



PREFACE

This set of notes has been compiled for three basic reasons.

- 1. The days in which we live loudly proclaim the undeniable fact that the rule of man is fastly coming to an end.
- 2. The Word of God is the only source that tells us why. The prophecy of Daniel is one of the most detailed expositions of every facet of the Divine purpose, for man and the future of this earth, that we have in all of Scripture.
- 3. It is evident from the response of our large television audience that they, as thinking men and women, are deeply concerned about the current trend as it affects their future, both individually and collectively.

In view of these observations and with the help of Yahweh, your television committee has taken the responsibility of presenting, as complete a study as possible, of this most challenging prophecy.

Our earnest prayer is that the great God of Israel will give strength and wisdom to each one that earnestly and sincerely seek to know and serve Him. May we all be recipients of the fulfillment of Daniel 12:3:

> "And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever."

> > M. D. Stewart

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DANIEL'S GREAT FULFILLED PROPHECY

There are many fulfilled prophecies in the Bible, but none of them are so circumstantial in detail or have received such an undeniable fulfillment in the actual events of a long past history as the prophecy contained in the first 39 verses of the eleventh chapter of Daniel. The fulfillment 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 prejudice. 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, Ptclemy, Philometer, Philadelphus, Antigonus, Antiochus Theos, Antiochus Epiphanes, etc., as such names always loom largely with human narrators. Instead of that, the prophet describes these individualites 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.

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 wellknown and recognized prophetical 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," recognizing the Maccabean period as one where there was no prophet.

(4) The dissensions between Pharisees and Saducees sprang up during the Maccabean age - and were a guarantee against either party successfully introducing any new book as part of Scripture. Both recognized 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), *believing, were saved from the flame; Daniel, in his simplicity, was delivered from the mouth of the lions" (2:59).

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

(7) The book of Ezekiel (written during the captivity) recognizes 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 28:3 - (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, BC 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 recognized as part of scripture long before the Maccabean exploits. The very defects of the Greek version of Daniel is proof of its antiquity; for had Daniel been a product of the Maccabean age, its real character could not have been so soon forgotten.

(9) Josephus, writing in the first century, records (in Apion against the Jews, book 11, 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-recognized 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 parenthesis is the author's)

INTRODUCTION

Due to the accuracy of the fulfilled prophecies of Daniel, the book has been a battlefield between the skeptic and the believer down through the procession of time. Regardless of all criticism, however, the book remains with its sixth century authorship unchallenged.

The Septuagint, the Greek version of the Old Testament written prior to Antiochus Epiphanes, contains the book of Daniel and forever silences critics like Porphory, a heretic from the third century, Dr. Driver and many, many others.

Josephus records an incident during the time of Alexander the great which supports the early authorship of Daniel. When Alexander's invasion reached the near East, Jaddua, the high priest went out to meet him and showed to him a copy of the book of Daniel in which he was clearly mentioned. Alexander was so impressed by this that instead of destroying Jerusalem, he entered the city peaceably and worshipped at the temple.

The book of Daniel revolves around the central theme of the entire Bible, yea, the central theme of the atonement, namely, the kingdom of God verses the kingdom of men. From Genesis to the Revelation, Babylon has come to represent the kingdom of men, and note carefully how the Bible describes it—THE KINGDOM OF MEN not THE KINGDOMS OF MEN. They are one no matter what the nationality might be. They are ruled over by man whose heart is deceitful and desperately wicked (sick-diseased), Jeremiah 17:9; and the carnal mind is enmity against God, Romans 8:7.

Babylon had its beginning back in the tenth chapter of Genesis, coming from the offspring of Ham. Ham of course was one of the three sons of Noah and this man, if you remember, was cursed because of his homosexual activities with his father. Ham's first son was Cush and Cush had a son by the name of Nimrod. If you look carefully at Genesis 10:10 you will see that this man founded Babel or Babylon in the land of Shinar. History records that after the flood the wild animals, because of their rapid reproduction, became a very real threat to the people. Due to this fact Nimrod built large cities with protective walls into which the inhabitants could flee for refuge. Nimrod therefore became a visible protector of the people and men began to put their trust in the kingdom of men instead of the kingdom of God, just as they do today.

Even though God had promised in Genesis 8:21, that He would never again repeat the flood upon the earth, man did not believe, and under the direction of Nimrod the kingdom of men began building the tower of Babel to lift them high above another flood. This was much more than just a structure of wood and stone; this was a shrine to the sun for the kingdom of men looked to the sun as the operative principle that had dried up the waters from the face of the earth. This was the beginning of the heathen idolatry of Babylon, this was the birth of sun worship which was at the very heart of the Babylonian religion.

Shortly after the death of Nimrod, historians tell us that Semeramis (Nimrod's wife), gave birth to an illegitimate child. She maintained that Nimrod had returned from paradise long enough to father the infant and so convincing was her argument that upon the death of the three, they were deified and worshipped as Nimrod the father, Semeramis as Ashteroth the mother and the child Adonnis. Thus the trinity was born and because Nimrod had been killed by the Semites they felt that all three had ascended to the region of the sun and so sun worship received added impetus as the religion of Babylon.

It is interesting to see how each division of the kingdom of men has in turn created their own trinity. In Egypt there was Issus the mother god, Seb the father god, and Horus the child god. In Greece there was Zeus the father god, and Dianna the mother god and Bachus the child god. In Rome there was Jupiter the father god, Venus the mother god and there was Cupid the child god. In Rome today we have Mary the mother of God, God the father god and Jesus Christ as God the son. In popular Christianity we have God the father, God the son and God the holy spirit.

Have you ever wondered why the word trinity is not mentioned in the Bible? Have you ever wondered why the phrase God the son, or God the holy spirit does not appear in the Bible? Have you ever wondered why the doctrine of the trinity did not become a part of church doctrine until the third century? Well here is your answer. It is an outgrowth of the religion of Babylon the kingdom of men.

Have you ever asked yourself the question as to the derivation of an immortal soul, or the doctrine of re-incarnation? Once again my dear friend, we are carried right back to Nimrod. God's Word had decreed that when man disobeyed he would surely die. The serpent, part of the animal thinking of the kingdom of men, said you shall not surely die. Seceramis said that Nimrod even though killed, had not really died but had returned to father her illegitimate child and so this malicious teaching began to grow in Egypt where they buried a man's possessions with him, in Greece, Rome, China, and today we hear that when we die we are not dead but either in bliss or torture. My friends this is the religion of the kingdom of men, not the kingdom of God. If you doubt me please try to find the word immortal soul in your Bible. If you doubt me please find where man goes to heaven when he dies. Ask yourself why Jesus came into this world and if you are familiar with your Bible your mind will reflect on John 3:16, "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth on Him should not PERISH but have everlasting life." STOP/ THINK/ what would have happened to man if Jesus had not come on the scene. The Bible says he would have perished, but the kingdom of men, Babylon, that which is opposed to God, says NO he would live on.

Let us go a step further. We have already shown how Babylon was a kingdom of sun worshippers. In Isaiah 14:12, we have the king of Babylon referred to as Lucifer and if you will look at your margin you will see that this means day star, a bright and shining light. Could you think of a more appropriate title for a ruler of a kingdom of sun worshippers? Today we are told that this Lucifer is an immortal devil but the Bible says nothing about it. Do you know that this is the only place this word occurs in all of Scripture? Do you know there is not one word in this chapter about a fallen angel or a devil or a satan? Can you see why our Lord warns us in Revelations 18:4, to come out of her my people and why the apostle Paul warns in Galatians 1:8-9, "But though we or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed."

We now follow the representatives of the kingdom of God, Daniel, Azariah, Mishael and Hananiah as they do battle with the kingdom of men in Babylon, and may their strategy and conclusions become ours as we fight the same battle in these last days just before the stone cut out of the mountain without hands demolishes the metallic image of men and fills the earth with the glory of God as the waters cover the sea.

First of all we might ask, why had Israel been torn from home, from family and friends, from wealth and position, from their beloved "Eternal" City, and forced to march like cattle under armed guard over four hundred miles of hot desert sand?

II

Why had the cream of Israel's aristocracy found themselves unceremoniously landed in Babylon? Israel had repeatedly forsaken Yahweh and embraced the many idols of their neighbours. It was idolatry they wanted so where better for Yahweh to "forsake" these rebellious people than in that Civic Center of Pagan Pantheism, Babylon? Babylon, the city that had so suddenly over the last century thrown off the skackles of its Assyrian overlords, and had risen to such splendour under the political genius of Nebuchadnezzar. Babylon, the city of mystery. The city of magnificence, scientific skill, sophisticated religion and calculated loneliness.

The children of Israel were a long way from home. Jeremiah the unpopular prophet was right. Egypt their prospective ally was soundly beaten. King Jeconiah was captured and the 70 years of captivity, so emphatically declared by Jeremiah, had begun. And amid all this turmoil and confusion stood a young man with the austere name of Daniel - God (E1) is Judge.

THE BOOK OF DANIEL

"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 the basest of men" (Daniel 4:17,25,32).

Contrast with Ezekiel: "They (Israel) shall know that I am Yahweh." In Daniel this theme is extended to all nations!

Meaning of his name: "The judgment of El" See Judges 11:27; Acts 17:31.

ANALYSIS: Chapters 1 - 6 ... Historical

Chapter 1 : Heathen WISDOM judged Chapter 2 : Heathen MIGHT judged Chapter 3 : Heathen WORSHIP judged Chapter 4 : Heathen PRIDE judged Chapter 5 : Heathen IMPIETY judged Chapter 6 : Heathen PERSECUTORS judged

Chapters 7 - 12 ... Prophetical

Chapter 7 : Judgment on the WESTERN dominions Chapter 8 : Judgment on the EASTERN dominions Chapter 9 : Judgment on ISRAEL after the flesh Chapters 10-12 : Judgment on OPPRESSORS of Yahweh's Land and People

SUMMARY: Daniel predicted the destiny of two powers: the kingdom of men and the kingdom of God (Dan. 4:17 - 2:44; 4:3; 7:27).

The beginning of the kingdom of men - Gen. 10:8. Its fuller development--Dan. 4:10-12.

Christ's estimation of the importance of this book - Matt. 24:15. Cp. Dan. 12:10.

The book is divided into two parts, the first six chapters being historical, the last six being prophetical. It is recorded in two languages, 2:4 - 7:28 being in Aramaic, and the rest in Hebrew. Daniel was familiar with Aramaic, the "tongue of the Chaldeans" (1:4).

The first six chapters are given in the third person; the latter in the first person. Possibly Daniel had a reluctance to express in the first person the

notable acts of faith of which he was the hero. At the same time, it was good for these things to be known in Babylon, for these examples of Yahweh's power vindicated the God of Israel at a time when attempts were made to discredit Him before the people (Dan. 1:2). Thus the historical portion is recorded in language familiar to the Babylonians.

DANIEL: THE MAN OF PRAYER AND PATIENCE

One of the most notable characteristics of all men of faith is in their attitude to prayer. Such a man was Daniel. In 2:16, 18, we see the courageous attitude of faith in the face of great peril. Daniel offers to explain Nebuchadnezzar's dream and then approaches the throne of Yahweh in prayer for the interpretation (Cp. 2:16-18).

Note the wonderful testimony to the wisdom of Yahweh in 2:20-23. Daniel was fully conversant with the source of his wisdom, ever ready to praise the name of Yahweh for this gift of understanding and ever ready to acknowledge the true source of his wisdom before men. There was no arrogance or contempt on the part of Daniel for the ignorance of his superiors concerning God's way. All requests that were made to him or his three friends were met with humble respectful co-operation (Cp. 2:30; 4:27; 5:12; 6:21-22), but where the things requested were in opposition to God's commandments or where the glory of Yahweh's name was insulted there was no hesitation or mincing of words in contending earnestly for the faith which was written so indelibly upon their hearts (Cp. 3:16-18; 5:18-23). One can picture the white-hot anger with which Daniel would indict the drunken Belshazzar for his defiling of the vessels of the temple.

In 6:10 we see Daniel much later in his life (probably about the age of 90) praying stedfastly toward Jerusalem "upon his knees three times a day...as he did aforetime" (Cp. Psa. 55:17; Acts 10:9). At this time Daniel had little regard for the peril which had been placed before him in this chapter, for at this time he "understood by books the number of years whereby the word of Yahweh came to Jeremiah the prophet, that he would accomplish 70 years in the desolations of Jerusalem (9:2). It is under these circumstances that Daniel earnestly looked for the glorious restoration of the kingdom of Israel under the Messiah at this time. It was in this spirit that this wonderful man of steadfast faith once again approached the throne of Yahweh in prayer after a preparation of fasting with sackcloth and ashes. This prayer extends from 9:4 to v. 19, in which Daniel makes a passionate appeal for mercy and forgiveness from Yahweh and His righteousness' sake. "We have sinned..." v. 5

"Neither have we hearkened..." v. 6 "O Yahweh, righteousness belongeth unto thee..." v. 7 "...we do not present our suplications before thee for our righteousnesses, but for thy great mercies." v. 18 "...for thy city and thy people are called by thy name." v. 19

Thus Daniel, as did other worthies such as Nehemiah (Neh. 1:4-11), appealed to the righteousness and mercy of the name of Yahweh, in contrast to the depths to which the nation had fallen. In praying thus Daniel identified himself with his people in their acknowledgement of sin, thus typing Christ's first mission upon the earth.

The faith, the courage, patience and reverence for the exalted position of the Father, exhibited during the lifetime of this wise man, set the pattern of acceptable prayer to our Heavenly Father for us all to follow.

Daniel was a man of high social position (1:3), well known to his contemporaries for his wisdom and righteousness (Ezek. 14:14,20; 28:3). His integrity toward

Yahweh was reflected in his relations toward men (6:4-5). He came under the category of "good figs" mentioned by Jeremiah (Jer. 24:5) who went into captivity for good. He would have been cognisant of Jeremiah's letters to the exiles (Jer. 29), and later heard the Book of Babylon read in the midst of the city (Jer. 51:59-64). All this made a great impression on him, and he became an avid student of Jeremiah's prophecies (Dan. 9:1-3).

Daniel, with Ezekiel, played an important part in preparing a people ready to return when the decree sounded forth from Cyrus (Ezra 1). Daniel shares the honour of being called "greatly beloved" with David, Jesus (Matt. 3:17), and John (John 13:23); and John unfolds and extends in the book of Revelation the prophecies given through Daniel. Daniel not only foretold future things in common with other prophets, but was unique in that he also fixed a time for their fulfilment.

The Learning of Daniel: Ezek. 28:3. Daniel's skill in the things of Yahweh would help him to master and surpass the Gentiles in their own science. The learning of the Chaldeans embraced both theology and science. In science Babylon already possessed the elements of the telescope and knowledge of calculation of eclipses. Astronomy was combined with astrology and divination. Its theology and polytheism were legion (Jer. 50:38; Ezek. 21:21; Isa. 47:12-13). As the instruction of Moses' mother counteracted the wisdom of Egypt, so Daniel's knowledge of the Truth enabled him to resist indoctrination from Babylon. The influence of his parents could have affected him in this regard. With Daniel, the Truth was the basic wisdom, and because he made it so, he excelled the Babylonians in their own wisdom. See I Cor. 3:18-23; 1:18-31.

In Daniel 4:9 and 5:11 Daniel is styled the "master of the magicians." These were sometimes called "Magi" although this title relates to the Persians more particularly. Daniel is styled "Reb-Mag," which equals Chief of the Magi, in the "Superior Greek Version of Daniel by Theodocian" (Vine). Cp. 1:20; 2:27; 4:7; 5:7,11,15. In his official capacity as Master of the Wise, Daniel was in a position to influence some according to the Truth. This opportunity doubtless continued during Persian domination (6:2). That he did so is evident by the Magi who came enquiring for the birth of the Lord (Matt. 2:1,7,16). The prophecies of Daniel could well have influenced such (Dan. 9:24,25).

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

In the fourth year of Jehoiakim (BC 604) Nebuchadnezzar attacked Jerusalem (Jer. 25:1) thus bringing into operation yet another section of curse of the law which is graphically outlined in Deut. 28:15-68 (Cp. v. 36). After repeated warnings by the prophets the nation of Israel failed to turn to their God. Isaiah proclaimed the doom of the ten-tribe kingdom of Ephraim (Isa. 7:8). This took place in the sixth of Hezekiah, king of Judah (BC 726) under the hand of Shalmaneser. But the days of Judah were also numbered and Isaiah also had the unpleasant task of prophesying the impending captivity of the sons of the house of David (Isa. 39:3-8).

In BC 628 the book of the law was discovered and in the eighteenth year of Josiah (2 Chron. 35:18,25) a great Passover was celebrated surpassing all since the days of Samuel the prophet. But even at this time the prophetic drum of Jeremiah proclaimed the impending storm clouds of captivity, and in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the sentence was passed (Jer. 25:8-11): seventy years of captivity in Babylon under the hand of Nebuchadnezzar. So it was in this fateful year that Daniel and Ezekiel were carried away into Babylon with king Jeconiah (Jehoiachin) (2 Kings 24:12-13). Daniel became the protege of the Chaldeans in the house of Nebuchadnezzar, Ezekiel became the Man of Sign among the captives by the river Chebar outside Babylon and Jeremiah remained the despised prophet in the stricken city of Jerusalem.

VERSE BY VERSE STUDY OF THE PROPHECY OF DANIEL

Time of this prophecy:

3397 years after creation

1741 years after the flood

603 years before the birth of Christ

114 years after the destruction of the kingdom of Israel by Shalmaneser, king of Assyria.

Writer:

Daniel (signifies the judgment of God). Chaldean name--Belteshazzar. He was of the tribe of Judah, and was eminent for wisdom and piety. His wisdom was recognized by his contemporary, Ezekiel, as he upbraids the king of Tyre, Ezekiel 28:3. Josephus speaks of him as the greatest of the prophets. He lived in the ruling courts of three of the world's greatest monarchs: Nebuchadnezzar, Cyrus and Darius. (Note Job 5:3; Proverbs 29:16) Daniel was taken captive in the first invasion of Nebuchadnezzar in the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim, which was about 606 B.C., 2 Kings 24:25.

God's estimate of Daniel: "O Daniel, a man greatly beloved."

Daniel, a man of purpose: 1:8; 6:10 Daniel, a man of prayer: 2:17-23; 6:10; 9:13-17; chap. 10 Daniel, a man of prophecy: Matt. 24:15

Message:

Daniel is the prophet of "The times of the Gentiles," because of the fact that the major portion of his prophecies were directly concerned with the Gentile nations, and the day that they would be consumed by the kingdom of God, Dan. 2: 44. We might say the theme of Daniel is prophecy interwoven with history to show that God is overruling the idolatry, blasphemy, selfwill and intolerance of the Gentiles.

VERSE BY VERSE EXPOSITION

Chapter One

Verse 1

"In the third year of Jehoiakim" - This king was raised to the throne of Judea in the place of his brother Jehoahaz by Pharaoh-Necho, king of Egypt (2 Kings 23:34-36), and continued tributary to him during the first three years of his reign.

"Nebuchadnezzar" - Signifies "Nebo defend the boundary" (Nebo being a god of Babylon). The king was described as Yahweh's slave (Jer. 25:9-10), a fact he was not aware of. One of the greatest builders of antiquity, he brought Babylon to the greatest heights of its grandeur. In Daniel's prophecy he types Gentile power which is to be brought into subjection to Christ.

The fourth year of Jehoiakim was the first year of Nebuchadnezzar (Jer. 25:1). Nebuchadnezzar completely defeated the Egyptian army near the Euphrates (Jer. 46:2). This victory put the neighboring countries of Syria, among which Judea was chief, under the Chaldean government. By this action Jehoiakim who had been forced to bow before Pharaoh-Necho for three years, now became the vassal of the king of Babylon (2 Kings 24:1). At the end of three years, Jehoiakim rebelled against Nebuchadnezzar, who was then occupied with other wars, and did not proceed against Jerusalem until three years later which was the eleventh and last of Jehoiakim (2 Kings 23:36).

Note: Nebuchadnezzar set out in the third year, but was delayed by fighting the battle of Charchemish with Pharaoh-Necho (Jer. 46:2), and thus did not come against Jerusalem until the fourth year.

Verse 2

"The Lord" - According to the Companion Bible, the word should be Yahweh, and thus should be printed in small capitals. This is one of the 134 places where, out of extreme but mistaken reverence, the Sopherim altered "Yahweh" to Adonai meaning "Lord." The following are the 134 references, where the Lord should be in small capitals, as given in the Massorah official list:

Gen. 18:3,27,30,32; 19:18; 20:4; Ex. 4:10,13; 5:22; 15:17; 34:9,9; Num. 14:17
Josh 7:8; Judg. 6:15; 13:8; 1 Kings 3:10,15; 22:6; 2 Kings 7:6; 19:23; Isa. 3:17;
Isa. 3:18; 4.4; 6:1,8,11; 7:14,20; 8:7; 9:8,17; 10:12; 11:11; 21:6,8,16; 28:2;
Isa. 29:13; 30:20; 37:24; 38:14,16; 49:14; Ezek. 18:25,29; 21:13; 33:17,29;
Amos 5:16; 7:7,8; 9:1; Zech. 9:4; Mic. 1:2; Mal. 1:12,14; Psa. 2:4; 16:2; 22:19,
Psa. 22:30; 30:8; 35:3,17,22; 37:12; 38:9,15,22; 39:7; 40:17; 44:23; 51:15; 55:9;
54:4; 59:11; 62:12; 66:18; 68:11,17,19,22,26,32; 73:20; 77:2,7; 78:65; 79:12;
86:3,4,5,8,9,12,15; 89:49,50; 90:1,17; 110:5; 130:2,3,6; 57:9; Dan. 1:2; 9:3,4,7;
Dan 9:9,15,16,17,19,19,19; Lam. 1:14,15,15; 2:1,2,5,7,18,19,20; 3:31,36,37,58;
Ezra 10:3; Neh. 1:11; 4:14; Job 28:28.

<u>"Gave"</u> - Fulfilling the warning to Hezekiah (2 Kings 20:14-18), and demonstrating the principle of Dan. 4:17. See Dan. 2:37; 5:18-19; Jer. 25:9.

"Part of the vessels of the house of God" - He took the finest of them for the service of his god, Bel, and left what were necessary for carrying on the public worship of Yahweh (he did not attempt to alter the civil or religious constitution of Judea). Jehoiakim was still on the throne. Nebuchadnezzar had only laid the land under tribute. The balance of the vessels had probably been left as a test for those remaining in Judea (Jer. 27:17,18). The carrying away of these vessels was a fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy to Hezekiah (2 Kings 20:14-18). The chaldeans carried the sacred vessels away at three different times:

- 1. In the war of which we are now speaking
- 2. In the taking of Jerusalem and Jeconiah a few months later (2 Kings 24:13)
- 3. Eleven years later under the reign of Zedekiah when the city and temple were totally destroyed and the land ruined (2 Kings 25:8-15).
- Note: H.P. Mansfield notes that this taking of the vessels into the temple of Bel was to illustrate the superiority of the gods of Babylon over Yahweh the God of Israel.

The Babylonians fought in the name of their gods (Isaiah 36:19-20). Nebuchadnezzar desecrated the temple of Yahweh in Jerusalem, but Babylon suffered the vengeance of God (Jer. 50:28). (Just as all will who desecrate the Holy Name of Yahweh).

-2-

gods of Babylon:

Bel - "Enlil" or Ellil" - The greatest of all Babylonian gods--Lord of the world and king of the land.

Tutelar - god of the city and empire.

| Anu - the god of the heavens | Marduk - the city god of Babylon |
|------------------------------------|--|
| Ea - the god of wisdom | (responsible for the success of Babylon) |
| Sin - the moon god | Nebo - god of evergreen vegetation, |
| Shamash - the sun god | and in later times was identified with |
| Ishtar - goddess of fruitfulness | the planet Mercury |
| and love | Nergal - god of the underworld |
| Ninib - god of healing | |
| Ramman - god of storms and thunder | Tammuz - god of vegetation which is revived by spring rains. |
| Asshyr - god of war | |

"The land of Shinar" - This is an archaism--name for Babylonia used in Genesis 10:10; 11:2; 14:9; Isa. 11:11; Zech. 5:11. Land of the Archrebel, Nimrod, and the tower of Babel, signifying rebellion against God. Heb. "enemy's tooth."

Verse 3

"Children of Israel" "King's seed" "of the princes" - They were of noble birth, selected of the king's seed. Daniel was a probable descendent of king Hezekiah, 2 Kings 20:17,18 cp. with Isa. 29:6,7. (Therefore of the tribe of Judah).

Verse 4

"Children" - Heb. YELADIM, youths (Cp 1 Kings 12:8). Daniel was perhaps 17 or 18 years of age. Thus he would have witnessed something of Josiah's reform (2 Kings 23) as a young boy (4 years?). He probably would have heard Jeremiah, and most certainly he had been influenced by these things (cp. 9:2).

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

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

- 1. Not deformed in body, but comely and well favored--whose countenances were those of ingenuity.
- 2. Skilful in wisdom and cunning and understanding of science--quick, sharp.
- 3. Young so that they would be pliable, easy to mold into the Chaldean way of thinking.

Nebuchadnezzar discounted the fact that Jewish young people with this background would be doubly schooled in the things of God which were first in the Jew's life.

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

Verse 5

<u>"a daily provision"</u> - The kings of Persia who succeeded the kings of Babylon were accustomed to order the food left on their own tables to be delivered to their courtiers.

Not only were these Jewish youths to live in a heathen land, but they were to live at the court in the very center of ungodliness where unclean food such as the heathen eat, was to be their daily ration from the kings own table where they would learn heathen wisdom, given heathen names, and made attendants or advisors to one who was the very personification of heathenism.

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

Verse 6

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

"Daniel" - (Heb. God is my judge). Occurs as the name of one of David's sons (1 Chron. 3:1); and of a Levite who was contemporary with Ezra, Ezra 8:2; Neh. 10: 6. In Ezekiel 14:14,20; 28:3, it occurs as the name of a sage of the patriarchial period.

"Hananiah" - (Heb. "God has been gracious"). Also a name of a contemporary of Ezra--Neh. 10:23.

"Mishael" - (Heb. "Who is what God is"). Also a name of a cousin of Moses, Ex. 6:22; Lev. 10:4. Contemporary of Ezra, Neb. 8:4.

"Azariah" - (Heb. "Helped of God"). Same name given to a contemporary of Ezra (Neh. 10:2).

The number four is used throughout the scriptures to describe God's creation and nations. Four is the number of the great elements: earth, air, fire and water. Four are the regions of the earth: north, south, east and west. Four divisions of the day: morning, noon, evening and night. (Mark 13:35, evening, midnight, cock crowing, or in the morning). Four seasons of the year: spring, summer, autumn and winter. Four divisions of Israel: Judah, Reuben, Ephraim and Dan. Four young princes of Judea: Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, Azariah. Four metals of the image: four universal empires. Four living creatures: Ezekiel 1:5-12.

Verse 7

"Unto whom the prince of the eunuchs gave names" - This change of names was a mark of dominion and authority. It was customary for masters to impose new names on their slaves and assistants upon ascending the throne.

In Numbers 6:27 God says, "And they shall put my name upon the children of Israel; and I will bless them." So it became common to incorporate the names and titles of deity into the names of children born in Israel.

-4-

"Belteshazzar" - (Dedicated to Bel the chief god). Nebuchadnezzar now anxious to exalt his heathen gods above the God of Israel, employs the same procedure. He changed Daniel's name to Belteshazzar which means "keeper of the hid treasures of Bel" Dan. 4:8. Nebuchadnezzar now begins to use force to bring these faithful princes of Judea into the Babylonian camp.

"Shadrach" (Dedicated to the sun god). Nebuchadnezzar changes Hananiah (God has been gracious), to Shadrach (inspiration of the sun), which has its roots in Baal worship in the days of Nimrod.

"Meshach" - (Dedicated to the earth god). In Israel Mishael's name meant "who is what God is," but under Nebuchadnezzar, Meshach means "He who belongs to the goddess 'Shaca'" - the venus of Babylon.

"Abed-nego" - (Dedicated to the fire god). This was the name given to Azariah (helped of God). It means in Chaldee "the servant of Nego," or "the servant of the shining fire." Probably referring to either Jupiter or Venus.

Even in captivity the four princes of Judah now live in luxury and are in position to enjoy the pleasures of sin if they will but yield to the flesh.

