greek cities than all his predecessors, and became the champion of Hellenization. Thus, he paid considerable attention to the Jews of Palestine. He was responsible, on one occasion when returning from Egypt, for great destruction against Jerusalem. Convinced that a rebellion had broken out against him, he stormed the city, killed thousands of Jews, and sold thousands more into slavery. In their place a Greek community was established, outwardly transforming Jerusalem into a foreign city-state. By BC 167 the enforced Hellenization of the Jews reached its peak; the Jews were compelled, upon penalty of death “to depart from the laws of their fathers, and to cease living by the laws of God. Further, the sanctuary in Jerusalem was to be polluted and called after Zeus Olympius” (II Macc.6:1,2). Throughout this period anti-semitism was rife, and Antiochus Epiphanes became known to history as “the enemy of the Jews.”

VERSE 21

“And in his estate shall stand up a vile person” — The “vile” Heliodorus had supporters, but lacked the confidence of the people. Seleucus IV had a brother, Antiochus, who had for twelve years been held in Rome as a hostage for the payment of the annual indemnity (which by now had fallen behind). He was now released, to be

replaced by his nephew Demetrius, and Antiochus arrived in Athens to hear of his brother’s (Seleucus’) murder. He was told that Heliodorus had seized the crown and was supported by a strong party. Antiochus thereupon gained help from the king of Pergamos, and moved into Syria at the head of a powerful army. He drove out the usurper, and being settled on the throne, he assumed the name of Epiphanes, which means “the illustrious”, a title “never worse applied”!

“To whom they shall not give the honor of the kingdom” — i.e. the people, who did not support the claims of Heliodorus, the poisoner and usurper.

“But he shall come in peaceably” — Referring to Antiochus IV Epiphanes, who reigned from BC 175-163. Although he headed a strong army against Heliodorus, he depended on art rather than arms for his victory. Gesenius renders the phrase here used, “in the midst of security”, i.e. unexpectedly, suddenly. He would do it when the nation was least expecting it; when the people were taken off guard he would “steal a march on them.” All this accorded with fact. Antiochus quietly left Rome, came to Athens to learn concerning the state of things in Syria where Heliodorus had usurped the authority, made an agreement with the king of Pergamos, for aid — in preparation for his attack on Heliodorus. No one seemed to suspect his aim, or to doubt that his desire was to remove the usurper and place his nephew on the throne. Instead, by such “peaceable” means, he worked to destroy his enemy.

“And obtain the kingdom by flatteries” — Thus Antiochus endeared himself to the Athenians, and by his fondness for practical jokes, his proneness for roaming the streets of the capital by night incognito, his capricious fits of generosity, he became popular, even with Heliodorus’ erstwhile supporters. He flattered Eumenes, king of Pergamos and Attalus his brother, and got their assistance. He flattered the

Romans, and sent ambassadors to court their favour and pay them the arrears of the tribute. He flattered the Syrians, and gained their concurrence — and as he flattered the Syrians, so they flattered him, giving him the epithet *Epiphanes, the Illustrious*.

VERSE 22

“And with the arms of a flood shall they be overflowed from before him” — The Egyptians, under Ptolemy VI, were unable to defend themselves against Antiochus IV Epiphanes. As a mighty inundation this “King of the North” came against the “King of the South” (v. 16). In the intervening years since verse 16 (BC 198-170), Ptolemy V Epiphanes had died (BC 180), and was replaced by his young son, Ptolemy VI Philometor, whose mother Cleopatra (see v. 13, 17) acted as regent for him until her own death in BC 176. She was the daughter of Antiochus III, and consequently the sister of Antiochus IV Epiphanes, now ruling in Antioch. After her death, two courtiers were entrusted to act as regents for the young king, and they began plotting for the recovery of Coele-Syria and Palestine. Ptolemy married his own sister, Cleopatra (v. 13), and an embassy from Antioch came to the marriage to represent Antiochus. There the plotting became known and the message was passed on to Antiochus. He prepared for the expected attack.

Sometime in the winter of BC 170-169, the Egyptian Government declared war on Antiochus. But he forestalled the Egyptian army by crossing the frontier first, and routed them so thoroughly near Pelusium that the way into the heart of Egypt lay open before Antiochus.

“And shall be broken” — The invasion of Egypt was one of the earliest and most prominent acts of Antiochus. A peace treaty was signed at Memphis, by which Ptolemy VI was allowed to remain as titular king of Egypt, but Antiochus was the real protector. BC 169.

“Yea, also the prince of the cove-

nant” — Antiochus acted with duplicity against Onias, the High Priest in Jerusalem (v. 20). He removed Onias from office, and replaced him with his brother Jason, who had ingratiated himself with Antiochus Epiphanes with promises of money and the Hellenization of Jerusalem. He was made High Priest instead of Onias in BC 174, who was at Antioch at the time. But then Antiochus appointed wicked Menelaus (brother of Simon, v. 20) who outbid Jason and was elevated to High Priest in BC 171. Menelaus desired to have Onias destroyed and bribed a minister of the Antioch Court to accomplish this. Thus, Antiochus occasioned the decease of Onias, the “prince of the covenant” of this verse.

VERSE 23

“And after the league made with him he shall work deceitfully” — Notwithstanding the peace treaty signed with Ptolemy Philometor, Antiochus “worked deceitfully.” Under the terms of the treaty, he had retained Pelusium, the key to the country’s defences, and therefore had access to some of the choice places in all Egypt.

“For he shall come up, and shall become strong with a small people” — Antiochus retained a garrison on Egyptian territory. At first his own forces were small, and he pretended in his invasion of Egypt to be the friend of the Egyptian king, and that he came to aid him and settle him firmly on the throne. By degrees, however, he possessed one town after another, and subdued one place after another, until he finally dominated the throne and had the king entirely in his power.

VERSE 24

“He shall enter peaceably even upon the fattest places of the province;” — The margin has: “into the peaceable and fat.” Antiochus made gradual and artful approaches until he had seized upon the best portions of the land. Josephus claims that Antiochus “came with great forces to Pelusium and circumvented Ptolemy Philometor by treachery and seized upon Egypt”

(*Ant.* 12:5:2). He took possession of Memphis and the country as far as Alexandria, the most choice and fertile portions of Egypt. In so doing, he reduced the country to a "province."

"And he shall do that which his fathers have not done, nor his fathers' fathers;" — Which none of his predecessors had been able to do, in the conquest of Egypt. Previous wars by his "fathers" had been mostly waged in Coele-Syria and Palestine, but Antiochus Epiphanes first took the key of Egypt, Pelusium, and then invaded the country itself. This invasion and its results are recorded in I Macc. 1:17-20. "And the kingdom was established before Antiochus, and he had a mind to reign over the land of Egypt, that he might reign over two kingdoms. And he entered into Egypt with a great multitude, with chariots and elephants and horsemen, and a great number of ships: and he made war against Ptolomee, king of Egypt, but Ptolomee was afraid at his presence, and fled, and many were wounded unto death. And he took the strong cities of the land of Egypt: and he took the spoils of the land of Egypt."

"He shall scatter among them the prey, and spoil, and riches:" — The acquired property was distributed among his soldiers as a reward.

"And he shall forecast his devices against the strongholds, even for a time" — To "forecast his devices" is otherwise rendered: "think his thoughts." He will "plot the overthrow of fortresses" (NIV). His aim was to direct the war against the strongly-fortified places of Egypt. But he needed to keep a wary eye on Rome, which was busily engaged in war against Macedonia (BC 171-168). The agreement made with Rome by Antiochus III in BC 190 following the Battle of Magnesia (see v. 18), in addition to the large financial penalty, also prohibited him from attacking a friend or ally of Rome — which Egypt was! But it did not prohibit him from defending himself against attack by such a nation. So he had to wait for, or "devise", excuses.

The excuse came to hand. From Antiochus' actions in retaining power in Pelusium, and "from other indications of the Syrian king's intentions, Philometor rightly judged that it was his design, by setting the two brothers (Ptolemy VI Philometor, and Physcon, later called Ptolemy VIII Euergetes) in continued collision with each other, to retain Egypt virtually in his own power. Acting on this judgment, Philometor invited his brother to terms of reconciliation, which by the aid of their sister Cleopatra (now Philometor's wife, and later to become Physcon's!) was happily effected."

But Antiochus' power in Egypt was to last only "for a time." Eventually Rome demanded that he retreat from Alexandria, and leave Egypt alone.

VERSE 25

"And he shall stir up his power and his courage against the king of the south with a great army" — There were signs of preparations in the South for an attempt to drive him from Egypt. His garrison people kept him informed, and he therefore prepared "a great army" to put down the challenge.

"And the king of the south shall be stirred up to battle with a very great and mighty army" — Ostensibly more powerful and lethal than the northern army. The army of Ptolemy was *very great and mighty*.

"But he shall not stand" — Antiochus attacked, and his army advanced on Alexandria, while he, himself, tarried at Memphis to be crowned King of Egypt. In this ancient capital of Lower Egypt, he used "the traditional rites of the priests of Ptah." His intentions were now manifest. But Ptolemy was unable to resist Antiochus, and his power was reduced.

"For they shall forecast devices against him" — His own men would form plans against him to defeat him (v. 26) because of the hopelessness of their position.

VERSE 26

“Yea, they that feed of the portion of his meat shall destroy him” — The Alexandrian courtiers turned against Philometor in favour of Ptolemy VIII Euergetes (Physcon), and drove him out of the kingdom.

“And his army shall overflow: and many shall fall down slain” — The word for “overflow” is *shataph* (cp v. 22), in the sense of “swept away” (NIV, RSV). Though the army of Egypt was “very great and mighty” it could not defeat Antiochus, but was soundly beaten with great loss of men, so that Ptolemy finally sued for peace. The account in 1 Macc. 1:18 is that “Ptolemy was afraid of him (Antiochus) and fled; and many were wounded to death.”

VERSE 27

“And both these kings’ hearts shall be to do mischief, and they shall speak lies at one table” — Both Antiochus and Physcon (Euergetes VIII) now met to come to an arrangement, but neither had any intention of honouring any agreement! Their schemes, promises and assurances were false, and the arrangements were soon violated.

“But it shall not prosper” — Neither succeeded in his object, for Yahweh’s plans take precedence. Whatever their hopes for future victory and achievement, both would fail, as the Elohim determined on a change of course.

“For yet the end shall be at the time appointed” — It was appropriate for the Elohim to interrupt the deceptions and manipulations of these kings, to achieve a turn in the Divine purpose. Gabriel reminds Daniel of the important angelic work in the steps of Destiny. The reason why the two kings could not carry out their deceitful design was, that there was “an appointed time” when these affairs were to be determined, and no purposes of theirs could be allowed to frustrate the higher counsels of the Most High.

The “end,” or result, would not be as the two kings contrived to achieve, but

as Divinely decreed with the emergence of Rome into the Middle East, as is revealed in vv. 29-30. Rome would supersede the authority of both kings.

Gabriel explains in v. 29 what would occur “at the time appointed” hence the phrase in this verse suggests that certain other activities in “his land” (v. 28) were being undertaken, so as to change the intentions of Antiochus according to the Divine Plan.

Antiochus Massacres in Palestine — v. 28

Gabriel reveals that the King of the North, flushed with success in Egypt, proposes to return home. On the way he subdues opposition in Jerusalem, and reduces Jewish power in Palestine. But his power was now to be limited by the Divine purpose as the Elohim interrupted his plans.

VERSE 28

“Then shall he return into his land with great riches” — Enriched with the spoils of Egypt, Antiochus moved north. He had heard of rejoicing in Jerusalem upon a report of his supposed death, and determined to take revenge.

“And his heart shall be against the holy covenant” — The relationship between Jerusalem and Antioch had been mild to this time, other than for the huge tax burden imposed on the Jews, and the bitterness felt by the religious parties against the Hellenizing operations of the usurper High Priest, Menelaus. In his bid to maintain this position he had undertaken additional works which had been commenced by Jason before him. These involved the introduction of Grecian games — naked wrestling; running, discus throwing, etc. Soon, even the priestly families were involved in these worldly escapades. In these circumstances, news had filtered through of Antiochus’ supposed difficulties in Egypt, and even of his death. Encouraged by such rumours, Jason considered the time was ripe for him to overthrow Menelaus, and with 1,000 men, he attacked Jerusalem, seized the city

and Temple, and confined Menelaus to the Citadel. Hearing of these riots on his northward journey from Egypt, Antiochus interpreted them as an uprising in favour of Egypt, and immediately despatched his soldiers. They subdued Jason and reinstated Menelaus, destroying portion of the city. Antiochus used the opportunity to take action against the Jewish religion, on the grounds of its fanaticism.

“And he shall do exploits” — The word “exploits” is not in the original; the Hebrew is simply, “he shall do”; i.e. he shall accomplish his designs on the covenant people. Josephus records that Antiochus took Jerusalem by storm; slew forty thousand inhabitants; sold as many more for slaves; boiled swine’s flesh and sprinkled the temple

and altar with the broth; broke into the holy of holies; took away the golden vessels and other sacred treasures, to the value of one thousand eight hundred talents; restored Menelaus to office, and appointed one Philip, a Phrygian, governor of Judea.

“And return to his own land” — With the wealth obtained and some 80,000 prisoners and slaves.

Antiochus Again Invades Egypt
— v. 29

Events now cause a return to the south. Gabriel emphasises that in the carefully allocated time-schedules of God a change in fortunes for Antiochus now occurs. He reminds Daniel that the passing years were under the control of Almighty God.

The Struggle for Independence

The Seleucids gained control of Palestine from the Ptolemies in 198BC, at a time when the Jerusalem Jews were themselves divided into two bitterly opposed factions. Civil war broke out, followed by the Maccabean war against the Seleucids, which eventually led to a brief period of Jewish independence. Some of the notable events of this period are as follows:

- * 198-142 BC Judea is ruled by the Seleucids.
- * 175-163 BC Reign of Antiochus IV Epiphanes
- * 167-164 BC The great persecution; sacrifices made to Olympian Zeus in the Temple; revolt of Mattathias
- * 166-161 BC Judas Maccabeus continues the revolt
- * 164 BC Purification of the Temple
- * 163-162 BC Reign of Antiochus V Eupator
- * 162-150 BC Reign of Demetrius I Soter
- * 161 BC Nicanor (Syrian commander in Judea) defeated
- * 161-143 BC Jonathan leads the Jews
- * 146 BC Romans destroy Carthage and Corinth
- * 145-140 BC First reign of Demetrius II Nicator
- * 145 BC Charter of Demetrius II confirms Jonathan as ruler of Judea
- * 144-142 BC Antiochus IV installed in Antioch.
- * 143-134 BC Simon ruler of Judea.
- * circa. 141 BC Jews renew alliances with Rome and Sparta.
- * 64 BC Pompey deposes Philip II and Syria becomes a Roman province.
- * 63 BC Pompey at Damascus
- * 63 BC Pompey takes Jerusalem
- * 40 BC Roman Senate names Herod ‘King of Judea’
- * 37 BC Herod takes Jerusalem

VERSE 29

“At the time appointed” — According to the purpose of God (cp. v. 27). There was a definite period in the Divine Mind in which all this was to be accomplished, and the Elohim were responsible to ensure that it occurred.

“He shall return, and come toward the south” — Antiochus now had an excuse for renewing his attacks on Egypt under the pretence of reinstating Ptolemy VI to the throne. He sent his fleet to Cyprus in BC 168 (see p. 301 chart) to secure possession of that island, and led his army towards Egypt to subdue the two brothers, designing to annex the whole country to his dominions.

“But it shall not be as the former, or as the latter” — On his earlier excursions he had been victorious, and had gone home with much booty. Not all of his ambitions had been realised, but effectively he was master of Egypt. But this time, the outcome was much different — a great victory turned sour! Laying siege to Alexandria, he marched on to Memphis where he re-installed Ptolemy VI Philometor as king of Egypt. But then the two brothers came to an understanding — Physcon (Ptolemy VIII Euergetes) in Alexandria, and Ptolemy VI Philometor in Memphis. Upon hearing of this, Antiochus sent a powerful army against Memphis, and himself attacked Alexandria, which was the only real obstruction to his complete control of the country.

But in Alexandria, Physcon and his sister Cleopatra, knowing the hopelessness of their case, sent an appeal to Rome for help.

One week before Antiochus arrived at Alexandria, Rome had successfully concluded its own war with Macedonia, and was now free to attend to other matters. It rushed to the aid of Egypt: an envoy was despatched, and Antiochus was halted a mile outside the city.

“The envoy was Lucius Popillius Laenus, with whom Antiochus had formed a friendship in the days of his

exile at Rome. The meeting of the two outside Alexandria is one of the famous scenes of history. Laenus, instead of accepting the friendly right hand which Antiochus held out to greet an old friend, put into it a copy of the decree of the Roman Senate bidding Antiochus leave Egypt at once, and told him of the Roman triumph at Pydna. Antiochus said he must consult with his advisers; Laenus drew a circle around the king in the sand and told him to give his answer before he stepped out of the circle. Antiochus had no option; he bowed to the dictation of Rome... The power of Rome was now paramount. Within a week she had conquered Macedonia, taken Egypt under her protection, and forced the Seleucid king to submit to her dictation. *Thus these three chief heirs of Alexander's empire had to acknowledge a new and superior power*” (*Israel and the Nations*, p. 141). Upon the scene, in BC 168, had come the representative of the Legs of Iron, the Dreadful Fourth Beast, the Little Horn of the Goat, the King who would do according to his will.

With Egypt's internal troubles, and especially those between the brothers at the top, “Rome regarded herself as entitled to act as the paramount ruler of Egypt, and to award the sovereignty according to her will” (*Historian's History*). Following the withdrawal of Antiochus, the brothers ruled Egypt jointly for a time, but then quarrels arose and Physcon succeeded in driving Philometor from the country. Rome again intervened, awarded the throne to Philometor as its rightful occupant, and set Physcon as ruler of Libya and Cyrene. Philometor was killed in battle against Syria in BC 145, and the Egyptians proclaimed his infant son, Ptolemy VII, as king. Physcon promptly murdered the child and resumed the throne as Ptolemy VIII. Rome then acquiesced, and he ruled alone from BC 145 to 116. He took his brother's widow, their own sister, in marriage; then divorced her in favour of his niece, the daughter of Philometor and Cleopatra. She also bore the name Cleopatra.

“Yet for a Time Appointed”

This significant phrase occurs three times in Daniel 11. It limited the activities of Antiochus Epiphanes, the king of the north, as he endeavoured to establish his power in the Middle East, but was frustrated by the course of events. In fact, the unseen Elohist power was controlling events in accordance with the Divine plan. Thus, in verses 27 and 29, Daniel is reminded that the activities of Antiochus could not go beyond what God determined. In verse 35, the phrase appears during the testing of the Maccabees, who defended the Jewish State against their persecutors under the unseen direction of the angels. Their exploits were not limited to that time only, but played an important part in history's progress towards “the time of the end.” A similar phrase appears in verse 40, as the prophecy concerns the events leading up to the appearance of Israel's greatest warrior, the Prince himself.

Daniel was encouraged by such a phrase. It pointed to Yahweh's care of His land and people; to the overshadowing presence of the Elohim in all the affairs of the nations; and to the ultimate victory which would be achieved “at the set time to favor Zion” (Psa. 102:13). Paul says that God has “thoroughly adjusted the ages by His command” (cp. Heb. 11:3).

It is valuable to briefly consider some occurrences of the phrase:

Psa. 81:3 — The sound of the shophar trumpet introduced special times according to natural laws established by God.

Prov. 7:20 — In parable form, the nobleman's absence is limited. Nevertheless the promiscuous wife puts off preparation for her husband's return. Claiming there is no fear of him returning unexpectedly, she indulges herself in folly.

Jer. 8:7 — The testimony of nature, as the migratory laws dictate the stork's future well-being as it seeks a better climate. Yet, Yahweh's people were unable to detect God's guiding laws for their benefit.

Jer. 46:17 — Under attack from the Babylonians, Pharaoh of Egypt let the “appointed time (the years of prosperity he enjoyed at the beginning of his reign) pass by,” and Nebuchadnezzar, as God's servant, brought judgment against Egypt. Pharaoh failed to recognise the opportunities God had allowed him, and nothing now remained but his ruin.

Dan. 8:19 — Daniel is assured of the certainty of the Divine Plan. Every item in the prophetic program is carefully established in the Divine Mind, and executed by the angels.