The Real Test--Flesh versus spirit

Verse 8

"But Daniel would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat." There were probably three reasons why Daniel would not eat meat from the royal table:

- 1. Because they ate unclean beasts that were forbidden by Jewish law.
- 2. Because they ate beasts which had not been properly killed according to the Mosaic law.
- 3. Because the animals that were eaten were first offered as victims to their gods (Bel Merodach).

Nebuchadnezzar had changed their names, but they could not change their nature. Let us remember the exhortation that even though we dwell in Babylon let us not partake of their food. Dare to be a Daniel--no man ever had faith without trials. No man ever built his house upon a rock without the rains descending.

"nor with the wine" - Before wine was offered to the king's house it was usually dedicated to the gods (Bel Merodach) by part of it being poured out at the base in oblation.

Here begins Daniel's first great trial against the flesh

Verse 9

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

Verse 10

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

"faces worse liking" - your faces sorrowful looking (Matt. 6:16).

<u>"endanger my head"</u> - literally, make guilty my head. Not fear of decapitation, but rather loss of rank.

Verse 11

"Then said Daniel to Melzar" - Melzar was an officer under Ashpenaz, whose office it was to attend to the food, clothing, etc., of these royal captives.

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

Verse 12

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

Examples:

- 1. Noah completed the antedeluvian age in the tenth generation from God.
- 2. The ten commandments contain all that is necessary.
- 3. The lord's prayer is completed in ten clauses:

God's sovereignty Yahweh's manifested Name The realization of God's kingdom First mention of the earth Gift of grace supplying our need Speaks of man's sin Pleads for spiritual guidance Pleads for final deliverance Sums up the Divine glory Completion of the eternal cycles.

4. The tithe - This represented the whole that was due from man to God.

- 5. Ten plagues Representative of God's complete cycle of judgments on Egypt.
- Ten toes of the image and ten horns of the fourth beast--symbol of the ten kingdoms that constitute the anti-christ; Dan. 7:7,20,24; Rev. 12:3; 13:1; Rev. 17:3,7,12.
- 7. The ten nations imply the nations of the whole world, Gen. 15:19.
- 8. Israel rebelled against God ten times, Num. 14:22.
- 9. The tenth generation completed and represented the whole existence of the family or nation, Deut. 23:3,4,5; Neh. 13:1.
- 10. The ten "I am's" of Jesus in John:

6:35; 6:41; 6:51; 8:12; 8:18; 10:7,9; 10:14; 14:6; 15:1,5.

Verse 12

"give us pulse to eat" - Hebrew "hazzeraim," seeds, or grain, barley, wheat, rye, peas, etc. Septuagint - "Let them give us vegetables to eat, and water to drink."

Daniel and his three friends knew that to eat meat would be taking a chance of partaking of that which had been offered to idols. They would eat and drink only of that food which had been provided of God, i.e. the bread and water of life.

Verse 13

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

Verse 15

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

Verse 16

"took away" - The original Hebrew does not imply that the steward forced the Babylonian youths, who were in training to adopt this vegetarian diet. It is an inspiring picture of God's children in the midst of Babylon, partaking only of God's food. Let us heed the dynamic exhortation. Let us dare to be a Daniel.

Verse 17

"As for these four children" - Literally young men or youths. Our translation gives entirely the wrong impression.

"God gave them knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom" - There is no suggestion here that the vegetarian diet made the youths mentally more alert than those who ate meat and drank wine. Their knowledge and skill was a gift from God--a reward for their faithfulness. They had followed the admonition of Psa. 37; Ezek. 18; Ezek. 33; James 1:5-6; Rom. 10:17; Matt. 7:7.

All four mastered the learning of the Babylonian court as Joseph and Moses had mastered that of Egypt, but to Daniel was given the extra endowment of skill in the interpretation of visions and dreams. In Egypt, Joseph was given similar skill in dream interpretation.

Verse 18

"Now at the end of the days - i.e. at the end of three years (v. 5). Three in Scripture stands for that which is solid, real, substantial, complete, and entire. Daniel and his three friends had completed their trials, and now stand to be judged.

NUMBER THREE IN SCRIPTURE

A. God's attributes are three: Omniscience, Omnipresence and Omnipotence.

B. Three great divisions of time: past, presence and future.

- C. Thought, word, and deed complete the sum of human capability.
- D. Three kingdoms embrace our ideas of matter: mineral, vegetable and animal.
- E. Three is the first of four perfect numbers:
 - 1. Three denotes Divine perfection
 - 2. Seven denotes spiritual perfection.
 - 3. Ten denotes ordinal perfection
 - 4. Twelve denotes governmental perfection.
- F. The third day the earth rose up out of the water--symbol of resurrection. Jonah three days in the belly of a fish, Matt. 12:39,40; Luke 11:29; Jonah 1:17. It was on the third day Jesus was perfected, Luke 13:32. It was the third hour he was crucified. It was for three hours (6th - 9th), that darkness covered the land. At the end of this series of three hours darkness was obliterated for those who put their trust in him. The three years of his seeking fruit testifies to the completeness of Israel's failure, Luke 13:7. The Divine testimony concerning him was complete in the threefold voice from heaven, Matt. 3:17; 17:5; John 12:28. His three-fold "it is written" shows that the word of God is the perfection of all ministry, Matt. 4. He raised three persons from the dead. The inscriptions on the cross were written in three languages, showing his complete rejection by man. The perfection of his office is emphasized in the three: prophet, priest and king.

The Divine completeness in his shepherd care is seen in his Revelation as:

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

Three appearances of Christ:

- 1. In the end of the age to put away sin, Heb. 9:26,28
- 2. Now to appear in the presence of God for us, Heb. 9:24
- 3. His second coming to those who look for him, Heb. 9:28.
- G. Abraham's covenant: Three animals (heifer, shegoat, ram), each of three years old, were used as covenant sacrifices.
- H. Complete separation of Israel was marked by three days journey into the wilderness, Ex. 5:3.
- I. The spies brought back three items to show the Divine perfection of the land: grapes, figs and pomegranates, Num. 13:23.
- J. At the giving of the law, three times Israel said all that the Lord hath spoken will we do, Ex. 19:8; 24:3,7.
- K. Israel had three great feasts: Unleavened bread (passover); feast of weeks; feast of tabernacles, Deut. 16:16.
- L. The sheet was let down three times to Peter, Acts 10:16.
- M. Old Testament has a three-fold division: 1. Law; 2. Psalms; 3. Prophets; (Luke 24:22).
- N. Notable three: 1. Shem, Ham and Japheth; 2. Abraham, Isaac and Jacob;
 3. Gersham, Kohath, and Merari; 4. Saul, David and Solomon.

O. Completeness of Divine judgment: Mene, Tekel, and Peres.

P. The three requirements for grace: faith; hope; love.

O. Three-fold nature of temptation: lust of eye; lust of flesh; pride of life.

Verse 19

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

Verse 20

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

<u>ten times better</u> - Ten again signifies perfection of Divine order, i.e. God had given His children perfection in the understanding of the court.

<u>"magicians and astrologers</u>" - Probably the same as philosophers and astronomers of our day.

Verse 21

"Daniel continued even unto the first year of King Cyrus" - that is to the end of the Chaldean Empire, and we find Daniel alive in the third year of Cyrus; approximately 537 B.C., some seventy years after he had been carried captive. He lived to see the promises of Isaiah and Jeremiah fulfilled in the deliverance of the Jews from their state of captivity consequent upon the decree of Cyrus issued in his first year (Ezra 1:1). This was the first year of his sole reign, but the third year since the fall of Babylon, for Cyrus reigned jointly with Darius for two years (Dan. 10:1): whether Daniel lived beyond this point we do not know, but in this year he was told of his impending death (Dan. 12:13).

In this chapter Daniel types all those of "like precious faith" who down through the ages have dwelt in spiritual Babylon. In the minority, surrounded with the trials and temptations of spiritual Babylon (Rev. 16:19), ridiculed because of their beliefs, their ultimate triumph is nevertheless sure and certain. The world might reject the Truth today and mock at the idea of Christ returning and setting up his Kingdom, but the time is shortly coming when they will be forced to acknowledge that, "in all matters of wisdom and understanding" the humble follower of the Lord is "ten times better" than the so-called learned (cp. Jer. 16:19). Thus as Daniel and his "brethren" typed the followers of the Lord, Nebuchadnezzar typed the Gentiles who, at the return of Christ, will be forced to acknowledge the divine wisdom.

This first chapter of Daniel illustrates the inner conflict which must first be conquered in self before we face the challenge of the world.

Notable examples: Moses, forty years in the wilderness of Midian; Christ's forty days in the wilderness.

Daniel Chapter Two

Daniel chapter one records the triumph of faith. Daniel chapter two reveals the vindication of Truth. This is the record of the first of three incidents through which Nebuchadnezzar, the pagan king, was compelled to admit that the God of the Hebrews, YAHWEH, whom he had defiled and dishonored by robbing the temple of its vessels and placing them in the house of his god (Dan. 1:2), is in fact <u>all-wise</u> (Dan. 2:47), all-powerful (Dan. 3:28-29) and supreme (Dan. 4:37).

Daniel chapter two provides a complete vindication of Isaiah 44:24-28, a vindication that continues until this present day. The dream seen by the king, and the interpretation given by the prophet, revealed the transient nature of human glory and showed Nebuchadnezzar that though he might believe that he was the arbiter of his own power and destiny, he was but an instrument in the hand of Yahweh of Israel.

The vision and interpretation of Daniel two provides the FOUNDATION of the whole book of Daniel (and much of the Apocalypse), with all his later prophecies being only an amplification of this one.

Verse 1

"the second year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar" - This refers to the second year of his reigning alone. He was king two years before his father's death (Nabopolazzar). Technically it could be said that this was the fifth year of his reign and the fourth of Daniel's captivity.

We are confronted here now with another number--two. Two affirms that there is a difference--that there is another in contrast to number one that affirms that there is none other. It is the first number by which we can divide another, and thus indicates division or difference--good and evil--night and day. Nearly every word has an antonym which of course is the exact opposite. A few scriptural examples are as follows: on the second day of creation the firmament divided the waters from the waters. The first statement of the Bible "in the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." This speaks of perfection and order. The second statement, "and the earth was (or rather became) without form and void." The second speaks of ruin and desolation.

Life and death (difference) : Old and New Testaments First Adam - second Adam Flesh and spirit Mortality and immortality Corruption and incorruption

Same principle represented in Cain and Abel; Abraham and Lot; Isaac and Ishmael; Esau and Jacob, Elijah and Ahab; Judas and Peter; also the old covenant and new covenant, Heb. 8:7,8,13; 10:9. See Jer. 18:1-4, the potters two vessels. Ordinances of the law, the gospel of grace, Heb. 7:18; 10:6-9. The first man marred, Gen. 2:7; 3:19, of the earth earthy. The second man, the Lord from heaven. Old creation marred because of sin, Gen. 3:19. New creation established in rightecusness, Rev. 21:22.

The difference, however, may not be in opposites. It is also used in association and co-operation for mutual help. Death and resurrection--saviour and mighty deliverer, Psa. 89:19. The law hung on two commandments, Matt. 22:40. God's revelation is twofold, the two covenants, law and grace, faith and works. The testimony of the two spies was alone true. It is extremely interesting that words that have special reference to the testimony of God's Word occur only twice in Scripture. Greek: "Aleetheuo" - to tell the truth, Gal. 4:16; to speak the truth, Eph. 4:15. Greek: "Ametathetos" - immutable, Heb. 6:18; immutability, Heb. 6:17. Greek: "Anakephalaioomai" - comprehend, Rom. 13:9; gather together in one, Eph. 1:10. Greek: "Bebaiosis" - confirmation, Phil. 1:7; Heb. 6:16. Greek: "Keraia" - tittle, Matt. 5:18; Luke 16:7.

Looking at chapter 1, verse 5, Daniel was three years being prepared to "stand before the king," yet this chapter is said to have occurred in the "second year of the king." This was the "second year" of his sole reign, but actually the fourth year on the throne, as he was ruling Babylon jointly with his father for two years. Nabopolassar, the father of Nebuchadnezzar, had placed some of his lords as governors of Coele-Syria and Phoenicia, but they had revolted and joined forces with Egypt against Babylon. Thereupon Nabopolassar, gave Nebuchadnezzar the title of king, and sent him to reduce the rebellious provinces. Nebuchadnezzar was thus king of Babylon jointly with his father for two years, and when he came against Jerusalem (ch. 1:1), and then afterwards on his own account. In chapter 2, Daniel, a captive in Babylon, follows Babylonish reckoning. The second of Nebuchadnezzar (i.e. of his sole reign) according to Babylonish reckoning is the fourth according to Jewish reckoning which includes the joint reign with his father (Jer. 25:1). Thus Daniel could be taken captive by king Nebuchadnezzar, be in Babylon three years (ch. 1:1,5), and yet later, in the second year of his sole reign, enact the events of chapter 2.

"He dreamed dreams" - There was only one dream but it was made up of many parts. The dreaming followed his waking thoughts which had troubled him in regard to the destiny of the great power he wielded at the time (v. 29).

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

Verse 2

2

(The contest between the wisdom of this world, and the wisdom of God.) "The magicians" - Heb. "Chartummim" - this word of abstruce and difficult subjects, and especially Egyptian hieroglyphics, an art which is now entirely lost.

"The astrologers" - Heb. "Ashshaphim" from "Nashaph," to breathe--because they laid claim to divine inspiration. Most likely these were the philosophers and astronomers among the Babylonians--counterpart in horoscopes today.

"The sorcerers" - Heb. "Mechashshephim" - these were those who endeavored to find out futurity by auguries, casting lots, etc. They inspected the entrails of beasts, the flight of birds, etc, and endeavored to predict the future from a foundation of this nature. They skilled in ventriloguism.

"The Chaldeans" - The Chaldeans were the most ancient philosophers of the world. It is thought that they were a college of learned men where all the arts and sciences were professed and taught.

Herein is a fitting representation of the finest wisdom this world can offer. In the proof that is to follow, we will see how true the first chapter "none of the court of the wise men could compare with Daniel and his friends." Paul, with all his secular education, tells Timothy, "preach the word" (2 Tim. 4:2). See also I Cor. 2:1,2. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, Psa. 111:10. The wisdom of this world is foolishness with God, I Cor. 3:19.

"Stood before the king" - Cp. Dan. 1:19. Daniel was not among them because at this time his apprenticeship was not complete (see 1:5). It was normal practise for those who had been summoned to interpret omens and dreams, and they doubtless thought that a routine request was about to be made. Daniel was only skilled in the wisdom of Israel and this wisdom was despised by the Babylonians.

Verse 3

"I have dreamed a dream" - Thus spake Nebuchadnezzar. His name signifies "Nebo defend the borders," and the dream was sent to him to reveal that it is not Nebo but Yahweh that does this, and who rules in the kingdom of men, determining "the times before appointed, and the bounds of their (the nations') habitation" (Acts 17:26). The king had not forgotten the dream, but rather desired of his wise men and counsellors to interpret the meaning of the things seen. However, in order to have tangible evidence that they were qualified to interpret it, he demanded of them not only the interpretation but also a description of the dream itself. The king's spirit had been deeply troubled so that he had a desire for truth above all else.

Verse 4

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

"O king live forever" - With this introduction we have the beginning of the Chaldee part of Daniel which continues to the end of chapter 7. These kings of greetings are still in use in the East Indies. A superior gives a blessing to an inferior by saying, "long life to thee." Same thought, Dan. 3:9; 5:10; 6:6,21.

"Tell thy servants the dream" - Hebrew "Pishra" - from a verb whose primary significance seems to refer to the disentangling of knotted yarn. Its derivative in this instance has to do with the unriddling of dreams. The wise men seek the data of the dream imagery so that they may consult their books and work out the interpretation. The space of the archaeologist has unearthed Babylonian tablets giving formulas for the interpretation of dreams from the elements contained therein.

Our first reaction to this incident is that it belongs to a superstitious past that is now ended. Let us not be fooled--fortune telling is big business today. Around every city are the Chaldeans who for a price will reveal the future. Every bookstand is full of magazines that will foretell the future through the horoscope. In this supposedly most scientific age, these occult mysteries flourish today even though every intelligent man knows that it is magical nonsence. When man is frightened he will turn to any so-called source of information, but like the king of Babylon, they listen, but are not comforted, Psa. 146:3,4.

Verse 5

"The thing has gone from me" - Gesenius translates from the Aramaic verb "Azadh" - to go forth and makes the sentence read, "the decree is gone forth from me." RSV--"The word from me is sure." "If ye will not make known unto me the dream." It was a simple matter to consult their dream books, but if they could recall the dream then he could have faith in their interpretation.

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

<u>"your houses shall be made a dunghill"</u> - i.e. to become the lowest form of disgrace. The Babylonian houses were built of sun dried bricks; when demolished the rain dissolved the whole into a mass of mire in the wet land near the river.

Verse 6

"gifts and rewards" - lit. interpretation--Persian word "Nebhizbah"--presents poured out in lavish profusion.

Verse 7

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

Verse 8

"to gain time" - literally "to buy time," Eph. 5:16; Col. 4:5. The king here suggests they are thinking that given a little more time, the monarchs attention may be distracted by something else--possibly that they also might have time to escape.

Verse 9

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

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

Verse 10

"there is not a man upon the earth" - i.e. the thing is utterly impossible to man. Unknowingly they give God the glory and position He rightly deserves. God makes the heathen (out of their own mouth), condemn their impotent pretensions to supernatural knowledge. Note how the foundation is being laid for God's revelation to Daniel to outshine the greatest wisdom Babylon (flesh, kingdom of men) could produce.

Verse 11

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

Verse 12

"Wise men of Babylon" - It is interesting to note that Daniel and his three friends were not numbered among the wise men of Babylon at this time, because their time of apprenticeship was not yet up. Cp. 1:5 with 2:1. This was for a divine reason, namely, that the frail weak wisdom of mortal man might be exposed in all its foolishness before being put to shame by the wisdom of the Eternal.

Verse 13

"They sought Daniel and his fellows" - As the decree stated that all the wise men of Babylon should be slain, the four young Hebrews, being reputed among the wisest, (even though their period of apprenticeship was not complete) were scheduled to die also.

Verse 14

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

"Daniel answers with counsel and wisdom" - R.S.V. replied with prudence and discretion. The word for discretion is sometimes used for the discret answer. It denotes the art of finding the right word at the right time.

Verse 15

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

Verse 16

"Daniel went in" - Perhaps not in person but by the mediation of some courtier who had access to him. Daniel's first direct interview seems to have been in verse 25.

"That he would give him time," for the purpose of seeking unto God for the revelation of the dream. The wise men of Babylon dared not to promise such a thing. They would only pledge interpretation upon revelation of the dream. Daniel seeks both the revelation and the interpretation. Exhortation to us is our constant and vigilant seeking of God in prayer for the answer to our difficult and perplexing problems.

Verse 17

"Then Daniel went to his house" - Here is the reason Daniel sought time. He desired the opportunity to enter into his closet with his three brethren in the Lord, to pray unto his Father in secret. Matt. 6:6 Note the close family terminology.

Verse 18

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

"Should not perish with the rest" - Consider Abraham's attitude under similar circumstances, "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right" (Gen. 18:25).

* * DANIEL'S THANKS AND PRAISE TO YAHWEH - VV 19-23

"Then was the secret revealed...in a night vision" - We are not told as to the exact modus operandi of the revelation, whether it was by dream or immediate inspiration. God spoke to Jacob in a night vision. Gen. 46:2, see also Job 33:14.

<u>"Daniel blessed"</u> - BERAK, to kneel, adore. Having been granted the desired knowledge, namely, the secret of Yahweh's purpose, Daniel "blessed the name of God," the characteristics of which had once again been revealed to him. It is profitable to take heed of the manner in which faithful men of old addressed God in prayer. Cp. Neh. 11:17; 12:8,46; Psa. 26:7; 50:14; 69:30; 95:2; 100:4; Phil. 4:6; 1 Tim. 4:3. Their prayers are not limited to REQUESTS for assistance, or THANKS for benefits received, but in addition, and most prominent, they are expressions of PRAISE for His holy name, in terms that reveal they "knew" God in the highest sense (John 17:3). The Psalms constantly exhort us to "praise His holy Name, and we need to bear this in mind when exercising the grand and sublime privilege of prayer. Consider Mal. 3:16, they that thought upon His name, speaking often one to another. The name of Yahweh is a strong tower (Prov. 18:10), a protection (Psa. 124:8), a heritage (Psa. 61:5,8; 69:36).

Verse 20

"Blessed by the name of God for ever and ever" - Here Daniel acknowledged God as the basis of all power. There is a great example for us contained in Daniel's words. Our prayers should never be limited to cries for help or thanks for answered prayers, but should also be dedicated to the praise of the great Name of Yahweh. The Lord's prayer is a wonderful example of this. We see this feature emphasized in the verses which follow. The zeal and fervour of this prayer springs from the fact that their life had been saved. We have the same inspiration for our prayers, for our life has also been saved through God's plan of salvation revealed through His son Jesus Christ. Note Jeremiah 32:17-19.

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

Verse 21

"He changeth the times and seasons" - Time, duration, succession are His and under His dominion. He controls the rise and fall of rulers and nations in much the same way that puppets are manipulated by their operator, Heb. 11:3; Psa. 102:13. Jesus the Christ was born on time; crucified on time; raised from the dead on time; ascended to heaven on time; HE WILL COME AGAIN - <u>ON TIME</u>, Acts 1:11; John 14:3; Rev. 22:12,20. Exhortation: Mark 13:35-37.

Daniel here gives us our first clue, i.e. that the dream concerned more than the Babylonian Empire. That there was to be a succession of kingdoms. The times are the phases and periods of duration of empires, ch. 7:25; I Chron. 12:32; 29:30 - "the seasons" the fitting times for their culmination, decline and fall, Ecc. 3:1; Acts 1:7; I Thess. 5:1. This is further emphasized by the next thought:

<u>"He removeth kings and setteth up kings"</u> - God's Holy Word gives the best possible interpretation of this thought, I Sam. 2:7,8; Job 12:16-21; Psa. 75:6-7; Psa. 113:7-8; Prov. 8:15-16; Luke 1:51,52; Acts 13:21-22; Jer. 27:5.

"He giveth wisdom" - Particularly does this apply to divine things. In this direction there is no scope for boasting. He gave Bezaleel wisdom to work in metals in order that the tabernacle might be beautified (Ex. 31:2-3), He gave Solomon wisdom to righteously govern the people of Israel (1 Kings 4:29, Prov. 2:6-7). Notice the instructions given to the kings of Israel. As soon as they ascended the throne they had to personally write a copy of the law and read from it every day, (Deut. 17:18-21). They were not to delegate this work to some scribe; it was the king's personal responsibility. This gave him wisdom, for God would bless the effort put into understanding His Word. It would prevent the king being conceited, (notice verse 20), and bring prosperity to himself, his family, and his kingdom. In our case, this wisdom will come by "comparing spiritual things with spiritual" (I Cor. 2:13), that is, by studying the Word of God. James gives us some very practical advice to aid us in our search (James 1:5,17), and we need to put this advice into effect, for the wisdom we seek is "from above" (James 3:15-17). See also I Kings 3:9-12; I Cor. 1:18-31; 2:1-2; 2 Tim. 4:2; 1 Tim. 6:20.

Verse 22

"He revealeth the deep and secret things" - We read in Amos 3:6,7, "Shall a trumpet be blown in the city, and the people not be afraid? shall there be evil in a city, and the Lord hath not done it? Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets." He revealeth secrets for the faithful in the past--Gen. 41:16,25,28; He will do the same for those who approach Him according to His standards today, Psa. 25:14. See Job 12:22; Eph. 1:17,18. "He knoweth what is in the darkness (sin or flesh), and the light (righteousness-spirit) dwelleth in him." See 1 Cor. 14:6, where the two wisdoms are distinguished. Also 2 Cor. 4:5,6; Rev. 1:10; 4:2. The book of the Revelation is an apocalyptic revelation which simply means that the veil which hides God's future plans has been removed. Thus the revelation of this dream was an apocalyptic revelation. The rending of the veil (Christ's mortal body) of the temple from top to bottom at the time of Christ's death was an apocalyptic revelation of the new creation. The apocalyptic revelation to Daniel is now revealed by gradual steps. Each revelation preparing him for the succeeding one. In chapters two and four he is but an interpreter of Nebuchadnezzar's dreams. In chapter 7:1,2, he has a dream of the night. In chapter 8:1-3, he has a vision in a waking state. Lastly in the two final revelations, chapters 9,10, and 12, he is carried into the final consumation.

Verse 23

"I thank thee and praise thee" - Not only does this prayer reflect praise and thankfulness to Yahweh for deliverance from certain death, but now will be given opportunity to vindicate the God of Israel. Daniel ascribes all the glory to God. "God of my fathers." Thou hast shown thyself the same God of mercy to me, a captive exile, as thou didst to Israel of old. Thou hast not forgotten the covenant made with our fathers, Luke1:54,55; Psa. 106:45.

"Hast given me wisdom and might" - Direct reference to verse 20. Whatever ability I now have to stay the kings cruel decree is thy gift--"me - we - us."

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

"Hast made known the kings matter" - Verse 10, "not a man upon the earth can show the kings matter." Imposters are compelled by the God of Truth to eat up their own words. Verse 24

"Therefore" - because of having received the divine communication.

"Destroy not the wise men of Babylon" - The decree was suspended until it could be established that Daniel's (God's) interpretation was authentic.

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

Verse 25

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

Verse 26

"Belteshazzar" - This was Daniel's Babylonian name. Keeper of the hid treasures of Bel.

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

Verse 27

<u>"cannot the wise men"</u> - fleshly, human, inadequate, earthly wisdom now is defeated, and if the answer is to come it must be from God the ruler and sustainer of the universe (Isa. 47:11-15).

<u>"astrologers"</u> - Heb. "gazerin" to cut and to determine, i.e. practitioners in the art of hepatoscopy (Ezek. 21:21) (the study of the liver). Refers to the art of cutting open animals, and making a study of the entrails to determine the future.

<u>"soothsayers"</u> - From the root, "to cut off," referring to their cutting of the heavens into divisions, and so <u>guessing</u> at man's destinies from the positions of the stars. All of this adds up to show Nebuchadnezzar the utter folly of placing any confidence in the flesh.

Verse 28

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

<u>"revealeth secrets"</u> - Amos 3:7; 4:13; Gen. 41:45 "Zaphnathpaaneah"--revealer of secrets (the title given to Joseph).

"the latter days" - The days just prior to the establishment of God's kingdom on earth: Isa. 2:2; Jer. 23:20; Ezek. 38:16; 2 Tim. 3:1; 2 Pet. 3:3. This speaks to us of the fact that the image would be existent in the last days, but inactive. Figuratively the image has fallen due to the clay, weakening the feet of the image, and causing it to become top heavy. The 38th of Ezekiel shows that in the "latter days" a great power (Russia) will strengthen and solidify this image so that it will stand up again ready to be destroyed by the stone power (Christ and the saints). Note that all the metals are broken together, verse 35. Ezek. 38:19-23; Zech. 14: 1-4; Isa. 13:6-11; 24:19-23.

"visions of thy head" - Conceptions formed in the brain. The heart is the seat of intelligence, Jer. 5:23-24; Hosea 7:11.

Verse 29

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

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

Verse 30

"not...for any wisdom that I have" - Not on account of any previous wisdom that I may have manifested, 1:17-20. The specially favoured servants of God have always disclaimed any credit or merit for themselves. They gave <u>all</u> the glory to God, Gen. 41:16; Acts 8:12.

Note the contrast: Daniel-as for me - meek, lowly of heart. As for the-king of Babylon - high, mighty, arrogant, proud and haughty.

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Daniel's wisdom is our wisdom, and makes us wiser than our foes, Psa. 119:98. This exhortation should be firmly implanted in our mind. Let God be first in our heart and mind. The revelation was two-fold. First, for their sakes—it saved the lives of the wise men. Second, that the king might know the thoughts of his heart, that he might see that he was nothing but dust and ashes.

"not revealed to me for any wisdom that I have" - Like Joseph of old and Jesus Christ of the future, Daniel disclaims any skill of his own. (Psa. 119:98) Revelation was made first for their sakes, secondly that the king might know that there was a God in heaven.

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

"But for their sakes" - The reasons for the vision and its revelation were manifold and could be summarised as follows:

- 1. The revelation made known to the king the things he desired to understand;
- 2. Saved His servants from the fate they would have suffered with the Chaldeans;
- 3. Brought conspicously before the Babylonians the knowledge of the true God;
- 4. Emphasized the helplessness of the false systems of religious superstitions;
- 5. Elevated Yahweh's Holy Name by revealing the ultimate triumph of the hope of Israel:
- 6. Demonstrated that Gentile might was dependent upon the God of Israel.