Hab. 2:3 — In answer to the prophet's anxious concern that Yahweh had ignored the pleas of the faithful, He reveals that, despite appearances to the contrary, the Day of Judgment would occur at the appropriate time.

Acts 17:26 — The rise and fall of nations is determined by God. He allows a certain period for the Gentiles to hear the Word of life. Furthermore, a “day is appointed” when those, who have responded to His gracious invitation, will be judged (v. 31).

Gal. 4:2 — The Father has established certain periods of instruction for His children. He superintends the education of His sons according to the proper limits. This has been done for Jewry, and for the Gentiles.

The signs of the times are provided as evidence of the “time appointed” for the return of the Master. We ignore them at our peril. There is a limit to the days of opportunity, as there was a limit to the wilderness wanderings (Num. 14:34), to the exile in Babylon (Jer. 25:11-12); and to the desolation of Jerusalem (Luke 21:24). We must recognise God's control over the affairs of the nations (Dan. 2:44), and conform our lives accordingly.

Conflict with the Jewish Maccabees
— vv. 30-35.

To achieve the next stage in the Divine Purpose, which would see the manifestation of a power in Greece that would continue in various forms down the centuries, Antiochus is drawn back to the Holy Land and incites a Jewish rebellion. The family of Judas Maccabeus stirs up the Jewish spirit against the power of Antiochus.

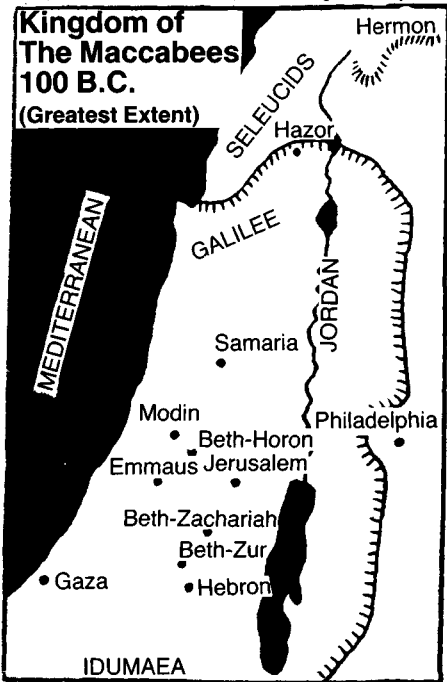
VERSE 30

“For the ships of Chittim shall come against him” — The ships were carrying a valuable cargo: the Roman envoy, Laenus! This incident brought Rome directly into the affairs of the Middle East, and laid the basis for the future events that transpired in the Holy Land. Chittim is first mentioned in Num. 24:24 where reference is made to “the coast of Chittim,” thus emphasising its maritime prowess. Chittim was one of the sons of Japheth (Kittim, Gen. 10:4) whose posterity,

according to Josephus, settled in Cilicia, Macedonia, Cyprus and Italy. Other references mention the “land” (Isa. 23:1), “isles” (Jer. 2:10), as well as the “ships” and “coast”. The name signifies to *strike, bruise*. In the days of the Maccabees it was generally used for Macedonia, and Rome enlisted Grecian ships to transport of it envoy in the action taken against Antiochus. One authority claims that the Roman envoy left Rome for Brundisium, and then passed over to the Grecian shore, and from thence to Alexandria by way of Chalcis, Delos and Rhodes, the isles of the Sea.

“Therefore he shall be grieved” — The word *kaah* means to be *faint-hearted, frightened, disappointed*. In Alexandria, Antiochus was forced to submit to the wishes of the Roman Senate, delivered by Laenus, and reluctantly relinquished his former enterprise in Egypt.

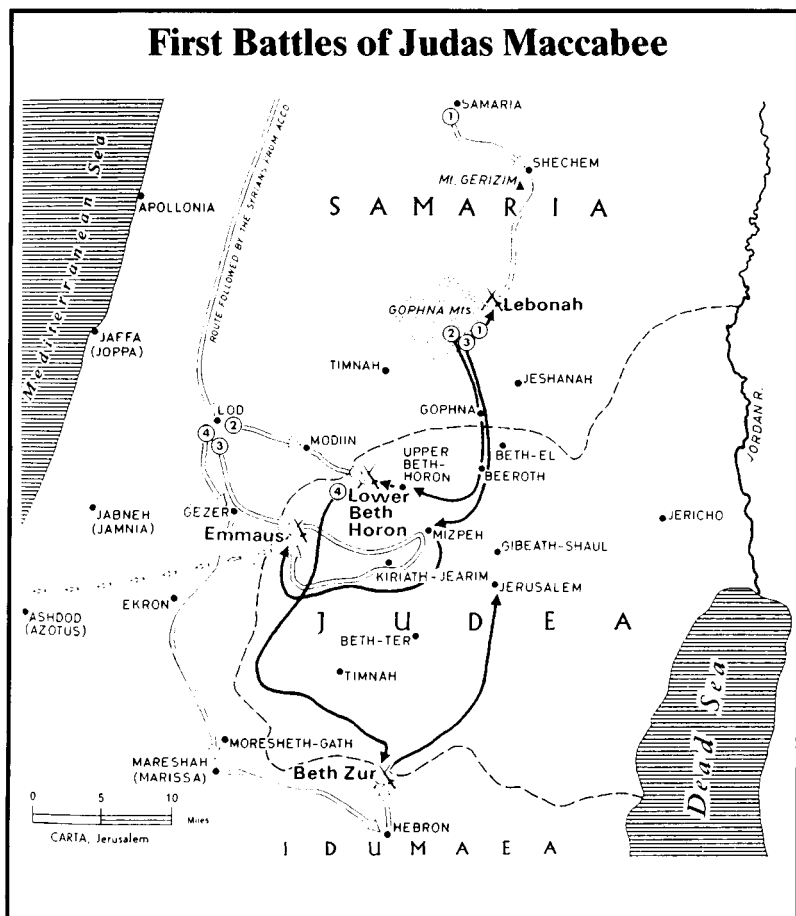
“And return, and have indignation against the holy covenant” — Antiochus now began a systematic attempt to destroy Judaism. What the Jews experienced previously from his anger, was but a foretaste of what would now happen! The word “indignation” is from the Hebrew, *za'am*, and describes intense anger, meaning “to froth at the mouth, to be in fury”. It is used to describe Yahweh’s wrath against sin and sinners, and is found in ch. 8:19, 11:36. Antiochus left Egypt in great anger, being compelled by the Romans to abandon his plans. He became irritated, and sought to vent his wrath in some other direction. Seizing upon the slightest pretext, he took opportunity to attack Jerusalem, despatching an army of twenty-two thousand men under the command of his general, Apollonius. They plundered the city, pulled down the houses round about it, slew most of the people, and built a castle on an eminence that overlooked the temple. They polluted every place of worship, so that the temple service was completely abandoned, and all the people fled from the city. When Antiochus returned to Antioch he decreed that all should conform to the Grecian



worship, and that the temple in Jerusalem should be consecrated to Jupiter Olympius. The *Book of Maccabees* notes that Antiochus ordained "that they should follow the law of the nations of the earth, and should forbid holocausts and sacrifices, and atonements to be made in the temple of God. And should prohibit the sabbath and festival days to be celebrated. And he commanded the holy places to be profaned, and the holy people of Israel. And he commanded altars to be built, and temples, and idols, and swine's flesh to be immolated, and unclean

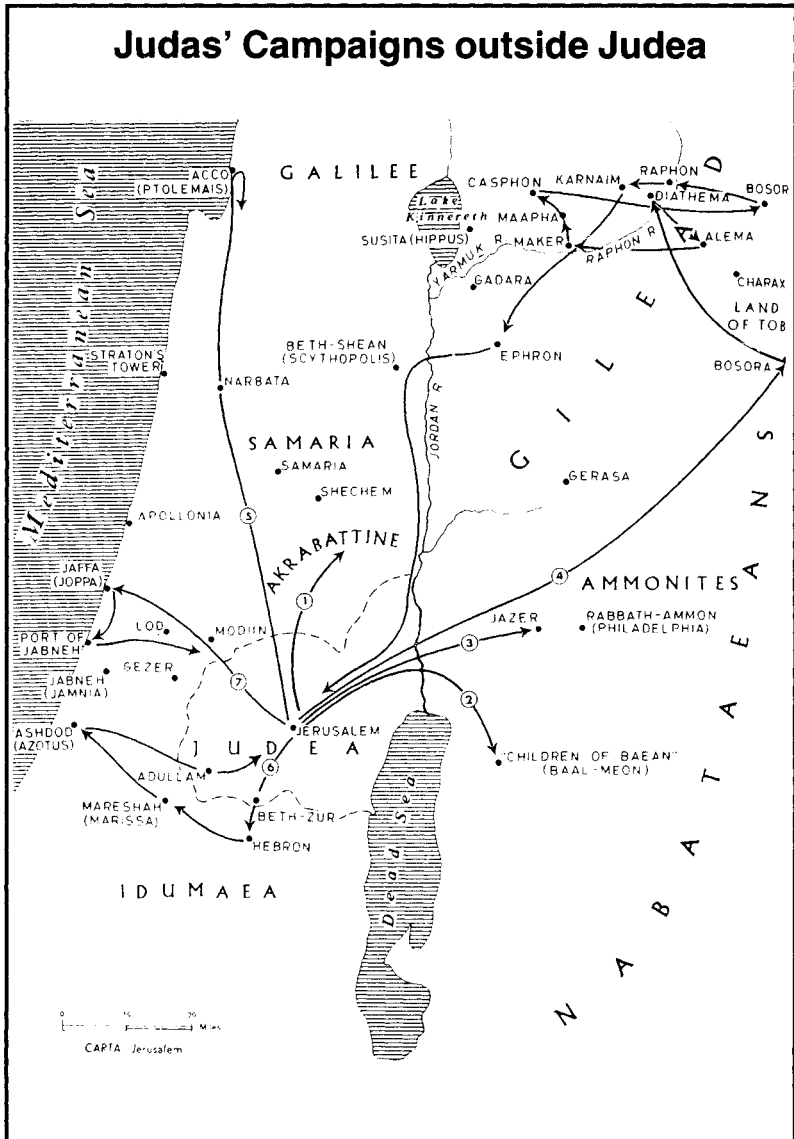
beasts. And that they should leave their children uncircumcised, and let their souls be defiled with all uncleannesses, and abominations, to the end that they should forget the law, and should change all the justifications of God. And that whosoever would not do according to the word of king Antiochus should be put to death."

"So shall he do; he shall even return, and have intelligence with them that forsake the holy covenant" — Antiochus conferred with the apostate high priest, Menelaus, and the Jews united with him, and they betrayed their



fellows to Antiochus. The Hellenisation process had seduced many who should have separated from Antiochus and remained faithful to the "holy covenant". They were the Judases of

the times (John 13:2), and betrayed their brethren to the enemy. Like Alexander in the days of Paul (2 Tim. 4:14), these "forsakers" traded their future hope for present advantage.



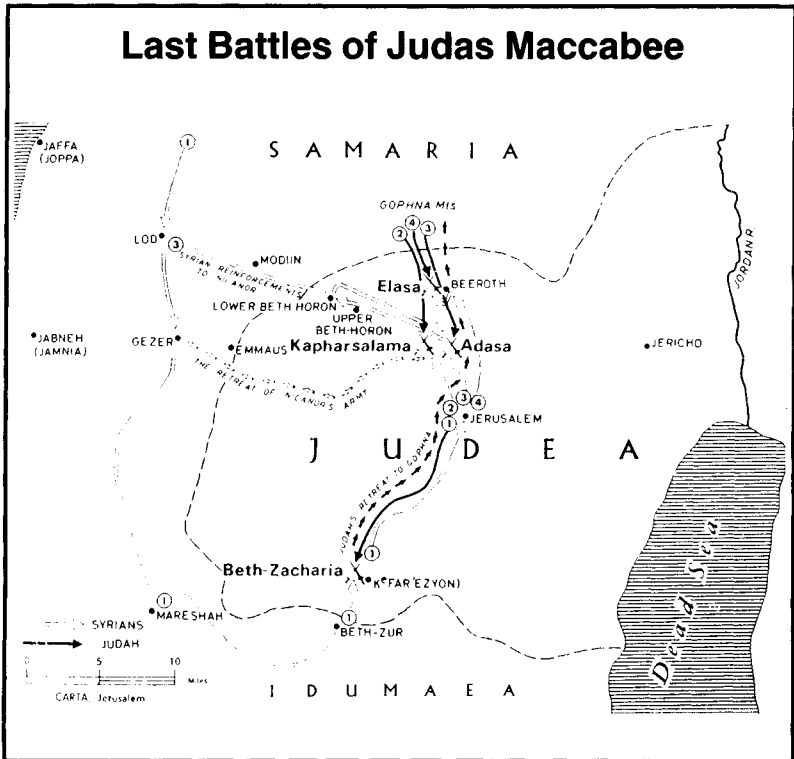
VERSE 31

“And arms shall stand on his part” — Antiochus took a terrible vengeance, as though Jerusalem was the cause of all his disappointments. Many cruelties were committed against the Jews. The word “arms” is a symbol of physical power, which was mercilessly and ruthlessly exacted by Antiochus. He appointed Athenaeus, an elderly man well-versed in all the ceremonies of Grecian idolatry, to carry his edict into effect throughout Judea and Samaria. Everywhere officers were commissioned to force the people to sacrifice to idols on the king’s birthday. The Jews were forced to eat swine’s flesh and other unclean animals that were sacrificed.

“And they shall pollute the sanctuary of strength” — By shedding

the blood of its worshippers, setting up shrines to other gods, commanding Jews to sacrifice swines’ flesh, etc. The word “strength” is from the Hebrew *maoz*, a fortified place, referring to the fortification and defences that had been set up to protect Jerusalem and the Temple. But all the endeavours of the Jews were to no avail. Antiochus’ army destroyed the defences that had been erected, and polluted the Sanctuary that had been built to the glory of Yahweh. But the glory having departed (cp Ezek. 10:18), there was no true strength left, and the religious sham that remained was soon overcome by the power of the Gentiles.

“And shall take away the daily sacrifice” — In June BC 167 the Mosaic sacrifices were forbidden by Athenaeus when he exerted his will upon the



Jews in Jerusalem. They were re-instated later (v. 33), until, under the Roman domination, they finally ceased.

“And they shall place the abomination that maketh desolate” — This very expression occurs in 1 Macc. 1:54, “Now in the fifteenth day of the month Casleu in the 145th year, they set up the abomination of desolation upon the altar and builded idol altars throughout the cities of Judah on every side.” Athenaeus was sent to Jerusalem to instruct the Jews in the Greek religion, and compel them to an observance of its rites. He dedicated the Temple to Jupiter Olympius, and on the altar he placed a smaller altar, to be used in sacrificing to the heathen god. This was later repeated by the Romans — ch. 9:27.

The word “desolate” is from *shamem*, signifying, “to stun, devastate,” indicating the terrible result of Antiochus’ oppression of the Jews.

VERSE 32

“And such as do wickedly against the covenant” — They were those who apostatized, and who were willing to follow the foreign religion. They forsook the old ways in favor of the new, to enable them to become accepted as “citizens of Antioch,” with the attendant privileges. This applied particularly to the youth, who became involved in the sporting arenas and pursuits

— an especial warning against a similar attitude in subsequent times when the Truth is under threat. A grave responsibility to honor the “Covenant” rests upon the lovers of Truth, and we renege this at our personal peril.

“Shall he corrupt by flatteries” — There were Jews that did so, as recorded in 1 Macc. 1:52, “Then many of the people were gathered unto them, to wit, everyone that forsook the law, and so they committed evils in the land.” Men like Alcimus, the high priest after Menelaus, transgressed the sacred covenant, and were corrupted by the flatteries of Epiphanes. He used them to gain over the people to his views. The “flatteries” were promises of favor, of promotion to high office, and of national prosperity. To obtain them, those “who did wickedly” traded their own faith. Concerning such an attitude, the Lord later declared: “Whosoever will save his life (by compromising in this life) shall lose it (as far as future promise is concerned); and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it (in immortality). For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?” (Matt. 16:25-26). Those of the Jewish ecclesia whom Antiochus “corrupted” were seduced by impiety and apostasy.

“But the people that do know their God shall be strong” — Those who

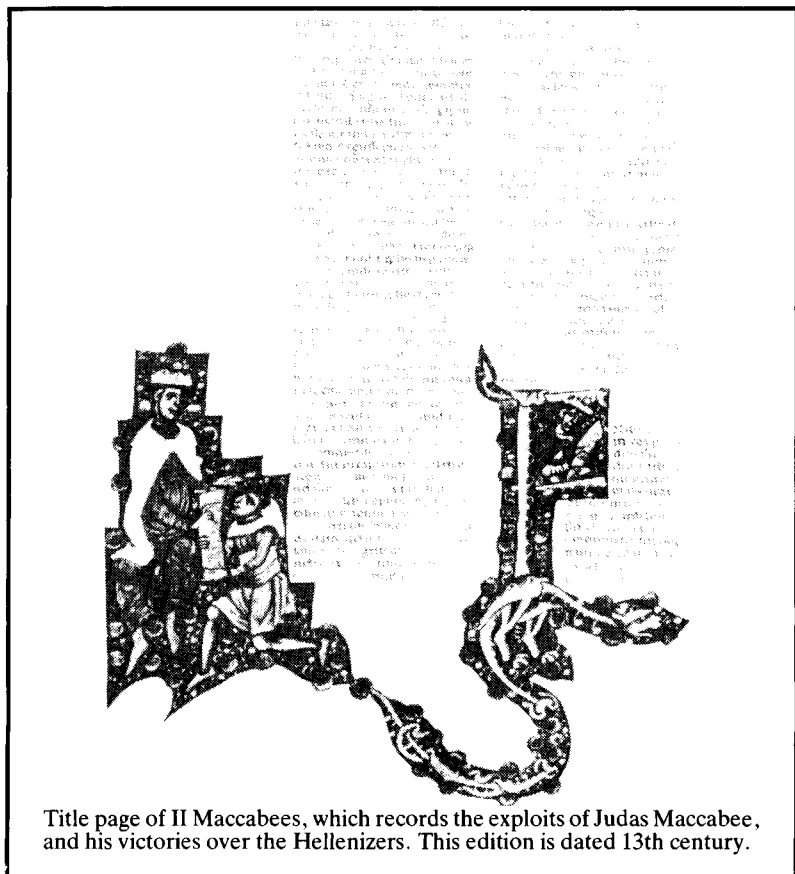
The Majesty of the Prophecy

“It may be proper to stand a little here, and reflect how particular and circumstantial this prophecy is, concerning Egypt and Syria, from the death of Alexander to the time of Antiochus Epiphanes. There is not so concise, comprehensive, and regular an account of their kings and affairs to be found in any authors of those times. The prophecy is really more perfect than any history, and is so powerfully exact, not only to the time of Antiochus Epiphanes, but likewise equally so beyond that time, that we may conclude in the words of the inspired writer, ‘No one could thus declare the times and seasons, but He who hath them in His own power.’”

refused the flattery of Antiochus, and adhered to the service and worship of Yahweh. This introduces the Maccabean family, a group known as *the Hasidim*, who were extremely zealous for the Law, and who were led by Mattathias and his sons, as outlined in 1 Macc. 2:1-5, "Mattathias, the son of John, the son of Simeon, a priest of the sons of Joarib, and he had five sons: John who was surnamed Gaddis; and Simon who was surnamed Thassi; and Judas who was called Maccabeus; and Eleazar who was surnamed Avaran; and Jonathan called Appus." This family refused to submit to the demands of Antiochus, and maintained their

loyalty to Judaism. They strengthened themselves in opposition to the oppressors. Judas Maccabeus had the greatest success, and was a valiant warrior in the cause of Jewry.

"And do exploits" — Following the Syrian edicts against the Jews, Mattathias was required to lead the way by offering a sacrifice on the new heathen altar erected on the Temple site. He refused, and in his zeal slew a Judean who came forward to carry out the injunction of Antiochus. Mattathias overthrew the altar, called on the faithful to follow him, and fled with his family into the wilderness. Thousands followed, and an army developed. He



Title page of II Maccabees, which records the exploits of Judas Maccabee, and his victories over the Hellenizers. This edition is dated 13th century.

One of History's Great Warriors



Figure of Judas Maccabee portrayed on a French 16th century enamel plaque.