* * The Dream - Vv 31-35

Verse 31

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

"the form was terrible" - kingdom of men in its various phases built on bloodshed and violence, Hab. 1:7; Isa. 13:17,18.

Verse 32

"head of fine gold" - Babylonish Empire, the first and the greatest. "breast and arms of silver" - Medo Persian Empire under Cyrus.

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

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

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

- NOTE: I. The metals lessen in specific gravity as they go downward. Silver lighter than gold; brass lighter than silver; iron lighter than brass. Image top heavy—typical of flesh, i.e. reverse of stability.
 - II. The kingdoms deteriorate in authority-power, morals.
 - A. Nebuchadnezzar derived his authority from God, not from man, neither was he responsible to man. He was an absolute monarch, i.e. his word was law.
 - B. Persian king so dependent on others that he could not deliver Daniel from the princes, Dan. 6:14,15. Contrast 5:18,19. As to Nebuchadnezzar's power from God—"whom he would he slew, and whom he would he kept alive." Also Ezra 7:14; Esther 1:13-16.
 - C. We see deterioration in Greece by its divisions-Greece was not united like Babylon and Persia.
 - D. Iron is stronger than brass, but inferior in other respects-very appropriate to Rome who was hardy and strong to tread down the nations but less kingly, leaning more to the animal instincts of the flesh as manifest in the first two centuries.
 - 1. Nebuchadnezzar's power was of God, verses 37,38
 - 2. Autocracy in Persia, predicated on his nobility of person and birth
 - 3. In Greece not of birth, but individual influence
 - 4. In Rome, lowest of all, dependent entirely on popular choice as the emperor was appointed by military election.

Greece-two thighs-a dual rule at the bottom of Greece's history over Egypt and Syria into which Greece was finally divided.

Verse 33

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

<u>"feet part of iron and part of clay"</u> - refers to dissolution of Roman Empire-Alaric and Goths, 395 A.D. Rhadagasius, king of the confederate Germans under the first trumpet.

Under the second trumpet the Vandals under Genseric. After a long series of conquests took Rome in A.D. 455. Also supported by the bravest of the Moors and Vandals destroyed the Roman navy of 1,113 ships.

The third trumpet—Attilia and the Huns. In 20 years, from 436 to 456, Attila stormed over the country of France, Italy, and the rich plains of Lombardy. Gibbon said that "Grass never grew on the spot where his horse had trod."

Verse 34

"stone cut out without hands" - i.e. not a product of human hands. The stone here refers to the kingdom of God, and of course the neucleus of that kingdom was and is the Lord Jesus, Luke 17:20; 1 Peter 2:1-10.

Altars (typifying the Lord Jesus Christ) were made out of stone, Ex. 20:22-24; Deut. 27:5-type of Christ, Heb. 13:10; Rom. 12:6. Destruction of the Gogian host represented as a great sacrifice which will be offered on the Christ altar, Ezek. 39:17.

Contrast the glory of the image with the humble stone, Isa. 53:2, but because the power of God is revealed in the stone it will triumph, Zech. 4:6.

Verse 35

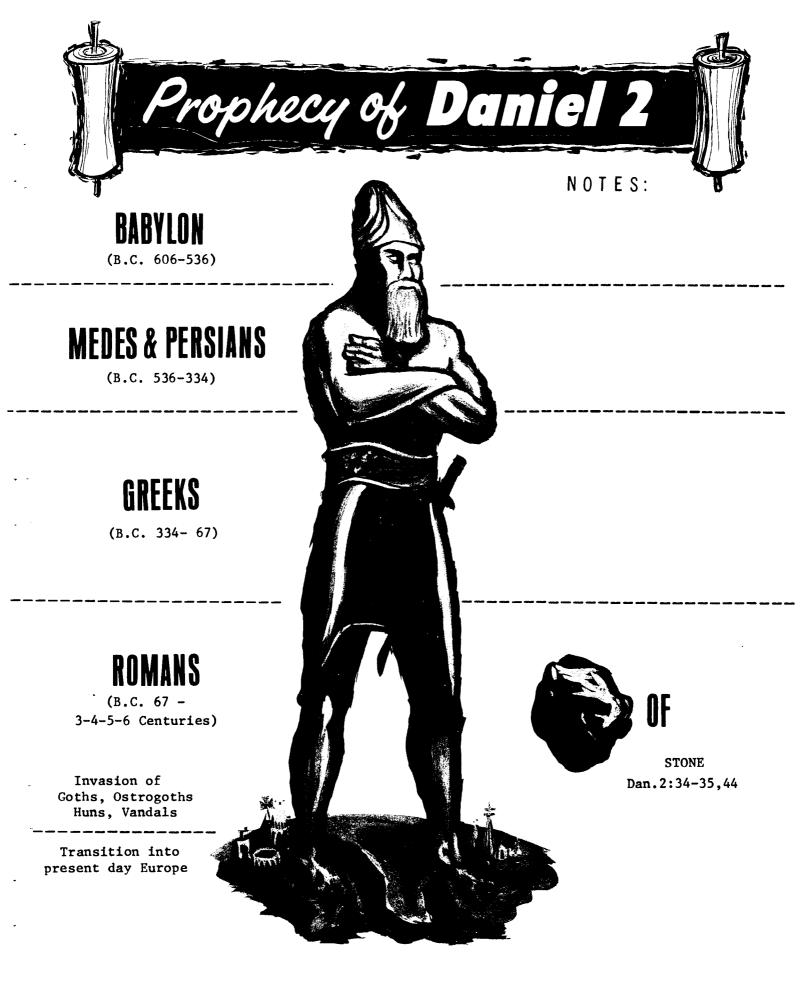
"Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold broken to pieces together." - In the metals of the image we have the pride, pomp, power and wealth of man brought low by the simple inobscure creation of God—a stone (1 Sam. 17), David and Goliath. This verse is a prophetic picture of the complete demolition of the kingdom of men. Both the political king of the north under the leadership of Russia (Ezek. 38, 39), and ecclesiastical Babylon, under the helm of the pope of Rome (Rev. 14; Matt. 21:42-44) In the last twenty years we have seen Russia rise from a power that controlled 170,000,000 in 1939 to a nation that rules over 955,000,000 today. From a territorial rule of 8,000,000 square miles in 1939 to over 15,000,000 square miles in 1973. A power big and strong enough to weld all of Europe together and cause the image to stand again.

"like the chaff of the summer threshingfloors" - Chaff is used in scripture as a symbol of that which is worthless, inflammable and that which shall be destroyed, Job 21:18; Psa. 1:4; 35:5; Isa. 5:24; 29:5; Matt. 3:12; Luke 3:17. In this then we have a graphic description of how completely this present civilization will be removed from the earth, Micah 4:11-13; Joel 3:12-14. Grain was winnowed in the East on an elevated place in the open air by throwing it up in the air with a shovel so that the wind would carry away the chaff.

Note: There is no preliminary movement to the stone. It is not gradual but immediate. There is no slow conquest of the world through the preaching of the gospel.

"the wind carried them away" - Just as the flood carried the civilization of Noah's day away, so this language is descriptive of that time when all of man's buildings constructed by the hands of sin shall be removed in preparation for the fifth universal empire, 2 Peter 3:10-14. This is a striking picture of sin being completely purged from our bodies before immortality can be bestowed.

"the stone" - Jesus Christ-the very nucleus of the kingdom of God, Matt. 21: 42-44. Christ as the chief corner stone and constituting the temple of God, 1 Pet.



2:4-8. The image was composed of metals held together by mechanical force just as nations who have no affinity are held by force. The stone, however, is one with elements of mutual cohesion and chemical affinity. The image was limited to human boundaries for expansion. The stone knows no limitations.

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

Verse 36

<u>"This is the dream"</u> - no guess work—not possibly, or probable, but this <u>is</u> i.e. you can depend on it, Nebuchadnezzar, for this is from Yahweh. This same definite characteristic is in all of God's prophecies and promises, Isa. 9:6-9; Luke 1:32; Acts 1:11; 15:16, John 14:1-2.

we will tell the interpretation" - same great truth, i.e. we will tell, and you can depend upon the interpretation because it is not of man, but of God-(we -Daniel and his three friends).

Verse 37

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

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

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

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

<u>"and glory"</u> - God has also given you honor and dignity, but you have acclaimed this for yourself.

Verse 38

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

"thou art this head of gold" - This seems to be very flattering to the king, but this comfort is dashed to the ground as Daniel speaks of a kingdom that shall rise after him.

Babylon was the city of gold (Isa. 13:19; 14:40. Undoubtedly the richest and most refined of the four universal empires. In an inscription Nebuchadnezzar declared: "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."

<u>Nebuchadnezzar</u> - He indentified as "the head of gold." He is the representative of the great incarnation of human pride and power, humbled before the manifestation of divine wisdom and strength. He made the image and commanded the world to worship it.

Time Periods:Nebuchadnessarreigned43 yearsEvil Merodach (his son)2 yearsNeriglissar (son-in-law)4 yearsLaboresoarched (Neriglissar's son)9 monthsNabonidus and Belshazzar, reigned when the city was destroyed.Their dynasty lasted 70 years (Jer. 25:12,27).

Nebuchadnezzar brought Babylon to the pinnacle of its glory. He came against Jerusalem in the first year of his reign (Jer. 25:1) and 70 years later Babylon fell to the Medes and Persians. In the nineteenth year of his reign the temple was smitten and 70 years later in the second year of Darius the command was issued to rebuild it (Ezra 4:24; 6:1). In the twenty-third year of his reign a further and final deportation of captives occurred (Jer. 52:30), 70 years later in the sixth year of Darius the rebuilding of the temple was completed (Ezra 6:15).

The kingdom of Babylon existed for approximately 70 years, 606 B.C. to 536 B.C. It actually began, however, with Nimrod, B.C. 2233. The prophets of God spoke of the kingdom uppermost in their mind—the kingdom of God. Nebuchadnezzar dreamed of the kingdom which occupied all his thoughts, i.e. his own great empires which he was building.

<u>Babylon:</u> - All the glory that was Nebuchadnezzar's shone in the head of gold. His idea of impressing his subjects was to make a great display of wealth, and thus he built altars of solid gold to Merodach, the patron god of Babylonia.

<u>Medo-Persia:</u> - At the height of Babylon's glory this kingdom was growing by means of excessive taxation. They believed not in the outward show, but in secret hoarded treasure to be used in war when necessary. THEIR STANDARD OF CURRENCY WAS SILVER.

<u>Greece:</u> - The Greeks worshipped Ea, the god of brass. The Javan people mentioned in Eze. 27:13, were Asiatic Greeks, who made the brass from copper and tin. The brass musical instruments mentioned in Dan. 3:5-7 were imported from Greece.

Rome: - Ninib, the god of iron, was the same as Sature, the god of war, worshipped by the Romans. The Romans had discovered the strength of iron, and considered the brass of Greeks out of date. The change, however, was gradual as shown by the teeth of iron and the claws of brass of the fourth beast of Daniel's seven.

The Chaldean Empire, called the Assyrian in its commencement, was called the Chaldean because of the country, i.e. Chaldea. It was referred to as being Babylonish because of its chief city, Babylon. In the time of Nebuchadnezzar it extended over Chaldea, Assyria, Arabia, Syria from Nimrod B.C. 2233 to B.C. 538.

Verse 39

"And after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee" - This was the Medo-Persian dynasty established during the life of Cyrus who marched through the earth with resistless armies, melting the nations as the sun melts structures of snow. It was to this man that the writing on the wall was directed, "thy kingdom is divided and given to the Hedes and Persians.

According to Herodotus, the taxation and tribute demanded by Persia of those she conquered, was paid in silver talents. The empire lasted nearly 207 years. It was inferior to Babylon in wealth, luxury and magnificence—not in extent, B.C. 538 to B.C. 334.

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

"And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron" - This of course has reference to the iron rule of Rome. Their soldiers had iron swords, iron breastplates in contrast to that of the Greeks. Gibbon in his fall and decline of the Roman Empire, refers to these four universal empires in the same terminology as that of Danielgold, silver, brass and the iron monarchy of Rome. The iron rule probably reached its greatest climax in the dark ages during the times of the martyrs.

Verse 41

"the kingdom shall be divided" - This has reference to the two divisions of Rome, represented by the two legs—concerns the time period from 312 A.D. to 324 A.D. in the sixth seal, when Constantine established the Eastern Division of the Roman Empire.

Verse 42

"toes of the feet part of iron and part of clay" - This weakening of the foundation of that which symbolizes the kingdoms of men points with unmistakable accuracy to the fall and decline of the Roman Empire as outlined by Gibbon in his book, "The Fall and Decline of the Roman Empire." This was actually and literally fulfilled in the fourth, fifth and sixth centuries when the Goths, Vandals, Huns, Ostrogoths, etc., under the leadership of Genseric, Alaric, Attila, and others; attacked and systematically disintregated the Roman Empire. This is contemporary and analogous to the first, second and third trumpets of the Revelation.

Verse 43

<u>"iron mixed with miry clay"</u> - Out of this ten-toed phase has come Europe as we see her today. The iron and clay is a very apt and fitting symbol as we can see by previewing Europe's tempestuous history of bloodshed. Truly as Daniel has said the iron and the clay shall not cleave to one another. In ancient times, iron was produced by subjecting the ore to intense heat, and afterwards driving out the clay * by beating. When the latter was done imperfectly, the result was "slag" in which the iron and clay was mixed, and revealed the imperfection of the product. The symbol thus speaks of the imperfect efforts of man to bring unity and peace.

"they shall mingle" - That is, the toes. The gradual influence of democracy is indicated, for the clay suggests the influence of commoners or "seed of men." Europe thus divided between "clay" nations and "iron" nations (the Iron Curtain of today!).

"Shall not cleave" - Despite all efforts at United Nations, the iron and clay is not united - Communism and Capitalism.

THE FEET OF THE IMAGE: "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 collosal 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." (Exposition of Daniel, page 87).

It is important to note that in the vision no Empire is represented as succeeding Rome; the legs of the image merged into the ten toes. Rome was never overthrown by any single power but disintegrated into parts. Ten smaller powers in Europe took the united Empire, and laid the foundation for modern Europe.

Verse 44

"in the days of these kings" - Not just one kingdom such as Babylon, or Medo-Persia, or Greece, or Rome, but in a time when all these kingdoms would be represented morally and politically in one unit. Ezek. 38 and 39, make it very clear that this image will strike in the last days, not in ten divisions, but as one unit. This one unit, however, will bear all the characteristics and so-called qualities of Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece and Rome.

"shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom" - This of course is the great and final purpose of God for this earth, Num. 14:21; Isa. 2:9; Hab. 2:14.

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

"and the kingdom shall not be left to other people" - The reason of course being that its rulers shall be immortal and all-powerful. They shall have supreme, honest and just wisdom emanating from the Divine source of all power and wisdom, even Yahweh.

"but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms" - This speaks of both phases of Armageddon. The political leg of the image symbolized by Eastern Rome, (Constantine 312 A.D.), and the latter day manifestation in Russia as king of the north. Ezek. 38:39; Zech. 14:1-4; Joel 3. The second and last phase being the Western leg of the image (Rome and the Pope), Rev. 14:8-20.

<u>"and it shall stand forever"</u> - the ultimate purpose of God, Gen. 3:15; 13:14-17; 15:18; 2 Sam. 7:12-16; Psa. 89:34-37; Rev. 21.

Verse 45

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

"the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter"-In the destruction of the kingdoms of men, i.e. that which is opposed to God-His great and glorious purpose with this earth will finally be realized, Num. 14:21; Isa. 11:9; Hab. 2:14.

"the dream is certain and the interpretation thereof sure" - the zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this. Isa. 9:7; Heb. 6:17-19.

Verse 46

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

Verse 47

<u>"your God is a God of gods, and a Lord of kings"</u> - A true preview of the humble submission of the world that will follow the outpouring of God's judgments upon the world in the period of the seven vials of the Revelation.

Verse 48

"Then the king made Daniel a great man" - This finds its grand counterpart in the exaltation of Christ as king of kings and lord of lords, Rev. 11:15.

Verse 49

<u>"and he set Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego over the affairs of the province</u> of Babylon" - This speaks of the day when the saints will be co-rulers with our Lord and Christ, Rev. 5:10; Matt. 25:14-24; 19:28-29 - speaks of that time when we shall be one with him--Yahweh Elohim, John 17; Rev. 10 (the angel of the rainbow).

"but Daniel sat in the gate of the king" - This has definite reference to that time when our Master shall possess the gate of his enemies, Gen. 22:17.

Verse 1

"Nebuchadnezzar the king made an image of gold" - There is a difference of opinion concerning this image, because of its proportions—60 cubits (90 feet) high, and 6 cubits (9 feet) wide. Due to this fact, some feel that this image was not in the form of a man. Others advance the thought that these measurements include the pedestal upon which the image stood. Another thought is that this was an image of Bel, and that the six cubits has reference to the thickness (chest to back) which would be about the right proportion.

Such images were not unusual in these times, and Herodotus confirms this by mentioning a similar image 40 feet high in the temple of Belus at Babylon. The colossus of Nero was one hundred and ten feet high. The colossus of Rhodes was 70 cubits high, and was considered one of the seven wonders of the world.

The interval between the dream of Daniel chapter two, and this event is approximately 19 years. Nebuchadnezzar had just returned from finishing the Jewish and Syrian wars, the spoils of which would furnish the material for such a colossal statue.

"of gold" - In all probability this image was not of solid gold, but gold plated. A column of gold of these proportions would contain 5,725¹/₂ cubic feet and a weight of 8,262,806 pounds and 10 ounces of gold.

"the plain of Dura" - The situation is not exactly known. There was a town or city called Dura or Doura in Mesopotamia. Dura means wall or rampart. Thus the image was set up at a place where Babylonish power was walled in; and here was established the source of all Gentile power which has its roots in Babylonish error. From this place Abraham had been called to separate himself (Gen. 13:1).

Verse 2

"sent to gather together the princes" - Princes come from Heb. "achashdarpenaiya" "achash"-great or eminent, and "dar" to go about freely, and "panim" the presence. The whole word carries the meaning then "private counselors who had free access to the presence of the king.

"the governors" - Heb. "signaiya"-lieutenants or viceroys.

"the captains" - Heb. "pachauatha"-to extend and so used because these captains were placed over the extended provinces that had been conquered by Nebuchadnezzar.

<u>"the judges"</u> - Heb. "adargazeraiya" from "adar"—noble or magnificent, and "gazar" to decree. These were the nobles, the assistants to the king in making laws, statutes, etc.

"the treasurers" - Heb. "gedaberaiya" from "ganaz"-to treasure up. Those who kept the current coin or were in charge of the mint.

"the counselors" - Heb. 'dethaberaiya' from 'dath"-a statute, and "bar"-to declare the meaning of the law. A group of men comparable in duty to the supreme court of the United States.

<u>"the sheriffs"</u> - Heb. "tiphtaye" from "shaphath"—to set in order. Probably civil magistrates.

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

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

Verse 4

"then a herald cried aloud" - Literally "a crier called with might." The decrees are much the same as those which proceed from dictators of today. Turn or burn.

Verse 5

"the sound of the cornet" - Cornet comes from Heb. "karna" and is the common blowing horn made from the ram's horn and used by the shepherds.

"flute" - From Heb. "mashrokitha," from "sharak" - to whistle, shriek. A wind instrument which made a strong and shrill noise.

"harp" - from Heb. "kithros." Some kind of a stringed instrument.

"sackbut" - from Heb. "sabbecha" - to interweave. Probably on account of the number of chords. It was most likely a species of a harp.

<u>"psaltery"</u> - Heb. "pesanterin" This was a large triangle with about twenty catguts of different sizes. It was the ancient psalterium and most probably the same as David's harp.

"dulcimer" - Heb. "sumponeyah" Probably a kind of tambourine or tomtom drum. Some scholars say that this was similar to a bagpipe.

"and all kinds of music" - The entire band.

NOTE: Six kinds of instruments - (flesh).

Verse 6

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

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

"be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace" - This was the ancient mode of punishment among the Chaldeans, Jer. 29:22. The furnace was not constructed just for this special occasion. The historian Chardin mentions in his travels, A.D. 1671-1677, that in Persia, to terrify those who took advantage of scarcity to sell at exorbant prices, the cooks were roasted over a slow fire and the fakers cast into a burning oven.

Verse 7

"All the people fell down and worshipped" - A sad commentary of man's fear of the power of the flesh--put not your trust in princes, Psa. 146:3,4.

"certain Chaldeans" - The elevation of Daniel and his friends was probably at the expense of certain Chaldeans who now took opportunity to accuse them, jealousy being the motive. How easy it is for us to do this very same thing in this age.

accused the Jews" - Literally, ate the flesh of the Jews. See Job 31:31; Psa. 14:4; 27:2; Jer. 10:25. They completely forgot that they owed their lives to these Jews, 2:15,16. For some reason they were especially antagonistic against Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. Daniel was either too high up for them to reach or possibly away in another part of the empire. We may certainly rest assured that he was not among the idolaters.

Verse 9

"O king live forever" - It has been truly said, "A preface of flattery is closely akin to the cruelty that follows." A good example of this is found in Acts 24:2,3, Tertullus accusing Paul before Felix. See Psa. 5:9; 36:2; Prov. 2:16; 7:5; 28:23; 29:5; Dan. 11:21; 11:32,34.

Verse 10

"Thou O king hast made a decree" - Force can be very effective in human circles, but force never made a convert to Christ. "My ways are not your ways," says Yahweh. God's basis is that of love. God looks to the individual who serves through a desire to serve. Nebuchadnezzar would feel that this procedure was absolutely necessary for a great part of his empire had been newly acquired. It was composed of many nations: Jews, Egyptians, Moabites, Ammonites, Syrians, Edomites. For these to be amalgamated into one empire there must not be a diversity of opinions, and from a purely natural viewpoint we can see Nebuchadnezzar's wisdom. We can see Nebuchadnezzar's pride rising on the plains of Dura that day as the music rose to a high crescendo and he received the plaudits of his many subjects. Amidst this scene the news of non-compliance would strike like a thunder bolt.

Verse 12

"certain Jews" - It was not all the Jews, but only those spiritually minded that were accused, and these followed the law of the land as far as they could without violating the laws of God by assembling as requested, Rom. 13:1; 1 Pet 2: 13-15; Acts 4:19-20; 5:29.

<u>"serve not thy gods"</u> - Note the plural. Not only the golden image, but the multiplicity of gods in Babylon. They remembered well the command, "Thou shalt not bow down to any idol gods or worship them." This king had showed them much kindness and had heaped honors upon them, but their duty to God was stronger than gratitude to the king. "He that loveth father or mother more than me cannot be my disciple." Exhortation: If we do not fill our minds with things spiritual, they will be filled with that which can only bring death.

Verse 13

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

<u>"bring"</u> - In this one little word we again see the mark of divinity. Instead of commanding their immediate execution as in the case of the wise men (ch. 2:12), Yahweh guided His children before the king that their testimony (Matt. 10:18) might be on exhibition for an example to all who would follow in later years. "in his rage" - literally, in rage and hot wrath. The matter might seem to us as nothing, but the fury of potentates was a stock feature in stories of this type. See Esther 1:12; 7:7.

Verse 14

<u>"it is true</u> - margin, is it on purpose—i.e. is it a deliberate act—do you know what you are doing? We can see a certain amount of fear and respect in these words of the king. He gives them a chance to answer, and our minds go to Jesus before Pilate.

"the golden image that I have set up" - This is important—only man sets up the golden image. This creation of a duality in God's universe is the first step to eternal destruction.

"serve my gods" - I acknowledge your God (2:47), you should acknowledge mine.

Verse 15

"who is that God" - This vain boasting reminds us of the speech of Pharaoh to Moses, "Who is Yahweh that I should obey his voice to let Israel go?" (Ex. 5:2). Also the defiant proclamation of Sennacherib to Hezekiah and Jerusalem, "Who are they among all the gods of the countries that have delivered their country out of mine hand that the Lord should deliver Jerusalem out of mine hand," 2 Kings. 18:35. And yet God destroyed Pharaoh, and put a hook into Sennacherib's nose by which he led him in ignominy, back to his own city to perish miserably at the hands of his sons. How empty the boasts. How unbounded the folly of men who challenge Yahweh to conflict, see Mark 15:29-30. Contrast 2 Kings 18:35 with Isa. 43:2; Cp. Dan.6:20.

Verse 16

"we are not careful to answer thee" - i.e. there is only one course to follow and that is to obey God. "Our minds are as determined to follow spirit as yours is to obey flesh. No amount of persuasion will change our course." Hesitation or parlaying with sin is fatal; unhesitating decision is the only safe path, Matt. 10: 19,28. Our path in God's service must be all or nothing at all. We cannot serve God and mammon. Their confidence was like David's, I Sam. 17:37.

Verse 17

"If it be so" - Regardless of the consequence, our God is able to deliver us—if not from death, then He will deliver us out of death. Here was faith coupled with courage, Heb. 11:34.

Render to Ceasar the things that are Ceasar's. and to God the things that are God's. God does not desire Ceasar's things, and Ceasar does not have the things of God.

There is not the slightest indication that they expected a miraculous deliverance. Their language implies no more than faithful obedience. See Isa. 43:2.

"is able" - They did not question His power to deliver. They did not know whether He would exercise this power or not. Cp. Gen. 19:22.

Verse 18

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

Verse 19

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

<u>"heat the furnace"</u> - points to the day that is to come. The furnace of nations is today being heated for war, and just as the fire destroyed the mighty men of Babylon's court, so the coming fire will destroy the mighty powers of today. Faithful Israel shall be saved, Isa. 26:20; Isa. 48:10.

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

<u>"than it was wont"</u> - literally than it was fitting. It was this overheating of the furnace that consumed his mighty men. Nebuchadnezzar defeated his own purpose. The hotter the fire, the sooner they would be destroyed. How typical of modern warfare.

Verse 20

"the most mighty men" - generals and chiefs of Nebuchadnezzar's army, Joel 3:9.

Verse 21

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

"were cast" - Remember that they were bound that they might not struggle. Futhermore they were flung in in haste, fully clothed. Yahweh permitted this to accentuate the miracle, for, we read, they were loosed from their bonds and their clothes were unsinged.

Verse 22

"because the king's commandment was urgent" - R.S.V. "Because the king's order was strict." This same word is translated severe in Dan. 2:15, R.S.V. The attendants had to carry the victims up to drop them in from the top, and because of the added fuel the flames were pouring out, the attendants were burned to death before they could get down. In so many instances, the tormentors of the righteous suffer the very penalty they propose for their victims. The lions devour Daniel's accusers, Dan. 6:24. Haman was hanged on the gallows he prepared for Mordecai, Esther 7:10, and of course our Lord, Isa. 25:9. The death of the executioners forms a very real contrast with the deliverance of those who had been sentenced to die. This scene will be duplicated when the northern hordes come into the land to slay God's elect. Isa. 45:17; Isa. 66:15,16.

Verse 23

<u>"fell down"</u> - not cast down, for those who brought the three youths to the furnace, perished by the flames themselves, and so could not cast them in.

The Vulgate is interesting - "An angel of the Lord went down with Azariah and his companions into the furnace, and drove out the flame of fire from the furnace; and they walked in the midst of the furnace. Isa. 52:15.

"was astonied" - petrified as he saw these three not only preserved, but in the custody of God, Psa. 23; Psa. 91.

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

Verse 25

"I see four men, and the fourth is like the son of God" - Nebuchadnezzar saw an angel, v. 28. Idolatrous Nebuchadnezzar had no conception of Christ. Heb. "Bar Elahin"—a son of the God—a divine person, an angel. A single angel was sufficient just as one was all that was needed to stop the lions mouth. Nebuchadnezzar saw this spectacle watching through the mouth or the opening in the side of the furnace. He here types those who will see deliverance of spiritual Israel through the Lord Jesus Christ, Luke 21:27; Jer. 16:19; Isa. 25:7; 43:2. Cp. Jer. 29:21-22.

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

i.

Verse 26

"mouth" - a gate or a door from which the ashes were removed.

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

Verse 27

<u>"princes, governors, captains, kings, counsellors"</u> - dignitaries of the court. These things were not done in a corner.

"fire had no power" - fulfilling Isa. 43:2; Heb. 11:34. God alone is a consuming fire, Heb. 12:29. A great defeat for a nation that worshipped a fire god.