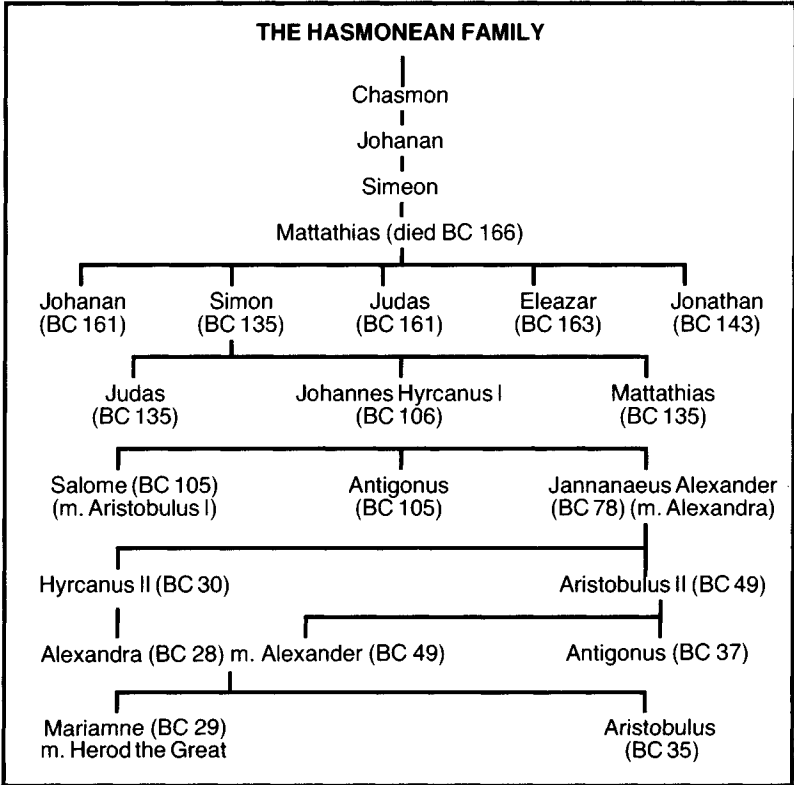
Judas Maccabee was the third son of Mattathias the Hasmonean, and assumed leadership of the Jewish revolt against Antiochus Epiphanes in accordance with the death-bed wish of his father. His exceptional military talent made him the natural

choice as military commander of the rebels. Judas' early strategy was to avoid any open involvement with the army of the Seleucids, preferring to attack the enemy from ambush, in order to give them a feeling of insecurity. At the beginning of the struggle he succeeded in defeating a small Syrian force under the command of Pollonius, who was killed. Judas took possession of his sword which he used as a symbol of vengeance until his own death. Later, as his victories mounted, and his skills increased, the army of the Maccabees became a vital force in the Middle Eastern affairs, even to the procuring of an alliance with the Romans — although they committed themselves only such an alliance as was in their own interests. As a result of the struggles against the generals of Antiochus, Judas was able to occupy Jerusalem (except the "tower") and purified the temple exactly three years after its profanation. However, his final battle, near Elasa, was in BC 161. Judas and his faithful supporters were killed, and his body was taken from the battlefield by his brothers, and buried in a family sepulchre in Modi'in. Judas was a vital part of the Divine scheme; one of the servants commissioned by the Elohim to perform the will of Yahweh (cp. Cyrus, Isa. 45:1).

died a year later, in BC 166, having named Judas to succeed him as the family patriarch and leader of the battle, and Simon as "the man of counsel." Thus commenced a movement whose influence continued almost to the birth of Christ.

VERSE 33

"And they that understand among the people shall instruct many" — At the commencement of the revolt the movement was passive, as the faithful endeavored to strengthen themselves in the Law.



“Yet they shall fall by the sword, and by flame, by captivity and by spoil, many days” — The challenge and opposition by Mattathias against the power of Syria was not altogether successful, and many had to flee for their lives. Their final triumph would be only after many of them had fallen in battle, or been made captives. Mattathias, who began the opposition to Antiochus, summoned as many as he could induce to follow him, and sought security in the mountains. His enemies pursued him and, refusing to fight on the Sabbath, many of his followers were slain. Their dwellings were destroyed by fire, and the captives cast into heated caldrons of brass. The temple and city were plundered. Josephus records that this violence lasted three years.

VERSE 34

“Now when they shall fall, they shall be holpen with a little help” — Yahweh gave them a limited success. Following the death of Mattathias, Judas Maccabaeus raised the standard of independence. He defeated and killed Apollonius, and decimated his troops. With 3,000 he defeated Apollonius with 47,000 at Beth-horon; with 20,000 men at Emmaus he routed the army of the successor, Lysias, destroying 65,000 of the enemy; and occupied Jerusalem in BC 164. When success crowned the arms of Judas and his brethren, many of the Sadducean party joined them, although they formerly belonged to the Hellenizers. So the religious group of the Maccabees became a powerful guerilla army, that

tore apart the heart and strength of the Syrians.

In BC 163 Antiochus IV Epiphanes died, breathing out threats against the Jews. His successor, Antiochus V Eupator died in BC 162, allowing Demetrius I Soter to ascend the Syrian throne (BC 162-150). He sent Nicanor against Judas (at the instigation of a Jewish group!), but Judas defeated him soundly in two battles (BC 161). Subsequently, Judas fell in battle, and was succeeded by his brothers, Jonathan (BC 161-143) and Simon (BC 143-135). Simon made overtures to Demetrius II Nicator in BC 143, which were favorably received, and the independence of the Jews was formally recognised. So an uneasy self-governing situation existed in Jerusalem, until the city fell victim to Rome when Pompey took it in BC 63.

“But many shall cleave to them with flatteries” — When Judas began to be successful, many joined him, hoping, by a limited amount of treachery against Judas, to secure safety if the Syrians ultimately prevailed, while, at the same time, their presence with the Maccabees would save them from the vengeance of their own countrymen if Judas were victorious and the Syrian yoke thrown off.

VERSE 35

“And some of them of understanding shall fall” — There would be temporary defeats in order to test the sincerity of the others. The death of such heroes as Eleazar Avaran, as well as Judas Maccabaeus himself would severely try the others. Some might have suggested that God had withdrawn His protection, but this was not necessarily the case. God sometimes allows reverses in life to test the sincerity of His people. The Master later warned his disciples to “Take heed that no man deceive you” (Matt. 24:4) by using present circumstances to wean a servant from the Faith. It was a trial in the apostolic times, when the “fathers fell asleep” (2 Pet. 3:4), and some took that opportunity to entice their fellows from the “understanding”.

“To try them, and to purge, and to make them white” — The evidence of seeming defeat and the death of renowned warriors might be used as justification to turn from the struggle of right. The margin is as the Hebrew: “by them” who have fallen, others would be tried, purged and made white. The word “try” means “to melt, to smelt” as with metals. It is the method by which the value and durability of metals is achieved. They would be “purified” by separating them from the dross, and “made white” through their elevation to approval.

This has been the experience of the ecclesia in every age. Through trial and test, faithfulness is developed: “Rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ’s sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy” (1 Pet. 4:13). Such trial and test is often shaped by difficult circumstances, and through the duplicity of companions. Though there is little physical persecution at present, the trial is none-the-less serious, for it may be that the pleasantness of the times will wrest the future from us, as the Lord warned Laodicea (Rev. 3:17). He told that ecclesia to obtain gold of faith (the metal properly tested, 1 Pet. 1:7), the purging element of eye-salve that excludes the diseased vision, and the white raiment of acceptable worship. Never let the distressing circumstances of life destroy the glory of our calling.

“Even to the time of the end: because it is yet for a time appointed” — Bro. Thomas renders this as “for the time of the end.” The trial was not to last *until* the time of the end, but because that time would see the *reason* for the trial. Their present trials were for future benefits. Saints must understand that days of difficulty are allowed by God, for His over-riding wisdom sees beyond the present to the future (cp. Ch. 12:10). Then, the reason for trouble and trial will be clearly understood. Paul speaks of “our light affliction, which is but for a moment, *worketh in us* a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory” (2 Cor. 4:17). His words indicate the need to allow the circumstances of the pre-

Fulfilment of 430 Days — Verse 35

Bro. Thomas comments in *Elpis Israel*, p. 404: “This verse brings us down to the end of 430 years from the destruction of the city and temple of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans (Ezek. 4:1-8). There is here a break in the prophecy. Nothing more is said about Israel and the king of the North, until the prediction is resumed in the fortieth verse, which may be regarded as continuous with verse thirty-five ... With the exception of the “little help” derived from the victories of the Maccabees, the history of Israel has been a series of calamities to this day.”

He makes further comment in *Exposition of Daniel and Eureka*, vol. 1, concerning the prophecy of Ezekiel 4: “Ezekiel records how he was instructed to lie first on his left side for 390 days, and then on his right side for a further 40 days, a total of 430 days, as a ‘sign to the house of Israel (and) Judah, for I have laid upon thee the years of their iniquity. Even thus shall the children of Israel eat their defiled bread among the Gentiles whither I will drive them’.” Bro. Thomas suggests two applications of this sign. The first: dated from the foundation of Solomon’s Temple (BC 1022, *Chronikon Hebraikon*) until the destruction of the Temple in BC 592 (a period of 430 years). In a second application it applied from the sacking of Jerusalem (BC 592, according to his reckoning) until BC 162 (when events allowed Judas Maccabeus to take control of Jerusalem in BC 161), a further period of 430 years.

On our dating (slightly different from that of Bro. Thomas), the destruction of the Temple was in BC 586, and the 430 year period concluded in BC 156, the period of considerable Maccabean influence. According to 1 Macc. 9:73, in BC 158, “the sword ceased from Israel: and Jonathan dwelt in Michmash, and Jonathan began there to judge the people, and he destroyed the wicked out of Israel.”

sent to develop our character. They must “work in us,” otherwise we might be overcome by “much sorrow.” Christ maintained his vision of the future glory, enabling him to “endure the cross and despise the shame” (Heb. 12:2). The phrase “time of the end” is again mentioned in Dan. 11:40 as a period which would introduce the work of Michael, the warrior-prince of Israel (Ch. 12:1); and in Ch. 12:9, as the time of the resurrection, when the characters now shaped and polished will be displayed in all their glory.

The Character of the King of the North — vv. 36-39

The world stage now sees a dominant figure appear as the King of the North. Earlier Daniel was told of a “little horn” power (ch. 8:9; 10:12), and now is given further information concerning its development. This power was revealed in the Eastern Roman area, stemming from Pergamum (and later, from Constantinople) and would dominate until “the time of the end” (v. 40). A previous prophecy identified this power as that which crucified Jesus and scattered

Jewry (ch. 8:9-12), finally "casting the truth to the ground and prospering." Daniel is now instructed concerning the political achievements of this power as it is drawn into the Middle East conflicts, and ultimately, assumes the mantle of the King of the North.

VERSE 36

"And the king" — Gabriel had earlier spoken of "a king of fierce countenance" (ch. 8:23), and now he shows how this power would manifest both religious and political influence on the scene. This power is described as a "little horn" (ch. 8:9) which came out of the Grecian he-goat, to "wax exceeding great, toward the south, and toward the east, and toward the pleasant land." One of the four divisions of Alexander's Empire established its centre in Pergamum, (see notes from p. 192 to p. 212). It was from this centre that the power of Rome developed when Constantine assumed total control of the empire. This prophecy now traces the important stages of this power as it wields religious and political sway leading up to the "time of the end" (ch. 11:40).

"Shall do according to his will" — Shall be absolute and supreme, manifesting dictatorial power. During the third and second centuries BC the Romans made themselves masters of the Mediterranean world. In a series of dramatic battles, Rome secured victory over Sicily, Spain, Carthage; and finally, the Macedonian kingdoms fell. The emperors of Rome were worshipped by the populous. In civil war with Pompey (BC 49), Julius Caesar was an easy victor, and returned to Rome as dictator for life. With the Roman people, as well as the soldiers, he was immensely popular, for he ensured that the rewards of empire were enjoyed by all the citizens. His son-in-law, Octavius, re-established the dictatorship (BC 42) and, as the Emperor Augustus, institutionalized it.

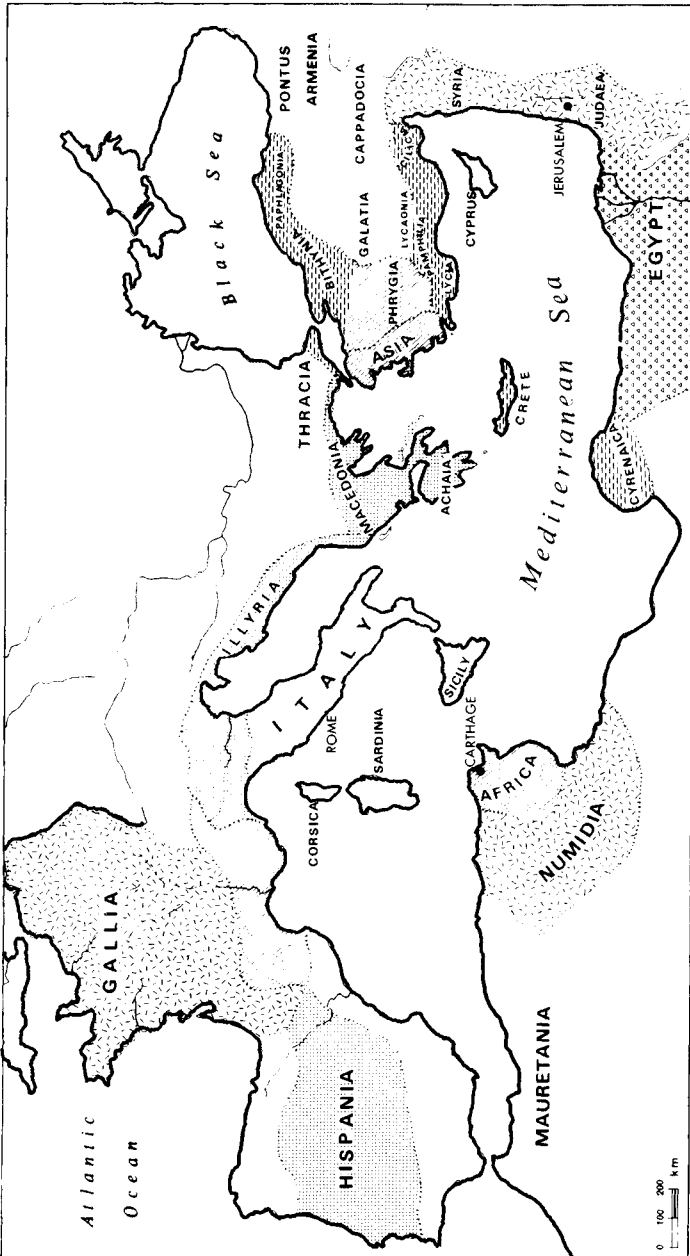
"And he shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god" — Introducing a religious aspect. The



Pompey, a famous Roman general, was given great power to strengthen the position of Rome throughout the Mediterranean, but was later opposed and defeated by Julius Caesar.

king would grasp both political and spiritual power. Rome was pagan until AD 313, and christian thereafter. Under both elements it challenged the successors of "the people who do know their God" (v. 32). Pagan Rome opposed the Truth in the days of Christ; and papal Rome has continued to do so since. Daniel learns that the oppressing power would become religious. Constantine chose Byzantium as the centre of the empire's eastern communications, and there he reigned in great splendour. He renamed the city after himself: Constantinople. Turning "religious" on his death-bed, Constantine decreed that christianity become the state-religion. Following his death, a religious centre was established in Constantinople, which rivalled the Bishop of Rome. A battle for supremacy developed. In AD 588, John

The Roman Conquests in the Mediterranean Basin



The Rise of Rome

While Alexander's great empire of the East had been disintegrating since his death in BC 323, a city in the West had been growing in power, until it had an empire beyond the borders of its own country.

In BC 338 Rome dissolved the Latin League and assumed control of central Italy. Within fifty years it had penetrated north into the Po Valley. Between BC 264 and 146 the Punic Wars saw the destruction of Carthage. Subsequently the Aegean League was defeated and Corinth destroyed. So Roman rule began to impinge on Greek territory.

During the reign of Ptolemy IV Philopator (BC 221-205), when the Roman war with Carthage was being fought, the Romans sought good relations with Egypt, and sent ambassadors to renew their ancient friendship, and convey magnificent presents to Ptolemy and his queen. When Ptolemy IV died, and was replaced by his child-son, they sent another embassy to offer help. The king's counsellors took the opportunity to place the boy under the guardianship of a powerful republic like Rome, as a protection against the designs of Antiochus III in the north. This continued for nine years until Ptolemy was entitled, under Egyptian rule, to govern in his own right.

But, although not actively involved, Rome gained a position of influence with the King of the South, which would increase until, eventually, Rome dominated the country in BC 30.

The Syrians in the North were never friendly with this rising power of the West, for their interests clashed in Greece and Egypt. But the Syrian kingdom deteriorated until its king was compelled by circumstances to submit to the Roman rule (BC 65). By BC 30, Rome had complete control of the territories of both King of the North and the King of the South. Palestine fell to Pompey in BC 63, and the situation was achieved for the fulfilment of Daniel's prophecy in ch. 11:35-39.

"the Father", the Patriarch of Constantinople, assumed the title "Universal Bishop," arousing the ire of Gregory, Bishop of Rome. Maurice, the Emperor of Constantinople would have acknowledged the title assumed, but Maurice was murdered by a usurper named Phocas, who became Emperor in Constantinople. Phocas then wrote to Gregory, and acknowledged him as Supreme Bishop. Gregory died that same year, and was succeeded by Boniface III. Phocas confirmed the supremacy of Boniface III,

in AD 604, and also acknowledged his right to pass the title on to those who would follow after him. Thus, the king exalted himself above every aspiring god, pagan or christian.

The word "god" is *el*, strength or might — relating to any power that would seek to oppose the king.

"And shall speak marvellous things against the God of gods" — Heb. *el of elim*, signifying "the strength of the mighty ones." The pagan/papal king established the Church of Rome, propounded doctrines astray from the

Truth proclaimed by the servants of Yahweh, and opposed them. The word "marvellous" is from *pala*, to distinguish, to be great, wonderful. It is rendered "monstrous" (NASB), "unheard of" (NIV). In both word and deed, the Roman power challenged the Truth and persecuted its followers.

"And shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished" — There was an appointed time during which this power would be allowed to continue (ch. 8:25). The word "indignation" (Heb. *za'am*) signifies fury, especially describing God's displeasure against sin. The expression is taken from ch. 8:19, which concerns the Little Horn of the Goat Power. This same power is defined by Paul in 2 Thess. 2:3, who confirms that it would last for a considerable period in which the "man of sin would be revealed," usurping the position of God. The assumptions and blasphemies of this power would continue until the return of Christ will "accomplish the Divine indignation" against the enemy.

"For that that is determined shall be done" — The Divine purpose is sure and steadfast (Psa. 145:19) and the ages have been designed by the Word of God (Heb. 11:3). God has determined the series of events which must occur to achieve the preparation of the kingdom.

VERSE 37

"Neither shall he regard the God of his fathers" — The king would not be bound nor restrained by the religion of his fathers. Constantine's fathers were pagan, but he embraced christianity to further his political ambitions. The doctrines espoused by Constantine, and subsequently developed within the Catholic Church, renounced paganism (though its system was incorporated in a modified form into the Catholic teachings). The popes of the Church established themselves as infallible, and as the "vicars of God" — thus in honouring them, these emperors of Constantinople "respected a new god."

"Nor the desire of women" — The doctrine of the papacy includes the celibacy of a priesthood, and the institution of a celibate order of nuns. This attitude has its basis in paganism, for Hislop records: "Strange as it may seem, yet the voice of antiquity assigns to the abandoned queen (Semiramus) the invention of clerical celibacy, and that in its most stringent forms" (*The Two Babylons*, p. 219). Concerning the church-approved separation of women in nunneries and convents, a personal report is contained in *Forgotten Women in Convents*, p. 109: "I shrink at the memory of the awful struggle back to normalcy which I, in common with every other ex-nun went through. With no business training, no knowledge of homemaking, no sense of values without which any life is a failure; with no decision, a prey to a thousand terrors, afraid of myself and everyone else; timid, cringing, physically emancipated but mentally chained, the unfortunate ex-nun, returns to her cell voluntarily, because there are no decisions to be made there. Rome clips the wings of her victims so that they cannot fly, then tells the believing world that they stay because they like it."

Daniel's prophecy is defined by Paul, who declares that this unnatural attitude would develop out of the ecclesial sphere, and become a great movement: "The Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; forbidding to marry..." (1 Tim. 3:1-3). When the Truth was converted by Constantine into a pagan-orientated christianity, church practice fulfilled both prophecies.

"Nor regard any god" — No power would prevent the execution of the king's will. Popery became political, and religion was made companion to power, as the popes exercised absolute domination over their subjects. The *National Catholic Almanac* claims: "When the triple crown is placed on the

head of a new pope at his 'coronation' ceremony, the ritual prescribes the following declaration by the officiating cardinal: Receive the tiara adorned with three crowns, and know that thou art the Father of Princes and Kings, Ruler of the world, the Vicar of our Saviour Jesus Christ."

The Septuagint translates the phrase: "because that in everything he shall be exalted," indicating the extent of political power that will be wielded.

"For he shall magnify himself above all" — Exercising absolute political and religious control over the "bodies and souls of men" (Rev. 18:13), and claiming the right to dictate in matters of conscience and morals when temporal power was denied it in 1870.

VERSE 38

"But in his estate shall he honour the God of forces" — The word "estate" is used in Gen. 40:13 for "office" and in Exod. 38:8 it appears as the "foot" of the laver. It thus refers to the *foundation* of the king's power; the jurisdiction of his influence. The papacy established a foundation of religion based upon acknowledgement of "the god of forces." Bro. Thomas translates this phrase as "god of guardians." The Hebrew is *eloah mauzzim*; the root word, *maoz*, is translated fortress (Jer. 16:19), fort (Dan. 11:19), most strong (v. 39). Thus, the god whom the king (papacy) honors is surrounded by protection: the cathedrals, churches, idols, and the "ghosts of saints and martyrs" who are worshipped as the protectors of catholics. In March, 533, Justinian, the civil representative of the empire, wrote to the Bishop of Rome: "We suffer not anything that belongs to the state of the churches to be done without submitting it to your holiness who art the head of all the churches." Thus the "king who does according to his will" (the Emperor) acknowledged this "strange god" as of supreme spiritual authority over all the "bazaars of the guardians" which became his (*Exposition of Daniel*, p. 65). The universal bishops of Rome presented the god of a new system of

idolatry, whose "saints" became the protecting influence in the lives of Catholics. Their images were set up to be worshipped (Rev. 9:20). Paul speaks of the "seducing spirits and doctrines of daemons" (1 Tim. 4:1) as the policy of the latter-day apostasy, by which its followers were taught to rely on the protection of the immortal souls of "departed saints."

"And a god whom his fathers knew not shall he honour with gold, and silver, and with precious stones and pleasant things" — The Roman Church has become a bazaar of spiritual merchandise. The influence of Rome has extended worldwide in all spheres of society. In the moment of her destruction at the coming of Christ, nations, kings and societies will give recognition to her power in the past (Rev. 18:9-19). The wealth-policy of Catholicism was cultivated by the emperors in Constantinople and Justinian bestowed great riches upon the churches. Besides the magnificent temple of St. Sophia, he dedicated twenty-five others in Constantinople and its suburbs to the honour of the Virgin and saints of the catholic calendar. Most of these edifices were decorated with marble and gold (*Exp. of Daniel*).

The phrase "pleasant things" can be translated "costly gifts," referring to precious ornaments and statuary. It is used in Isa. 44:9 to signify the costly ornaments with which the heathens decked their idols. They represent all the pleasantries sought by the Gentile heart (v. 43), but which will be destroyed by the Divine conqueror of the future (Isa. 2:12-22).

VERSE 39

"Thus shall he do in the most strong holds" — The places of his power! The Hebrew is *le miutzahrai mauzzim*, and, according to Parkhurst, the root of *miutzahrai* is *bahtzar*, which signifies "to enclose with a wall, or the like for safety," thus a store, or treasure so secured. It is derived from a bazaar, a covered marketplace in the eastern countries. Bro. Thomas renders the phrase: "Bazaars of Guardians." The

expression is again used in v. 15 (most fenced), v. 24 (strong holds).

These great "bazaars" are the sphere of influence over which "the king" will hold sway, and upon which his followers will place their confidence and faith. Within the walls of the churches and cathedrals of christianity, the bazaars are conducted for spiritual and material profit, as sales of the "bodies and souls of men" (Rev. 18:12-13, 2 Pet. 2:3) are traded. There are found the deified spirits (1 Tim. 4:1), the "miracle-working saints," the precious idol-treasures and relics. Constantine recognised the power that was possible through religion, and gave his followers an example of ruthless exploitation of the minds of people that has been repeated by pope and cleric, on behalf of the church-system since. The busy bazaars of christendom have deluded the hearts of the masses as to the glorious truth of Yahweh, and their doctrine has become a "covering cast over all people and a veil that is spread over all nations" (Isa. 25:7), which will be removed when Christ destroys the bazaars and merchandising of Rome for ever (Rev. 18:16-17). Then mankind will acknowledge the folly of the strong-holds of flesh, and call upon Yahweh as their "strength, fortress, and refuge" (Jer. 16:19).

"With a strange god" — The god of v. 38. The word "strange" comes from the Heb. *neykar*, "foreign, heathen." Constantine replaced the pagan gods of Rome, which his fathers worshipped, with the new god of christianity.

"Whom he shall acknowledge and increase with glory" — Following Constantine, the succeeding Roman Emperors by example and decree increased the power, influence and authority of the Catholic Church, its leaders and clergy. Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* states: "Constantine first established the Roman bishop in full power in Western Europe. The popes received from him considerable real estate, extensive judicial authority, much liquid wealth, control over the armed forces, and political dominance ... As the wealth

and political power of the Roman popes increased, so did the position and influence of the cardinals."

"And he shall cause them to rule over many" — Power was vested in the Vatican, so that both temporal and religious control were exercised. Rev. 13:2 describes the papal beast which revealed the characteristics of a lion, able to roar forth throughout the forest of mankind. The pagan dragon bestowed upon this lion "his power, and his seat, and great authority." Thus, from Constantinople arose a vocal power which claimed control over the "bodies and souls of men" (Rev. 18:13), and for over a millennium presided upon the papal throne. This was in accordance with the prophecy of Rev. 13:7 in which "power was given him (the papal king) over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations." Though the temporal power of the papacy was taken from the Vatican in AD 1870, the Catholic Church still maintains a tremendous control. Over 800 millions bow the knee to the throne of the Pope.

"And shall divide the land for gain" — Each priest and bishop was given jurisdiction over a "diocese," a territory, or district. From such centres, information is fed back to the Vatican through the "Holy See," enabling the Papacy to maintain its influence in both religious and political matters. Wealth is also channelled back to St. Peters in Rome, the chief of the "Bazaars of the Guardians," fulfilling the terms of Rev. 18:12-13. In the Holy Land, "holy sites" were secured by the Papacy, giving rise to the wars of the Crusaders, and present disputes in Israel.

Supremacy of the King of the North — vv. 40-45

Daniel's attention is now directed to a time far beyond his own. Gabriel's prophecy was to assist him understand that the "vision is for many days." Daniel may have been discouraged by the seeming delay in the restoration of his people and the elevation of Zion. But the Divine purpose would carefully proceed along a predetermined course: the provision of a Messiah, the develop-

ment of a political Seed of the Serpent in the King of the North, and the final contest between them both. Now Daniel was to learn of the final outcome and the ultimate victory of the Prince of Princes.

VERSE 40

“And at the time of the end” — This refers to the same time as in Dan. 7:26 (see notes), indicating the termination of the events outlined. Yahweh has carefully set out certain “ages” (Heb. 11:3) according to His purpose. Everything that has occurred since the days of Daniel, has pointed to this end period (Dan. 8:19). This “time” includes the return of Christ (12:1), international trouble (12:1), personal judgment (11:35), resurrection and deliverance (12:2), and complete explanation of the Divine secret (12:4,6,9).

The time that concludes with Christ as victor over a world at peace, commenced with the re-appearance of the “kings of north and south,” and a third party, termed “him”. Brother Thomas comments that “It is evident from this (verse 40) that at the time of the end, there are to be two horns of the Goat and the little horn all co-extensive, and as hostile in their policy as in the days of Antiochus Epiphanes” (*Elpis Israel*, p. 416). This dates the commencement of this time period as 1917, when events saw the first stage occur.

“Shall the king of the south” — This power was last heard of in verse 29, when the force of the Ptolemys in Egypt was overthrown by Antiochus (Dan. 11:26). Since then, the king of the south (the power in occupation of Egypt) disappeared from prophecy to allow events in Palestine and Europe to take precedence. Now, however, the scene returns to Egypt. This time, Britain was to become the king of the south, and in 1882 circumstances forced Britain to intervene in Egyptian affairs. Brother Thomas anticipated the importance of this event by writing in *Elpis Israel* (p. 445): “God, Who rules the world, and marks out the bounds of habitation for the nations, will make Britain a gainer by the trans-

action. He will cause her rulers to see the desirableness of Egypt, Ethiopia and Seba, which they will be induced, by force of circumstances, probably, to take possession of.” This proved to be the case. Against severe opposition, Disraeli, Prime Minister of Britain, bought control of the Suez Canal, leading to the sole domination of Egypt by Britain in 1882. For seventy-two years Britain remained in Egypt, until an agreement was signed in 1954 relinquishing British influence in the area. By 1956 the last British troops had left. But the period had seen Britain play a significant role in Egypt as “king of the south.”

“Push at him” — The “him” here refers to the king of verse 36, the power ruling in Constantinople. From the days of Constantine (BC 324) this city became the capital of the Roman Empire. In 1453, however, it fell to the Turkish power who made it their capital, and, destroying the remnant of the Roman Empire, became the “him” of this verse. The prophecy thus requires that at the time of the end, the power in occupation of Egypt (Britain) should “push at” Turkey. The first movement from Egypt against the Turks began in 1832-3 when the army of Muhammed Ali, under the direction of his son, Ibrahim, was despatched against the Turks in Syria. It did not succeed completely because the Angelic Controllers recognised that the full time was not yet; but it was the beginning of a situation that led up to the “time of the end.” Britain and France were forced into the arena, and were to ultimately provide the needed “push.” This occurred in 1917, when Turkey controlled most of the Middle East including Jerusalem and Palestine. But, supporting Germany against Britain in W.W.1, she attracted the opposition of the “king of the south” and British forces, under the direction of General Allenby, attacked and defeated Turkish forces in Palestine.

“And the king of the north shall come against him” — Subsequent to the attack from the king of the south. The fulfilment must await the final re-

The Disappearance of the Kings of North and South

The progress of these two kings was interrupted by the advent of the "king" of verse 36. Gabriel revealed to Daniel that both powers would succumb to the domination of the "king who would exalt and magnify himself." Thus Rome controlled the Seleucid Kingdom of the North in BC 65, and the Ptolemaic Kingdom of the South in BC 30, and ruled supreme.

During the next 3 centuries, angelic work concentrated in the Holy Land with the advent of the Son of God and the development of ecclesias.

In about AD 324, new developments occurred in the Roman Empire that would ultimate in the re-appearance of the Kings of the North and South. In that year Constantine established a new capital for his empire in the East: "During the later operations of the war against Licinius, he had sufficient opportunity to contemplate, both as a soldier and as a statesman, the incomparable position of Byzantium; and to observe how strongly it was guarded by nature against a hostile attack, while it was accessible on every side to the benefits of commercial intercourse ... (He) was not insensible to the ambition of founding a city which might perpetuate the glory of his own name" (*Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*). Byzantium was renamed Constantinople. At first in concert with Rome, it later became a thorn in the side of the Roman Bishop. An opposing system of religion to Roman Catholicism developed, until a great schism occurred between the Papacy in the west and the Greek Orthodox Patriarchy in the east.

Revelation 9 prophesies of the rise of Mahomet in the East. Born in Mecca about 570 AD, he was driven to Medina in 622 AD (the Moslem date for 1335 Moon-Calendar years — see notes Dan. 12:12). Constantinople became embroiled in the "holy wars" that followed. It was besieged by the Saracens in AD 668-675, and again in AD 715-718. But then the Sixth Angel sounded (Rev. 9:13) to introduce the uprising of the Ottoman Turk. A significant period of 391 years (v. 15), dated from April 29, 1062, when Togrul Beg established himself in the Moslem world by his marriage to the Caliph's daughter. Thereafter, the "four angels" being "loosed from the great river Euphrates," directed the Moslem power to overspread and subdue the eastern third of the Roman Empire.

Thus, the territory of the King of the North became established as Turkish in 1453; and in also controlling Palestine in 1509 and Egypt in 1517, Turkey displaced Rome as "the king."

The time had come, however, for a re-appearance of the kings of North and South in a latter-day manifestation, to prepare the

world scene for the final conflict (Dan. 11:40-45).

Palestine fell to the Turks in 1509, when it was incorporated in the Turkish Empire by Selim IX, and remained so until 1917. Egypt, which fell to Arab world power in 640 AD, became Ottoman in 1517, and thereafter was governed by military Pashas. For a short period Napoleon's France achieved control of Egypt, but this then returned to the Turks. In 1832-3, the military pasha, Muhammed Ali revolted, and, but for Western interference, may have conquered Turkey itself. He was granted a hereditary Pashalik over Egypt. In 1879, Britain and France took joint-control, and in 1882, after a further revolt, Britain became the sole administrator. In 1914-15, Egypt became a British Protectorate, until termination in 1954. So Britain became "king of the south".

Constantinople fell to the Ottomans in May 29, 1453, and still remains Turkish. When Russia overruns Turkey, and controls all the territories of the Seleucid Northern Empire, she will become the "king of the north" of verse 40.

forming of the ancient Seleucid Kingdom of Syria, which the northern Russian power is poised to accomplish. She is spreading her control over the territory of the ancient king of the north, and only requires a controlling influence in Iran, Iraq and Syria to qualify for the title; then she will be ready to "come against him (Turkey)."

Significantly, the same year that saw the push of the king of the south (Britain) against Turkey (1917) also witnessed the Russian Revolution when Lenin overthrew the Tzarist capitalist regime, and introduced the philosophy of Communism, commencing a movement that would ultimate in the king of the north. In the dramatic years that followed, Russia made great gains in power, influence and territory, and is about to complete the path marked out by Destiny. In her final onslaught for world domination, Russia will first attack Constantinople (Istanbul) in order to control the seaways into the Mediterranean, and then proceed against Egypt (v. 42) and the Holy Land (v. 45).

"Like a whirlwind" — A sudden, unexpected attack that will take the world off its guard.

"With chariots, and with horse-

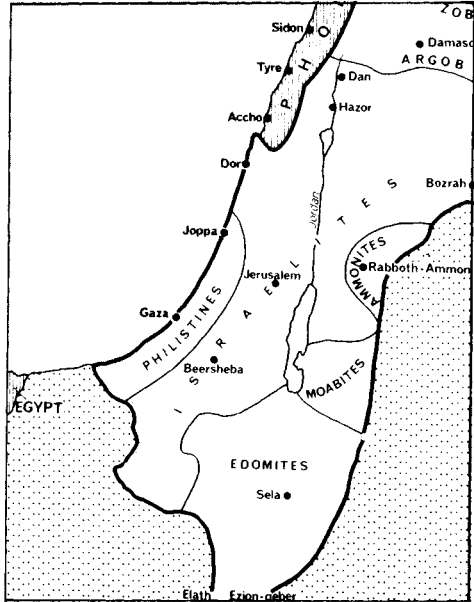
men, and with many ships" — A vast array of military equipment, naval, infantry and artillery. Russia is building up her conventional combat forces.

"And he shall enter into the countries" — The area occupied by the king of Constantinople, the "him" of this verse. Russia's desire to dominate in Turkey will provide a spring-board for her designs on the Middle East.

"And shall overflow and pass over" — At first it will seem that Russia merely seeks control of Istanbul, to permit her free access through the Bosphorus into the Mediterranean. But her intentions will be obvious when her troops proceed on a southward thrust into the Middle East itself. The drama of the incident is described by Brother Thomas as follows: "The tempest, then, is gathering. The King of the North is preparing his hosts, and fortifying with all the forces that iron can afford him". And, again: "He will rush on against him both by land and sea, his forces being distinguished by their numerical strength, in 'chariots,' or artillery, cavalry, and ships. The result of this tornado will be a successful one, for he will 'overwhelm and pass over'" (*Exposition of Daniel*, p. 81).

VERSE 41

“He shall enter also into the glorious land” — This is the “pleasant land” of ch.8:9 (see notes on page 192). The adjective in both verses comes from the Hebrew *tsebiy*, signifying splendour, beauty, from a root *tsabah*, meaning: “to array an army.” The word also occurs in ch.11:16, 45. The Hebrew is: “a land of ornament.” Thus the prophecy describes the Holy Land, concerning which Yahweh declares: “(it is) a land which Yahweh thy God careth for: the eyes of Yahweh thy God are always upon it from the beginning of the year even unto the end of the year” (i.e. constantly). Having absorbed “the little horn”, Russia will act the part required by the prophecy and invade the areas of Lebanon and Israel, driving down along the coastal plains intent on securing a foothold in the south. The description is of a fast moving army. Jerusalem is bypassed at this stage.



The ancient areas of Ammon, Moab and Edom — east of the Jordan — will be occupied by Western forces as a buffer against the invading Gogian armies. Daniel 11:41 states that these areas “escape” out of the control of the northern host — implying the existence of a challenging power against which Gogue does not take action. However, Egypt “shall not escape” and will be over-run.

“And many countries shall be overthrown” — The word “countries” is not in the original Hebrew. Thus Young’s Literal renders: “and many do stumble.” Others suggest: “Many things”, which could refer to cities, dwellings or people. In order to achieve his designs, Russia will pass down the coastal plain avoiding Jerusalem, as was often done by the Kings of North and South as they marched back and forth in their constant endeavours to obtain the supremacy. The word for “overthrown” is *kashal*, which indicates to totter, waver, faint or fall, through weakness. There will be little resistance to the onslaught of the Russian hordes. Israel will be in a state of panic, recognising the futility of contesting the issue. This will commence the “time of Jacob’s trouble” (Jer. 30:7), the moment when “they shall look unto the earth, and behold trouble and darkness, dimness of anguish; and they

shall be driven to darkness” (Isa. 8:22), when Russia will devastate the cities along the coastal plains, repeating the steps of Sennacherib (2 Kings 18:13, 34-35).

“But these shall escape out of his hand, even Edom, and Moab, and the chief of the children of Ammon” — By a lightning drive southwards Russia for the moment skirts the eastward areas, intent upon domination of Egypt and the south. The territories of Edom, Moab and Ammon describe the modern kingdom of Jordan and the Arabian Peninsular. This area was subject or allied to Antiochus (and Turkey) in the past, so this prophecy relates to the future. It is to this territory that many of the distressed in Israel will flee from the Russian onslaught through the

Holy Land, as the ultimate fulfilment of Isa. 16:3-4: "hide the outcasts; bewray not him that wandereth. Let mine outcasts dwell with thee, Moab; be thou a covert to them from the face of the spoiler." Thus the angels will provide for the protection of threatened Jews, whilst the final destiny is played out upon the mountains of Israel.

VERSE 42

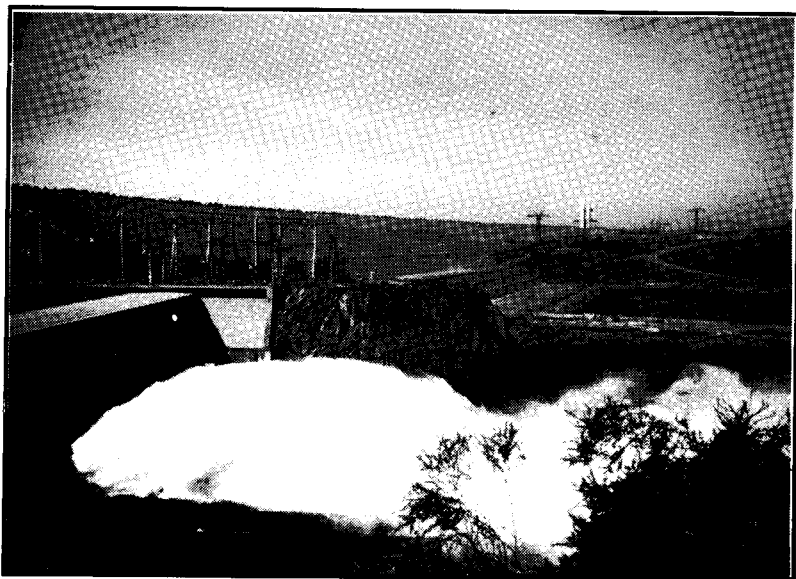
"He shall stretch forth his hand also upon the countries" — Repeating the exploits of the Assyrian oppressors (2 Kings 18:13, 34-35) who destroyed the nations of Palestine and took away many captives. Whereas verse 41 reported that "many shall be overthrown," thus describing the devastation of cities and peoples, this verse shows that various countries will come under Russian control. His southward thrust for world control will see the overthrow of Turkey, Asia, Greece, Syria and coastal Israel.