"the smell of fire had not passed on them" - This will be the experience of all who put their implicit trust in Yahweh, Luke 21:27; Jer. 16:19; Isa. 25:7; 54:17; Prov. 6:27; 1 Pet. 1:7.

There were trick fire-walkers, but this was of such a supernatural manifestation there could be no doubt. So will be the great and dreadful manifestation of God's might in the last days, Ezek. 38, 39; Zech. 14; Joel 3. See Luke 12:7; 21:18.

Verse 28

"then Nebuchadnezzar spake" - This recognition and obeisance types the day described in Psa. 72:11, when all kings shall fall down before him, also Heb. 8:11.

"blessed by the God of Shadrach, Meshech, and Abednego" - same as queen of Sheba, 1 Kings 10:9, and Hiram king of Tyre, 2 Chron. 2:12. Truly a noble testimony from a heathen king. They had demonstrated the principles of gaining eternal salvation in the showplace of the then known world. Nebuchadnezzar did have a few good qualities, Jer. 39:11; 42:12. Types the kings of the future, Psa. 72:11. "changed the king's word" - Nebuchadnezzar now admits that God's word should be obeyed rather than man's, Acts 5:29.

<u>"yielded their bodies"</u> - (to the fire)—co-crucifixion, Rom. 6:6; Gal. 2:20; Matt. 27:44—not in heathen sacrifices or bowing to man, see Prov. 16:7.

Verse 29

"every people, nation, and language" - types the day when all shall know and recognize God, Isa. 60:12; Psa. 72; Zech. 14:16-21; Psa. 2:9—shall dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.

This decree had much to do with keeping the Jews from completely turning to idolatry in the captivity and afterwards, Psa. 76:10. Another example of the way God works in the kingdom of men, to accomplish His purpose.

Verse 30

"the king promoted Shadrach" - points to the day when the redeemed shall become kings and priests and reign on the earth, Rev. 5:10; Matt. 19:28. When spiritual Israel will have dominion over spiritual Babylon.

Why Daniel was not there

Compare Dan. 2:49 with 3:2. Daniel was probably still in the king's palace and therefore out of the public eye. Since Daniel typifies Christ the Great Judge, it is not fitting that he should undergo the fiery trial of affliction which is to be meted out to spiritual Israel throughout the ages. Daniel at this state was "elevated," typifying Christ's ascension to glory. Typically the angel in the fire was acting on the initiative of Christ - the leader of the faithful. This angel represented the head of the multitudinous manifestation of Christ. Daniel's faith was manifest in the lion's den (ch. 6) which is typical of Christ's first advent and trial. The deliverance and elevation of the brethren of Christ from the fiery furnace of affliction typifies Christ's second advent. Cp. the difference between the titles of Christ given in Dan. 8:11 (first advent) and 8:25 (second advent).

Chapter 4

Heathen Pride Judged

Chapter 4 obviously follows much later in Nebuchadnezzar's reign when his power is secure, and the tremendous building projects he undertook were complete (Cp. 4: 30). Meanwhile Ezekiel had prophesied (Ezek. 1:2), letters would have been received from Jeremiah advising the Jews in Babylon of the protracted nature of their captivity (Jer. 29). The Jews would have witnessed the humiliation of king Zedekiah prostrating himself before Nebuchadnezzar (Jer. 51:59). At that time they had heard the dramatic prophecy against Babylon read by Seraiah, who dramatically threw the scroll into the Euphrates (Jer. 51:59-64), to indicate Babylon's eventual fall.

Verses 1 - 3

These words were proclaimed consequent upon the experiences recorded in this chapter. Evidently Daniel recorded them based upon existing documents.

Verse 1

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

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

Verse 2

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

Verse 3

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

Verse 4

"I was at rest" - my wars were over, my kingdom was at peace-I was sole Monarch of the world with Syria, Phoenicia, Judea, Egypt, and Arabia under my feet. As I laid at rest in my pride, I had a dream that troubled me. (It was probably these victories that fed his ego). An ancient document records as follows: "For extent of dominion, great revenues it supplied, unrivalled success in war, magnificence and splendour of his court, and stupendous works and improvement in Babylon he was incomparably the greatest monarch the world has seen."

"flourishing" - green—imagery of a tree, Jer. 17:8; Psa. 1: prosperous, Job 15: 32. This entire chapter is an exhortation against pride. Blessed are the meek, The Lord requires us to do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with thy God.

Verse 5

"I saw a dream which made me afraid" - This was no ordinary dream, but like the dream of Daniel 2, was a supernatural revelation.

Verse 6

"bring in all the wise men of Babylon" - It might seem strange that Daniel was

not brought in first, but herein we have an act of Divine providence. Flesh must first show its insufficiency to reveal the mysteries that belong to God alone same situation we find in chapter 2.

Verse 7

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

Verse 8

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

<u>"name of my god"</u> - Nebuchadnezzar makes it very clear that his hope is centered completely and entirely in the god of flesh.

"in whom is the spirit of the holy gods" - He credited Daniel's wisdom to the heathen gods. He may have recognized Yahweh, but certainly gave him no preeminence above his heathen gods, Gen. 31:53. The key had already been given in the prophecy of Ezek. 31:3, 10, 11, 16.

Verse 9

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

<u>"spirit of the holy gods"</u> - The plurality here speaks of their belief in many gods, and also includes Yahweh. This is clear from the word "holy." The heathen gods made no claim to purity. Notice Nebuchadnezzar distinguishes between <u>his</u> god and Yahweh.

Verse 10

"I saw and behold" - This dream concerned Nebuchadnezzar himself, and the things he was about to undergo; and like the rest of Daniel's prophecies had a dual fulfillment.

"<u>a tree</u>" - representative of Babylon. Trees are often used to represent nations, Ezek. 31:3. The fig tree representative of Israel - the evergreen tree the symbol of immortality, Psa. 1; Ezek. 17:5,6; Jer. 22:15; Psa. 37:35.

Verse 11

"The tree grew and was strong" - Growth and strength of Babylon

"reached unto heaven" - scope and power of its rule

"to the end of the earth" - speaks of the universality of its rule.

Verse 12

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

"fruit thereof much" - prosperity of the land.

Verse 13

<u>"watcher and holy one"</u> - called a watcher because of his ever being on the alert to do God's bidding, Psa. 103:20; Rev. 4:8;—full of eyes - they rest not day or night, Psa. 34:7; Heb. 1:14; see also Jer. 4:16,17—Sodom and Gomorrah, Gen. 18:19.

"hew down the tree" - Overthrow of Babylon.

Verse 15

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

"a band of iron and brass" - Rome and Greece of Daniel 2. The two main churches of divided Rome were the Roman Catholic church and the Greek Catholic church. These two bands keep mankind chained in the superstitions and errors of Babylon the great.

"the tender grass" - people, Isa. 40:6.

Verse 16

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

"be changed" - a verb indicating mental derangement.

"let a beasts heart be given to him" - illustrates the brutal, beastly, inhuman rule of mankind down through the centuries, see Ecc. 3:18-21. Daniel 2, gives us man's conception of himself, illustrated in the beautiful, valuable, metals of the image. Daniel chapter 7, portrays man as God sees him, i.e. an animal. Man must be humbled, Prov. 16:5.

"let seven times pass over him" - Cp. Lev. 26:18,21,24,28 and particularly v. 43. This is the basis of Jeremiah's prophecy. Jeremiah's 70 years captivity (Jer. 29: 10), was termed a "sabbath of the land" (2 Chron. 36:21). The "seven times" of Daniel are an extension of that principle. From the Jewish vantage point, a time is a Jewish year of 360 days. From the prophetic standpoint a day is a year, Ezek. 4:6. Seven times, 7 x 360 gives us 2520 years. The overthrow of Jerusalem took place from 603-606 B.C. 603-606 B.C. from 2520 years = 1914-1917—the time that Jerusalem was freed from the oppressive rule of the Turk. We have been in a state of war ever since. This was without question a clear indication of the beginning of the end, and should warn us of the nearness of Christ's return. Dating this period from B.C. 542, the fall of the Babylonian Tree to Cyrus, 2,520 years would bring us to 1973: a possible date when the Gentile nations will be forced to acknowledge that the Most High God rules in the Kingdom of Men. Cp. Ezek. 38:23.

3

Verse 17

"By the decree of the watchers, and the holy ones" - The watchers, are the Elohim that do God's bidding today, Heb. 1:14; Psa. 103:20; Ex. 23:20; Gen. 18:21; Gen. 48:16; Jer. 27:4-5.

"The most high rules in the kingdom of men" - God never leaves the decision to men-the so-called rulers are only God's agents.

"giveth it to whomsoever he will" - God rules in the kingdom of men. He is guiding all events to His final purpose, Jer. 27:5; Psa. 75:6,7; Psa. 113:7,8.

<u>"setteth up over it the basest of men"</u> - Septuagint, "And will set over it him who is set at nought by men." This of course refers to the Lord Jesus Christ, 1 Cor. 1:26-30; Ezek. 21:27.

God is actually saying that at the end of the 2520 year period, dating from the Babylonian reign that He will set Jesus Christ over the nations, 1 Cor. 1:26-30; Ezek. 21:27.

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"O Belteshazzar declare the interpretation thereof" - Here Nebuchadnezzar expresses his full confidence in Daniel.

Verse 19

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

Verses 20 and 21 - Repetition of verses 11 and 12.

Verse 22

"it is thou O king" - From verse 22 through 27, we have a picture of Gentile rule being humbled and brought to their knees in recognition of God. Humility must come before exaltation—the cross before the crown.

Nebuchadnezzar had now arrived at the zenith of his power. Northwards he possessed Armenia and a considerable portion of Asia Minor. In the west Syria, and at one time Egypt; southward his power reached the Persian Gulf; while in the east the Medes and the Elamites were subject to him. Possessing the Mediterranean and Persian Gulf, all the treasures of the then known world were at his command.

In his first vision, Nebuchadnezzar saw himself as the golden head of the image. In his pride, on the plains of Dura, he desired the whole image to be of gold, and himself to be that image.

Verse 23

<u>"Hew the tree"</u> - The Rise and Fall of nations are supervised by God (Acts 17:26; Heb. 1:14; Psa. 103:20).

Verse 24

"Upon my lord the king" - In the most considerate and respectful terms the prophet makes known the interpretation.

Verse 25

"They shall drive thee" - i.e. thou shalt be driven-you shall be humbled-you shall be brought low.

"till thou know the most high ruleth in the kingdom of men" - This is the great truth that all men and nations must come to know. God is and will be supreme in all the earth, Num. 14:21; Isa. 11:9; Hab. 2:14; Dan. 2:44.

Verse 26

<u>"they commanded</u> - i.e. the watchers (plural) in contrast to the singular of verse 13. (See notes)

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

<u>"sure"</u> - Chald. QAYAM = permanent, stedfast, in a sense of restoration. As Nebuchadnezzar was restored to his manly dignity and glory - so mankind will be restored to the conditions originally existing.

"the heavens do rule" - i.e. the heavens or the one, Yahweh in heaven rules the kingdom of men. Yahweh and the host of angels, Eph. 1:20,21; 3:10; Col. 1:16.

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"break off thy sins" - The avenue of escape from death is to become a crosserover. Daniel counsels Nebuchadnezzar to rebel against his sins of pride, harshness and cruelty. The metaphor is taken from a beast casting off the yoke, Gen. 27:40; Matt. 11:28. Repent and bring forth fruits meet for repentance.

"if it may be" - i.e. if Nebuchadnezzar will repent his prosperity and peace will be prolonged.

Verse 28

"all this came upon the king" - Cp. Isa. 47:7.

Verse 29

"twelve months" - Twelve is a perfect number. It signifies governmental perfection, to wit, 12 tribes of Israel; 12 apostles; 12 foundations of the New Jerusalem, etc. Here was certainly sufficient time for repentance.

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

Verse 30

"is not this great Babylon which I have built" - This is in accordance with the language of the king as recorded on inscriptions dug up by archaeologists today. One such inscription records Nebuchadnezzar as saying, "I finished the great twofold wall of Babylon. I made strong the city of bricks burnt hard as stones, and piled high in huge masses as mountains. Behold, beside the Imgoul-Bel, the impregnable fortifications of Babylon. I made inside Babylon on the Eastern bank of the river, such a fortification as no king before me had ever made. I excavated the ditch; with bricks and mortar, I bound its bed; I built above it a strong rampart; I adorned its gates. The portals and pillars, I plated with bronze. Against presumptuous enemies, the foes of Babylon I made use of great waters like those of the seas. Thus I made strong the defences of Babylon. May it last forever; Babylon the city which is the delight of my eyes, which I have made gracious." In this we see the pride of man that was brought low in Babylon, and points to the day when the pride of all mankind will be laid low.

The area of Babylon was approximately 200 square miles. It was surrounded by walls 85 feet wide, 335 feet high. Within the walls the city was laid out in smaller towns, separated from each other by parks, plantations and gardens. It is stated that corn sufficient for the whole population could be grown within the walls. He had completed eight temples beside the huge temple of Merodach, immediately across the Euphrates facing the royal palace. Instead of repenting like Daniel had counselled, after the allotted 12 months, he now looks out and exclaims, "Is not this great Babylon that I have built." Adam grasped to become as God, and fell, and such has been true of everyone who has made this mistake.

Verse 31

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

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Verse 32

"seven times" - Verses 16, 23, 25 and 32. 2520 years of animal rule over the nations. $7 \times 360 = 2520$ years. 603-606 + 2520 = 1914-1917, when Jerusalem was

freed from the Turk and the Jews were permitted to return. Nebuchadnezzar's case was similar to the maniac who dwelt among the tombs in the time of Christ.

Verse 33

"the thing was fulfilled" - It is generally agreed that the disease which came upon Nebuchadnezzar was "Lycanthropy"—a form of insanity in which the patient imagines himself to be an animal, and acts accordingly. The nations of the world are examples of this disease today, Prov. 28:15.

There is a passage in the inscriptions of Nebuchadnezzar, discovered by archaeoligists, in which the king mentions a time during which "the seat of the kingdom did not rejoice my heart," and during which he did no building nor "sing the praises of Merodach." It may have reference to the time when the punishment of God fell upon him, and he had the period of madness.

<u>"he did eat grass as oxen"</u> - God looks upon the nations as animals, Dan. 7:4; Ecc. 3:18-21; Prov. 28:15.

Verse 34

"at the end of the days" - The head of Babylon turning to the praise of God types the day soon to come when the nations of the world shall fall down before Yahweh, Psa. 72:8-11.

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

<u>"praised him"</u> - Psa. 116:12,14; Mark 5:15,18,19. Nebuchadnezzar acknowledged God as: *ALL-WISE - Daniel 2:47 *ALL-POWERFUL - Daniel 3:28 *SUPREME - Daniel 4:37

Verse 35

"as nothing" - Isa. 40:15,17

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

"the army of heaven" - the Elohim.

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

"what doest thou" - Job 9:12; Rom. 9:20.

Verse 36

<u>"my reason returned"</u> - His sanity returned. This types the day when the present insanity of the nations will be transformed by worship to Yahweh, Isa. 2: 2-4. Jer. 25:15-16 very aptly describes the nations of the world today.

NOTE: Cuneiform inscriptions record a period of at least four years where there was absolutely no activity on the throne of Babylon.

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

<u>"majesty was added"</u> - My authority was greater than ever before, Job 42:12; Prov. 22:4; Matt. 6:33.

Verse 37

"the king of heaven" - How far the king progressed in a belief in one God is not clear. In chapter 2, verse 26, his belief was no higher than that which a heathen has in his own superstitions. In chapter 2, verse 47, Nebuchadnezzar acknowledges that Daniel's God is a God of gods, a Lord of kings and a revealer of secrets.

In Dan. 3:15, he is represented as setting himself above all gods, and even after the miracle of the fiery furnace he only acknowledges God on the same level as Bel-Merodach. See Rev. 15:3; 16:7; Psa. 51:4.

It is supposed that Nebuchadnezzar lived 17 years after his restoration and that he never again turned to idolatry. He died about 564 B.C.

DISSATISFACTION, violence and revolt swept Babylon following the death of Nebuchadnezzar. Evil-Merodach was assassinated, his successor who heated the revolt did not last long. His son was also murdered within a year. Unrest continued during the reign of Nabonidas. Five years after he came to the throne, Cyrus overcame Astyages, the Mede, whose capital, Ecbatana, he made the capital of his enlarged kingdom. Nabonidas reacted to this victory by moving his army into Arabia Felix, leaving his son Belshazzar in control of Babylonia and its army. Later he returned to Babylonia and defeat.

Heathen Impiety Judged

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* * Belshazzar's Feast - Vv 1-4

Cp Isa. 21:4; Jer. 50:24; 51:39,57.

Verse 1 - Time: approximately 30 years after the events of chapter 4.

"Belshazzar" - great grandson of Nebuchadnezzar. After the death of Nebuchadnezzar, his son Evil-Merodach took the throne and was succeeded by his son Belshazzar. See Jer. 52:31; II Kings 25:27; also Jer. 27:6-8.

There is however, a seeming contradiction here in verse 11. Many Hebrew scholars feel that the repetition here of the word "father" means that the queen mother has reference to his grandfather. If this is not the meaning then there would be idle repetition which the word of God cannot be guilty of. The Hebrew of father is "ab" meaning ancestor. Four kings then comprise the span of Babylon's rule: 1. Nabopolassor

- 2. Nebuchadnezzar
- 3. Evil-Merodach
- 4. Belshazzar

"made a great feast" - Probably a state banquet. It was an annual festival with a religious significance, a time of public rejoicing when the whole night was given up to revelling. According to Herodotus, Cyrus knew of this, and took advantage of it.

"to a thousand of his lords" - There is nothing unusual in the large number of guests. The Septuagint doubles this number. Daniel, at this time would have been approximately 83 years old. Belshazzar placed all his confidence in flesh. He felt that the fortifications of Babylon were impregnable. The world today, modern Babylon likewise, places its trust and faith in man, but just as Babylon of yesterday was overthrown, so will modern Babylon meet its doom, Rev. 16:15-19. See also Jer. 50:24; 51:39, 57; also cp. Jer. 52:33. See also additional note on page 42.

Verse 2

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

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<u>"tasted"</u> = TEH-AME, not merely "to sip", but to be moved or warmed by it. Cp. Rev. 18:3; Jer. 51:7.

"the gold and silver vessels from the temple" - Babylonians were famous for their over indulgence in drinking. The king thus mocked at God, but the temple was to have its revenge; see Jer. 51:6-8; 50:28.

"his father Nebuchadnezzar" - Belshazzar was the grandson of Nebuchadnezzar, but the word in the Hebrew signifies "ancestor" and is used in this sense in 1 Kings 15:11-13; Rom. 9:10.

Here is a brief outline of the history of Nebuchadnezzar's descendants. He was succeeded by Evil-Merodach, 2 Kings 25-27; who was slain after a reign of two years by Neriglissar (a general), son-in-law of Nebuchadnezzar. The usurper reigned four years, leaving the throne to Labarosoaked his son, a mere child. In less than a year he was murdered and Nabonidus, a Babylonian lord, foremost in the plot, ascended the throne, marrying a daughter of Nebuchadnezzar. Cylinders found at Ur reveal that Belshazzar (a grandson of Nebuchadnezzar) Jer. 27:7, was the eldest son of Nabonidus; that he was created regent, and ruled with his father; and that he was in Babylon (whilst his father was not), when Cyrus took the city. Critics of the Bible used to say that Belshazzar was a fiction, because history recorded that Nabonidus was reigning when the city fell; but the discoveries of archaeologists have confirmed the Bible story, and reveal that Belshazzar was reigning with Nabonidus his father.

11

Verse 3

"vessels taken out of the temple" - See Jer. 50:20; Dan. 5:23. In the Babylonian Talmud, there is mentioned that Belshazzar gave the command because of a wrong calculation he had made. He knew the prophecy of Jeremiah of the 70 years captivity. Nebuchadnezzar had reigned 45 years; Evil-Merodach 23 years; and he himself had been reigning 2 years. The time period was now up, and nothing had happened— "why store the vessels any longer" — he of course was wrong.

Verse 4

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

Verse 5

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

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

"The king saw the hand that wrote" - Writing Hebrew from right to left the hand would cover what it wrote, thus cp. Vv. 8, 24.

"the king's countenance was changed" - Lit. his color or brightness was changed, Job 14:20-changing of the face in death. Here is a very natural description of fear that is easily imagined.

- 1) The face would grow pale
- 2) His mind would become greatly agitated
- 3) Extreme fear usually causes severe pain in the lower part of the back and kidneys
- 4) His entire body would tremble so that his knees would shake
- 5) As a great and final climax "the king cried aloud for help" —lit. called with strength, see Dan. 3:4; 4:14
- Joints and loins from "Harch" i.e. the lower part of the back, see Psa. 69:23; Nahum 2:10.

Where has the king's bravery gone? There is such a thing as conscience. It is like a policeman entering a crowded room — the guilty become uncomfortable.

Verse 7

"astrologers, the Chaldeans, and the soothsayers" - Explained in previous verses. In brief this was the cream of Babylon's wise men comparable to the president's cabinet and the supreme court of the United States. See Isa. 47:13. He bypasses the wisdom of God, just as the world does today. "he shall be the third ruler in the kingdom" - Probably because Nabonidus would be first and Belshazzar as his regent, second.

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

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

"the chain of gold" - Another sign of princely dignity, Gen. 41:42.

Verse 8

"they could not read the writing" - The reason they could not read this writing was that it was written in pure Hebrew instead of the Chaldean character (see notes on verse 25). The pagan wise men must fall so that God's name may be exalted, Gen. 41:8; Dan. 2:3-12. It of course types the day when the haughtiness of man shall be brought low, Psa. 72; Isa. 2. The only true explanation of course lies in the supernatural character of the inscription and the inspiration of Daniel.

"Astonied" - R.V. Renders: "perplexed." Like the world today (Luke 21:25).

Verse 9

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

Verse 10

"the queen came" - This is generally conceded to be the widow of Nebuchadnezzar, i.e. Belteshazzar's grandmother. If this be true she would be queen "Amiyt," daughter of "Astyages," sister of Darius the Mede. This is according to Polyhistor, and Calmet. There is another school of thought that says she was "Nitocris" who is said to have been queen when Cyrus took the city. She was a lady of eminent wisdom and discretion; and the chief direction of public affairs was given her. She was the mother of "Labynithus;" who many think was the same as Belshazzar.

Still another school of thought places this queen as the daughter of Nebuchadnezzar, wife of Nabonidus, mother of Belshazzar, who would remember Daniel's sensational activities in the courts of Babylon.

Note: (Addition to verse 1)

This was no time to frolic in revelry. Outside his walls prowled the greatest soldier of all time, i.e. Cyrus. Belshazzar literally blasphemed the God of heaven by drinking wine from the sacred vessels of the temple. Even Nebuchadnezzar at his idolatrous heights would not have dared to do this sort of thing.

Exhortation: Is this the way we are ruling our temples while the enemy of sin threatens our gates?

Verse 11

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

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

"the king-thy father the king-thy father" - This repetition of Nebuchadnezzar's name in relation to Daniel emphasizes the respect Nebuchadnezzar had for Daniel. When all temporal hope is lost man turns to God and the Bible in desperation.

Verse 12

"dissolving of doubts" - lit. a dissolver or unraveller of knots.

Verse 13

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

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

Verse 15

"of the thing" - i.e. the whole of this miraculous transaction.

Verse 16

"dissolve doubts" - Untie knots.

Verse 17

<u>"let thy gifts be to thyself"</u> - Daniel refused the king's offer of reward at first, but afterwards accepted it. In this way he demonstrated truth without respect to a possible bribe. These gifts could be of little use for the city in just a few hours was to be taken and pillaged, Isa. 45:1; Jer. 50,51.

Verse 18

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

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

<u>"majesty"</u> - This majesty was in the eyes of his subjects only, not God. To this man will I look, says Yahweh, "To him that is of an humble and contrite spirit and trembleth at my word."

"glory" - from his fleshly victories.

"honour" - from the enlargement and decoration of the city.

Verse 19

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

Verse 20

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

Verse 21

"his heart was made like the beasts" - i.e. he desired to dwell with them.

"hast not humbled thine heart" - You have not erred through ignorance, but through deliberate contempt of God, even though you had all the warnings in the time of your grandfather. These things were not done in a corner.

Verse 23

"But hast lifted up thyself" - He had (1) arrogantly set himself up against God; (2) mocked at Him as being powerless, by publicly displaying the captured vessels of the temple; (3) committed sacrilege by contemptuously using them as drinking vessels; (4) refused to acknowledge the One who had humbled his grandfather and who is the Author of life.

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

"whose are all thy ways" - Jer. 10:23

"not glorified" - i.e. dishonoured.

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

Verse 24

"Then" - not only that time, but because of this—also when thou liftedst up thyself against the Lord.

"the part of thy hand" - The fore part of the fingers.

"sent from him" - i.e. from God. The hand is removed, and the writing made clear for Daniel to see.

Verse 25

"Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin" - Lit. numbered, weighed and divided. Mene repeated for emphasis - see Gen. 41:32.

Verse 26

"Mene" - God hath fixed the number of years of thine empire, and that number is now complete.

<u>"finished it"</u> - i.e. brought it to an end. The original carries the idea of handing it over. It is used in Ezra 7:19, "to deliver."

Verse 27

<u>"Tekel"</u> - weighed in the balances. The Egyptians thought that Osiris weighed the actions of the dead in a literal balance. The Babylonians may have had the same notion. See Job 6:2-3; 31:6; Prov. 24:12; Psa. 62:9.

"found wanting" - Too light before God, the weigher of actions, 1 Sam. 2:3; Psa. 62:9. Like spurious gold or silver, Jer. 6:30.

Verse 28

<u>"Peres"</u> - Lit. dividers. Alludes to the division of the Medes and Persians. Lit. severed from thee. Not only was Babylon to be divided, but it would be given to the Persians. It also means "to break."

"clothed Daniel with scarlet" - Daniel was thus restored to a similar rank to what he had held under Nebuchadnezzar, ch. 2:48. The king had promised and could not go back on his word. He may also have chosen this way to despise the prophecy of his doom as an idle threat.

In verse 17 he declined this offer. This insignia of honour would be witnesses for God's glory to the world of his having by God's aid interpreted the mystic characters. The cause of his elevation would also secure the favour of the new dynasty (ch. 6:2). For both Daniel and his captive countrymen the capture of the city was imminent as Herodotus confirms.

Cyrus diverted the Euphrates into a new channel and guided by two deserters, marched by the dry bed into the city whilst the Babylonians were carousing at an annual feast to their gods, Isa. 21:5; 41:27; Jer. 50:38,39; 51:36. As to Belshazzar's being slain see Isa. 14:18-20; 21:2-9; Jer. 50:29-35; 51:57.

The scarlet here was most likely purple. The gold chain about the neck, an emblem of magisterial authority—pointing to the day when those who remain faith-ful shall be exalted to places of honor when modern Babylon is destroyed.

Xenophon (Cyrop. 7,5) 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."

Verse 30

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

Verse 31

"Darius the Median" - i.e. Cyaxares II, the son and successor of Astyages, B.C. 569-536. Although Cyrus was leader of the assult, yet all was done in the name of Darius. This is the reason he is mentioned here. In ch. 6:28 we see that Daniel was not ignorant of Cyrus' share in the capture of Babylon. Isa. 13:17; 21:2, confirms Daniel's account in making the Medes the leading nation in destroying Babylon. Also see Jer. 51:11,28.

Darius was not a name, but a title commonly used by the rulers of Medo-Persia, and signified ruler. It was similar to the title Caesar assumed by the rulers of Rome.

Heathen Persecutors Judged

Daniel saw the liberation of his people (1:21) for which he had earnestly prayed, but he did not return to the land of Judah. He was then over 90 years of age and being offered a high position (6:2) doubtless felt he could best serve his people by using his influence wisely to the benefit of the Jews. The record of this chapter is a testimony of Faith which Daniel maintained to the end of his life, even under extreme trial. His great Faith demonstrates the truth of Isa. 54:17, revealing how Faith conquers all difficulties.

Verse 1

"Darius" - This Darius could have been Cyrus, for Darius is merely an appelative meaning "the Restrainer" (Herodotus 6:98), or "the Maintainer" (Prof. Sayce). "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." (Documents from OLD TESTAMENT TIMES, D. Winton Thomas, page 83).

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

Verse 2

<u>"three presidents"</u> - Thus each would have jurisdiction over 40 of these chiefs. Compare Dan. 7:7 = "three ribs."