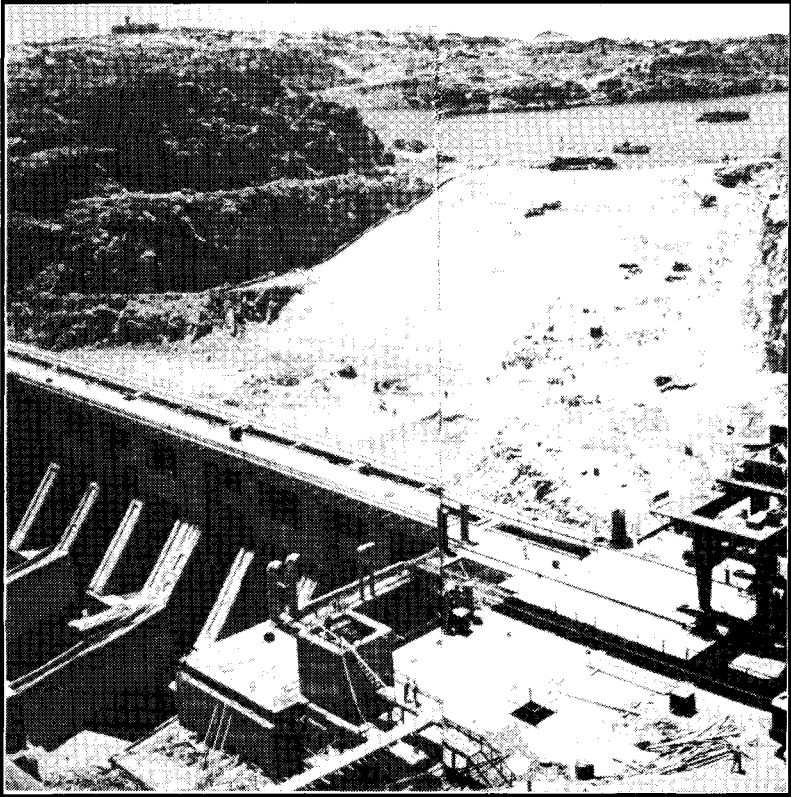
"And the land of Egypt shall not escape" — Notice reference is not made to the "King of the South". This role was assumed by Britain, who was

required to "push at" Turkey (v. 40). But circumstances forced Britain to relinquish her base in Egypt, and no power replaced her. Today Egypt exists without direction; she remains the "base nation" of Ezek. 29:14-15, and in that condition will feel the effect of Russia's attack, as the northern forces pour down the coast of Israel and across the Mediterranean. Russia will control Egypt, thus dominating the southern Mediterranean seaboard, preventing British influence or protection.

Russia has reason to exercise vengeance against Egypt! When America pulled out of the projected building of the Aswan Dam in Upper Egypt, Russia stepped in and provided technical and financial assistance. In due course she was deeply entrenched therein. Then she was unceremoniously ejected from the country, which, rather uncharacteristically, she did, leaving behind an immense wealth in materials and expertise. That has not been forgotten! A terrible revenge will be exacted in due time!

Isaiah speaks of the smiting of Egypt, prior to the time when Christ





Above: Construction of the Aswan dam in Egypt: a massive engineering feat designed to capture the waters of the Nile for irrigation. This amazing project was performed by Russian engineers and finance. The wall of the dam extends 4kms across the River Nile, with a width of 1km at the base. It is constructed in the form of a number of pyramids joined together, and the granite volume is 17 times that of the great pyramid of Cheops on the plain of Giza. The value of Russian interest in the construction of the Aswan dam will be one reason for the eventual invasion of Egypt, as foretold in Dan. 11:42.

Imagine the terrible catastrophe that will come upon Egypt when the earthquake of Zech. 14 occurs. Ezek. 30:6 depicts the collapse of the "tower of Syene" (modern Aswan), referring probably to the effects of the great earthquake, and allowing the waters of the dam to flood through Egypt, cleansing all the pollutants that are presently developing.

Page 338 opposite: Photo taken during the Logos Bible Lands Tour 1977 showing some of the mighty turbines on the Aswan High Dam hydro-electric units, which develop sufficient power to service the whole Middle East. This power ability will be one attraction for Russia to secure dominance in Egypt, and thus have the electric capability of servicing its huge forces in the area.

will institute healing policies to restore that "base nation" to a future glory. Ch. 19:2-4 depicts an Egypt under "a cruel lord": the Gogian power. It will see the outbreak of civil war (v.2), which breaks the spirit of Egypt (v.3), and leaves the whole nation in the control of powerful, strong and harsh overlords (v.4). Economic and political troubles will be felt throughout the land, as all industry and farming becomes subject to the claims of Russia (vv. 5-10). This circumstance will form part of the humbling process by which Yahweh will prepare Egypt for its place in the Kingdom (v.21-22) under the guidance of the Lord Jesus Christ.

VERSE 43

"But he shall have power over the treasures of gold and of silver, and over all the precious things of Egypt" — Although today Egypt is relatively poor economically, it possesses great treasures of antiquity — and certainly holds vital strategic influence over the waterways of the Red Sea, Suez Canal and the southern Mediterranean area. Occupying this territory will provide the King of the North (Russia) with tremendously important military positions of control, from whence the power of the West (Tarshish) can be effectively challenged.



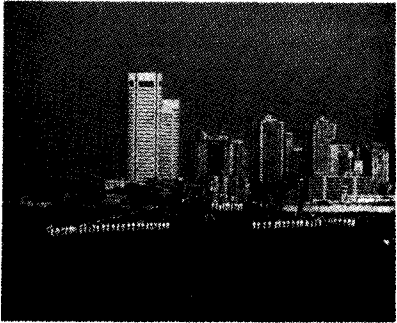
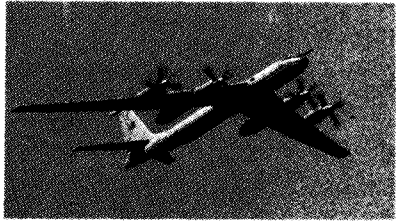
“And the Libyans and the Ethiopians shall be at his steps” — Gesenius renders the latter phrase: “shall follow him.” Libya borders Egypt to the west; Ethiopia is to the south. The Hebrew for *Ethiopia* is *Cushites*, referring to the African Cush which bounded Egypt on the south, and included not only Ethiopia above Syene and the Cataracts, but also Thebais or Upper Egypt. Both are estranged from modern Egypt because of her peace pact with Israel, and will willingly submit to Gogian control (Ezek. 38:5) becoming part of its confederate forces. Ethiopia is already under Russian influence and virtual control, whilst Libya has close ties with the Soviets.

VERSE 44

“But tidings out of the east” — The direction is to Sinai, where the Judgment Seat will be established, and reports of the unusual circumstances that are there occurring, now filter through to the Soviet forces in Egypt. At this point, Christ has already returned, and brought the responsible of all ages and generations to judgment, for “we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ” (Rom. 14:10) that his appraisal of our works might be publicly revealed in the gift of immortality or the decision of rejection (2 Cor. 5:10). Moses prophesied of this, when he declared that “Yahweh shall come (lit. Hebrew is in future tense) from Sinai” (Deut. 33:2) with His saints, following the judgment seat (see Hab. 3:1-3). The resurrection and gathering of the saints takes place before Russia enters Egypt, but at that time the drama of Sinai will be withheld from the gaze of the Gentiles. In *Eureka* Vol.5 pages 33-34 Brother Thomas suggests a period of ten years for the judgment and fraternisation of the saints before they go forth to subdue the nations (Psa. 149:4-9). These “tidings” could well be the remarkable activity of the Multitudinous Christ as he emerges from Teman (the *south* — Hab. 3:3).

“And out of the north” — Jerusalem is here defined. Whilst the Russian

forces consolidate in Egypt, and endeavour to strengthen their lines of communication through the Holy Land, opposing forces of the Western Allies attempt to halt the Russian thrust. The British and associated forces will establish their base in Trans Jordan, where, as the latter-day Moab and Edom they will be able to care for the Jews fleeing from the Soviet holocaust (Isa. 16:4). Coming from the east, the British alliance will make an attempt at stalling the Russian



A parade of Russian built equipment — demonstrating Soviet prowess on land, air and sea — part of the huge armament ability of the Russian Empire.

advance; they will make a courageous, but ineffective, protest to Gogue: "Art thou come to take a spoil? hast thou gathered thy company to take a prey?" (Ezek. 38:13). Against this challenge, Russia leaves a part of his forces to hold Egypt (Isa. 19:4), and proceeds northwards to meet the challenge.

"Shall trouble him:" — The Heb. word *bahal* means "to cause to tremble, to be alarmed, to become agitated." The strange, unusual events occurring in the area of Sinai, and the challenge of the British forces in Jordan, proceeding westwards towards Jerusalem, cause the Russian Autocrat to be diverted from his intentions in Egypt. His objective of world domination, now under threat, requires him to destroy all opposition.

"Therefore he shall go forth with great fury to destroy, and utterly to make away many" — Leaving a garrison in Egypt, the Russian army moves northward to counter the known and unknown threats. They will not understand the true nature of immortals who are already emerging from Sinai, probably imagining it is some unaccount-

able revolt of local forces. Gogue will consider Western forces as the main enemy to be crushed. No longer are the happy faces of Soviet preachers of *detente* seen! Intent on world domination, the King of the North no longer hides his true intentions, and will brook no opposition.

VERSE 45

"And he shall plant the tabernacles of his palace" — Heb. *ohelim appeden*: "tents of his pavilion"; i.e. a palacetent, the military tents of the chief and his court. When Oriental princes went forth to war, they marched in great state with a large retinue of the officers of their court and with all the appurtenances of luxury, as a display of their authority and magnificence (cp. Jer. 1:15 for a similar usage of the term). The RSV has "he shall pitch his palatial tents," thus describing the full extent of Gogian power and glory. He wishes to make an example of his power to the Western opposition, and selects Jerusalem as the place for the establishment of his supremacy.

"Between the seas in the glorious



Russian T-62 tanks attack during joint Pact exercise. Designed specifically for rapid offensive operations and deployment en masse, the T-62 relies for protection on speed and small size as well as exceptionally effective armour rivalled only by British tanks.

holy mountain — The seas are the Mediterranean and Dead Seas, and the mountain is Zion. Here is the setting for history's greatest battle: Armageddon (Rev. 16:16)! It was in Jerusalem that Jew and Gentile, as the Seed of the Serpent, killed God's holy Son; it will be at Jerusalem that the final chapter will be written, as the Seed of the Woman crushes the power of the Serpent. But firstly, Jerusalem will feel the full effects of fleshly dominance. All nations will be represented in the initial clash, and it will seem that Russia is successful over its enemies, for Jerusalem is sacked and her people greatly distressed (Zech. 14:1-2). Britain and the West are humiliated (Psa. 48:7) and driven back from Jerusalem (Isa. 16:4-7), so that Gogue stands supreme.

"Yet he shall come to his end" — He is destroyed, not by the Tarshish powers, but by the immortalised army of Christ, which has moved northwards in answer to the anguished cry of Israel (Ezek. 37:11). Divine vengeance is exacted against Gogue (Zech. 14:3), and saviours come to the aid of Zion (Joel 3:16; Obad. 21). The "great fury" of Gogue (Dan. 11:44) is met with the "fierce anger" of Yahweh (Zeph. 3:8), and "the fire of his wrath" (Ezek. 38:18-19), so that the political Seed of the Serpent is crushed.

"And none shall help him" — There will be none able to deliver him out of

the hands of Christ wielding Divine power. This is the fulfilment of Dan. 8:25. Though the Russian power is annihilated at Jerusalem, enemies of Christ will abound amongst Catholic Europe. But Christ takes the war into the enemies' camps, until, finally, all opposition to the Divine Will is destroyed. The fall of "Great Babylon" follows the demise of Russia (Rev. 18:21), and every "nation and kingdom that will not serve Christ shall perish; yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted" (Isa. 60:12).

This is the end of the Gentile dominion, the final answer to the political rebellion of mankind. Christ is supreme, and with him are the "called, chosen and faithful," all of whom have already waged that war typically in their lives, and have thus been equipped to challenge the national enemies of Christ. In them, the mind of the Spirit has succeeded in destroying the mind of the flesh — made possible through the victory of Christ (Rom. 7:25). Reliance upon the flesh, however, will not triumph, for it shall "come to its end and none shall help". What is clearly prophesied in the national and political spheres, must first be demonstrated in our personal warfare, and thus we must, like Paul, "delight in the law of God after the inward man" (Rom. 7:22). For all those who so labour, there is the encouraging vision with which Daniel concludes his book.





BLACK SEA

1st PHASE
RUSSIA TAKES TURKEY

ISTANBUL (CONSTANTINOPLE)

RUSSIA

TURKEY

ARMAGEDDON

2nd PHASE, RUSSIA TAKES EGYPT

MEDITERRANEAN SEA

BRITAIN WILL FORTIFY JERUSALEM, BUT WILL RETREAT TO EDOM AND MOAB (MODERN TRANS-JORDAN)

CYPRUS

OIL PIPE LINE

LEBANON

IRAQ

OIL PIPE LINE

ISRAEL

JERUSALEM

SAUDI ARABIA

TRANS JORDAN (EDOM & MOAB)

EGYPT

SUEZ CANAL

RUSSIA ADVANCES ON JERUSALEM

4th PHASE
RUSSIA ADVANCES ON JERUSALEM

NILE

MT SINAI

AT MT SINAI WILL BE ESTABLISHED THE JUDGEMENT SEAT. TIDINGS OUT OF THE EAST AND NORTH SHALL TROUBLE HIM.

Christ On Earth Again!

The nations will first become aware of the presence of the immortal army of Jesus Christ when the Gogian forces hear of "tidings out of the east" (Dan. 11:44). Christ will have made his stealthy advent some years previously — certainly before the tremendous rush of the Russian power as described in v. 40. The personal judgment of the household precedes the national assize of the Gentiles, for Peter declares: "judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God" (1 Pet. 4:17). Thus the return of Christ to Sinai will be accompanied by the resurrection and judgment of the responsible, as Daniel will be instructed in chapter 12. Those accepted will be invited to full fraternisation with their heavenly husband in the consummation of the Marriage of the Spirit, as beautifully described in the Song of Songs (cp. Song 2:10-13). The rejected will be sent back into the world they had, in their hearts, always loved (cp. 2 Tim. 4:10), but a world now convulsed in terrible warfare and slaughter, "such as never was since there was a nation" (Dan. 12:1). In a graphic description of the results of the judgment seat, the Lord speaks of some "taken, and the other left" (Luke 17:34-36). The word *taken* is *paralambano* in the Greek, signifying "to take alongside oneself" (as a wife — see Matt. 1:20,24); whereas the word *left* is *aphiemi* which means "to send forth, or away; to let go from oneself." The Master will select, as his Bride, those who have remained faithful to him; whereas the unworthy will be dismissed. The disciples responded: "Where, Lord?" to which he replied: "Wheresoever the body is, thither will the eagles be gathered together". Applying the parable to the extremity of AD 70, the decaying body of Israel was consumed by the ravenous vultures of Rome; and in its latter-day manifestation, the dead body of the Gentile world will be seen in the terrible conflagration of Armageddon — into which the rejected at Sinai will be despatched. From the Judgment Seat of Sinai, the "chariots of elohim" will proceed (Psa. 68:17-18; Deut. 33:2; Hab. 3:3-15; 2 Thess. 1:7-10; Jude 14).

It is appropriate that Sinai should be selected as the place of Judgment. It was before that august mount that Israel first appeared as a constituted nation (Exod. 19:3-6); it was there that the commandments of Yahweh sounded forth (Exod. 20:1), and the glory was shown to Moses (ch. 33:22). Sinai remains the place of Judgment, and Jerusalem the place of Glory.

CHAPTER TWELVE

RESURRECTION AND REWARD

From the vision of international turmoil, intrigue and trouble, Daniel is now turned to the glorious revelation of Messiah in the earth, and the gathering of all the faithful into the Divine family of immortality. He is given an assurance of his personal salvation, and the book concludes with a message of encouragement for those who, like Daniel, strive in the circumstances of life to maintain the Faith and Truth of Yahweh.

It is the culmination of a long life of service in Babylon. Notwithstanding the difficult trials, and dangerous moments that faced Daniel time and again, he is comforted by the assurance of ultimate victory. Now on the eve of the deliverance of Israel from the land of exile, the prophet is nevertheless told that it would be many years before final glory would come to his people. He would die, but it would be a temporary rest in the grave. Meanwhile, Messiah would come to fulfil his redemptive mission, great nations would rise and fall, Israel would again suffer great tribulations and anguish as the nations struggle for supremacy — but out of it all Daniel will rise to a glory he never experienced in life, and will yet stand with those whose names are “written in the book”.

This final chapter provides an encouraging message of hope for those, like Daniel, who maintain a consistent faith throughout the circumstances of their lives. It closes the prophecy on a note of expectancy, anticipating the day when Daniel will “stand in his lot at the end of the days.” That grand moment is imminent, and will bring our hopes and desires to a reality.

A Time of Trouble and Deliverance — Vv.1-4

Gabriel explains to Daniel what will happen when the great clash of powers occurs. When the King of the North believes he is triumphant, he is challenged by an invincible, unidentified power (ch. 11:45). This is now revealed to be the army of Michael who stands as the great deliverer. Daniel is told of the opening of graves and the association of all the servants of Yahweh throughout the ages, and he discerns the culmination of the events which previously caused his heart to ache with great sorrow (Dan. 10:2-3).

VERSE 1

“And at that time” — These four verses are an epilogue to Chapter 11, explaining the culmination of the “time of the end” which commenced in Ch. 11:40. The phrase designates a period that began with the demonstration of Gentile power, and concludes with the elevation of Daniel’s people through the power of Faith.

“Shall Michael” — The title earlier related to “one of the chief princes” (ch. 10:13), referred to as “your (Daniel’s) prince” (v. 21) and in this context referred to a certain archangel

(Jude 9) who "stands in the presence of the Deity" (as did Gabriel, Luke 1:19). Now the title is conferred on one known as "the great prince" (Dan. 12:1), who delivers his people not only from trouble, but also from the grave (v.2). The name signifies "Who is as El," and is a symbolic title for the Lord Jesus Christ, known also as Emmanuel: "El with us" (Matt. 1:23), and who has assumed full control of all angelic operations (1 Pet. 3:22). He is "as El (Power)", for he was the Word made flesh, a manifestation of the Father's perfect character (John 1:14; 14:9-10), who overcame the flesh by a life of perfect obedience to the Divine Will, and has now been clothed with Divine nature. It is in that elevated state that he returns to the earth at "that time" (Psa. 102:13; Acts 17:31) to fulfil the Divine purpose (John 10:18; Matt. 28:6; 1 Cor. 15:14,23; Acts 2:30-31).

"Stand up" — Indicating preparation for activity. Previously, he ascended into the heavens (Acts 1:9-11), and "sat down" at the right hand of the Father (Col. 3:1; Heb. 10:12-13), having completed his atoning work in fulfilment of Psalm 110:1 — an O.T. verse quoted more often than any other in the N.T. Daniel's vision now sees him *standing* ready to perform the terms of Psalm 110, to "strike through kings in the day of his wrath" (v.5), to execute the judgment written (Psa. 149:9; 82:8; 96:13; 98:9; Rev. 19:11).

"The great prince" — Heb. *gadol sar*. The term *sar* occurs 421 times in the O.T., including 18 occurrences in Daniel. It signifies "prince, chief, captain, governor," and is frequently used of royal rulers. Here it relates to the Lord Jesus, who has been given charge over all the *elohim* (Phil. 2:9; Heb. 1:6). He is "commander to the people" (Isa. 55:4), the "prince of princes", (Dan. 8:25) and the Prince of the host (Daniel 8:11).

"Which standeth for the children of thy people" — Christ will stand as the warrior to defend the "children of Daniel's people," and to take vengeance on all who have persecuted Daniel's associates throughout the

ages. The "children of thy people" refers to both natural and spiritual Israelites. Previous expressions have included "thy people" (ch. 9:15), "the holy people" (ch. 8:24), and "my people" (ch. 9:20), but here the term includes the "children" (Heb. *ben*) which has reference to the development of a family. That family will comprise both immortal and mortal constituents. Christ will bring salvation to Daniel's children of faith (Phil. 3:21), and deliverance to natural Israel (Rom. 11:26). The saints will rejoice in the manifestation of the "captain of their salvation" (Heb. 2:10) who brings from heaven the power of an endless life (Heb. 7:16). And the Jews will recognise in the great prince who comes from Sinai with his powerful army, the one they crucified (Zech. 12:10, Rev. 1:7), then made glorious in salvation (Zech. 9:16).

"And there shall be a time of trouble" — The Hebrew word for "trouble" (*tsarah*) indicates "intense turmoil" (Psa. 25:17), comparable to the pain endured by a woman bearing her first child (Jer. 4:31). It describes the terror of a people who cowered in fear before a merciless, rapacious army (Jer. 6:24). Note the usage of the word in Hab. 3:16; Zeph. 1:15 and Zech. 10:11. The same word appears in Jer. 30:7, "the time of Jacob's trouble." Thus, the Lord will return at a time of unparalleled chaos involving both Israel and the Gentiles (Jer. 25:30-33; Zech. 14; Mal. 4; Luke 21:25-26; 2 Thess. 1:7-10). It will be an age of spiritual and moral gloom, with mankind in a state of "gross darkness" (Isa. 60:2). The trouble will be so intense that there will seem to be "no way out" (as the word "perplexity" in Luke 21:25 signifies), with men's hearts failing them for fear as they contemplate the catastrophe that faces them.

The saints, however, have already been removed from this scene of chaos, for the time of trouble will erupt as the Judgment Seat is in progress (Isa. 26:20-21; Luke 21:25-27; 2 Pet. 3:12). They subsequently appear to deliver Jewry from the turmoil of the times, and bring all nations into subjection to

the reign of Christ and the saints (Psa. 2; Jer. 3:14-17; Ezek. 20:33-41, etc).

“Such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time” — Nations were only formed following the Tower of Babel (Gen. 10; 11:6), and therefore the universal devastation of the Flood is not included in this statement. Yahweh will not again destroy the earth with such a catastrophe as He did then when only eight were saved (Gen. 8:21; 9:10). Nevertheless, no event since then compares with the trouble that will soon erupt on the earth.

“And at that time thy people shall be delivered” — The drama of the first four verses shows how Israel will be delivered from the oppressing force described in Daniel 11. Not only will Israel be saved, but God’s sleeping saints will be delivered from the prison-house of death. Yahweh is called “The Deliverer” (Heb. *palat*) in 2 Sam. 22:2, for He has always manifested that merciful quality towards His people (cp. Psa. 18:2; 40:17; 43:1; 70:5; 71:2; 144:2). Moses was appointed to be a deliverer (Acts 7:35), as is Christ (Rom. 11:26). Yahweh has consistently delivered His people before pouring out a flood of judgment upon the ungodly (Gen. 7:1,16; 19:16,22. cp. Luke 17:26-30 where Christ likens the time of the end to the days of Noah and Lot).

“Every one that shall be found written in the book” — The Divine Memory constitutes a “book of record” in which the lives of individual people and nations are recorded. The Judgment Seat will see the opening of “the books” (Rev. 20:12) which constitute a “day-book” of actions performed, and a “ledger” of lives balanced. Commenting upon reference to “the book of life” in Rev. 3:5, Brother Thomas says:

“There would appear to be two scrolls — the one styled *A scroll of the Life*, and the other *THE scroll of the Life*. These two scrolls are opened at the setting up of ‘The Great White Throne’ of judgment, at the epoch of resurrection. Certain things having

been written in these scrolls, the resurrected are judged from them. These things are their works. One of these scrolls will present a very unseemly aspect — a sort of Every-Day Book Of Life, in which names of believers are inscribed with very disreputable mementoes appended to each. These will find no admission to ‘the other scroll which is of the life’ — the Ledger Of The Life, to which those names may be supposed to be transferred from the Every-Day Book, that are not condemned to obliteration. The dead constituents of the Angel of the ecclesia in Sardis, together with the few undefiled ones there, had all been written in the Every-Day Book of the Life; and their works inscribed under their respective names: and the general record of this scroll is read in the writing penned by John. He shows that the works therein recorded resolved themselves into two classes; the one signaled by the words ‘thou art dead’ after their names, and the other by the sentence, ‘their garments undefiled.’ Now of these classes, the names of the latter alone will be transferred to the Ledger; while the names of the former will be obliterated or excluded. The confession of names in the presence of the Father and in the presence of his messengers, will be read, not from the Every-Day Book, but from the Ledger of the Lamb’s Life, which contains the register of names inscribed there, from the foundation of the things extant.” (*Eureka* 1:361).

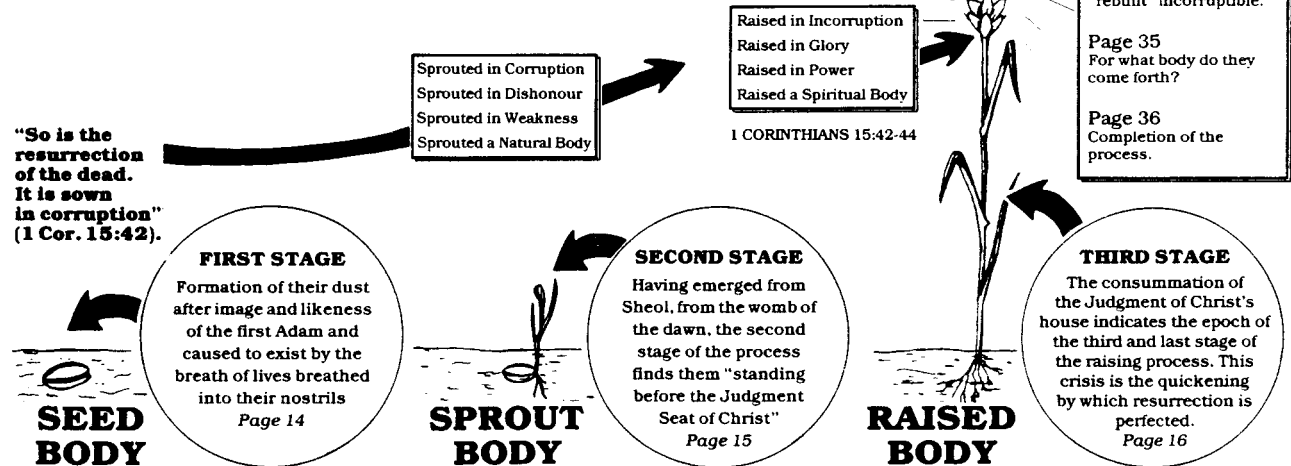
As there are books of account in the Divine memory concerning responsible individuals to be examined at the judgment, so there are “books” relating to the nations. Israel’s name is recorded among those who will be granted life — thus being delivered out of the time of trouble (Isa. 4:2-4; Ezek. 13:9; cp. Amos 9:9; Mic. 7:18-20); other nations are doomed to destruction when “the books are opened” (Dan. 7:10-12; Matt. 25:32).

The figurative books of the nations will be revealed when Christ is enthroned in Jerusalem, having destroyed the Gogian confederacy there gathered (Dan. 11:45). The

ANASTASIS or STANDING UP OF DEAD ONES

as expounded by Bro. J. Thomas in *Anastasis* (refer pp. 21,22,35,37).

THE 3 STAGES ILLUSTRATED IN DANIEL 10 SEEN IN THE PROCESS OF RAISING GRAIN



The raising of grain is a process which takes months to perfect, and is not said to be raised until it is ripe in the ear.

attitudes of all nations towards Christ will then be manifested, and their "deliverance" will depend upon their acknowledgement of his authority and compliance with his demands (Isa. 60:12).

VERSE 2

"And many of them" — The prophecy now turns from the national scene of v. 1 to examine the case of individuals who are responsible to God, and whose names are also recorded in the Divine Memory. The prophecy does not include all people, for it is restricted to "many", and thus rejects the concept of a universal resurrection (cp. Psa. 49:12; Prov. 21:16; Isa. 26:13-14; 43:17, etc). The Hebrew word for "many" is *rab* which occurs over 430 times in the O.T., 24 of which appear in Daniel (ch. 8:25,26; 9:27; 11:39,40,41,44; 12:3,4,10, etc). Only those who are amenable to judgment through knowledge are involved, for it is knowledge of the will of God which brings responsibility (Job 19:25-26; Isa. 26:19; 1 Cor. 15:21-22; 1 Thess. 4:14). The faithful reside in "memorial graves" described by Jesus in John 5:28. The Gr. word here is *mnemeion* which signifies a "memorial; something by which they are held in remembrance". It is different from *hades* in which dwell many of the forgotten (cp Psa. 88:5 with John 6:39). From the memorial graves, the responsible will rise for the purpose that the prophet now describes.

"That sleep in the dust of the earth" — Death for such is a temporary slumber (Job 3:13; Psa. 13:3; 1 Cor. 15:6). Concerning Lazarus, Jesus declared: "Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep" (John 11:11). The purpose of Christ who is "the resurrection and the life", is to re-energise those who presently sleep. For a time sin has been successful, for death is the "wages of sin" (Rom. 6:23), and the Divine judgment upon Adam sentenced him to become "dust" (Gen. 3:19).

"Shall awake" — They will be raised

for judgment in a corruptible condition. The resurrection of the dead is "sown (literally "springs forth") in corruption" (1 Cor. 15:42), thus the bodies that have rested in the graves will be the same bodies that come forth. The analogy of "awaking" indicates the renewing of a previous state. So Paul describes the "dead in Christ" rising first and being assembled with those "which are alive and remain" at the coming of Christ (1 Thess. 4:15-16). They will all be summoned in a state of corruptible nature, to await the determination of the Judge.

In type, this had already been enacted by Daniel (ch. 10:9-10), and he would understand the significance of this prophecy.

"Some to everlasting life" — Out of the "many" some will receive immortality. The others will be rejected. Rotherham renders this verse: "These ... those" describing the two classes mentioned. Jesus explained this separation as a division of "sheep" from "goats" (Matt. 25:33). He further limited those who would enter into life: "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven" (Matt. 7:21).

The word "everlasting" translated twice in this verse is from *olam* (rendered by the Sept. as Gr. *aion*), meaning "an age, a hidden undisclosed period". The life granted will stretch into the kingdom age, and beyond. The reward will be conferred because of obedience, and will result in a change to divine nature (Rom. 14:10; 2 Cor. 5:10). Our "vile body (Gr.: *body of humiliation*) will be fashioned (changed) like unto his (Christ's) glorious body" (Phil. 3:21). Physical resurrection is an individual matter, each saint standing answerable to Christ, although a great multitude will be involved. Each one will receive "in body according to that he has done, whether good or bad" (2 Cor.5:10).

"And some to shame and everlasting contempt" — A condition described by Jesus as "everlasting punishment"

(Matt. 25:46). Such punishment is endless, for it remains a decision never to be reversed. "Shame" and "contempt" are distinguishing levels of judgment.

The word "shame" is from the Hebrew *herpa*, signifying "reproach resulting from blame", and occurs 70 times, in most cases rendered "reproach". See its use in Job 27:6; Prov. 27:11 and Neh. 6:13. It implies severe censure to discredit; to upbraid or reprove. Thus, the Lord will fully reveal to the rejected the reasons why they will be dismissed in ignominy from the presence of his glory.

The word "contempt" is from *deraon*, a word associated with aversion or abhorrence, even to the point of disgust and loathing. It occurs only here, but a similar word is found in Isa. 66:24. The sense of personal catastrophe and loss to be experienced by the rejected at the Judgment Seat will be indescribable — especially since the reasons for rejection are revealed.

"Everlasting" is from *olam*, as in the previous phrase. Though the individuals are destroyed beforehand, the shame and contempt of their example extend for the period of the Millennium, as the folly of the neglect of a high and holy calling is recalled. As we await the coming day of decision we need to grasp our opportunities to "examine ourselves, whether we be in the faith; prove ourselves; and to recognise that unless Jesus Christ is in us, we be reprobates" (1 Cor. 11:28; 2 Cor. 13:5). Those who neglect so great salvation will experience the desperation of "wailing and gnashing of teeth" (Matt. 13:42).

VERSE 3

"And they that be wise" — Note margin: "teachers". The Hebrew *sakal* has been commonly rendered "wise" (ch. 12:10), but has also been translated as "understand" (ch. 9:13, 11:33), instruct, prudent, expert, skilful" (ch. 1:4), etc. It refers to those who have been instructed in spiritual matters and have used their time and opportunities "wisely". Such were the Levites of 2 Chron. 30:22, who shared the

enthusiasm of Hezekiah for the things of Yahweh; they not only possessed a sound knowledge of the Truth themselves, but in teaching others they exhibited a genuine desire to extend the treasures of the Word (cp Neh. 8:3,8). The lover of Truth must become a recipient of wisdom, and thus become a living exhortation to faithfulness.

"Shall shine as the brightness of the firmament" — An analogy comparing the "wise" upon earth with the wonders of the heavens. The picture of creation, when the *elohim* constructed the firmament in all its glory, is now repeated in the "new creation" formed by Jesus Christ (Col. 1:16). The glory of the blue heavens resplendent with sunrays is likened to the tremendous power and magnificence of the saints. The word "shine" (Heb. *zahar*) signifies "to send out light" with the further meaning of "to teach, warn, admonish". It has been rendered as "warn" 14 times in Ezekiel 3 and 33. Those who have endeavoured to "warn, teach and admonish" during the days of their probation, will "shine" with Divine glory at this time. They will become the new heavens of the Millennium (2 Pet. 3:13) as their powerful rays of truth and glory permeate all parts of the earth (Mal. 4:2). Ezekiel's vision of the cherubic march of the Lord Jesus Christ in conquest observed the "firmament" over the heads of the multitude associated with the throne of Yahweh (ch. 1:25-28).

"And they that turn many to righteousness" — They have been active in manifesting Godliness to others. Paul encouraged Timothy to maintain constant service in the Truth, and associated his exhortation to "be instant in season, out of season" (2 Tim. 4:2) with the coming of Christ and the Judgment (v.1). Our responsibility is to "occupy till he come," and to that end he has given talents and pounds with which we "trade" in spiritual matters (Matt. 25:15; Lk. 19:13).

Thus Daniel was told of two characteristics of the approved: the "wise" and those who "turn many to righteousness." The former manifest a per-

sonal understanding and knowledge of things Divine and are circumspect in their ways as a consequence; the latter reveal a performance of faith in a service to the Truth. The characteristics are seen in "faith *and* works". In this there is encouragement for all; none should feel inadequate for the task. In occupation or domestic spheres, ecclesial positions or humble services, all have opportunity to reveal "works of faith". Turning many to righteousness is not limited to Gospel proclamation endeavours, but includes all areas of activity. A worthwhile example of faithful endurance and devotion to the Truth can "turn" dilatory brethren and sisters back to "righteousness". No more is required than what one is competent and qualified by the circumstances of life to provide; but, on the other hand, "unto whom much is given, of him shall be much required" (Luke 12:48). God does not expect us to perform above our ability; but we should not give anything below it!

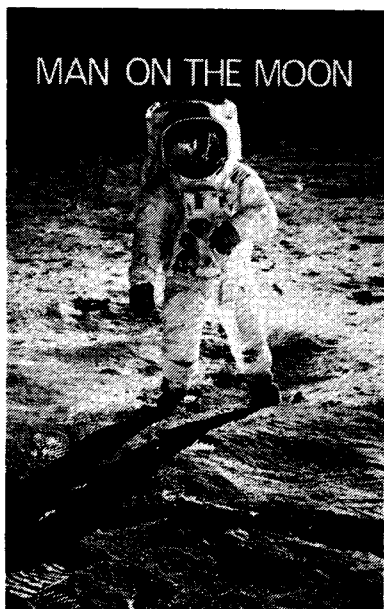
"As the stars for ever and ever" — The picture portrayed is that of a brilliant display of glorious light against the black vault of the night sky. Such a view is evident to the observer with upturned face in the Mid-East countries. Stars appear to stand out with marvellous lustre against the cavernous firmament. So the saints will appear as the glorious illuminaries of the Millennium, reflecting the glory of the "Sun of righteousness" himself (Mal. 4:2).

In the language of Scriptural typology, sun, moon and stars are used to symbolise different aspects of rulership. The sun represents civil authority; the moon, ecclesiastical responsibility; the stars illustrate principal statesmen or princes. Christ and the saints assume all positions in the political heavens of the Kingdom, and the stars symbolise the individual members of the glorified Christ-body: the immortalised brethren of Christ in their capacity as rulers over all the earth (Rev. 5:9-10). Stars shine with the seven colours of the rainbow which was originally shown to be a token of the future "time of rest" (Gen. 9:12-13).

"Ever and ever" (Heb. *le-olam va-ad*) signifies "for the hidden period (*olam*) and beyond (*ad*)", indicating a period that is endless, extending beyond the conclusion of the Millennium itself. Saints who inherit the glory of Divine nature will remain distinguished and honoured with immortality as the perfect manifestations of Yahweh throughout all eternity. This time is described by Paul in the vision of the third heaven: "he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful (i.e. impossible to adequately express) to utter" (2 Cor. 12:4).

VERSE 4

"But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words and seal the book" — An indication that the prophecy is completed. A book was sealed to preserve its con-



Symbol of the technological progress of the "last days". Man's conquest of space is evidence of the imminence of the complete fulfilment of the prophecy of Daniel.

ents, and to prevent it being read by those unauthorised to do so. The prophecy of Daniel requires a perceptive understanding and a dedicated attitude that its message might be “unlocked” as Jesus implied in Matt. 24:15, emphasising “whoso readeth, let him understand”. But few are able to unlock its secrets, and clerical commentaries are dismally astray on its meaning (cp. Isa. 29:11-13, Rev. 5:5). It can only be read by those whose minds and hearts are in “the time of the end” inasmuch as they comprehend the Kingdom of God and the Name of Jesus Christ, soon to be revealed in glory.

Since the book was both “shut up” and “sealed”, its contents would remain unaltered. Once declared through the word of prophecy, Yahweh’s purpose remains firm and unchangeable. There is a “set time” appointed to favour Zion (Psa. 102:13); the “ages have been so thoroughly adjusted by God’s command” (Heb. 11:3); and there are “times of restitution” established by the mouth of the holy prophets (Acts 3:21) — thus the “time of the end” cannot be altered.

“Even to the time of the end” — The prophecy will be finally revealed when the kingdom of God is established upon the destruction of the kingdom of men (Dan. 2:44; 4:17). The two advents of Christ are elements to that end, and both involve the “time of the end”. His first advent was the initial stage of Yahweh’s victory over flesh, and, after the completion of the 490 years’ prophecy, the “mystery was revealed” (Heb. 11:1. cp. Rom. 16:25; Eph. 3:3; 1 Pet. 1:10), although it is not comprehended in all its detail. At the second advent the full glory of the prophecy will be uncovered and the books unsealed.

“Many shall run to and fro” — The culmination of man’s desire to control his own destiny. It was the original Divine intention that man should subdue his environment (“have the dominion”: Gen. 1:28), but in his boundless passion mankind has gone beyond the

limits set. Not content with dominating all lands, mankind has endeavoured to plumb the heavens in celestial travel. This egotistical attitude of the current generation is another sign of the “time of the end.”

“And knowledge shall be increased” — In all fields of research, science, travel, medicine and technology. But such knowledge has not led to greater harmony with Divine ways; the very reverse is evident. Mankind is “ever learning but never able to come to the knowledge of the truth” (2 Tim. 3:7). They are unable to “open the book” and thus blindly continue in ignorance of true knowledge.

It is nevertheless true, also, that the Scriptures have been opened up to a greater extent than formerly; printed expositions and commentaries abound, and the passage of history has verified most prophetic details. Yet there is a lack of true understanding. Knowledge does not necessarily produce maturity and wisdom. Recognising the opportunities of these days, we need to develop a meditative and Godly attitude with our knowledge; otherwise our knowledge will be rendered impotent through our folly.