"Daniel was first" - We can see how Daniel's character and ability was recognized in Nebuchadnezzar's court.

Verse 3

"was preferred" - literally he outshone the others. The pronoun "this" is prefixed to Daniel's name so as to point him out as the favoured one already mentioned.

"An excellent spirit was in him" - He was conscientious, honest and faithful in all his daily duties (Cp. Col. 3:22). The elevation which he experienced by the hand of Balshazzar, just prior to Babylon's fall, would have brought him prominently to the notice of the Medes and Persians.

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

Verse 4

"sought to find occasion against Daniel" - They could find no accusation against Daniel. He was faithful to the king, but he was also faithful to his God. It was from this vantage point that they now would strike. Cp. 1 Peter 2:11-20.

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

Verse 5

"except we find it against him concerning the law of his God" - How wonderful it will be if this is the only accusation against us in the day of judgment.

"Except...concerning the law of his God" - This posed a difficulty for, on entering Babylon, Cyrus had proclaimed religious tolerance. Note the noble tribute these men pay to Daniel. He was blameless. So was Christ.

Verse 6

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

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

"King Darius live forever" - A hypocritical salutation from flesh.

Verse 7

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

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

"Ask a petition of any God or man" - Why would the liberal Cyrus fall for such a trap? Perhaps it had been pointed out to him that there was danger of insurrection because of his tolerance. He had granted liberty of worship, but this law was now to emphasize the authority of the Persian Empire over all others.

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

Verse 8

<u>"sign the writing"</u> - Literally, record the decree so that there can be no possibility of its being recalled, cp. Esther 8:8.

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

Verse 9

"Wherefore king Darius signed the writing and the decree" - Darius here types the rulers of today who unknowingly become tools in the hand of Yahweh to accomplish His purpose in the earth.

Verse 10

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

"toward Jerusalem" - 1 Kings 8:33-35; Psa. 5:7; 27:2. His mind was closed to Babylon, but open to Jerusalem, Matt. 6:6. Daniel was close to 90 years old, but his faith was still secure. A prayer offered in this manner was to be answered by Yahweh. Cp. 1 Kings 8:48-49.

"upon his knees"- A position of humility.

<u>"three times a day"</u> - Psa. 55:17. The third, sixth, and ninth hour, i.e. our nine, twelve and three o'clock. Cp. Acts 10:9.

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

Verse 11

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

Verse 12

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

Verse 13

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

Verse 14

"the king was sore displeased with himself" - He had every reason to be sorely displeased. Having been carried away by flattery, he now exposes himself as being an idiot.

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

Verse 15

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

Verse 16

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

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

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

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

"the king sealed it with his own signet" - This would prevent Darius delivering Daniel, but it also guaranteed Daniel's life should he escape the lion's den.

Verse 18

"passed the night fasting" - He neither ate or drank, he had no music to ccmfort him, he passed the night without sleep. All of this points out his great sincerity and when it is considered that Darius could not have been less than 62 years of age at this time, it shows more fully the depth of his concern. How these circumstances run parallel with those of Christ's trial! Darius like Pilate had been forced to convict the accused, and as Darius sealed the mouth of the den (v. 17), so Pilate sealed the sepulchre of the Lord (Matt. 27:66), and was troubled at the part he played in the trial (Matt. 27:24).

Verse 19

"the king arose very early" - by the break of the day.

Verse 20

"he cried with a lamentable voice" - his heart full of grief affected his speech.

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

Verse 22

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

"before him innocency was found in me" - Because I was innocent God has preserved me. This of course types the Lord Jesus Christ, Acts 2:27; Psa. 16:10. It also speaks to us of those who have obtained this same innocency through the Lord Jesus Christ, and thus will be preserved, Col. 3:3,4.

Verse 23

"no manner of hurt was found upon him"

Here is another example of the faith that is pleasing to God, Heb. 11:33. Here is another type of Christ, John 19:36. "A bone of him shall not be broken" Psa. 34:20; Ex. 12:46; Num. 9:12. Paul was also delivered from symbolic lions—the powers that be, 2 Tim. 4:17.

"believed in his God" - Chald. AMAN = 'to trust as in a parent or a nurse.' Paul declared that FAITH saved Daniel (Heb. 11:33) which is allied to BELIEF (Rom. 10:17) (R.S.V. = 'trusted'). Daniel's experience was not a pleasant one. He went in jeopardy of his life, but was ultimately saved and came forth triumphant. So it will be with all those that manifest the same faith as Daniel. Although brought into circumstances of trial now, their ultimate salvation is without doubt. This is the lesson of Chapter 6. See Isa. 54:17. This is our heritage!

Those who opposed Daniel, and the Jews (see v. 13) themselves suffered. So it will be at the end of the age. The "destroyers of the earth" will be destroyed (Rev. 11:18). When the judgments of God are manifested against earthly powers, it will be revealed that they have opposed His Word, and have persecuted His people. Down the ages many faithful men have suffered as did Daniel from the persecutions of Rome and other powers (including so-called Christian churches), but finally these will be destroyed. When modern Babylon (Christendom - so-called) is destroyed it will be seen that she has acted the part taken by these jealous rulers against Daniel (see Rev. 18:24). "The righteous is delivered out of trouble and the wicked cometh in his stead" (Prov. 11:8).

"the king commanded" - Josephus states that the satraps on hearing of the miracle suggested that the lions had been well fed before Daniel was put into the den. Thus the king with grim readiness gave them the opportunity of proving their theory.

"they brought those men" - This is a true picture of what happened to those who crucified our Lord - "his blood be on us and our children," Matt. 27:25. The destroyers of the earth will be destroyed, Rev. 11:18; 18:24. The fact that they were devoured immediately shows that the lions were hungry and only the providence of God had saved Daniel. Deut. 19:11, 19

"their children and their wives" - This was in accordance with the ideas of the ancient world and the Old Testament, 2 Sam. 21:5-9; Esther 9:13. It was also by Darius. According to the Divine law a man's household is only involved in judgment when it has taken part in the crime (Deut. 24:16). See Numbers 16 for an example, where in the case of rebellion all the guilty were destroyed, including wives and children (v. 32), except for Korah's children (Num. 26:11). Throughout the ages Rome has persecuted those like unto Daniel (cp. Rev. 18:24) and in the judgments to come her "children" will be involved, because they fully endorsed the actions of the parent and manifest the same characteristics (Rev. 2:20-23).

"Or ever they came at the bottom" - Rotherham renders, "And they had not reached the bottom of the den, when the lions seized them." Once the Divine restraint under which the lions had been placed was removed, they acted in all their natural fierceness. The terrible fate of these people emphasizes the extent of the miracle on behalf of Daniel.

> DANIEL'S TRIAL FORESHADOWED THE EXPERIENCE OF THE FUTURE JUDGE (Acts 17:31

- * He incited the envy of his contemporaries
- * They were forced to acknowledge his integrity (cp. John 8:46)
- * They forced the government to move against him
- * The king, like Pilate, acknowledged the injustice of the charge
- * He was delivered to the lions (sealed in the tomb)
- * He was delivered from the lions (restored to life)
- * His deliverance was a token of his faithfulness and righteousness
- * His adversaries were judged
- * THE RESULT: Gentiles acknowledge the living God.

Verse 25

"Then king Darius wrote unto all people, nations and languages that dwell in all the earth" - Darius throughly humbled by the power of God's revelation types the day when all kings shall fall down before Messiah, Psa. 72:10,11; Isa. 2:17. Note similarity of the decree, Dan. 3:29.

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

Verse 26-27

"for he is the living God..." - Note Darius' tenfold description of Yahweh:

- 1. "He is the living God" the author and giver of life-all others are dead gods.
- 2. "He is steadfast forever" All things change, but He is unchangeable.
- 3. "And his kingdom" He has made all things so he governs all things.
- 4. "His kingdom shall not be destroyed" No human power can prevail against it, because it is upheld by his omnipotence.
- "His dominion is without end" It is an everlasting dominion under an everlasting rule, by an everlasting God.
- 6. "He delivereth" He delivers them that are in danger and bondage.
- 7. "He rescueth" He rescueth those who have fallen into the hands of their enemies.
- "He worketh signs in the heavens" The most high rules in the kingdom of men, Dan. 2:28; 4:17,32.
- 9. "And wonders upon earth" Showing that both the ruling powers and the inhabitants of this earth are under his sway.
- "He hath delivered Daniel" Before our own eyes he has given the fullest proof of his power and goodness.

Verse 28

"So this Daniel prospered" - Daniel had served five kings: Nebuchadnezzar, Evil-Merodach, Belshazzar, Darius and Cyrus. Few courtiers have had so long a reign, served so many masters, been more successful in their management of public affairs, more faithful to God, or have left such a sterling example to posterity.

The Septuagint has an addition: "And king Darius was gathered to his fathers and Cyrus the Persian received the kingdom. This final verse llnks chapter 1:21 with 10:1.

Verse 29

"hath delivered Daniel from the power of the lions" - Daniel was not the only one so delivered. Paul was also delivered from the lions, but they were symbolic of the powers that be, 2 Tim. 4:17.

DARE TO BE A DANIEL

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

JUDGMENT ON WESTERN DOMINIONS

We are now introduced to a new section of the book which is prophetical in its context in contrast to the first six chapters which are historical records of the life and times of Daniel.

* *The Four Beasts - Vv 1-8

Verse l

"In the first year of Belshazzar" - This is the same Belshazzar who was slain at the taking of Babylon (chap. 5). Chronologically, chapter 5 should have followed this. It is felt that the reason chapter 5 was put in an improper place was so that all historic parts might be together and the prophetic be by themselves.

"Daniel had a dream" - Nebuchadnezzar's dream represented the nations as a glorious luminous image. As a contrast, Daniel saw them as wild beasts engaged in ambitious and fierce fighting.

"of his head" - Considering that this chapter takes us back in history to the time when Babylon had not as yet been overthrown by Persia ("in the first year of Belshazzar"), Daniel was probably considering the impending changes predicted by Isaiah (ch. 45) and Jeremiah (25:12), namely the manifestation of Cyrus, and the overthrow of Babylon at the end of the 70 years captivity.

"told the sum of the matters" - that Daniel might not forget this extraordinary dream, he wrote down the leading particulars when he arose.

Chronologically this dream took place something like 48 years after Nebuchadnezzar had the vision of the great image.

Verse 2

"visions by night" - In Scripture night or darkness always speaks to us of Gentile times—that state which is descriptive of humanity outside of the gospel hope, Eph. 2:11,12; Isa. 5:20; 9:2; 29:18; 42:7; 60:2; John 1:5; 8:12; 12:35; 1 John 1:5; 2:8; 9:11.

<u>"four winds of heaven strove upon the great sea"</u> - Wind in Scripture sometimes refers to armies, and many, many times to the judgments of God, Jer. 4:11-13. The winds were not all blowing at once, but successively, and at long intervals; and with each blowing we have a resulting change in the kingdoms represented by the beasts.

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

"upon the great sea" - The Mediterranean Sea is the one referred to here, and deals in particular with those kingdoms which surrounded this body of water. This will also be the scene of mortal man's last great stand. Sea in Scripture is representative many times of people and nations, Isa. 57:20; Rev. 17:15.

Verse 3

"four great beasts" - Beasts used in a prophetic sense in Scripture refer to nations, Prov. 28:15; Jer. 12:9. Nebuchadnezzar saw the kingdoms of this world through the eye of flesh, and as such they were pictured as a luminous warrior, Dan. 2:31. In this seventh chapter they are revealed as God sees the kingdoms of men, i.e. as wild beasts tearing each other to pieces, Dan. 7:17. Israel is compared to sheep in their midst, Matt. 10:16. "came up from the sea" - From the general area of the Mediterranean. It is interesting to note that all five universal empires have and will come from this area of the world's surface.

<u>"diverse one from another"</u> - Just as the metals of the image were completely different, so were the kingdoms which they represented.

Verse 4

<u>"the first was like a lion"</u> - The lion was the symbol of the Chaldean powers of Assyria, and Babylon, Jer. 4:7; 50:17. The spade of the archaeologist has unearthed many, many huge images of lions at both Ninevah and Babylon.

"eagles wings" - The huge outstretched eagle's wings symbolized the territory over which the kingdom of the Ninevite-Assyrian ruled, Jer. 50:17. "Israel is a scattered sheep; the lions have driven him away: first the king of Assyria hath devoured him; and last this Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon hath broken his bones." Wings are used in Scripture as a symbol of overshadowing protection, Psa. 91:4; Luke 13:34.

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

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

"A man's heart was given to it" - This speaks of the humane rule that eminated from Babylon in contrast to the cruel rule that was characteristic of Ninevah. Ninevah was given over wholly to idolatry while Nebuchadnezzar did recognize Israel's God.

Verse 5

"Behold another beast" - This second beast is comparable to the silver of the image in Daniel 2. Belshazzar's outright denial of the God of Israel had brought the downfall of Babylon, Dan. 5:30,31. The transfer of world power from Babylon to the Medes and Persians took place in B.C. 542. Its mission was to restore Judah's commonwealth and extend the boundary of the kingdom of men.

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

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

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

<u>"devour much flesh"</u> - Indicative of its conquering power. Persia's dominion extended to India. The bear is an all-devouring animal, noted for its fierceness (Isa. 13:16-18).

"another like a leopard" - We come now to the third universal empire analagous to the brass of the image. This kingdom was of course the brazen coated Greeks. Just as the leopard is swift to its prey, so were the conquests of Alexander the Great. In 334 B.C. he defeated the power of Persia, and Greece became the universal world empire. It answers to the goat with the four horns pointing to the four winds in the eighth chapter. The body of the leopard represents the Greecian empire before it was divided.

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

<u>"four heads"</u> - Upon the death of Alexander, a long period of war ensued which resulted in the Greecian empire being divided by his generals into four divisions so that where one universal empire had existed, there now were four, Dan. 11:4. This took place in B.C. 301. These four divisions or four heads were as follows:

- First head—The kingdom of the south which included Egypt, Libya, Arabia, Cuele - Syria and Palestine under the Ptolemies. (The name of a line of Graeco-Egyptian kings who ruled from the death of Alexander the Great until the Roman subjugation of Egypt in 31 B.C.) There were 13 Ptolemy kings.
- 2) Second head—The kingdom of the north west, including Thrace, Bythinia, etc., or the Thraco-Macedonian.
- 3) Third head—The kingdom of the north east, comprehending the rest of Asia inclusive of Babylon and its province; and extending beyond the Euphrates to the Indus. India beyond the great river, though under this head revolted; so that the Indus became its boundary. This was the Macedo-Babylonish kingdom of the Seleucidae.
- 4) Fourth head-The kingdom of the west embracing Macedonia and Greece.

The lion, the bear, the leopard, and its third head or kingdom of the north, all established themselves in the city of Babylon where Alexander held as it were, the states-general of the world and which he had resolved to make the throne of his empire, but the decree of heaven was against the city, Isa. 14:22,23; 13:19,22. The purpose of Alexander was frustrated by death; and by B.C. 293, Babylon became an uninhabited desert by the inundation of the Euphrates, and the building of Seleucia on the banks of the Tigris about forty miles above, to which its citizens removed. Thus it was that Daniel 4:14,15, was fulfilled. The tree of Babylon was hewn down, its branches lopped, its leaves shaken off, and its fruit scattered; so that the nations got away from under it and their rulers from its branches.

Daniel 4:15 tells us that regardless of this the stump of his roots would remain in the earth. This it did under the sovereignty of the third head of the leopard for almost 250 years until it was taken over by the Roman empire in B.C. 65. There are four heads of the leopard and four horns of the goat, but only two figure in the prophecy of Daniel. This is indicated in the two thighs of brass. The Bible is only interested in those two powers which pertain to Judah, the Holy Land, and the saints in the time of the end, i.e. the king of the north and the king of the south. The king of the south represented by the protector of Egypt and the king of the north represented by the two legs of the image. "After this I saw in the night visions" - Darkness refers to those outside of Christ. Night visions could very well have reference to visions concerning this heathen Roman kingdom.

"it was dreadful and terrible and strong exceedingly, and it had great iron teeth" - The iron teeth connect this beast with the iron legs and iron element of the iron-clay feet and toes. Its claws were of brass (v. 19). This relates the beast to the power represented by the brazen parts of the image and speaks of the Greek-Roman alliance.

"it had great iron teeth; it devoured and brake in pieces" - The destruction by the mouth of Rome has been seen in the dark ages as the saints of God were martyred. Here now is an allusion to a crocodile.

"and stamped the residue with the feet of it" - The feet of the image and the feet of the dragon (two legs of the image, Eastern and Western Rome, i.e. Rome and Constantinople—Istanbul). This stamping will occur in the events that take place as the image (indicative and representative of the kingdom of men walks to Armageddon—man's last stand. So just as this power destroyed at first with his mouth, so he will in the future try to destroy with his feet and claws.

Let us emphasize, here is an important statement that has not as yet been fulfilled. Rome has never trampled the residue of Persia underfoot, it has never occupied all this territory. A power must yet arise which will occupy the territories of Babylon, Persia, Greece and Rome, to be afterwards subjected to a higher power, namely Jesus Christ. Russia will do this. Thus, like the image of Daniel chapter 2, whose metals will have to be confederated together, before they can be broken to pieces TOGETHER (2:35), so also this terrible fourth beast vision has a latter-day application.

"It had ten horns" - (Cp. Rev. 13:1). "These horns represent ten kingdoms established by the Barbarians upon all the Mediterranean territory conquered by them from the Romans. Their names at the time of establishment: Huns, Vandals, Visigoths, Burgundians, Gepidoe, Lombards, Franks, Suevi, Alans, Bavarians. They emerged from the Sea of dynasties, when by concession or victory they became rulers of portions of the empire, in independence of that power. The institutions of the horns, therefore took place at different periods, and they were those who subsisted when the conquest of the Western Roman Empire was completed, and its imperial power extinguished." Eureka III, 168-170.

Verse 8

"before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots" -Before Rome was divided in ten parts, it was divided in two, as seen by the legs of the image. The headquarters of these two divisions were Rome in the west (headquarters of the Holy Roman Catholic); and Constantinople in the east (headquarters of the Greek Catholic Church). Roman Catholicism was forced upon the peoples of Europe, and when they resisted the supremacy of the Pope, they were compelled by military might to accept his control. Gibbon, in his history on the "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire", records how the Emperor of the Franks (Pepin) in the year 758 A.D. gave to the Pope the "States of the Church" viz. three kingdoms in Italy: The Exarchate of Revenna, the Kingdom of the Lombards, and the State of Rome. These were confirmed by his son, the Emperor Charlemagne, and represented by the triple crown worn by the Pope. Charlemagne did more then anybody else to establish the supremacy of the Pope, and he used his army constantly to this end. In his conquests three powers (or horns) were completely overthrown:

- 1) The Lombards;
- 2) The Huns;
- 3) The Vandals

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

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

"of a man" - He is defined in 2 Thess. 2:3-4 (cp. Rev. 13:18).

JUDGMENT ON THE NATIONS - Vv. 9-12

At this point the scene of the frightful vision changes to afford Daniel a glimpse of the time when the lawless dominion of Gentile powers shall be broken by a manifestation of Divine power in the execution of judgment.

Verse 9

"cast down" - R.V. renders, "placed," Septuagint renders, "placed, set, fixed." The picture is that of thrones of judgment being set up, and the metaphors are borrowed from the solemnites of earthly judicatories, particularly of the great Sanhedrin, where the father of the consistory sat, with his assessors seated on either side of him, in the form of a semi-circle with the people standing before him (cp. Psa. 9:7; 122:5; Rev. 20:4; Psa. 149:9).

"the Ancient of days" - A most appropriate title for God of whom the Psalmist said, "Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God" (Psa. 90:2; see also Psa. 102:24-27; Job 36:26; Psa. 41:13). The progress of years means nothing to Yahweh who is above and beyond all measure of time. Nations may come and go, being limited by epochs and ages (Acts 17:26), but He continues. He only hath immortality, a nature Divine and indestructible, a nature offered to His saints, if worthy (2 Peter 1:4), and already bestowed upon His worthy Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

In verse 13, Jesus Christ is represented as being presented to Him. But how can Yahweh be said to be sitting upon the throne of judgment? Will He personally leave heaven and come upon the earth? No, He will not. But His power and glory will be manifested in the Lord Jesus and his immortalized brethren, and in that sense He is represented as sitting on the throne. When a man employs a servant to do work for him, the servant goes forth in the name of the one employing him. If he represents a company, he goes forth in the name of the company. In the day of their glory, Christ and the elect will represent God on earth, and in that sense God will be reigning on earth though He will not personally leave His throne in the heavens.

"garment as white as snow" - White is the symbol of righteousness (Isa. 1:18; Rev. 19:8). Notice the similarity with John's vision in Rev. 1:13-14.

"hair like wool" - i.e. white, symbolizing a crown of righteousness.

"his throne like the fiery flame" - Ezekiel had had a similar vision earlier in captivity (Ezek. 1:26-27). Both prophets saw the manifestation of Divine glory in the execution of judgment (cp. 2 Thess. 1:5).

"wheels" - An identification with the chariots of the cherubim of Ezekiel 1. Here is an indication of the far-reaching unlimited extent of the influence and power of this throne (Isa. 9:7). Several times in the biblical record the spirit power is manifested in chariots of fire (2 Kings 2:11; 6:17). The wheel is the symbol of eternity. God as the hub—the source of immortality proceeding to the rim which as a circle is endless. A beautiful symbol of immortality manifested in the host of the redeemed which no man can number.

Verse 10

"a fiery stream issued and came forth from before him" - This speaks of the soon coming consuming judgments of Almighty God that are to be poured out on the kingdom of men, Ezek. 38:19-23; Joel 3:9-16; Isa. 2:11-22; Zech. 14:1-5.

(The multitudinous host are referred to as the name of Yahweh, Isa. 30:26,27. They are a people of the name of Yahweh, Acts 15:14. How Yahweh will use this immortalized host is called out in Psa. 149:4-9).

"thousand thousands...and ten thousand times ten thousand" - This speaks of the host which no man can number, Rev. 7:9-17. A cloud of witnesses, Heb. 12:1; Luke 20:36; 2 Thess 1:9; Psa. 103:21.

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

Verse 11

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

"the horn" - This is the Pope or the power we considered in verse 8. This is the iniquitous system denounced throughout God's holy word. This horn will speak against Christ, and the immortalized saints in a desperate effort to crush them.

"I beheld even till the beast was slain" - This speaks of the combined phase of Armageddon, i.e. Eastern and Western Rome—two legs of the image: Rome and Constantinople. The Constantinople (present day Istanbul) phase being the political phase which will be dominated by Russia. This will be destroyed first, Zech. 14; Ezek. 38; 39; Joel 3.

Rome, the ecclesiastical phase will be destroyed last. In the main however, they represent the complete Armageddon picture, and will be destroyed. This will be the work of Christ and his immortalized saints, Psa. 149:5-9.

"the burning flame" - The Spirit of God is often likened unto fire (Rev. 4:5; Lev. 9:24). Here the throne of Christ is shown in belligerent manifestation against the wicked (Psa. 97:2-3; Isa. 66:15). Also an allusion to the flames of Divine fire that consume a sacrifice (cp. Ezek. 39:17-18).

Verse 12

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

Verse 13

"I saw in the night visions" - This speaks of the darkness of Gentile times in contrast to the light of God's truth.

"one like the Son of man" - This is the Lord Jesus Christ, Luke 6:5; 7:34; 9:22; 9:26,44,56,58.

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

"and came to the Ancient of days" - There is a very definite way in which Jesus has taken his saints before God, Luke 19:12-27; John 14:1-2; Col. 3:3,4. In other words Christ at the present time is taking out a people for his name by pleading before the throne of grace, by guiding the every step of his lively stones, moulding, grinding, polishing for a place in that eternal temple, Eph. 2:20-22. When the needed quantity has been taken out, "I will come again and receive you unto myself" says Jesus, John 14:1,2. We shall be one with him even as he is one with the Father, John 17:21. We shall reign on the earth, Rev. 5:10. Christ is now our mediator, 1 Tim. 2:5. Through him we can come boldly before the throne of grace, Heb. 4:16. In this way our conversation is in heaven, Phil. 3:20. Through prayer we can penetrate "into the holiest," Heb. 10:19.

Verse 14

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"And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages should serve him." - This of course speaks of the very nucleus of the plan of God for this earth and mankind upon it. Isa. 9:6; Dan. 2:44 Luke 19:12-15; Matt. 28:18. Christ does not reign as yet, so that those things were given him in prospect only, Heb. 2:8.

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

Verse 15

"I Daniel was grieved in my spirit" - The words in the original Hebrew are very emphatic "My spirit was grieved or sickened within its sheath or scabbard." This is very descriptive of Daniel's inability to comprehend the depth of God's prophecy. His comprehensive ability was fenced in so to speak. John on Patmos had similar experience (Rev. 5:4) and "wept much." This is an attitude in which God delights, but how many today are content to let these deeper things of the Word lie unexplored? Those who take interest in the Divine record are always rewarded with enlightenment.

Verse 16

"One of them" - The vision was superintended by angels (Heb. 1:14; cp. Dan. 4: 17; 8:13; 12:5-6; Zech. 2:3; 3:1.

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

"the truth" - Rotherham renders, "I made exact enquiry."

Verse 17

"Four kings" - Four great dynasties over the kingdom of men (cp. v. 23).

"shall arise" - Lit. "arising out of." Not all of these four dynasties were to arise in the future, for Babylon, the first, had already arisen, and the second, Persia, was on the verge of becoming a world power.

"these great beasts which are four" - This of course speaks of the same four universal empires that we come in contact with in Daniel chapter 2, i.e. Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece and Rome.

Verse 18

"but the saints of the most high shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever." - This is the ultimate purpose of God. This will be the fulfillment of Christ's prayer in John 17:20-26. See Rev. 5:10; i.e. the saints of the heavenlies, Eph. 1:3.

Verse 19

"teeth of iron and brass" - This corresponds with Daniel 4:15, where the stump of the tree representing Babylon was left in the earth banded with a strap of iron and a strap of brass. It corresponds with the two legs of Daniel's image, i.e. the two divisions of the Roman Empire. West in Rome representing the ecclesiastical or Roman Catholic church; east in Constantinople, and representing the military and classified as the Greek Catholic church. The fourth beast will unite east and west. Both Roman and Greek Catholicism will confederate with Russia to form the latter day manifestation of the fourth beast. Both will be destroyed as evidenced by the stone-power in Daniel 2.

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

"and stamped the residue with his feet" - The greater fulfillment of this will be seen as Russia drives south to Armageddon, Ezek. 38:8-12. Here is a further connection with Rev. 13:2. These feet are the feet of a BEAR. (Russia!) Dr. Thomas comments, "These two metals (iron and brass) being inserted in the symbol suggest the power it was designed to represent - a dominion constituted of the Greek and Latin elements. Has such a dynastic form of the Kingdom of Babylon ever existed? The history of the nations of the Mediterranean countries from B.C. 65 to 395 A.D. shows that it not only existed, but 'devoured and brake in pieces," as predicted it would; THOUGH IT HAS NOT YET "STAMPED THE RESIDUE WITH ITS BRAZEN-CLAWED FEET. ' When the Russo-Greek elements (clay and brass) are combined with the Gomerians (iron) in the Gog confederacy, the feet of the Graeco-Roman Dragon will be manifested; and it will then 'stamp the residue with the feet of it.' Hitherto the Dragon has destroyed with its 'great iron teeth'; hereafter it will use its feet and claws. The feet of the image, and the feet of the dragon, have yet to be formed out of existing elements; and it is the king of the north's mission to accomplish the work." (EXPOSITION OF DANIEL, p. 14)

"The horn that had eyes, and a mouth that spake very great things." - This takes us back to verse 8, where we have the same words referring to the Pope. Cp. Rev. 13:5-10.

"stout" - arrogant, cp. 2 Thess. 2:4.

Verse 21

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

Verse 22

"Until the ancient of days come" - The Ancient of days here is God, who of course does not come to the earth in person, John 1:18; Ex. 33:20. Just as Yahweh was represented by the angel of His presence in the days of Moses, Ex. 23:20,21. So He was and is and will be represented by His son, the Lord Jesus Christ in the very near future. This great truth is emphasized 320 times in the New Testament alone, i.e. the second coming of Christ to this earth. With him will be his immortalized saints. They will then possess Divine nature (2 Peter 1:4), the "glory of God" (Rom. 5:2), and will be named with His name (Rev. 3:12). Thus His glory, power and authority will be manifested in them, and they will be one with Him (John 17:21).