Angelic Discussion on the Times

— vv.5-7

As Daniel contemplates the tremendous prophecy that has outlined world history up to the appearance of Michael the Prince, he sees two angels standing on the banks of the river, and overhears their deliberations upon the train of events. Daniel not only hears their discussions, but sees their interest in human affairs, and is drawn into similar feelings of keenness and anticipation.

VERSE 5

“Then I Daniel looked” — His attention is diverted to activities by the riverside. He has been attentive to the words of the angel outlining the course of world history, but this new development indicated that the previous communication had concluded, and nothing further would be revealed.

“And behold, there stood other two,

Restless Days

The past thirty years have witnessed a revolution in the transportation industry, unparalleled in history. Australia, with a population of about 16 million (1989) has one million of its citizens travelling overseas every year. Travelling between the States has increased phenomenally. Much of this is due to the tremendous advances in aviation, and most countries of the world have experienced similar developments in national and international travel.

But is the world a better place because millions are on the move?

A restlessness pervades society, and that has affected the Brotherhood. Many no longer find contentment at home, as was the case in former generations. With the ease and convenience of travel, a passion for travelling the world has arrived. Society is engrossed in movement, and has an insatiable appetite for "running to and fro" as Gabriel forecast (ch. 12:4).

But such an attitude will not develop faith and Godliness in those who are Christ's. It is so easy for members of Christ's Body to be caught up in the misguided, undisciplined turbulence which characterises modern-day society. Tours to distant, exotic places are held out as enticements — but in the company of unenlightened Gentiles, how can such travelling be conducive to spiritual things? The "to and fro" syndrome of the unstable world should be avoided by those who seek to "shine as the brightness of the firmament" (v.3).

Gabriel also mentions that "knowledge will be increased", and this is impressive in almost every avenue of human endeavour. But is the world a better place because of such astonishing developments? How many really benefit from the advance of human knowledge?

Thousands of aircraft belch out their pollutants into the atmosphere; millions of motor vehicles and other modern devices of industry add their measure. Thus the world faces the most critical paradox in history: the most rapid advancement of knowledge, linked to the certainty of absolute destruction of life, apart from Divine intervention.

Applying these descriptions to spiritual principles requires careful consideration. We are enabled to "run to and fro" as never before, that we might present the Truth to an extent undreamed of in earlier generations. We have access to "knowledge" concerning the Scriptures as never before. Sound expositions by faithful brethren are added to the well-researched lexicons, concordances and dictionaries that abound on bookshelves.

Yet, notwithstanding this array of latter-day advantages, does the Truth enjoy a purity of doctrine and practice greater than formerly? By no means. On the contrary, the Lord warns this generation: "When the Son of Man cometh, shall he find the faith on the earth? As it was in the days of Noah ... As it was in the days of Lot... even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed" (Luke 18:8; 17:26-30).

Following the Lord's first advent, many ran "to and fro" throughout the Roman world carrying the Gospel message, and "knowledge" was increased in the name of the risen Christ. At the epoch of the Lord's second advent similar conditions apply — but the results are quite different, and provide a sharp warning for the Brotherhood!

But there is a day coming when the powers of Divine nature will give opportunities beyond our present ken. Many will run to and fro and knowledge shall increase when the "wise" shall "shine" at the commencement of the Kingdom. Clothed upon with the full glory and power of heavenly nature, they will be able to travel in an instant to wherever Yahweh decrees; and they will be provided with an increase of knowledge as immortal minds attune into the Great Increate unfettered by present limitations. Then the glorious knowledge of Truth will "cover the earth as the waters do the sea" and bring refreshment and change to the present "perilous times". J.U.

the one on this side of the bank of the river, and the other on that side of the bank of the river — Two angels now join the group standing by the river Hiddekel (Tigris). It was here that previously, the vision of the "Man of One" was given (ch. 10:4-6). The river typifies the ever-flowing destiny of the nations, moving inexorably onward, like the flowing of the watercourse (Rev. 17:15; Isa. 17:12, etc). The two angels on each side acted as "ministering spirits" (Heb. 1:14) limiting and directing the stream for the benefit of the saints who would be its future rulers (Heb. 2:5). A third angel (the original messenger) appears above the river (v.6,7) indicating total Divine control over the destiny of nations. Nothing can be achieved by mankind without the decisions of heaven. Jesus told Pilate: "Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given (allowed) thee from above" (John 19:11), acknowledging the prin-

ciple that Daniel was taught (Dan. 4:17). Notwithstanding the endeavours of mankind to frustrate the Divine purpose, they cannot alter the scheme of things. Thus Daniel and his friends can rest confidently in the mighty Hand of Providence. Herein is great comfort for Yahweh's people in every age, and a significant means of strengthening the qualities of faith and hope.

VERSE 6

"One said" — Possibly the two silent, perhaps unseen, angels (v. 5) had been attentive witnesses to the previous outline of prophecy given to Daniel. As such they represent the elohistic company who desire to look into the things that concern man's salvation and the establishment of the Kingdom of God (Mark 13:32; 1 Pet. 1:12). Now they appear to seek further clarification of the events.

"To the man clothed in linen" —

“Man” is the Hebrew *ish*, indicating a superior figure (see ch. 10:5). His garments are described, to align him with the glorified, multitudinous Body of Christ (see ch. 10:5-6). Linen is the clothing of the priests (Exod. 28:5, 39, 42, etc), thus representing the priestly community over the river (nations); for all things are for the saints (cp Rom. 8:28; 2 Cor. 4:15).

“Which was upon the waters of the river” — The margin (supported by RSV, NIV, RV, etc) has “from above”. Thus the angel was not restricted by the movement of the waters. A boat riding upon the sea is affected by its movements; a helicopter hovering above it, is not. So the angel is controlling the nations, and is not affected by their ripples and waves. His position over the waters is indicative of his power over the nations. A similar vision was granted to John (Rev. 10:5). At the present time Babylon the Great glories in assuming they hold this position. The literal city was built above and on both sides of the River Euphrates, and endeavoured to control God’s people; spiritual Babylon continues that policy — but her power will be destroyed by the Man of the One (cp Rev. 17:5,18).

“How long?” — The Hebrew here and in ch. 8:13-14 signifies “Till when” (*Young’s Lt.*). The constant cry of saints: Psa. 6:3, 74:1-9; 79:5; 94:1-3; Hab. 1:2; Acts 1:6; Rev. 6:10; 13:10. The patience and faith of God’s servants have been tested through the passing years. But God is faithful to His promise and will certainly fulfil His Word in the dispensation of the fulness of times (Eph. 1:9-10).

“Shall it be to the end” — The Hebrew word *qets* signifies “an extremity of time; a cutting off”. The questioner seeks to know when the power of the nations will expire, when the destroyer of God’s people (ch. 11:44) will be removed. It is different from the word in verse 8. The enquirer sees the movement of the waters beneath the super-*vising* angel, and seeks the answer to national destiny represented therein. The river speaks of the continuing

long-suffering of God (2 Pet. 3:15), but there is a limit (v. 6,10).

“Of these wonders” — The word (Heb. *pele*) signifies “miracles, marvels”, and refers to the remarkable events Gabriel had outlined to Daniel. Thus, the angels desire to appreciate the marvels of the Divine purpose (1 Pet. 1:12). The same desire prompted the questions put by the apostles to the Lord Jesus on Mt Olivet (Luke 21:7), and he responded with an exhortation: “When ye see these things begin to come to pass...” Our attention must be focussed on the words of prophecy and their fulfilment in current events, seeing in them the remarkable activities of the *elohim* accomplishing the Divine purpose.

VERSE 7

“And I heard the man clothed in linen” — “Man” is *ish* in Hebrew, as in verse 6. The angel responded immediately to the questioner, and in a most solemn manner, as if he were communicating a great and momentous truth respecting the future. Daniel was permitted to hear the reply.

“Which was upon the waters of the river” — In a position of supreme authority (see notes v.6). This angel was thus privy to the times and seasons, and could indicate the future periods of time. Perhaps he was Palmoni, the “Wonderful Numberer”, the angel in charge of the chronological time-table of the Divine plan. See notes on ch. 8:13.

“When he held up his right hand and his left hand unto heaven” — It was customary to raise the hand in confirmation of a promise (Gen. 14:22; Deut. 32:40). Here two hands are held up in absolute confirmation of a limited time-period of duntreading of Daniel’s people that was yet to be expected. In Rev. 10:5-6, John saw the Rainbow Angel lift up his hand to reveal “that there should be time no longer”.

“And swore by him that liveth for ever” — This angel in linen is thus identified with the Rainbow Angel

(Rev. 10:5-6), representing the Multitudinous Christ in glory. He acknowledges the eternity of the Father (Dan. 4:34). Yahweh declares that His character is "forever" (Deut. 32:40), and therefore His faithfulness in the fulfilment of the declarations is assured.

"That it shall be for a time, times, and an half" — A "time" in Jewish reckoning is 360 days, thus: 360+720+180=1260 day-years. The same period of time is mentioned in ch. 7:25 where the prophecy concerned the papal oppression of spiritual Israel (see pp. 173-176). Here, however, the period has relationship to the scattering of the holy people prior to the fulfilment of the "wonders" and the manifestation of Michael the Prince. Taking the desolation of Jerusalem as a commencement, when the Mosque of Omar (as it is called) was first built as a wooden structure on the site of the Temple: AD 637-8, 1260 years concluded in AD 1897 which saw the birth of Zionism at the Zionist Conference in Basel, Switzerland. This period saw the establishment of Islam in which was taught the subjugation of Jews and the development of the Arab power under the standards of Mohammed. Bro Thomas commented: "It was at this time that 'the abomination of desolation' established itself as the normal condition of things in the Holy Land" (*Eureka*, 3:96). Subsequent humiliation gripped the "holy people", until a ray of hope was permitted when the cause of Jewry was revived 1260 years later.

"When he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people" — Rotherham renders this: "When the dispersion of a part of the holy people is brought to an end". A partial restoration of Jewry would see the "end period" which will bring these things to a finish.

"All these things shall be finished" — The partial resurrection of national Israel would introduce the conclusion of all the "wonders" and the return of the Lord Jesus Christ. He declared: "When these things begin to come to

pass, then look up, and lift up your heads, for your redemption draweth nigh" (Luke 21:28). This will conclude the period of "wonders" (v.6), including the intervening 1260 year epoch.

A Period of Gentile Domination — vv.8-11

Daniel is mystified by the conversation of the angels, and seeks confirmation of that which had been discussed. Like the saints of all ages, he could not fully appreciate the ways of Providence — whilst the elohim could comprehend the Divine mind. He therefore asks for clarification.

VERSE 8

"And I heard, but I understood not" — He could not appreciate the full significance of the angelic statements. Such are written "for our admonition upon whom the ends of the world are come" (1 Cor. 10:11). Notwithstanding the benefit of history that has been fulfilled during the period, our understanding of particular details awaits further unravelling. Yet, sufficient has been revealed to encourage our interest and to strengthen our faith, as we anticipate the "finishing" of the Divine Plan of the ages.

"Then said I, O my Lord, what shall be the end of these things?" — Daniel addresses the angel respectfully, recognising his superior knowledge and status. He manifests the proper attitude of a mortal when in the presence of a heavenly being. The title "Lord" (Heb. *adon*) means master, lord, or ruler and signifies one of higher authority. The word "end" is from *acharith*, meaning the end; the final outcome.

VERSE 9

"And he said, Go thy way Daniel" — Much had already been disclosed to Daniel, because he was a "man greatly beloved" who searched the Scriptures of Truth and made every effort to live in conformity with their principles. But the time period was long, and Daniel would sleep in the grave, awaiting its fulfilment; thus further details were unnecessary.

The Wonders at the End of 1260 Years An Alternative Period

If this prophecy is considered in relation to that recorded in ch. 7:25, the following may be considered:

Daniel 12:7, according to *Young's Literal Translation*, has: "After a time, times and a half; and at the completion of the scattering of the power of the holy people, finished are all these." Thus, the Scriptures appear to present two separate factors, not necessarily tied to the same time: 1. The "end of the wonders" is 1260 day-years; 2. When the scattering power of Israel's oppressor is ended, "all these shall be finished."

It seems logical to relate the period to the development of the one referred to as "he" — the "king" who would "prosper till the indignation be accomplished" (ch.11:36); the one whose power to work wonders is decreed to come to an "end" after this specified time. Bro Thomas comments on the previous prophecy: "The Seventh of Daniel reveals that the Holy Ones sojourning under the dominion of the Latino-Babylonian power, or Papacy, are to be given over to its power to the end of a time, times, and the dividing of time, or 1260 years ... Now the acknowledgement of the Eyes and Mouth as the god of the Kingdom of Babylon, or 'god upon earth' as the Pope is styled, was in the reign of Phocas, who wrote to the Latin Bishop in the year AD 604 and acknowledged his supremacy over all other ecclesiastics of the realm. This private recognition was followed by an imperial decree in AD 607, and in the year after a pillar was erected commemorative of the event, with the date of AD 608 inscribed upon it" (*Exposition of Daniel*, 1854, p.119).

Accepting this date as the commencement of the full power of the Papacy to work "wonders", and adding 1260 years, we have AD 1864-68 as the epoch marking the "end" of that power.

At that time, in the Franco-Prussian War the defender of the Papal power was under attack; the end of the Papal secular power was imminent, and Pope Pius IX was aware of it. On July 18, 1869, the Pope was declared to be infallible and made titular head of all Christianity — but that could not avail him much good in face of the advancing army. Cardinal Manning, of England, knew also what was happening. He wrote: "European powers are dissolving the temporal power of the Vicar of Christ." The Italian State was formed; the Pope was granted "the Vatican, the Lateran, the papal offices and Castel Gandolfo." He declared himself to be "a prisoner." This was in AD 1870, the final outcome of years of unrest and discontent with the atrocities perpetrated by the Papacy in the name of Christ.

If this interpretation be correct, it follows that the second factor mentioned by Daniel's prophecy ("the power to scatter the

holy people”), is also correct. We are being referred back to ch. 8:24 to a “king of fierce countenance, and understanding dark sentences” (such as the Papacy) to destroy (Heb. *shachath*, to decay, make into a ruin, a waste, to batter) the “holy people”. Dan. 11:36 speaks of the “king” who “shall exalt himself and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvellous things against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished”. The connection between Dan. 8:24-25, 11:36 and 12:7 seems remarkable. And, when “he shall be broken without hand”, and “the indignation is accomplished”, “all these (things) shall be caused to come to an end.” E. W.

“For the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end” — He had finished his communication, and directed Daniel to close up the record which he had made, and affix a seal to the volume (v.4). Unfolding events would provide further details concerning the prediction, and would confirm its truth by their exact correspondence with it. At the “time of the end” all such wonders would be revealed. Almost 640 years later, another faithful servant of Yahweh saw in vision one seated on “a rainbow throne”, holding “a book written within and on the backside, sealed with seven seals”. Like Daniel, the apostle John mourned the absence of one qualified to open the scroll and to publish its contents (Rev. 5:1-4). John saw such an one: “the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David (who had) prevailed to open the book and to loose the seven seals thereof” (v.5). Because of that vision, and with the benefit of historical progress, we are better able to understand the prophecies of Daniel and the Apocalypse.

VERSE 10

“Many shall be purified” — The word *barar* signifies “to be clarified; made bright”. It requires an examination that allows a selection of the valued part, as wheat is selected and separated from chaff and thus preserved. Purification is achieved by the power of the Word, which enlivens the mind to the Divine principles. Such have “purified their souls (cleansed from

fault) in the obedience to the Truth” (1 Pet. 1:22).

“And made white” — Indicating the methods applied by a fuller in order to whiten a garment by means of a cleansing process (cp. Mal. 3:2). The principle of baptism provides the means of cleansing from sin and its effects, and allows for a covering to be provided by Jesus Christ (Rom. 6) as the first stage in the “white linen clothing” of righteousness (Rev. 7:14; 19:8).

“And tried” — *Tsaraph* means to be purified, refined; as metal is tried by fire, when the dross is separated from it (Mal. 3:3; Zech. 13:9). Perfection through trial is the final act of development following the selection (purified) and cleansing (made white). Such a tried faith is “much more precious than of gold which perisheth” (1 Pet. 1:7). The circumstances of life, understood through the eyes of the Truth, are calculated to develop a faith which endures (Heb. 12:6). All who possess the three qualifications here presented are listed in “the book of life” (Dan. 12:1) and will be rewarded with Daniel at “the end of the days”.

“But the wicked shall do wickedly” — During the course of the 1260 period of v. 7 wickedness would increase, leading to the final time of trouble (v. 1) involving all peoples. The word “wicked” is from the Hebrew *rasha*, signifying those who are morally wrong. It describes the period of darkness that shall cover the earth and gross darkness the people (Isa. 60:2); the

days of Lot repeated in a modern setting (Luke 17:28); a time of extreme abandonment of every form of decency and morality (Isa. 59:12-15).

“And none of the wicked shall understand” — Completely absorbed in their lives of evil, this present generation is unable to recognise the Hand of Providence in world affairs. They see nothing but trouble; their eyes are blind to the way of salvation; they reject the witness of saints concerning the coming of Christ. Therefore, the words of the Master concerning the remarkable signs of his advent fall largely on deaf ears. The reason is that their consciences have been “seared” by the falsehoods of Rome (1 Tim. 4:2) and by the allurements of the world (2 Pet. 3:4-5), and through giving free reign to the dictates of the flesh (1 John 2:15-16).

“But the wise shall understand” — As in v.3, the word for “wise” is *sakal*, indicating “the circumspect; intelligent”. They are those who use their intellect to properly govern their lives. Christ urged his listeners to study Daniel’s prophecy that they might understand world events (Matt. 24:15) and manifest wisdom in the decisions of life.

VERSE 11

“And from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away” — The angel clarifies certain details of the previous prophecy given to Daniel (cp v.9). The “daily” refers to the Mosaic constitution of daily offerings, which was “taken away” in the dissolution of the nation by Rome in AD 70. In Dan. 8:11-13 the “little horn of the goat” (the Roman power) caused the “daily” to cease when Jerusalem and the Temple were destroyed. But a worse scene would follow. Bro. Thomas translates this verse: “And from after the time the daily shall be removed even for to set up an abomination making desolate...” The early ecclesial reliance on Judaism, though opposed by the apostles, developed a priestly class after the example of the Levites of the Mosaic Code. Ultimately, the priest-class

within the ecclesias expanded until a recognised clergy was established, laying the foundation for the “abomination that maketh desolate” to be manifested in the development of the Catholic Church. Daniel was reminded that the Jewish State would be replaced for a time with a Gentile “abomination” of religion.

“And the abomination that maketh desolate set up” — The full establishment of the Roman Catholic Church through the decree of Phocas occurred in AD 608. This became the commencing point for a period of oppression of “Daniel’s people”, both natural and spiritual.

“There shall be a thousand, two hundred and ninety days” — A day for a year principle, followed throughout in this prophecy, commencing at AD 608 terminates in AD 1898, with the efforts of Theodore Herzl and the first Jewish National Congress in Basel, Switzerland. This event commenced a train of circumstances which led finally to the revival of Israel, the freeing of Jerusalem and events preparatory to the coming of Christ.

The time periods listed above concern events amongst the Western Nations, involving the Roman power and the Papacy. Brother Thomas, in *Exposition of Daniel* (p.125) alludes to another aspect, seen in the Eastern regions: “As everyone knows, this desolator of the Holy Land thus far is the Ottoman Power, a ‘time of the end’ representative of the long-prevailing ‘abomination’. The 1290 were to reach to the end when the time came to pour out upon the desolator ... that is, when the 1290 years should end, the pouring out of ‘that determined’ upon the Ottoman should begin. It is well known that there has been a notable pouring out of calamities since 1820-23 to the present time.” Thus, the following dates are significant:

AD 533: The Decree of Justinian to promote the Roman Bishop as head of the Church. Adding 1290 results in AD 1823 when Greece gained independence from Turkey, and the Euphratean power began to evaporate (Rev.

16:12).

AD 610: The Decree of Phocas proclaiming civil power to the Papacy. Adding 1290 results in 1900, when Zionism was sponsored in England, giving impetus to Jewish national hopes.

AD 622: Mahomet proclaimed a new faith, Islam, and swore to eradicate idolatry and subdue the Jews. Adding 1290, results in AD 1912 when the events in the Balkan countries led to World War 1 and the final withdrawal of Turkish control over the Holy Land.