Verse 23

"the fourth beast" - This is simply a repetition of the description given of the fourth universal empire, i.e. Rome (verse 7).

"diverse" - Different in its form of government, being a confederacy of nations.

Verse 24

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

Verse 25

"He shall speak great words against the most high" - Original—"He shall speak as if he were God." This certainly applies in every detail to the Popes of Rome.

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

"and shall wear out the saints of the most high." - How significantly this has been fulfilled against those who have refused to submit to their idolatrous worship. The dark ages and the period of reformation speaks loud and clear against this bloody, persecuting, ruthless and impure church. "and think to change times and laws" i.e.:

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

"until a time, and times and the dividing of time." - A time is based upon a Jewish year, 360 days. A time singular, 360 times plural 720, a dividing of time, 180, making a total of 1260. On the principle of a day for a year (Gen. 29:27; Num. 14:34; Ezek. 4:6), we have a period of 1260 years.

The Pope was established as universal Bishop by the decree of the Emperor Phocas, 608-610, and for cneturies the Popes exercised temporal power over the nations. That is, they not only exercised spiritual authority, but interferred in the politics of the nations, and waged war against their enemies. This came to an end in 1868-1870 (1260 years after the decree of Phocas) when the temporal power of the Papacy was taken from the Popes. The Popes have no longer the power to persecute as they had formerly. Note the decline in power in the last 1260 years from the peak reached in 608-610 A.D.

| RISE IN POWER | 533 | Justinian, Emperor of Constantinople, declares the Biship of Rome, as superior to all others, giving him the title of Universal Bishop |
|---------------|---------|---|
| | | 1793 : French Revolution |
| | 549-554 | Justinian decrees that Rome, which has been freed from Gothic rule, is to be left to Pope's authority. He receives control of Municipal and Provincial Governments. |
| | | 1809 : Napoleon annexes Papal States |
| | 590 | Gregory I, surnamed "the Great," becomes Pope. New era for Papacy begins 1850 : Pius IX is driven into exile |
| | 600 | Gregory's Popedom at zenith |
| | | 1860 : Two-thirds of Papal States lost to Italy |
| | 608-610 | Phocas, New Emperor of Constantinople, confirms Justinian's earlier decrees |
| | ŧ | 1868-70 : End of temporal power of Papacy. Rome becomes capital of Italy |

Verse 26

"but the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end" - Not final judgment but preliminary executed by forces raised by God at the appropriate time, ending at Rev. 14:8-11.

Verse 27

"the kingdom...shall be given to the people of the saints" - We have here a very sobering reflection. Not all that are called to be saints will be chosen, but only those who have measured up to the commands of Christ. Not those of Isa. 13:3, but those of 1 Cor. 1:2. These correspond with the remnant of the woman's seed, Rev. 12:17. "all dominions shall obey and serve him" - This will not be a matter of choice. They will either serve or be destroyed, Isa. 60:12. The result of this will be a fulfillment of God's great purpose with the earth, Num. 14:21; Isa. 11:9; Hab. 2:14.

Verse 28

<u>"my cogitations much troubled me"</u> - The reason for this is to be found in Dan. 9:2, where we learn that Daniel thought that the establishment of the kingdom of God was at hand. The vision received had revealed to him that there were long epochs of persecution ahead for the people of God. So much Daniel would now realize, although the vision was not perfectly understood at the time (see 8:27).

It should be different with us for we see these events being fulfilled and the exhortation should be LOOK UP! LIFT UP YOUR HEADS! For your redemption draweth nigh.

JUDGMENT ON EASTERN DOMINIONS

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

Verse l

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

Verse 2

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

"river Ulai" - Same as river "Euleus" which divided Shushan (the capital) in two parts.

Verse 3

"A ram which had two horns" - In our previous lessons we have been considering four empires, but in this chapter we only have two, viz., the Grecian and the Persian. It will be noted that Babylon is not mentioned, its fate had now been completely sealed.

The ram here is a symbol of the Medo-Persia power. We are not left to guesswork in this matter for Daniel specifically calls out this Empire in Dan. 8:20. Cyrus was the founder of that Empire. Cyrus was the son of Cambyses, king of Persia, he was grandson of Astyages king of Media. Cyrus married Royana, the daughter and only child of his uncle Eyazares, called in scripture Ahasuerus. In this way he succeeded to both crowns and thus united Media and Persia. A ram was the symbol of the Medes and the Persians. The Persian kings wore ram's heads made of gold instead of a crown. An interesting note is found in the ruins of Persepolis where there has been uncovered several ram's heads with two horns, one higher than the other. Also a ram's head is found stamped on some ancient Persian coins.

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

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

Verse 4

"I saw the ram pushing westward and northward and southward" - The ram signified this Medo-Persian kingdom (the silver dominion of the metalic image) under the leadership of Cyrus; and the language here used is indicative of pushing their conquests to the west, north, and south. Calmet tells us that the principle theatre of their wars was:

- "Westward" Under Cyrus the Persians pushed westward to the Aegean Sea, subduing Babylonia, Syria, Asia Minor.
- "Northward" Subduing the Lydians, Iberians, Albanians, Armenians, Cappadocians
- "Southward" Arabia, Egypt, Ethiopia. Darius and Xerxes extended the Empire into parts of Greece, and also Eastward as far as India. However, since that extension to the East was irrelevant to the people of the Holy Land, these activities are not shown in the vision.

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

Verse 5

"Behold a he-goat" - This refers to Greece under the leadership of Alexander the Great. A goat was a very appropriate symbol of the Grecian or Macedonian people. Two hundred years before the time of Daniel the Greeks were called "aegeadoe", the goat's people. Adam Clarke gives the following explanation:

"Caranus, their first king, going with a multitude of Greeks to seek a new habitation in Macedonia, was advised by an oracle to take the goats for his guides; and afterwards, seeing a herd of goats fleeing from a violent storm, he followed them to Edessa, and there fixed the seat of his empire, and made them his ensigns or standards, and called the place Aegea, the goat's town and the people Aegeadoe, the goat's people."

Alexander the Great named his son Alexander Aegus, Alexander the Goat. This is also the derivative of the name of the Aegean Sea.

"came from the west" - Europe lies to the west of Asia.

"on the face of the whole earth" - i.e. he was carrying everything before him.

"touched not the ground" - This speaks of the rapidity of Alexander's conquests. By the time Alexander was thirty years of age he had conquered all Asia. This speed of conquest is aptly represented by the leopard with four wings in the seventh chapter. It also signifies that nothing could stop him.

<u>"a notable horn between his eyes"</u> - We are not left in doubt as to the identity of this horn, for the angel tells us in verse 21 that it is the first king which was Alexander.

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

"and ran unto him in the fury of his power" - These words are exceedingly descriptive of the severe battles that took place between the Greeks and the Persians. History tells us that Alexander first vanquished the generals of Darius at the river Granicus in Phrygia; he next attacked and totally routed Darius at the straits of Issus in Cilicia; and afterwards at the plains of Arbela in Assyria. One can hardly read these words without having the image of Darius' army standing and guarding the river Granicus, and of Alexander on the other side, with his forces plunging in swimming across the stream and rushing on the enemy, with all the fire and fury that can be conceived. The prize was world domination. This began in 334, and within three years from that battle, the Persian power was completely broken.

Verse 7

<u>"and smote the ram, and brake his two horns"</u> - This obviously is the complete subjugation of Media and Persia at which time the royal city of Persepolia, the capitol of the Persian Empire was sacked and burned. Alexander was moved with "choler against him" (Darius) because Darius had endeavored to draw off his captains with bribes and had laboured to induce some of his friends to assassinate him. Alexander, even though his forces were outnumbered five to one, would listen to no proposals of peace and was determined never to rest till he had destroyed Darius and his whole empire. In Media, Darius was seized and made prisoner by some of his own treacherous subjects and afterwards basely murdered.

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

"he cast him down to the ground and stamped upon him" - He totally destroyed the family and overturned the whole monarchy.

Verse 8

"the he-goat waxed very strong" - He (Alexander) had subdued nearly the whole of the then known world.

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

"for it came up four notable ones toward the four winds of heaven" - The regal family being dead, the governors of provinces usurped the title of kings, and Anti-Gonus, one of them, being slain at the Battle of Issus, they were reduced to four, as we have already seen in chapter seven. (1) Seleucus, who had Syria and Babylon, from whom came the Seleucidea (famous in history). (2) Lysimachus, who had Asia Minor. (3) Ptolemy, son of Lagus who had Egypt, from whom sprang the Lagidae. (4) Cassander, who had Greece and the neighboring countries.

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

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

"and out of one of them came forth a little horn" - This speaks to us of the rise of the Roman Empire after conquering the Ptolemy kings (one of the four divisions of the Grecian Empire, though it was very small in its beginning, yet it was very great at the zenith of its power.) Some feel that this little horn was Antiochus Epiphanes.

<u>"waxed exceeding great toward the south"</u> - This refers to the Romans making Egypt a province of their Empire.

"toward the east" - They conquered Syria and made it a Province.

"toward the pleasant land" - This was Judea. It is referred to as the pleasant land, Psa. 106:24; Jer. 3:19; Dan. 11:16,41; Ezek. 20:6,15; Zech. 7:14; Jer. 12:10; Deut. 11:10-12; Heb. 11:16. It is a matter of record that they took Judea and made it a Province. In A.D. 70 they burnt the temple and scattered the Jews over the face of the earth.

Verse 10

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

"cast down some of the host and stars to the ground" - This is speaking of the overthrow of Israel's leaders.

Verse 11

"even to the prince of the host" - i.e. their aggression went so far as actual crucifixion of Christ himself (cp. V. 25). Isa. 55:4. "prince" in Hebrew means commander, but Israel refused to obey or heed the words of their commander.

<u>"prince of the host"</u> - This is the Lord Jesus Christ. SAR-HATZ-ZAYAH = Commander of the Army (cp. Isa. 55:4; Dan. 8:25). Notice that here the Lord is manifested as Commander of the Army to overcome the military adversary of the people of Israel, whilst the Son of Man is to overcome the ecclesiastical system of Rome which persecuted the saints (7:13).

"the daily sacrifice was taken away" - This is the symbol of Judaism being taken away in the sacrifice of Christ. This could no longer be practised after the overthrow of Jerusalem and the scattering of Israel.

"sanctuary cast down" - This speaks of the temple being destroyed by Titus in A.D. 70 in the siege and sack of Jerusalem, Matt. 24:2,15.

Verse 12

<u>"an host was given him"</u> - See margin—"Or the host was given over for the transgression against the daily sacrifice." That is the Jews were given over to the persecution of Rome because they completely defied the laws of Almighty God. <u>An host also means "appointed time," an indication that Rome's triumph is only</u> to last for a set time. This set time is later revealed to Daniel, 9:24; 10:1.

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

"that certain saint" - See marginal rendering, i.e. "Or the numberer of secrets or the wonderful numberer." That certain saint is called "Palmoni." (See margin) Palmoni signifies the numberer. Daniel hears two angels speaking with each other. One of these angels is Palmoni, the numberer, who undoubtedly controls the time table of God's overall plan, so to speak.

There is nothing left to chance in God's universe. There is a set time to favor Zion, Psa. 102:13. There is also a set time for Christ's second coming and the establishment of God's kingdom in this earth. He now speaks of this intervening time and asks: "How long"? And the answer is given in verse 14.

Verse 14

"two thousand and three hundred days" - On the principle of a day for a year, this would be 2300 years. The opening vision of this eighth chapter is the struggle between the ram (Medo-Persia) and the he goat (Greece). Alexander invaded Asia and conquered the Persians in the battle of Granicus in 334 B.C. If we subtract 334 from 2300 we come up with 1966. Remember, this was the date of the beginning of the cleansing of the sanctuary - Christ seems to refer to this time in Luke 21:24.

In June of 1967 the old city of Jerusalem fell into Israeli hands after 1900 years of desolation by Gentile powers. The signs of the times tell us that the stage is almost set for the avenging of the sanctuary upon Gog and his allies, Ezek. 39.

Verse 16

<u>"and I heard a man's voice"</u> - This was the voice of an angel of God, Heb. 13:2. Gabriel-El Gibbor, cp. 9:21 and Luke 1:19,26; Isa. 9:6-9.

Verse 17

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

<u>"for at the time of the end shall be the vision"</u> - Hebrew rendering: "The vision shall have an end at the proper time."

Verse 18

"I was in deep sleep" - It is evident that Daniel received this vision as a dream just as did Nebuchadnezzar in chapters 2 and 4.

"he touched me and set me upright" - Margin: "made me stand upon my standing" that is, I was awakened and given the interpretation of this vision in person, by an angel of Yahweh. Thus we have the same authority of Isaiah 9:6, "The zeal of the Lord of hosts shall perform this."

Verse 19

"I will make thee know what shall be in the last end of the indignation" -This promise could only be made by one of authority who is capable of seeing the end from the beginning.

"for at the time appointed the end shall be" - This speaks of the time-table of God which acts with minute precision. See verses 13, and 14.

Verse 20

"the ram which thou sawest" - This as we have found refers to the Medo-Persian kingdom.

"the rough goat" - This was Greece-see notes on verse 5.

"the first king" - This was Alexander the Great-see previous notes in this chapter.

Verse 22

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

Verse 23

"when the transgressors are come to the full" - This transgression came to its full between the time of the Testaments, reaching its full peak with Antiochus Epiphanes when he offered a sow in sacrifice upon the altar of the temple in open blasphemy against God. Of course the grand fulfillment is yet future, and will be fulfilled completely when the latter day Assyrian comes into the land.

"a king of fierce countenance" - This relates to the eastern leg of Daniel's image. This division of eastern Rome originally established by Constantine, and which later became the symbol of the king of the north. First it was Rome; then Turkey; and in the very near future, Russia. Rome ultimately made Constantinople its headquarters under Constantine, approximately 330 A.D.

"understanding dark sentences" - Very learned and skillful in all things pertaining to government and allied knowledge.

Verse 24

"but not by his own power" - The Roman Empire drew its nourishment or power from Rome and Italy. It was here the body of the tree grew, even though the branches extended over Greece, Asia, Syria and Egypt.

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

Verse 25

"through his policy" - His policy in the days of Christ was that of world domination. This is his policy today, but it shall come to an end.

"he shall cause craft to prosper" - Just as there was a marriage of convenience between eastern and western Rome-in the same way will Russia have the blessing of the Pope as she swings south to take Jerusalem.

<u>"craft"</u> - MIRMAH = deceit, fraud. R.S.V. renders, "deceit." The same word is used by Jeremiah in relation to religion (cp. Jer. 9:6). Thus the policy of Emperors and Popes is aptly described.

"he shall magnify himself in his heart" - This has certainly been fulfilled, i.e. the Pope has set himself up as god upon earth.

"by peace destroy many" - Even today Russia speaks peace, but war is in her heart. When the Gogian confederacy is formed, and the alliance between Russia and Catholicism established, people will say "peace and safety" (1 Thess. 5:3), but sudden destruction will come. Before this however, Christ will have returned. "he shall also stand up against the prince of princes" - The first time Rome opposed Christ was at his crucifixion. This is the reference in verse 11, "the prince of the host" - singular. This time, however, reference is to the immortalized multitudinous body or host—the Yahweh Elohim—the saints with Christ, Zech. 14:5.

"he shall be broken without hand" - This speaks of the final destruction of the kingdom of men, Dan. 2:44; Ezek. 38:39; Zech. 14; Joel 3; etc.

Verse 26

"vision of evening and morning" - Same as that spoken of in verse 14. Contrast between the evening (darkness)—the things of the flesh. Morning speaks of light, things of the spirit.

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Verse 27

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

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

Chapter 9

JUDGMENT ON ISRAEL AFTER THE FLESH

The prophets of God, though understanding in outline the purpose of God and the salvation of a multitude which was to go hand in hand with the purposed Godmanifestation, did not fully comprehend the long period that had to elapse before the kingdom would be established in Israel under Messiah (Mark 13:32; 1 Pet. 1: 10-12). So also Daniel, who expected Israel to soon attain unto its final glorious state. The prayer, contained in the chapter before us, was uttered with such thoughts in mind, being a petition for the final and complete "peace of Jerusalem" (Psa. 122:6), for the final glory of the land, the temple and the people. Thus, his prayer has not as yet seen its complete fulfillment. It remains on record today as a witness of the "Hope of Israel" which shall become a reality in the near future, to be witnessed by the resurrected glorified host of faithful men and women who cherished this Hope and lived in anticipation of its fulfillment (cp. Dan. 12:13).

* * Jeremiah's Prophecy Fulfilled - Vv 1-2

Verse 1

"The first year of Darius" - Cp. 5:31. The fall of Babylon which occured in this year was a signal to Daniel that the long awaited time of restoration was at hand. His prayer could only be partially answered at this time (cp. Dan. 11:1).

"the son of Ahasuerus" - This is Darius the Mede spoken of in Dan. 5:31. Cyrus the Persian was the real conqueror of Babylon. Darius who was his uncle and father-in-law, and was reigning as regent. They reigned jointly for 3 years.

"was made king" - by Cyrus who was the actual conqueror of Babylon.

Verse 2

"I Daniel understood by books" - The prophecy referred to here is found in Jer. 25:12; 29:10. By these prophecies Daniel knew that the captivity was to last 70 years, and from his own calculations he could see that the time period was complete having had its beginning in 606 B.C. If we are alert we can see the counterpart in the days in which we live and we should follow Daniel's example.

Verse 3

"I set my face" - Daniel cleanses his heart and mind of the things of the flesh—figuratively enters his closet and shuts the doors about him (Matt. 6:6)— closes his windows to Babylon and opens them to Jerusalem. Contrast with Jer. 2:27

"to seek by prayer, and supplications, with fastings, and sackcloth, upon his body and ashes upon his head." All of this symbolizing his abject humility before God. This was the same type of prayer that Solomon prayed at the dedication of the temple (1 Kings 8:47,48). Cp. Psa. 122:6; Psa. 79; Neh. 1:4-11

Verse 4

"I prayed unto the LORD my God" - "LORD" Where LORD or GOD is printed in capitals, the Hebrew original reads YAHWEH. This is the covenant title of Deity, proclaimed to Moses when God was about to deliver Israel, Ex. 3:14. It means "I WILL BE," (manifest in a multitude), and proclaims the fact that God not only has future plans for natural Israel, but spiritual alike. Daniel then in this prayer is looking forward to the blessed time when the righteous of this day will become the immortal children of God, manifest in a host which no man can number. (Rev. 7) "O Lord" - This is once again Yahweh, and should be printed in capitals. This is one of the 134 places in the Old Testament where the Sopherim (the official revisers of the Hebrew text) state that the original has been altered, and should be Yahweh. Thus Daniel commences his prayer by reminding Yahweh of His ultimate purpose with Israel.

"the great and dreadful God" - God here is from Hebrew "EL"—signifies might or power, Deut. 7:21,22. To those that are His, He is a God of protection, but to those who oppose He is a consuming fire. Cp. Psa. 91 with Ezek. 38:18-23.

"keeping the covenant and mercy" - Even though Israel did not keep their part of the covenant with God, they could know of a certainty that God would keep Hisif they obeyed, Deut. 7:9; Ex. 34:6,7; Psa. 89:34-37; 110; Jer. 33:20-22.

Verse 5

"we have sinned" - Here is a basic principle that must be manifested every day of our life if we are going to get through to Almighty God. We must acknowledge that we are unworthy, sinners, totally inadequate and undeserving before God. This is the reason for the words of the thief as found in Luke 23:40,41. Also 1 Kings 8:47-48; Neh. 1:6-7; 9:33-34; Psa. 106:6; Jer. 14:7. Israel had sinned by departing from God's precepts, Isa. 63:9; Jer. 29:10-11.

Verse 6

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

Verse 7

"righteousness belongeth unto thee" - Here we have a man, in captivity, his beloved city of Jerusalem and the temple in ruins, the nation practically destroyed and yet he acknowledged the righteousness of God, and has the necessary faith to see that this is a part of his overall plan. This is a very necessary lesson for us to incorporate into <u>our</u> daily lives, i.e. that regardless of any temporal problem, reverses, setback or disappointment; we realize that we are the clay, He is the potter. We are lively stones being shaped and moulded for a place in the temple of God.

"to the men of Judah and unto all Israel" - Both the ten and the two tribes were guilty before God. They had transgressed His holy law—they had turned to heathen idolatry. Israel, longer in captivity than Judah, had probably fallen deeper into iniquity than Judah. The entire prophecy of Hosea treats of this.

Verse 8

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

Verse 9

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

"neither have we obeyed the voice of the Lord our God" - Here is our first approach to God, i.e. confession of our sins, our shortcomings, our complete unworthiness before his august presence. An outstanding example is given us in Luke 23:41 in the thief on the cross. This is the attitude the nations of the world must assume before the kingdom is established, Isa. 2:9-22; 66:2. Verse 11

"therefore the curse is poured upon us" - Israel had no one to blame but themselves. The entire 12 tribes had agreed to these curses as being a just punishment in the event they transgressed God's law. There are over fifty-five separate and distinct curses that were to come upon this nation and land, outlined clearly in Deut. 28. The probable reference here is to molten metal being poured upon criminals—Heb. "Tittach" from root Heb. "Nathach", Lev. 26:14; Deut. 27:15-26; 28:15; 29:20; 30:17-19; 31:17-18; 32:19-42; notice that this attitude will be reversed, Ezek. 34:23-30.

Verse 12

"he hath confirmed his words" - All the warnings of the earlier prophets have been fulfilled in the captivity (cp. Zech. 1:4-6).

"for under the whole heaven hath not been done...as upon Jerusalem" - Cp. Lam. 1:12; 2:13; 4:6; Ezek. 5:9; Joel 2:2; Amos 3:2. We must keep in mind that the captivity under the Romans and the conditions of the Jews since exceed by far all previous trouble. The guilt of crucifying Messiah, and rejection of the Divine mercy exceeded even that which happened earlier (Matt. 23:35; 24:21; Mark 13:19; Luke 21:22). Just as God chose Israel in whom He would manifest His power, mercy and benevolence, in the same way through this nation He would show to the world that it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. Israel will be the focal point of the greatest conflict the world has ever seen in the very near future.

Verse 13

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

<u>"yet made we not our prayer"</u> - R.S.V. renders, "Yet we have not entreated." They had not learned the lesson. "In vain have I smitten your children; they received no correction" (Jer. 2:30; 5:3; Isa. 9:13; Hos. 7:7,10,14).

<u>"that we might turn"</u> - Punishment was designed to accomplish that end. If they had learned the lesson of the captivity they may have avoided the greater judgment of A.D. 70.

Verse 14

"therefore hath the Lord watched upon the evil and brought it upon us" - Even though Israel was the chosen people of God they would not be protected from God's inexorable laws—"as a man soweth that shall he also reap", Gal. 6:7,8. Also the wages of sin is death, Rom. 6:23. Daniel would have learned this from Jeremiah's writings, Jer. 31:28; 44:27.

"thou hast brought forth thy people out of Egypt with a mighty hand" - Here is another of the great basic fundamentals of God's precious word, i.e. "out of Egypt have I called my son." Not only was Israel delivered out of the darkness of the land of sin and death, through the waters of baptism (Red Sea), 1 Cor. 10:1,2, into the land of Canaan, but everyone today who comes into Christ follows the same procedure. The grand and glorious climax will take place when this mortal puts on immortality. Exhortation: Just as Israel failed by turning to idolatry, so can we. Just as Yahweh made for Himself a Name, - in Israel's deliverance, so He will in Russia's destruction, Ezek. 38:23.

Verse 16

"O Lord according to all thy righteousness, let thine anger be turned away" -Note how Daniel's very being is projected into this petition. Note also how he prays subject to God's will. He asks his personal wants to be fulfilled only in relation to the fixed and eternal purpose of God. Let this be an example or pattern for our prayer life, i.e. if it be thy will, Almighty God, and not mine, help me O Yahweh to accept thy decision, knowing that thou art the potter, and we are the clay. Note 1:14; 8:47-48; 1 John 1:9.

Verse 17

"now therefore, O our God, hear the prayer of thy servant" - If a prayer of this intensity poured from the heart of one like Daniel and our Saviour (John 17); how much more should we bombard the throne of grace morning, noon and night, and so much more as we see the day approaching.

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"cause thy face to shine" - Metaphor from the sun, which gladdens all that it beams upon, Num. 6:25; Mal. 4:2.

Verse 18

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

"incline thine ear" - See Psa. 31:2 for clearer rendering of this phrase. It is descriptive, pleading as it were with God to bow down from His elevated position so as to hear better the petition of the caller.

Verse 19

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

"for thine own sake" - This is the strongest plea in Scripture, see Jer. 14:21.

Verse 20

"and whiles I was speaking" - Note that this is repeated in verse 21 showing that Daniel received the answer to his prayer before he had concluded his plea before the throne of grace.

"confessing my sin" - Note that Daniel recognizes his own weakness before that of Israel.

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

<u>"speaking...praying...confessing"</u> - This verse expresses the two main facets of the prayer:

- * * Confessing sin and acknowledging Yahweh's righteousness;
- * * Seeking His intercession.

Verse 21

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

"the man Gabriel" - That is the angel Gabriel who had appeared to him as a man-many have entertained angels unawares, Heb. 13:2; this angel had already appeared to Daniel, chapter 8:1,16, by the river Ulai. This same angel revealed the birth of Jesus to Mary.

"being caused to fly swiftly" - Literally meaning to move swiftly as one breathless and wearied out with quick running. God hears humble prayers such as this with great delight and sends the speediest answers. Gabriel himself on this occasion was ordered to make more than usual speed.

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

Verse 22

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

Verse 23

"At the beginning of thy supplications" - A remarkable fulfillment of Isaiah's words, "Before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear" (Isa. 65:24; Heb. 1:14; Psa. 103:20). This is an indication how heaven heeds the actions of faithful men.

"greatly beloved" - Margin: a man of desires. See Ezek. 23:6,12, that is the object of God's delight. Daniel stands as the Old Testament counterpart to John the beloved disciple of our Lord, John 21:20,24. An acknowledgement of this nature was given to Jesus at his baptism (Matt. 3:17). Daniel was like John (Jo. 21:20-24) to whom was given the Apocalypse.

"Understand the matter" - Christ also endorsed the angelic exhortation (Matt. 24:15; see also Dan. 12:10).

Verse 24

"seventy weeks" - On the principle of a day for a year as we have previously considered in Gen. 29:27; Num. 14:34; Ezek. 4:6; we would have 7 times 70 or 490 years. The starting point is given here just as it was for the 2300 year period in chapter eight. We find this in verse 25. It dates from the decree of Artaxerxes to restore Jerusalem and in Nehemiah 2:1 (we are told that this was in the month Nisan-March or April). In the twentieth year of Artaxerxes, B.C 456-490 years later in the month Nisan, Messiah the prince was crucified. By the Julian calendar Christ was crucified in the month Nisan 4746. 490 years subtracted from this takes us back to the month Nisan 4256—the very month and year that the decree went forth from Artaxerxes.

There are many indications in this verse which suggest that the time-period mentioned has a double application, reaching to the epoch of Christ's second advent. In the Hebrew the word "weeks" is literally "sevens" (SHEBUAH), without specifying whether weeks, years or jubilees are intended. Thus, literally, "seventy sevens" are "determined upon thy people." As seventy WEEKS or a day for a year principle (see Gen. 29:27; Ezek. 4:6), the prophecy was fulfilled at the first advent. But as seventy JUBILEES the prophecy will be fulfilled at the second advent, numbering the beginning of this Jubilee-period from the time when all tribes of Israel had been allotted their portion of the land by Joshua. In Lev. 25:8 the Jubilee is styled "a week of sabbaths," or seven sabbaths (7 x 7 = 49 years). It has been suggested that seventy such Jubilee cycles (49 years x 70 =3430 years) reach from the distribution of the land under Joshua unto the epoch of the establishment of the kingdom in the near future (see W. H. Carter, "PROPHECY AND CHRONOLOGY). According to his writings such a period concludes in 1997. This time will see fulfilled completely that which Christ accomplished partially at his first advent.

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

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

"to make reconciliation for iniquity" - The word reconciliation should be covering. The same word as is rendered elsewhere, atonement. The death of Jesus effects a covering for sins—see Rom. 4:6-7; Gal. 3:26-28. In Eden God provided a covering for Adam, Gen. 3:21, to cover their shame—a symbol for sin, see Rev. 16:15. And this pointed forward to Jesus the lamb of God, Rev. 13:8.

"to bring in everlasting righteousness" - i.e. "age lasting justification." See 1 Cor. 1:26-31; Phil. 3:8-14.

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

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

Dr. Thomas renders, "To the anointing the Holy One of holy ones." In "EXPOSITION OF DANIEL, he comments as follows, "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 v. 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.45:6)'. He is therefore the Holy One of all these associates, or the Holy One of holy ones, as I have rendered the text; The Most Holy, Holiest of All" (page 35). Although Christ was acknowledged as such by a minority group at his first advent, the full significance of this statement will not be appreciated until he returns, see notes on "seventy weeks."

Verse 25

"from the going forth of the commandment" - This was the decree of Artaxerxes we spoke of in verse 24. It is that spoken of in Neh. 2:1.

"Messiah the Prince" - The Lord Jesus Christ-the Prince of peace.

<u>"seventy weeks"</u> - 49 years. This has reference to the perilous, troublesome forty-nine years when Ezra and Nehemiah were attempting to rebuild and restore the wall, sacred constitutions and civil establishments of the Jews.

"threescore and two weeks" - This was the period of time that carries us between the Testaments and the rise of the Roman Empire. The Jews were looking for a leader that would come with pomp and splendor to lead them against the mighty Roman armies. The Jewish state was formed and Rome reached out to control it (Dan. 8:9). Seven weeks, sixty two weeks equal 69 weeks. The one week is taken up with $3\frac{1}{2}$ days (or years) of John the baptist's work and $3\frac{1}{2}$ days (or years) of the mission of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Verse 26

"after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off" - This of course has direct reference to the crucifixion of the Lord Jesus Christ in A.D. 33.

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

"the people of the prince" - The prince is the Lord Jesus, the people are the Roman nation. They are here represented as doing the will of the Lord Jesus. At his resurrection, all power was given to him in heaven and earth—Matt. 28:18. It was he who brought Rome against Israel to punish the latter, Deut. 28:49; Matt. 22:7.

The destruction spoken of in Luke 20:16-19, took place in A.D. 70, and those that had heard, understood and believed God's word safely escaped this destruction.

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

Verse 27

<u>"He"</u> - God

<u>"confirm the covenant"</u> - beautifully explained in Romans 15:8, "Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers."

"with many" - This refers to that group that hearkened to the message of God's word, Dan. 12:2.

<u>"for one week"</u> - This speaks of $3\frac{1}{2}$ years of the work of John the baptist— $3\frac{1}{2}$ years of the work of Christ.

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

"sacrifice and oblation to cease" - Dr. Thomas renders, "sacrificing and offering," and makes reference to the verb "cease" as follows, "This verb is not used OF THE PRIESTS as slaughtering victims in sacrifice; but of PRIVATE PERSONS offering sacrifice at their own cost. So says Gesenius. Peter's doctrine at Pentecost caused 3000 to cease from sacrifices and offerings as worshippers; but the priests continued sacrificing victims till the destruction of the Temple by Titus A.D. 70" (EXPOSITION OF DANIEL, page 37).

"overspreading of abominations" - R.V. Renders, "Upon the wing of abominations" In Dan. 11:31 the word abominations is rendered "idols," an allusion to the standards of the Roman Legions, portraying a golden eagle with outstretched wings, grasping a thunderbolt. These eagles were sanctified in the Temple of Mars, and were recognized as the symbol of Rome (cp. Deut. 28:49).

"he shall make it desolate" - A thirteenth century Hebrew MSS quotes, "In the temple there shall be abomination." This rendering is similar to the Septuagint version. This then is the prophecy to which Christ made reference in Matt. 24:15.

"the consummation" - Cp. Matt. 24:2. This is not yet completed, but at that time the punishment of the desolator shall be due, and shall be brought about swiftly.

"that determined shall be poured upon the desolate" - Note the margin: not the 'desolate' but the DESOLATOR. This marginal rendering is confirmed by R.S.V. and Rotherham. The fourth beast (Dan. 7:11) brought desolations to Jewry in A.D. 70, and it will again be set up in its fulness when the Russian Gogue comes into the Holy Land, but then that which has been determined shall be poured upon him, even the seventh vial of God's wrath (Rev. 16), and Christ's kingdom will be set up.

| ADDITIONAL HISTORICAL DETAILS to the SEVENTY WEEKS of v.24 PERSIAN KINGS AS GIVEN IN PTOLEMY'S CANON: | | | | |
|--|------------|-------------|-------|--|
| | | | | |
| Kings | Reign | Connumerary | Julia | |
| Communication with Device | | | | |
| Cyrus - jointly with Darius | ~ ~ | | | |
| for two years | 9 from | | 538 | |
| Cambyses | 8 | 529 | 529 | |
| Darius, Hystaspes** | 36 | 521 | 521 | |
| Xerxes | 21 | 485 | 486 | |
| Artaxerxes I, Longimanus++ | 41 | 464 | 465 | |
| Darius II, Nothus | 19 | 423 | 424 | |
| Artaxerxes II, Mnemon | 46 | 404 | 405 | |
| Artaxerxes III, Ochus | 21 | 358 | 359 | |
| Darius III, Cordomannus | 4 | 335 | 336 | |
| Alexander the Great | - | 331 | 332 | |

1. Suggestion

Commencing date of "70 weeks" is supposed to be the seventh of Artaxerxes, i.e. B.C. 456. 490 years from then = A.D. 33. BUT, the decree considered here (Ezra 7:7) DID NOT command the rebuilding of JERUSALEM.

2. Suggestion

Commencing date of "70 weeks" is supposed to be the 20th of Artaxerxes(++) according to Neh. 2, i.e. B.C. 444. 490 years from then = A.D. 46, which does not agree with the assumed historical date of Christ's crucifixion.

3. Suggestion

 $69\frac{1}{2}$ week-years $(7 + 62 + \frac{1}{2})$ are taken to be <u>lunar</u> years. Thus $69\frac{1}{2} \times 7 = 486\frac{1}{2}$ lunar years make 472 solar years. Accepting that the commencing date is again the 20th of Artaxerxes (++), i.e. B.C. 444, 472 years brings us to A.D. 28-29, as the date of Jesus' crucifixion.

We, personally, can favour none of these suggestions, since all of them accept that Artaxerxes (++) issued the decrees in question. The time that would have elapsed between the initial decree of Cyrus in B.C. 536 and the 20th of Artaxerxes in B.C. 444 is far too long to harmonise with scriptural chronology. The Artaxerxes who issued the decrees in Neh. 2:1 in the 20th year of his reign for the restoration of the city of Jerusalem is commonly identified as Artaxerxes Longimanus B.C. 464-424. But evidence in the Bible shows that this Artaxerxes (Neh. 2:1) is the same king as the Darius of Ezra 6:14. Notice that the temple was completed in the reign of "Darius and Artaxerxes" and according to their decrees. But there was only one decree for the rebuilding of the temple by Cyrus and endorsed by Darius. The Hebrew word VAV rendered "and" (Ezra 6:14) should here be rendered "even." The names Ahasuerus (= The Mighty), Artaxerxes (= The Great King) and Darius (= The Restainer or Maintainer) were really titles and not names. The Darius of Ezra was Darius Hystaspes and the Artaxerxes of Nehemiah should be identified with him.

Otherwise - (1) Ezra would have been at least 128 when he returned from Babylon, and at least 141 when he was associated with Nehemiah because his father was Seraiah the priest who was slain by Nebuchadnezzar (Ezra 7:1; 2 Kings 25:8, 18-20).

(2)Twenty out of thirty priests and Levites who returned with Zerubbabel (B.C. 536) signed the covenant with Nehemiah (Neh. 10:2-10). If Artaxerxes was Longimanus, they were still alive 91 years after their return, yet when they returned they were all heads of families.

(3) This Artaxerxes reigned at least 32 years (Neh. 4:14; 13:6), and no other king before Longimanus did this except Hystaspes. Josephus identifies Artaxerxes as Hystaspes (1 Esdras 3:1-2).

It seems also that Ahasuerus of Esther was the same king. Normally this king is identified as Xerxes (B.C. 485-465), but there is nothing in the book that does not equally conform with Darius Hystaspes. Charles Rollin in his book ANCIENT HISTORY also supports the suggestion that Ahasuerus and Hystaspes are the same person. Consider the following:

(1) If Ahasuerus was Xerxes, Mordecai would have been at least 123 years when made Premier, for he was carried away with Jeconiah (B.C. 497) (Esther 2:5-6).

(2) Josephus calls Ahasuerus, Artaxerxes, for it was a title used by several kings. In l Esdras 3:1-2, Ahasuerus is identified as Darius Hystaspes.

(3) If Ahasuerus was Xerxes, and Mordecai thus 123 years old, then the young and beautiful bride Esther must have been about 80 years old when she captivated the king.

Thus instead of Longimanus it is far more likely that Darius Hystaspes (**) issued the decrees in question. He reigned from B.C. 521 over a period of 36 years, and would thus have issued the decree to rebuild Jerusalem in his 20th year of reign, B.C. 500. We propose that the commencement of the 490 years should be taken as from here. Although this suggestion conflicts with conventional history and shows a discrepancy of 38 years, the latter ruler must have been the giver of the decree. We believe that the history of the world is, in fact, 40 years shorter than historians account it to be between the issuing of the decree of Neh. 2, and the death of the Lord. One thing only is certain and reliable, namely, that "seventy heptades have been decreed relatively to thy people and to thine Holy City" (Dr. Thomas' rendering).

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Chapter 10

JUDGMENT ON OPPRESSORS OF YAHWEH'S LAND AND PEOPLE

The previous chapter showed how the literal temple would be overthrown and the foundations laid for a spiritual temple (v. 27; Eph. 2:20). Chapter 10 reveals that despite many trials and political vicissitudes, this spiritual Temple will come to glory, and that Daniel shall see it.

* * Daniel's mourning - Vv. 1-3

"In the third year of Cyrus" - Cyrus had reigned jointly with Darius for two years. This third year was the first year of the sole reign of Cyrus. This time period finds Daniel 90 years old. This could well be the last year of Daniel's life.

"the thing was true" - i.e. God had revealed the vision to him so that the whole picture was plain and readily discerned by Daniel. This would have been a message of comfort and hope for the prophet.

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

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

Verse 2

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

Verse 3

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

Verse 4

"the river Hiddekel" - i.e. the river Tigris. The great river of Assyria, as the Euphrates of Babylon, and the Nile of Egypt.

Verse 5'

<u>"a certain man"</u> - Marginal rendering "one man." This is a picture of the multitudinous body of Christ incorporated in one, 1 Cor. 12:12; Eph. 2:20-22; Eph. 4:3,4,15,16; Rev. 1:12,13; 1 Pet. 2:1-10; Rev. 10:1-4; Isa. 26:19-21; John 17:9-12; 18:26.

"clothed in linen" - Fine linen is the righteousness of the saints, Rev. 19:8. The priests were clothed in linen, Ex. 28:39. By nature man is naked just as Adam in the garden of Eden; and in this state he is in need of being covered. We are figuratively clothed upon with Christ, Gal. 3:26. Man without Christ is described in Eph. 2:11, 12. Any man, no matter how good morally, is naked and in a state of sin if he is not clothed with the sin covering name of Christ, for we read in Jer. 17:9, "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" Compare Col. 1:21 with Rom. 8:1. See the great example recorded in Mark 5:1-15. We put on this garment at baptism.

Clothed with this covering, it now becomes our duty to keep it clean, Rev. 3:4. This can only be done day by day with the help of God through prayer, meditation and forgiveness. There is a day coming when we will receive the complete covering, even eternal life in God's kingdom.

"girded with gold" - The long robes that were worn in the Eastern countries impeded progress in running or similar exertion, unless they were gathered around the waist to give the greatest possible freedom of movement. Any man that was to engage in action would gird himself in this fashion. The man of the vision was not only clothed with a garment of bestowed righteousness, but was girded for action with GOLD, the symbol of a tried faith (1 Peter 1:7; cp. Prov. 17:3). Without faith it is impossible to please God (Heb. 11:6), and we do well to remember that faith is developed by "hearing the word of God" (Rom. 10:17; Psa. 12: 6).

"body like the bery1" - Notice in the chart that the bery1 stone symbolizes Dan. "Bery1" is the Hebrew word TARSHISH, signifying to break, or subdue. The Bery1, or Tarshish stone was one of the gems in the High Priest's breastplate, representing the tribe of Dan (cp. Ex. 28:20 with Num. 2, where the order of the gems and the order of the tribes are given). Dan means "judge" (Gen. 49:16-18; 1 Cor. 6:2), so that the body of this multitudinous Christ "being like the Bery1" indicates that it will perform the judgments written (Psa. 149:6-8).

| Order of the stones of the breastplate, Ex. 28:16-21 | Order of the 12 tribes of Israel, Num. 2 | |
|---|--|--|
| Sardius | Judah | |
| Topaz | Issachar | |
| Carbuncle | Zebulun | |
| Emerald | Reuben | |
| Sapphire | Simeon | |
| Diamond | Gad | |
| Ligure | Ephraim | |
| Agate | Manasseh | |
| Amethyst | Benjamin | |
| Beryl | Dan | |
| Onyx | Asher | |
| Jasper | Naphtali | |

Those constituting that body will be kings ruling with Christ in the earth. In the book of Revelation the Beryl finds mention again (Rev. 21:20), namely as the eighth stone in the foundation of the New Jerusalem. In Rev. 7 the multitudinous Christ is represented as the twelve tribes of Israel (for they are spiritual Israel, Eph. 2:12). It will be noticed, however, that the tribe of Dan is not listed in that record and has been replaced by the tribe of Levi which is ennumerated as the eighth tribe. Thus the Beryl is both representative of judgment and of priesthood. Both these characteristics will be manifested in the Man of the one. This "eighth" stone points forward to a time when flesh is to be judged (Dan), subdued (Tarshish), and taught (Levi).

<u>"face as the appearance of lightning"</u> - This speaks to us of our God as a consuming fire as He goes forth to destroy the world of the ungodly, and bring them into subjection before His power. Dan. 2:44; Psa. 144:5,6; Zech. 9:14; Isa. 30:27; Rev. 19:11; Joel 3:10; Ezek. 38:19-23; RESULT: Isa. 2:11-22. "eyes as lamps of fire" - The angels are the eyes of the Lord, keeping a vigilant watch over His universe and His children, Gen. 18:21; 2 Chron. 16:9; Dan. 4:17. This hope of life eternal, and becoming the eyes of God can be a reality in our life if we are faithful, Luke 20:35,36. In the Hebrew, the word rendered "eyes" is the same as that used for "fountain," because tears well out of the eyes. So the immortal saints will be fountains of spirit for lamps of fire is a symbol used to describe the "Spirit of God" Rev. 4:5; 5:6; Ezek. 10:12 cp. John 4:14.

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<u>"arms and feet like polished brass"</u> - Brass in the scripture is the symbol of flesh, 1 Sam. 17:4-6; 1 Kings 14:27. Polished brass is a metal that has been purified by the action of fire, and polished by friction, Num. 31:22-23. It speaks to us then of purified human nature as we hope to be in the day when we are clothed with immortality.

"His voice like the voice of a multitude" - This takes us back to what we originally mentioned about the "certain saint." It speaks to us of the multitudinous Christ. The same thoughts and testimonies apply here. Cp. Ezek. 43:2; Rev. 14:7.

Verse 7

"the men that were with me saw not the vision" - Here we have the exact counterpart of that which occurred at the conversion of Saul of Tarsus, Acts 9:7. The Divine influence was felt, but only Daniel saw the corporeal appearance. See similar instances, Acts 7:56; Num. 22:31. Acts 26:18 shows us that it is the great and ultimate purpose to open the eyes of all men, so that the Divine presence will be made visible. In this we have a picture of the dual manifestation of Christ at his second coming. First, to the saints; and second to the world. Daniel enacts his own death, resurrection and appearance before the judgment seat, verses 7-21.

Verses 8-9: Death

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

Verse 9

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

Verses 10-11: Resurrection

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

Verse 11

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

Verse 12

<u>"Fear not Daniel"</u> - Daniel at last can be sure of his reward (2 Tim. 4:6-8). As he looks back over his life he can see how the molding hand of God has guided his every step in all that he has done, Psa. 23:91. He can now see the reason for the many trials and purgings he has endured. Let this be a source of comfort to each of us as day by day we might feel that our prayers are going unanswered. God always answers prayer, but sometimes the answer is no.

"from the first day" - Daniel had occupied 21 days in fasting and mourning (see v. 2), and it must have seemed as though God would not reveal to him the meaning of the vision, but here Gabriel explains the delay. Sometimes our prayers are not speedily answered, but that does not mean that we ought to forsake prayer (see Luke 11:9-10).

"thou didst set thine heart to understand and to chasten thyself" - Such an attitude will find commendation at the time of resurrection and judgment. Not only will there be granted at that time a complete revelation of the individual's conduct in the past, but, to those who are found approved, there will also be granted an insight regarding the development of the Divine program nationally (cp. 2 Cor. 5:10). Daniel was not LAZY in spiritual things, he TRIED to understand, and he PREPARED his heart to suitably approach God. See the exhortation James 5:10.

"I am come for thy words" - We are not specifically informed what these words related to. We may presume, however, that Daniel had fasted, recognizing that the 70 years of Jerusalem's downtreading had come to an end, and was thus awaiting the return of the Jews to the land of Israel. The decree of Cyrus was given in this very year (cp. Ezra 1:1 with notes Dan. 10:1).

Verse 13

"But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me one and twenty days" -We cannot be dogmatic as to the exact meaning of this verse. The reference is to Cyrus, the destined deliverer of God's people, and the delay here mentioned might well refer to the decree going forth to restore the temple. If this be the true interpretation, it might well find its counterpart in the opposition of the nations at Jesus' second advent.

"Michael" - Probably the angel that was placed over the affairs of Israel, Ex. 23:20-23. See Josh. 5:14. As the angel of God's presence, he types the mission of the Lord Jesus Christ in the last days in Dan. 12:1. Jesus is referred to as Michael.

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

Verse 14

"Now I am come to make thee understand what shall befall thy people in the latter days" - This relates directly to the events contained in chapters 11 and 12.

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

Verse 15

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

Verses 16-17: Judgment

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

Verse 17

"For how can the servant talk with this my lord?" - What will we be able to say before the one who knows all? "When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?" (Psa. 8:3,4). Excuses, lies, shifting the blame will be of no avail. 9

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Verse 18: Approval

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

Verse 19: Immortality Granted

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

Verse 20

"knowest thou wherefore" - The Septuagint renders, "Surely thou knowest." The decree of Cyrus would have revealed the purpose of the angel.

"fight with the prince of Persia" - The angelic support was essential for Israel in all the opposition they were as yet to receive in their endeavour to rebuild the Temple and the city of Jerusalem (cp. Zech. 3:1 with Ezra 5:5).

"and when I am gone forth" - That is, "When my purpose with Persia is completed the power of Greece shall arise." Here again is evidence that the angels had power over the rulers of the kingdom of men, and complete control of the rise and fall of nations as determined by God. This knowledge gives confidence to all believers, even in times of extreme adversity, and thus Paul wrote, "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God..." (Rom. 8:28), and again, "The powers that be are ordained of God" (Rom. 13:1-6). It was God who raised up Cyrus to execute His purpose (Isa. 45:1), and it was the same God who removed the kings of Persia, and caused Greece to prevail when His purpose required it. Gabriel had been entrusted with the supervision of these affairs. These things are also true for our day. The rise of Russia, the humbling of America, the exploits of Israel, and all the events leading to Armageddon, are controlled by Jesus Christ and the angels.

Verse 21

"there is none that holdeth with me in these things, but Michael your prince" -Apart from Divine intervention through the angels, the affairs of Israel would not prosper. It is God that bringeth them to pass, and not mortal man. He uses the circumstances that God creates, and through these circumstances the affairs of Israel, and the purpose of God is advanced. The study of chapters 11 and 12 will now reveal how true this is.

Chapter 11

This chapter records Gabriel's explanation of the vision seen by Daniel in chapter 8. After the death of Alexander who founded the Greek Empire (the "mighty king" of verse 3), his four generals divided the territory he conquered into four kingdoms over which they ruled; and then they proceeded to quarrel among themselves until the rising power of Rome was drawn into the Middle East, and ultimately incorporated them all under its power. Verses 5 to 34 of this chapter outlines in a remarkable way the wars and policy of two of the kingdoms that arose out of the divided Greek Empire, and which are known to history as the Seleucid Empire (comprehending roughly the territory occupied by Turkey today with the addition of Armenia, Media, Persia etc.), and represented in the prophecy as the KING OF THE NORTH, and the Egyptian Empire (which included Palestine, Cyprus and some of the isles of Greece) ruled over by the Ptolemys, and referred to in this prophecy as THE KING OF THE SOUTH.

The intrepretation of this prophecy is presented in "Elpis Israel" pp. 398 to 403, where the author gives the text of Scripture in italics, and the interpretation in Roman type; and to this interpretation we direct you. It occupies some 250 years of history from 300 B.C. (circa), during which the Jews (who had returned from captivity in Babylon under the Persian kings) suffered from the wars between the powers of the North and South, but finally obtained complete independence when a priestly family, known to history as the Maccabees, led the nation to victory and glory. Rome never conquered Judea at this time, but merely incorporated it as an ally into her Empire. Gradually, however, Judea lost all independence, so that in the days of Christ it was completely dominated by Rome, and a Roman Governor was set up in Jerusalem (Pontius Pilate).

Verse 1

"Also I" -the "I" here is Gabriel

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

"stood" - implies promptness or an attitude that is willing to help.

"to confirm him and strengthen him" - Daniel needed Divine help and strength for he was now about to witness a vision that would project him through all the events that were to transpire between his day and the establishment of the kingdom of God on earth. Yahweh had proclaimed many years earlier by the mouth of Isaiah that He would strengthen the Persians "for Jacob my servant's sake, and Israel mine elect" (Isa. 45:1-4). This promise He fulfilled when He gave them power to overrun Babylon, and to establish themselves in the Babylonish territory as supreme and legislative power.

Verse 2

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

"there shall stand up yet three kings in Persia" - These three were to be in addition to Cyrus who was then reigning. They were as follows: 1) <u>Cambyses</u>, the son of Cyrus; (-2) Smerdis, an imposter who pretended to be another son of Cyrus; 3) <u>Darius</u>, the son of <u>Hystaspes</u>, who married Mandane, the daughter of Cyrus. Cambyses reigned seven years and five months. Smerdis reigned only seven months. Darius Hystaspes reigned thirty-six years.

"the fourth shall be far richer than they all" - This was Xerxes, the son of Darius of whom Justin says, "He had so great an abundance of riches in his kingdom, that although rivers were dried up by his numerous armies, yet his wealth remained unexhausted."

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"he shall stir up all against the realm of Grecia" - Herodotus states that his army amounted to 5,283,220 men. Besides this the Carthaginians furnished him with an army of 300,000 men and a fleet of 200 ships. He led an army against the Greeks of 800,000 men and 1207 ships with three banks of rowers each. As he marched along he petitioned the people of the countries through which he passed to join him. After his overthrow at Salamis, Persia is viewed as being politically dead. Even though it had an existence.

Verse 3

"a mighty king shall stand up" - This verse carries us nearly 100 years ahead to the birth of Alexander the Great. Note that the record does not say that he should stand up against Xerxes, but simply that he would stand up, i.e. that he should reign in Greece.

Verse 4

"his kingdom shall be broken...divided toward the four winds of heaven" - i.e. after his death the kingdom shall be divided among his four chief generals. See Daniel 8:22.

"and not to his posterity" - The family of Alexander had a most tragic end.

- 1. His wife, Statria, was murdered soon after his death by his other wife, Roxana.
- 2. His brother, Aridoeus, who succeeded him, was killed, together with his wife, Euridice, by command of Olympias, Alexander's mother; after he had been king about six years and some months.
- 3. Olympias herself was killed by the soldiers in revenge.
- 4. Alexander Aegus, his son, together with his mother, Roxana, was slain by order of Cassander.
- 5. Two years after, his other son, Hercules, with his mother Barsine, was privately murdered by Polysperchon. So that in 15 years after his death, not one of his family or posterity remained alive.

Alexander was the great butcher of men. He was either poisoned, or killed himself by immoderate drinking when he was only 32 years and 8 months old. As a man sows so shall he reap, so neither root nor branch was left of Alexander the Great or his family. Exhortation: Psalm 146:3,4.

The following interpretation from verses 5 through 35, is taken from "Elpis Israel" pages 398 to 405.

Verse 5

"And the king of the south" - Ptolemy Soter, shall be strong, and shall be one of his, Alexander's, princes, or generals; and he shall be strong above him, and have dominion; <u>his dominion shall be a great dominion</u>, extending over Egypt, Libya, Cyrenaica, Arabia, Palestine, Coele-Syria, and most of the maritime provinces of Asia Minor; with the island of Cyprus, and several others in the Aegean Sea, and even some cities of Greece, as Cicyon and Corinth. Such was the dominion of Ptolemy Soter, the first Macedonian king of Egypt.

"And in the end of" - fifty-two "years" from B.C. 301, "they," the kings of Egypt and Assyro-Macedonia, "shall associate themselves together; for the king's daughter of the south," Berenice, the daughter of Ptolemy Philadelphus, "shall come," or be conducted, to Antiochus Theos, "the king of the north, to make a marriage agreement; but she shall not retain the power of the arm" of her father Ptolemy Philadelphus. "Neither shall he," her husband Antiochus, "stand;" for Laodice, his repudiated wife, whom he shall receive again when he divorces Berenice after her father's death, shall cause him to be poisoned. "Nor shall his arm," Berenice, "stand; but she shall be given up" to suffer death; "and they," the Egyptians also, "that brought her" to Syria; "and he," her son, "whom she brought forth, and he that strengthened her in these times," shall die; and thus leave her to the mercy of Laodice, which will be treachery and death.

Verse 7

"But out of a branch of her" - parent "roots shall" Ptolemy Euergetes, her brother, "stand up in his estate," or kingdom, "and come with an army, and shall enter into" Antioch the capital, and "the fortress of the king of the north, and shall deal," or make war, "against them," even against Laodice and her son Seleucus, "and shall prevail; (verse 8) "and" Euergetes "shall also carry captive into Egypt their gods, with their princes, and with their precious vessels of silver and of gold; and he shall continue" to reign nine "more years" then the king "of the north," who shall die a prisoner in Parthia five years before the king of Egypt. (Verse 9) "So the king of the south shall come into his kingdom, and shall return into his own land," B.C. 244.

Verse 10

"But his," - Seleucus Callinicus' "sons," Seleucus Ceraunus, and Antiochus, "shall be stirred up" to war; "and shall assemble a multitude of great forces: and one of them," even Antiochus the Great, "shall certainly come and overflow" through the passes of Libanus, "and pass through" into Galilee, and possess himself of all that part of the country, which was formerly the inheritance of the tribes of Reuben and Gad, and of the half tribe of Manasseh. "Then" the season being too far advanced to prolong the campaign, "shall he return" to Ptolemais, where he shall put his forces into winter quarters. "But," early in the spring B.C. 217, Ptolemy Philopator shall march with a large army to Raphia, by which Antiochus "shall be stirred up" again to war, and defeated with great slaughter, so that he shall retreat "to his fortress." (Verse 11) Thus, "shall the king of the south be moved with choler, and come forth and fight with the king of the north; and "the king of the north" "shall set forth a great multitude," even 72,000 foot and 6,000 horse; "but the multitude shall be given into the hand" of the king of Egypt.

Verse 12

"And when he" - the king of the south, "hath taken away the multitude" by a signal defeat of Antiochus, "his heart shall be lifted up," for he will desire to enter the most holy place of the temple. But while he was preparing to enter, he was stricken, and carried off for dead. In his victory over Antiochus "he shall cast down ten thousands" even 10,000 foot and 300 horses. "But," not following up his advantages, Philopator "shall not be strengthened" by his victory.

Verse 13

<u>"For"</u> Antiochus the Great, "the king of the North, shall return, and set forth a multitude" of troops, "greater than the former, and shall certainly come after certain," that is, nineteen "years" after the battle of Raphia, or B.C. 198, "with a great army and with much riches," and shall subjugate all Palestine and Coele-Syria.