AD 627: Jerusalem was taken by the Saracen Arabs. Adding 1290, results in AD 1917 when the city was freed from the Turks.

Thus, all the commencing dates that may be appropriately selected conclude in the present era, and indicate conclusively the imminence of the fulfilment of all the prophecies of Daniel. Though this information may have caused Daniel some dismay at the long period following his decease, it gives us great encouragement that, shortly, the Prince will appear, Daniel will be resurrected, and we shall be saved.

A Blessing is Upon Those Who Wait — vv. 12-13

As Daniel's prophecy concludes, the prophet is given words of encouragement. There will be others, like him, who watch and wait for the salvation of Zion; though he would rest meanwhile, he will eventually stand again and receive his reward for faithfulness. Upon these words of consolation, comfort and hope, the prophecy concludes.

VERSE 12

"Blessed" — Blessed because of the ability to understand the significance of the times, and to see beyond the era of mankind's domination. Blessedness depends upon a discerning eye of faith (Matt. 13:16) and a faithful life (Rev. 16:15). It is only available to those able to perceive the events of destiny, and understand the hidden activity of the elohim. All who comprehend these prophecies are to remember that there is a set time to favour Zion, and that

the "time of the end" is firmly fixed by God's decrees (Psa. 102:13; Psa. 75:2).

"Is he that waiteth" — The word is from the Hebrew *chakah*, "to adhere to." It is not mere lingering that is meant, nor simply the exercise of patience. Nothing we can do will hurry the appointed day. But blessedness is to those who adhere to Truth and practise righteousness. They "adhere" to the time determined as they eagerly watch for and anticipate its culmination.

"And cometh to" — Literally, "to touch". He reaches forth to that time in eager expectation. It is an expression of faith, manifested by the seed of Abraham who saw the promises "afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them" (Heb. 11:13). They made the future a living reality, and their spiritual vision constantly focused upon the glory of the Kingdom. In a life of pressure and distraction such as is presently experienced, the servants of God must make the glories of the future so real and concrete, as to become the all-absorbing influence which dominates their lives. Such are able to "come to mount Zion and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem" (Heb. 12:22), and realise a blessedness not available to the unlightened.

"The thousand three hundred and five and thirty days" — Very significant events involved this period of 1335 years.

Commencing AD 529/533 with the Decree of Justinian in Constantinople to establish the Bishop of Rome as head of the Church, the period concludes in AD 1868 with the end of the temporal power of the Papacy.

Commencing AD 604/610 with the Decree of Phocas that granted civil power to the Papacy, the period concludes in AD 1945 when Russia emerged as a world power in preparation for the "time of the end."

Commencing AD 622 when Mahomet proclaimed the Islamic faith and established the Moslem Calendar, the period concludes in AD 1957 with the signing of the Treaty of Rome (Euro-

pean Economic Community, or Common Market) which was indicative of the formation of the feet of the Image (see notes Dan.2:28).

The 1335 year-period indicates an epoch that will consummate in the great blessing of verse 13, when Daniel and all the faithful will be gathered together to receive their destined inheritance. All the remarkable events of the present century focus upon the obvious signs that indicate the imminent fulfilment of these things.

VERSE 13

“But go thy way” — See v.9. Daniel had been shown “his way” in ch. 10:8-9. He would await in the grave the consummation of the vision.

“Till the end be” — Indicating that Daniel’s rest in the grave would conclude at “the end” and that he would be present at the resurrection which would then occur (ch. 10:18-19).

“For thou shalt rest” — He would experience the mortality of those mentioned in verse 2, and rest for a time from his labours. The angelic message indicated his imminent death. Thereafter many things would occur of which he had been given the briefest of visions. The affairs of the world were to continue for a considerable passage of time before “the end” should come. There would be scenes of revolution, commotion and tumult — momentous changes were to occur before that consummation would be reached. But during the long interval Daniel would “rest”. He would quietly and calmly “sleep in the dust of the earth.” He would be agitated by none of these troubles, disturbed by none of these changes; for he would peacefully slumber in the sure and certain hope of resurrection. He had given long and faithful service to the God he worshipped. He had remained consistent throughout; and now, with such experiences behind him, Daniel would rest.

We also must “rest” though not in the sense meant in this verse. Our “rest” is in the same confidence that

Daniel exhibited: “Ye who are troubled, rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven” (2 Thess. 1:7). Here is the quiet assurance that Yahweh will do all things well — and though we, like Daniel, can lift not a finger to alter the heavy load of human folly so evident today, we await the power of heaven to be revealed in the glories of Divine conquest.

“And stand in thy lot” — The promised inheritance. The picture presented is of those who gather to obtain the results of a “lot” cast upon the basis of a Divine decision (cp. Josh. 14:2). To such, their inheritance is marked out (Ezek. 45:1; 46:16). Daniel is thus assured of his ultimate elevation to glory, as also was Paul (2 Tim. 4:8). John was told: “Blessed and holy is he that hath part (Gr: *meros*: portion, allotment) in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years” (Rev. 20:6).

“At the end of the days” — The time of the end represents an epoch with beginning and ending. The final picture will see Gentile dominion terminated, and Daniel raised to triumphantly see the Colossus of Men fall, Israel avenged and the Saints rewarded. Daniel and his companions will be granted immortality and stand together with their wondrous Lord, as Kings and Priests in his dominion.

With this cheering prospect the communications of the angel to Daniel are closed. Nothing could be better fitted to comfort his heart in a land of exile; nothing better fitted to elevate his thoughts; nothing better for all his faithful companions and followers down through the ages who continue to labour in the spirit of Daniel, opposing the powers of the darkness of this age, and who retain his convictions, whilst he rests in the memorial grave awaiting the angelic bidding to come forth and enter into his promised inheritance.

We can express no greater desire than that the promise to Daniel also embrace ourselves who read this prophecy for our own behalf and direc-

tion. The life and service of Daniel will not have been in vain if we are able to reach forth to the visions he provides, and grasp hold of the wonderful truths he believed. By dwelling on the firm piety, the consummate wisdom and the steady confidence in God evinced by

this remarkable man, we will be better established in the same pathway, and grace our lives with the high ideals of his. May the God of Daniel bless us in these days of Babylon's last throes, and bring us quickly into the Kingdom of the Great Prince.

It is sublimely fitting that, at the conclusion of the Book, Daniel is left — deeply contemplative, and still rich in faith — with his mind looking far forward, into the future. He was not to be distressed at the circumstances in which he found himself. Nor was he to be depressed at the slowness of the unfolding of Yahweh's purpose. God's wisdom far exceeds that of man. His grand purpose for the Ages will unfold according to His own plan and time-table. He is the architect and builder. It is His will which should prevail. Without doubt or questioning, we may be sure that Daniel understood these things; and accepted them with patience, faithfully bowing to the great Divine will. His life drew to a close in cheerful anticipation of the blessings which were to come. What greater comfort could he hope to receive, in a land of exile?

And what of ourselves? We, too, are in exile. "Strangers and pilgrims" like the fathers in the land (Heb. 11:13; 1 Pet. 2:11). A state in which we must — like Daniel — be content to remain, until the time when we shall receive our promised inheritance. Therefore, like Daniel, we must look forward — our eyes fixed firmly upon the vision of the future. For, "where there is no vision the people perish" (Prov. 29:18).

In some respects we have received greater blessings to guide our path than did Daniel. We have all the Scriptural revelation which Daniel had — and more. We possess, by the mercy of Yahweh, His completed revelation to mankind. All glorious truths which require to be made known to man are now a part of our heritage. The vision of the future which is ours can elevate our minds to heights of faithfulness which are acceptable to our God. We can thus be encouraged in times of trial or weakness; comforted when distressed; elevated from depths of despair; instructed when in need of wisdom; renewed in zeal; receive strength to continue undeterred from our course until the coming of our Great King.

In common with Daniel, we "know" that our "Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth ..." (Job 19:25). Together with Daniel and all the worthies of old, we have absolute assurance that, through our Redeemer, all his faithful servants will be raised to honour and glory, and will bear the full effulgence of the Divine character and glory in the Age of Messiah's reign. Soon he will ascend into the political heavens, "shining as the brightness of the firmament", dispelling the present gloom and darkness, and filling the earth with the glory of Yahweh.

"Even so, come, Lord Jesus!"

J.U.

The Apocalypse in Daniel

Daniel foretold the establishment of a kingdom which shall be a great military power in its beginning, and of perpetual continuance: that it should conquer all kingdoms extant in the Latter Days; that until then "*the Kingdom of Men*" would bear rule over all the earth — until seven times, 2520 years, should be completed; which is the age of Nebuchadnezzar's Image from the first year of his reign, B.C. 608. That these two kingdoms, the Kingdom of God and the Kingdom of Men, should be antagonist kingdoms in all their elements and principles; that till the end of a period of 1260 years, the Kingdom of Men should "prevail against the Saints", or Heirs of the Kingdom of God; that it should also destroy the power of the Jews, and rule over Palestine to the end of that period; that when this end should arrive, the power of God should be Apocalypsed, or revealed, in the person of Michael, the Prince of princes, who shall appear to deliver Israel, and awake the dead; that in effecting this deliverance, the thrones, or kingdoms of this world, shall be cast down, and the Kingdom of Men transferred to the Saints, who shall possess it under the whole heaven *ad-ahlmah*, "during an Aion," or Millennium, *we-ad ahlam ahlmayah* "even for the Aion of the Aions," or "a season and a time" — ch. 2:44; 4:15,16; 8:24; 7:21,22,25, 12:1,2; 7:9,18,27,12.

J. Thomas *Eureka* Vol. 1, p. 43,44.

The Atonement in the Book of Daniel

Daniel declared: "Messiah shall be cut off, but not for himself" (Ch. 9:26).

His words are sometimes taken as evidence in favour of Jesus Christ being free from the Adamic condemnation. The first reply to this argument is, that the margin gives as an alternative rendering "and shall have nothing". This, it has been said, is not an alternative rendering, but simply the translators' idea of what the passage means, as shown by their reference to John 14:30. But an answer such as this is a mere evasion; the use of the word "or" in the margin shows it to be an alternative rendering; the insertion of John 14:30 is simply for the purpose of pointing to what may be considered as a parallel passage, or more correctly, a New Testament statement of an Old Testament prediction. The prince or ruler of the Jewish world came to the Messiah, and found no real fault in him.

The next reply is, that this is a passage respecting which there is by no means unanimity of opinion among Biblical translators. If there be any unanimity at all, it is, that the ordinary version is not correct. The reason why this is so, is very clearly pointed out in the following extract from Barnes:

"Our translation — *but not for himself* — was undoubtedly adopted from the common view of the atonement — that the Messiah did not die

for himself, but that his life was given as a ransom for others. There can be no doubt of that fact to those who hold the common doctrine of the atonement; and yet it may be doubted whether the translators did not undesignedly allow their views of the atonement to shape the interpretation of this passage, and whether it can be fairly made out from the Hebrew. The ordinary meaning of the Hebrew word here used is, undoubtedly, "nothing", "emptiness" — in the sense of there being nothing (compare Gesenius); and, thus applied, the sense here would be, that after he was cut off, that which he before possessed would cease, or there would be "nothing" to him; that is, either his life would cease, or his dominion would cease, or he would be cut off as the Prince — the Messiah. This interpretation appears to be confirmed by what is immediately said, that *another* would come and destroy the city and the sanctuary, or that the possession would pass into his hands" (Albert Barnes).

This testimony is valuable, not simply because it comes from the pen of a Hebrew scholar, but because the writer is a believer in the doctrine which is supposed to be taught by the common version. If, therefore, his criticism were biased by his theology, he would support the ordinary rendering; but, instead of this, he says that the common version has been coloured by the theology of the translators. This is both candid and honourable. On this account his remarks, which doctrinally are valueless, are all the more reliable.

In addition to giving critical remarks of his own, Barnes adds the versions of several other Hebrew scholars:

"*They shall not be his people who deny him*" — *Latin Vulgate.*

"*And it is not with him*" — *Syriac.*

"*Without any successors of his own*" — *Bertholdt.*

"*One shall be cut off, and there shall be none for it*" (the people) — *Prof. Stuart.*

"*And not to be will be his lot*" — *C. B. Michaelis.*

"*And no one remained to him*" — *Jacch. and Hitzig.*

"*And no one was present for him*" — *Rosch.*

Another Hebrew scholar, who has given considerable attention to Biblical manuscripts, and who is the translator of an edition of Gesenius' Hebrew Lexicon, has some remarks similar to those of Barnes:—

"The words which stand in our English version, 'but not for himself', have often been taken as if they spoke of the vicarious character of our Saviour's sufferings. This would, however, be, I believe, placing a most true and important doctrine upon an insufficient basis. I believe that the words simply imply, '*and there shall be nothing for him;*' he will be rejected, and his earthly kingdom will be a thing on which he will not then enter" — *S. P. Tregelles.*

It will be seen that Dr. Tregelles is also a believer in the popular doctrine of substitution, and yet he does not consider that this passage supports it. In his translation of *Gesenius' Hebrew Lexicon*, among the meanings given for the word translated "not" in our version, are "nothing, emptiness, vacuity".

In *Gill's* commentary, the following renderings are given:— "*He is*

not" (Jarchi); "*He hath not*" (Gussetius); "He has nothing" (Cocceus).

Sir L. C. Lee Breuton, in his English translation of the Septuagint version, renders it, "*There is no judgment in him*".

Dr. J. Pye Smith's translation, quoted by William Carpenter, is as follows: "*No one will be for him*" (i.e. to defend him from his murderous enemies).

Boothroyd renders it, "*Shall Messiah be cut off, though he had no fault,*" and adds, "Votable renders 'Though none are for him' and this version Wintle adopts".

Dr. Pusey, in his work on Daniel, gives the following translation: "*Messiah shall be cut off; and there shall not be to him, i.e., as the context implies, the city and the sanctuary shall be his no more*".

Other renderings are as follow:

"*Shall an anointed one be cut off and have (no lineal successor)?*" — Ewald.

"*Will an anointed one be cut off and be no more?*" — Hitzig.

"*Messiah shall be cut off, but nothing remain to him*" — Calvin.

"*Shall Messiah be cut off; and though none shall be for him, the people of the Prince that cometh,*" etc. — Thomas Wintle.

"*And it shall not be his people*" — Wycliff.

These critical scholars belong to various schools of theology, and yet it will be seen that none of them support the Authorised Version. Most of them are believers in the doctrine of the apostacy — that Jesus Christ did not die for himself, and on this account their linguistic criticism cannot be suspected of partiality.

The Unitarians, who are quite as far removed from the truth of the matter, also deem it necessary to alter the ordinary version, as shown by the following extract from a new translation of Dr. Voyes, Professor of Hebrew in the Harvard University, published by the American Unitarian Association:

"*And after the sixty-two weeks shall an anointed one be cut off, and there shall not be to him (a successor).*"

In this translation the following extracts are given from other exegetical authorities:

"*Shall an anointed one be cut off, and no one is at hand who belongs to him?*" — De Wette.

"*An anointed one shall be cut off, and there is not to him (dominion)*" — Hengstenburg.

"*Shall an anointed one be cut off, and no one be to him (i.e. no legitimate successor and heir)*" — Maurer.

The doctrine of substitution is carried to the greatest extreme by the Romish Church. Therefore, if this passage had been supposed to support that doctrine, it would naturally be expected that the Romish Bible would have been so rendered. But it would appear as if such an idea was never attributed to this passage; for the Douay version renders it:

"*And after sixty-two weeks Christ shall be slain: and the people that shall deny him shall not be his*".

From these numerous testimonies, it will be apparent to the most un-

educated that Daniel 9:26 affords no support for the theory that Jesus Christ in dying on the cross, died for others only, and not for himself. It is only necessary to add, that Dr. Thomas rendered the phrase:

"The anointed one will be cut off, though nothing (will be) in him".

Summary of Daniel's Three Time Periods of Ch.12

AD533: The decree of emperor Justinian appoints the bishop of Rome as head of the church.

+1260=1793, French revolution concludes.

+1290=1823, Greek independence from Turkey, commencing evaporation of political Euphrates.

+1335=1868, Papacy loses temporal power.

AD608: (604-608) The decree of Phocas appoints the Pope as Universal Bishop.

+1260=1868, Papal loss of temporal power (1866-70).

+1290=1898 Jewish revival of Zionism under Hertzl (1896-1900).

+1335=1943, Conclusion W.W.2 and establishment of Israel and Russia as significant powers.

AD622: Commencement of Islam religion by Mahomet, and uprising of Ottoman Empire.

+1260=1882, Britain occupies Egypt and becomes King of Sth, opposing Turkey.

+1290=1912, Conclusion of Italian/Turkish war.

+1335=1957, Pact of Rome from which EEC formed.

AD627: Jerusalem conquered by the Saracen Arabs.

+1260=1887, Period of intense turmoil, leading to creation of Zionism ideals.

+1290=1917, Jerusalem freed from Arab control.

+1335=1962, Cuban crisis lays basis for opposition between USA & USSR.

AD638: The first building of the Mosque of Omar (abomination of desolation) on the holy site of Jerusalem.

+1260=1898, The revival of Jewish hopes.

+1290=1928, The development of anti-semitism in Europe.

+1335=1973, Yom Kippur War witnessed to Israeli power.

Such signs reveal the work of the elohim preparing this generation for the coming of Messiah, the glorification of the faithful and the establishment of the Kingdom.

Waiting With Patience

God revealed to Daniel that many long years should elapse before the saints of the Most High should take the kingdom and possess it for ever (Daniel 10:1,14). The prophet had been told that in the period of waiting the saints were to be "worn out" and that the sanctuary was to be trodden underfoot. Although he did not know the exact time that was to elapse he knew that so far as he was concerned it was in the distant future. Doubtless, like many others, Daniel had hoped that he would live to see the day of the Lord and when he learned of the ages of unbelief and down-treading that lay ahead it caused him to mourn. He was disappointed that the end of the seventy years of captivity spoken of by Jeremiah was not the day when the

throne of David was to be restored.

Many have been disappointed as the dates on which they had fixed their hopes passed and proved not to be the time of the end but simply a notable milestone in the path of God's great and glorious purpose.

But should this disappointment which comes as a result of studying the prophets be a deterrent to us? Should we close the book and say that time will reveal the purpose of God and that we can occupy our time in better ways than by attempting to puzzle over the deep things contained in the prophets? True we have many things to perform in connection with our walk in the Truth which we must not neglect, but for what purpose did God reveal things that are to come to pass if not for the saints to study? And if they are revealed for this purpose what generation can they interest more than the present one which can look back on the fulfilment of so many prophecies? The times of Daniel and John were given to be understood and not just read and passed over as being too difficult to follow. The inspired writer says: "Blessed is he that readeth and they that hear the words of the prophecy," and as Dr. Thomas points out, "hearing" does not mean allowing the words to go in at one ear and out at the other. We need to understand and remember the things contained in the prophecy in order to receive the blessing.

Another point that emerges from a study of prophecy is that every development in the times of the Gentiles in which we live is part of a definite programme always leading up to the consummation which is the setting up of the kingdom of God. We find that not only is this programme an outline of events that will take place but a timetable wherein the number of years which must elapse, before certain happenings can take place, is set forth. Jesus referred to these times when he said to the apostles: "It is not for you to know the times or the seasons which the Father hath put in his own power". Later the Revelation was given, to "show unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass".

Daniel was told to seal the book even to the time of the end. All these things tell us that prophecy was given for the saints to study; in particular was it given for the benefit of those living in the time of the end.

Paul says that "God has appointed a day in the which He will judge the world in righteousness". Daniel and John both indicate that a time has been fixed for the re-appearance of the Messiah. We should remember this when we become impatient. Let us rather take heed to the Word through Habakkuk: "The vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak and not lie; though it tarry, wait for it, because it will surely come, it will not tarry". So let us pray as Christ taught his disciples: "Thy kingdom come," or as John has placed it on record in Revelation: "He which testifieth these things saith: Surely I come quickly, Amen. Even so come Lord Jesus". Let us be content with Peter's assurance: "The Lord is not slack, as some men count slackness; but that all should come to repentance, for the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night."

We have every reason to believe that this day is very close at hand. Let us take care that we are ready for it, or we may find ourselves complaining, not at the delay, but that the Lord came too soon, before we were ready. This is a point for very serious examination in every one of us.