"And in those things," - when Ptolemy Epiphanes shall reign over Egypt "many shall stand up against the" infant "king of the south," even the kings of Macedonia, and of Syria, and Scopas, the general of his deceased father. "But the deputies of" the Romans, "the breakers of thy people," Daniel, "shall interfere to establish the vision." They became the guardians and protectors of Epiphanes during his minority; and appointed "three deputies," who were ordered to acquaint the kings with their resolution, and to enjoin them not to infest the dominions of their royal pupil; for that otherwise they should be forced to declare war against them. The deputy, Emilius, one of the three, after delivering the message of the Roman senate, proceeded to Alexandria, and settled everything to as much advantage as the state of affairs in Egypt would then admit. In this way the Romans began to mix themselves up with the affairs of Egypt, Palestine, and Syria; and in a few years establish themselves as lords paramount of the East, and so constituted a power in Asia, symbolized by the Little Horn of the Goat, and in the thirty-sixth verse, styled "THE KING". "But," though they should be "the breakers of Israel," the assurance was given to Daniel, saying, "they shall fall."

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Verse 15

"So the king of the north," - being checked by the Romans, "shall come" into Palestine, "and cast up a mount" against Sidon, where he shall besiege the forces of the Egyptians; "and he shall take" Jerusalem, "the city of munitions," from the castle of which he shall expel the Egyptian garrison; "and the arms of the south shall not withstand, neither his chosen people, neither shall there be any strength to withstand" Antiochus. (Verse 16) "But" Antiochus the Great, "who cometh against" Ptolemy Epiphanes, "shall do according to his own will in" Coele-Syria and Palestine, "and none shall stand before him: and he shall" make a permanent "stand in the glorious land" of Israel, "which by his hand shall be consumed."

Verse 17

"He shall also set his face to enter" into Greece, "with the strength of his whole kingdom, and Israelites (Ishrim) with him. "Thus shall he do" to incorporate Greece into his dominion, by which the Romans, who had recently proclaimed it free, would be stirred up against him. Therefore, to secure the neutrality of their Egyptian ally, he shall give Cleopatra, "the daughter of women," or princess royal, to Epiphanes, to wife, "corrupting her" to betray him by resigning to him Coele-Syria and Palestine as her dower, but on condition that he should receive half the revenues. Thus, the land of Israel 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. But "she shall" cleave to her husband and "not stand, neither be for him," but shall join with her husband in congratulating the Roman Senate on the victory they had gained over her father at Thermopylae (B.C. 191).

Verse 18

"After this shall" Antiochus, at the earnest solicitation of the AEtolians, "turn his face unto the isles" of Greece, "and shall take many; but a military commander (Kotzin), L. Scipio, the Roman consul "shall cause the reproach offered by him to cease; without his own disgrace he," Scipio, "shall cause it to turn upon" Antiochus, by defeating him at Mount Sipylus, and repulsing him from every part of Asia Minor. As the condition of peace, the Romans required him to pay 15,000 talents; 500 down, 2500 on the ratification of the treaty, and the rest in twelve years at 1,000 talents per annum. These terms being acceded to, (Verse 19), "he shall turn his face toward the fortress," or capital, "of his own land," being much at a loss how to raise the tribute. While in the province of Elymais, he heard of a considerable treasure in the temple of Jupiter Belus. He accordingly broke into it in the dead of night, and carried off all its riches. "But he shall stumble and fall, and not be found;" for the provincials, exasperated at the robbery, rebelled against him, and murdered him and all his attendants (B.C. 187).

Verse 20

"Then shall stand up in" - Antiochus' "estate," or kingdom, his son Seleucus Philopator, "one who causeth an exactor to pass over the glory of the kingdom;" the business of his reign being to raise the tribute for the Romans. "But within few days" --that is, twelve years--"he shall be destroyed, neither in anger, nor in battle," being poisoned by Heliodorus, his prime minister, having reigned long enough to pay the last installment to the Romans.

Verse 21

"And in his," - Seleucus Philopator's, "place shall stand up" Heliodorus, "a vile person," being both a poisoner and usurper, "to whom they," the authorities of the nation, "shall not give the honour of the kingdom; but" Antiochus Epiphanes "shall come in peacefully, and obtain the kingdom by flatteries" bestowed on the party of Heliodorus.

Verse 22

"And with the arms of a flood" by which they shall be formidably invaded, "shall they," the Egyptians, "be overflown from before" Antiochus, whom they excite to war by demanding the restitution of Coele-Syria and Palestine. "And they shall be broken," or subdued; "yea, also" Onias "the prince," or high priest, "of the Mosiac "covenant," shall be murdered, as in B.C. 172, it came to pass.

Verse 23

"And after the league made with" Ptolemy Philometor, Antiochus "shall work deceitfully" after his second invasion of Egypt, B.C. 170; "for he shall come up to" Alexandria, "and he shall become strong with a small people" or army. By his deceit (Verse 24) "he shall enter peaceably even upon the fattest places of the province" to which he reduces Egypt; "and he," Antiochus, "shall do that which his fathers," or predecessors, "have not done, nor his fathers' fathers;" namely, "he shall scatter among" his followers, "the prey, and spoil, and riches: yea, he shall forecast his devices against the strong holds" of Egypt, "even for a time."

Verse 25

"And he shall stir up his power and his courage against the king of the south with a great army; and the king of the south shall be stirred up to battle with a very great and mighty army; but he shall not stand: for" the Alexandrians seeing him in the hands of Antiochus, and lost to them, "shall forecast devices against him," and place the crown of Egypt upon the head of his brother Euergetes II.

Verse 26

"Yea, they that feed of the portion of" Philometor's "meat" even his courtiers "shall separate," or renounce, him; and his, 'Antiochus', "army shall overflow" Egypt; "and many" of the Egyptians "shall fall down slain." (Verse 27) "And the hearts of both these kings shall be to do mischief, and they shall speak lies at one table, but shall not prosper; for the end is yet at the time appointed."

"Then shall" - Antiochus Epiphanes "return into his land with great riches; and his heart shall be against the Holy Covenant; and he shall do" terrible things against Jerusalem taking it by storm, butchering 80,000 men, making 40,000 prisoners and causing a like number to be sold for slaves. "And then shall he return to his own land," laden with the spoils of the temple, amounting to 1,800 talents, or 270,000 pounds (B.C. 169).

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Verse 29

"At the time appointed" - under pretence of restoring Philometor to the throne, "he shall return, and come toward the south" against Alexandria to besiege it. "But it," this fourth invasion, "shall not be as the former, or as the latter." He raised the siege, and marched towards Memphis, where he installed Philometor as king. As soon, however, as he had departed, Philometor came to an understanding with Euergetes, and they agreed to a joint reign over Egypt. This coming to the ears of Antiochus, he led a powerful army against Memphis for the purpose of subduing the country. Having nearly accomplished his project, he marched against Alexandria, which was the only obstacle to his becoming absolute master of Egypt. But the Roman Embassy, sent at the request of the Ptolemies, met him about a mile from the city. They had left Rome with the utmost diligence. When they arrived at Delos, they found a fleet of Macedonian, or Greek, ships, on board of which they embarked for Alexandria, where they arrived at the crisis of his approach. Popilius delivered him the decree of the Senate, and demanded an immediate answer. Sorely against his will, he agreed to obey its mandate, and draw off his army from Egypt. Thus his invasion terminated very differently from the former: (Verse 30) "for the ships of Chittim shall come against him," and prevent him from incorporating Egypt into his Assyrian kingdom of the north."

All his wrath was kindled at this interference; "therefore shall he be grieved, and return, and have indignation against the Holy Covenant;" for in his return march through Palestine, he detached 20,000 men under Apollonius with orders to destroy Jerusalem, B.C. 168. "So shall he do; he shall even return, and have intelligence with them that forsake the Holy Covenant."

Verse 31

"And arms shall stand on his part" - under Apollonius; "and they," the Assyro-Macedonian troops, "shall pollute the" temple, or "sanctuary of strength," by shedding the blood of the worshippers in its court; "and they shall take away the daily sacrifice; and they shall place" a strong fort and garrison to command the temple, even "the abomination that maketh desolate," and overawes the nation.

As soon as Antiochus Epiphanes was returned to Antioch, he published a decree by which all his subjects were required to conform to his religion. This was aimed chiefly at the Jews, whose religion and nation he was resolved to extirpate. Atheneus, a man advanced in years, and extremely well versed in all the ceremonies of the Grecian idolatry, was commissioned to carry the edict into effect in Judea and Samaria. As soon as he arrived at Jerusalem, he began by suppressing "the daily" or burnt offering of continuance, and all the observances of the Jewish law. He caused the sabbaths and other festivals to be profaned; forbade the circumcision of Children; carried off and burnt all copies of the law whereever they could be found; and put to death whoever acted contrary to the decree of the king. To establish it the sooner in every part of the nation, altars and chapels filled with idols were erected in every city, and sacred groves were planted. Officers were appointed over these who caused the people generally to offer sacrifice in them every month, on the day of the month on which the king was born, who made them eat swine's flesh and other unclean animals sacrificed there. The temple in Jerusalem was dedicated to Jupiter Olympus, whose statue was placed within it. Thus he did in his great indignation against Yahweh and His people Israel.

Verse 32

"And such" - of the Jews "as do wickedly against the covenant shall" Antiochus "by flatteries cause to dissemble." These not only "forsook the holy covenant," but "had intelligence" with the king, and aided him all they could in the desolation with which he was overspreading their country. "But the" Maccabees and their adherents, "people who do know their God shall be strong, and do" valiantly in war.

Verse 33

"And they," even Mattathias and his five sons, etc., "that understand among the people shall instruct," and encourage, "many; yet they" of their party "shall fall by the sword, and by flame, by captivity, and by spoil, days."

Verse 34

"Now when they shall fall" - by these calamities "they shall be holpen with a little help"; for whilst Antiochus was amusing himself by celebrating games at Daphne, Judas Maccabaeus had raised the standard of independence, and was helping his countrymen in Judea. He levied a small army, fortified the cities, rebuilt the fortresses, threw strong garrisons into them, and thereby awed the whole country. He defeated and killed Apollonius, and made great slaughter of the troops. With 3,000 men he defeated Lysias with 47,000; and another army of 20,000 under Timotheus and Bacchides; and in the year B.C. 170, he gave Lysias a second defeat at Bethsura, by which he dispersed 65,000 of the enemy. Yet, "many shall cleave to them," the Maccabees, "with flatteries," for it was a time of trial.

Verse 35

<u>"And"</u> - therefore "some of them of understanding shall fall to try them, and to purge, and make them white FOR THE TIME OF THE END; because it," the time of the end "is yet for a time appointed."

The thirty-fifth verse of this eleventh chapter brings us down to the end of 430 years from the destruction of the city and temple of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans. 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. The latter speaks of their being tried and made white to, or till, the time of the end, and then the fortieth reintroduces the king of the south and the king of the north, and outlines the events they were to bring to pass in that time, and which will end in the resurrection, when they who have tried and made white in the long interval, will stand in their lot with Daniel at the end of the 1,335 days. 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; and will so continue to be till the "time appointed" for their deliverance arrives.

But the Maccabean epoch is particularly interesting as the termination of Ezekiel's 430 years. The house of Israel, and the house of Judah, had been great transgressors of the holy covenant from the foundation of the temple in the fourth year of Solomon to the sack of the city in the 19th of Nebuchadnezzar. This was a period of 430 years, which was divided into two periods--namely, one of forty years from the foundation of the temple to the apostasy of Rehoboam and Judah; the other, of three hundred and ninety from this apostasy to the destruction of the temple. God determined that this long national transgression should be punished by as long

a retribution. He therefore gave Israel "a sign" of what was coming upon them. This consisted in Ezekiel lying on his left side 390 days, and then upon his right for 40 days more. By this sign was represented the prostrate condition of Israel for 430 years. The 430 years of transgression had not quite ended when the sign was appointed in the fifth of Jehoichin's captivity. The thing signified began to take effect in the sacking of Jerusalem. Israel then began to "eat their defiled bread among the Gentiles"; so that the 430 years would end B.C. 161, according to my chronology.

These four centuries of punishment were a very calamitous period of Jewish history. They endured a captivity in Babylon for 70 years; for several years more their times were "troublous"; they were vassals to the Persians till their dominion was overthrown by Alexander; afterwards, as we have seen, they were alternately subject to the king of the south and the king of the north, and their land became a field of battle for the hosts of these Powers, who defiled the temple, and at length converted it into a house for the worship of Jupiter. But, a very few years before the 430 years were about to expire, Judas Maccabaeus commenced a war against Antiochus Epiphanes, which ended in the recovery of Jerusalem, the purification of the temple from the heathen worship, its re-dedication to God, and the erection of Judea into an independent kingdom under the Asmoneans, which continued until it was placed under Herod the Idumean by the Romans, about 39 years before Christ.

Verse 36

In our notes on Daniel 8:9 we saw that among the four horns (or powers) that arose out of the Grecian Empire, there came another "little horn" which we identified as the power of Rome, and which ultimately crucified Jesus, and scattered Jewry (see Dan. 8:9-12), finally "casting the truth to the ground, and prospering."

In Daniel 11:36, "little horn" power is termed "the king." Rome was drawn into the quarrels of the Kings of the North and South in the Middle East, and in B.C. 65 ended in conquering the King of the North, later extending its power over the rest of the kingdoms.

In the early part of the fourth century A.D., in the time of Constantine, the city of Constantinople was made capital of the Roman Empire instead of Rome. Constantinople is in the territory of the ancient Greek Empire, so that the Roman horn is found growing among the other horns that developed out of Alexander's Greek Empire.

Verse 36

<u>"the king"</u> - The little horn of Daniel 8:9, the Roman power with its headquarters in Constantinople.

"shall do according to his will" - dictatorial power.

<u>"magnify himself above every god"</u> - Constantine, the first so-called Christian Emperor, and the founder of Constantinople, asserted his influence in the counsels of the Christian Church, and made so-called Christianity recognized throughout the Empire. Under his rule the pagan gods went into decline (as did also the Truth in its purity). Constantine was followed by Emperors who continued his policy with the church, so that ultimately, under Emperors like Justinian (533) and Phocas (606-610) the authority of the Roman Catholic Church was established by the civil power ruling in Constantinople both of whom were then fighting for the supremacy. Justinian proclaimed that the Pope was "head of all churches," and Phocas, by governmental decree, proclaimed the Pope to be Universal Bishop with power to confer this title upon his successors. Thus the power of the church of Rome was established by the civil authority of Constantinople. "speak against the God of gods" - Whilst the civil authority of Constantine and his successors assist the church of Rome, it opposed those who held the Truth, brutally persecuting them.

Verse_37

"Neither shall he regard the God of his fathers" - Nothing was allowed to stand in the way of the ambition of these Emperors. Constantine's fathers were pagans, but he embraced so-called Christianity, in order that his political ambitions might be furthered. In his time, so-called Christianity was growing in strength, and he used this growing body of opinion in order to gain absolute power-for Constantine had to fight his way to power, and depose the ruling authorities of the time. The pope sets himself up as infallible, virtually as God (see 2 Thess. 2:4), and in honouring him, these Emperors of Constantinople were "honouring a God their fathers knew not."

Verse 38

"shall be honour" - Justinian wrote in March, A.D. 533, "We suffer not anything that belongs to the state of the churches to be done without submitting it to your holiness who are the head of all the churches."

"God of forces" - The Hebrew word for "force" is Mauzzim (see margin), and means "protectors." It is the "God of protectors" whom these Emperors honoured. The "protectors" of this "God" are the saints that Roman Catholicism canonises, and which Catholics call upon for protection in time of need. The St. Patricks, St. Peters, St. Andrews and so forth of which the Catholic church is full--the socalled immortal souls of these "saints" supposed to protect their devotees, and to them candles are burned. These "saints" are honoured with "gold, silver and precious stones." In the great churches of Catholicism this wealth is today to be seen. (Rev. 9:20).

Verse 39

"the most strong holds" - The Hebrew is "Mitzahrai Mauzzim" and can be translated, the "Bazaars of the Protectors." These are the churches of Catholicism dedicated to the "saints" or "protectors," and where they pay their money to get their souls out of purgatory, or pay to occupy the best pews. The "Bazaars" are therefore the churches of Christendom--a great money-making venture (see Rev. 18:12-13; 2 Pet. 2:3).

"a strange god" - the pope (2 Thess. 2:4).

"divide the land for gain" - Each priest and bishop has his territory, and from these money is poured into headquarters--the chief church of all: St. Peters in Rome, the chief of the Bazaars of the protectors. Even the holy land has thus been divided by Rome for gain.

Verses 39-45

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

Verse 40

"at the time of the end" - This defines the time at which the prophecy is to be dated. Whereas the kings of the north and south of previous verses relate to past ages, the kings of the north and south of these verses relate to our times.

"the king of the south" - the latter-day occupier of Egypt. In 1882 circumstances forced Britain to intervene in Egyptian affairs, and once in the land they were forced to remain there. In recent years British control in Egypt has gradually been withdrawn, an indication that her work there is nearing completion. Over 100 years ago, Christadelphians were anticipating the fulfillment of these prophecies that required Britain to occupy Egypt, and in 1882 they saw their expectations realized. From recent events it is very obvious that the protector of Israel will be the Anglo Saxons (the Merchants of Tarshish and the young lions thereof, of whom the United States is chief (Ezek. 38:13). Note that this verse does not say Britain will be a great military power, but a leading mercantile power and that is her exact position today.

<u>"push at him"</u> - The "him" is the "kings" of verse 36. We saw that this was the power ruling in Constantinople. In the days of Constantine (B.C. 312) and onwards, this city became the headquarters, the capital, of the Roman Empire. In 1453, however, it fell to the Turkish Power who made it their capital, and who have continued to hold it since. The Turks destroyed the remnant of the Roman Empire, and thus became the "him" of this verse. The prophecy thus demanded that at the time of the end, the power in occupation of Egypt (Britain) should "push" at him (i.e. Turkey). This occurred in 1917, during the Great War of 1914-18. At that time Turkey controlled most of the Middle East including Jerusalem and Palestine. But in the war she sided with Germany against Britain, and Britain "pushed at Turkey" from Egypt, driving her from Jerusalem and Palestine. As a result, the Jews were invited to return to Palestine. This portion of verse 40 is thus fulfilled.

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

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

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

"chariots" - tanks, etc. A symbol of warfare.

"many ships" - Russia is rapidly becoming the great naval power of the world.

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

Verse 41

"He shall enter into the glorious land" - Palestine. Russia will drive down along the coastal plains of Palestine intent on taking Egypt. At this stage Jerusalem will be bypassed, after having been put in a stage of siege, (Zech. 14:2).

"Edom, Moab and Ammon shall escape" - Russia will drive down along the coastal plains of Palestine intent on taking Egypt. At this stage Jerusalem will be bypassed, so will also the territories east of Palestine (cp. Isa. 16:4). Russia must be opposed to the Arabs, otherwise Russia would not need to capture them.

"Egypt shall not escape" - Russia will attack and take Egypt, but notice that there is no "King of the South" in existence at that time. Dr. Thomas stated in Elpis Israel, page 445, "Britain will be compelled to retreat from Egypt before Armageddon." From this verse it seems that Egypt will be an unwilling slave to Russia at the time of domination. The hand of Russia is already seen infiltrating into the Arab countries mentioned in this chapter. Already there seems to be discontent brewing among the common people of Egypt, but already it is too late. Very soon the iron fist of Russia will overrule any objections and thus fulfill Isa. 19:4.

Verse 43

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

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

Verse 44

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

"tidings out of the north" - Jerusalem is north of Egypt, and doubtless when Russia makes its drive down to Egypt, the British and American forces will attempt to cut his communications by building up their forces in Israel preparatory to attempting the ejection of Gogue. In the terms of Ezek. 38:13 they will challenge the supremacy of the Russian king of the north. The strange activity of the Divine host at Sinai, and the preparations of Britain and America in Israel will be tidings that "shall trouble the king of the north."

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

Verse 45

"the tabernacles" - The Hebrew is "ohel" signifying "tents."

"of his palace" - i.e. his power. See Jer. 1:15 for similar usage of the term.

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

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

<u>"yet he shall come to his end"</u> - He shall be destroyed, not by Britain, nor America, but by Christ (see Zech. 14:3; Joel 3:16; Zeph. 3:8; Ezek. 38:21-23). This is the great climax of the Scriptures; this is the great beginning of God's eternal purpose, (Num. 14:21; Isa. 11:9).

"and none shall help him" - There will no none that will be able to deliver him out of the hands of Christ wielding Divine power

Chapter 12

Verse 1

"At that time" - the time referred to in Daniel 11:40, the "time of the end."

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

"the great prince" - the king of the Jews.

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

"there shall be a time of trouble" - The world will experience terrible trouble by war and earthquake (Zech. 14; Ezek. 38 - see particularly Jer. 25:32-38). Christ will overthrow all the institutions of Gentilism, and establish his kingdom on the ruins of all others (see Dan. 2:44). All other nations will cease. If they refuse to accept Christ, they will be disciplined until they submit. Human nature being what it is many nations will not accept him, and will suffer the rigours of war (see Psa. 2; Isa. 30:27; 2:10-22; Psa. 46:8-10).

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

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

"thy people shall be delivered, everyone found written in the book" - This is the "book of life" (Rev. 3:5; Psa. 69:28; Ex. 32:32; Mal. 3:16), a symbolic book, not a real one, in which is recorded the characters the faithful develop. Those whose names are recorded in this all-important book "shall be delivered" by being granted "everlasting life." Those whose names are blotted therefrom will receive "shame and everlasting contempt." All who are responsible will be raised to judgment and brought before the judgment seat (Rom. 14:10; 2 Cor. 5:10; Ecc. 3:17; John 5:22,27; Rom. 2:6-9; Job 19:25-27; Isa. 26:19; Matt. 22:29-32; John 11:23-26), to receive eternal life or death. Israel's name is recorded among those nations who shall be granted life, Isa. 4:2-4; Ezek. 13:9. Some nations will be doomed for destruction, Dan. 7:10-12; Matt. 25:32.

Verse 3

"shall shine as stars" etc. - In Scripture, Sun, Moon and Stars are used to symbolize ruling powers. The Sun represents the civil authority, the Moon represents the Ecclesiastical authority, and the Stars represent the principal statesmen. Isaiah condemned the Jewish "heavens and earth" of his day (ch. 1:2), and prophesied, of new heavens and earth "in which would dwell righteousness" (i.e. the kingdom of God - Isa. 65:17-18). The symbolic sun (the Lord Jesus - Mal. 4:1) shall shine forth brightly from the political heavens then established, and the symbolic moon (the system of religion established under Christ) will likewise shine forth brilliantly (see Isa. 30:26 - this verse cannot be understood literally, for such power would destroy all creation). See the fate of the Gentile heavens - Isa. 51:6. In the new political heavens the immortalized brethren of Christ shall shine forth as stars (i.e. statesmen) ruling with Christ (Rev. 5:9-10).

Verse 4

"seal the book" - A sealed book cannot be read (Isa. 29:11), and though Daniel's book could be read, it was not read with understanding (Dan. 8:27). It was sealed up, but the revelation which Jesus Christ gave to his servants helped to unseal its mysteries (Rev. 5:5) and make known the events it predicted, Rev. 1:1.

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

<u>"many shall run to and fro"</u> - Man has subdued the earth on land, sea and air as God commanded from the beginning (Gen. 1:28), and this is in preparation for the kingdom to be established. It would not have been convenient to have established the kingdom at Christ's first advent, for much of the earth still remained to be explored and prepared for the consummation of Yahweh's purpose (Num. 14:21). Today travel and speed is a feature of the times. "Knowledge shall be increased" in all avenues of knowledge; science, travel, prophecy etc.

Verse 5

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

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

Verse 6

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

"Upon the waters" - The man's position upon the waters is indicative of his power over the nations. Notice the similarity with the vision of John on Patmos, recorded in Rev. 10, particularly v. 5. At the present time Babylon the Great glories in holding this position, little realizing that her power shall be eclipsed by the Man of the One (cp. Rev. 17:5,15).

"how long" - has been the constant cry of the faithful down the ages (Hab. 1:2; Psa. 6:3; 74:10; Rev. 6:10; etc.).

Verse 7

"held up his right hand and his left hand" - It was customary to raise a hand in confirmation of a promise (cp. Gen. 14:22; Deut. 32:40), and here two hands are raised in absolute confirmation of a limited time-period of down-treading of Daniel's people that was as yet to be expected. Contrast with John's vision, where the Rainbowed Angel lifts up his hand and reveals "that there should be time no longer" (Rev. 10:5-6).

"time, times and a half" - $3\frac{1}{2}$ "times." A "time" is a Jewish year of 360 days. 360 x $3\frac{1}{2} = 1260$. As the prophecy had relation to the development of Roman Catholicism (see Dan. 11:38) it is logical that this period had relation to the same subject. The church of Rome was granted its authority in 610 by Phocas the Emperor in Constantinople, and 1260 years later, in 1870 it lost this power, when the Pope was greatly reduced in authority. Here a day is used to represent a year (see Num. 14:34).

"when he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people" -Rotherham renders, "When the dispersion of a part of the holy people is brought to an end." Accepting this rendering, the Spirit reveals that at the end of 1260 years the dispersion of Jewry shall partly be brought to an end. This came to pass, as outlined above (cp. Luke 21:24).

Verse 10

Here is mankind divided in the light of God's estimation. The pure and the impure; the wicked and the righteous; the wise and the ignorant. Here is encouragement for us to try to understand the prophecy, and to this the Lord Jesus adds his words, see Matt. 24:15. This verse reveals the purpose of the long period of Gentile dominion and apparent humiliation of Daniel's people.

"many shall be" - Cp. 11:35.

"purified" - The word indicated the separating of the wheat from the chaff.

<u>"made white"</u> - Indicating the methods applied by the fuller, in order to whiten a garment by means of a cleansing process (cp. Mal. 3:2).

<u>"tried"</u> - As metal is tried by fire, when the dross is separated from it (Mal. 3:3; Zech. 13:9).

Verse 11

Here is an alternative and better rendering: "and from after the time the daily shall be removed even for to set up an abomination making desolate - 1290." The "daily" refers to the daily sacrifice of Israel and thus relates to Judaism which was "taken away" in A.D. 70 when the Jewish State was overthrown by Rome. But among the early Ecclesias were some who taught that believers should observe the law of Moses (Acts 15:1,5), and Paul had to constantly fight these errorists. After a time, these errorists taught that as the Law of Moses provided for priests and Levites, so the Ecclesia should support the clergy, and thus form its own brand of "priests" separated from the believers. In time this developed into Roman Catholicism. Thus, "daily" was taken away, and "an abomination that astonisheth" (see margin) set up. This was Roman Catholicism, concerning which John declared: "I wondered with great astonishment" (not "admiration" as in the A.V.) - Rev. 17:6. "1290" days - Date from the same time as the 1260 (see verse 7), brings to 1900 when Zionism was sponsored in England and a great impetus given to Jewish national hopes. First conference of Jews and publication of the pamphlet "The Jewish State" was in 1878. So the purpose of God was brought a great step forward.

Verse 12

"1335 days" - 45 years later - 1945 when World War 2 came to an end, and Russia emerged as a world force, and out of which came the Jewish State. World War 2 laid the foundations for the final crisis, and World War 3 depicted in Daniel 11:40-45.

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

Verse 13

"thy lot" - Thus assurance is given to Daniel that he shall be accepted and rewarded by the future king over all the earth who will build again the tabernacle of David in the Land of Promise (Acts 15:16). Part of the land shall be reserved for the saints (Ezek. 45:1). Daniel shall receive his portion, the gift and inheritance spoken of in Ezek. 46:16.

"the end of the days" - Once again the assurance that Gentile dominion shall come to an end. Daniel shall be raised to witness the fall of the image (ch. 2). Then Israel shall be avenged (8:14), and "that determined shall be poured upon the desolator" (9:27).

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Further thoughts on . . .

THE TIME PERIODS OF DANIEL

It has been noted that the book of Daniel is unique in that it not only foretells the future but also fixes the time for its fulfillment by its remarkable time periods. Much has been written about these periods, and all too often misunderstanding and confusion have arisen. This has been through misapplication of these prophecies to fit preconceived ideas on how God's purpose should work out. This is, therefore, an attempt to bring a balanced understanding to a complex but vitally interesting facet of the Word of God.

While there is a "set time to favour Zion" and the date of Christ's return has been predetermined in the mind of Yahweh from the beginning of creation, it is <u>far</u> <u>more</u> important for us to know <u>how</u> Christ will return, and under what prevailing conditions on earth, than to be able to pin-point a date, and sit idly by waiting for its fulfillment. It has always been the purpose of Yahweh that His servants should be vigilant and ever able to discern the signs of the times (Amos 3:7; Matt. 16:3; 25:13), and it is in the light of this that these and other time periods of Scripture have been given, serving rather to confirm the prophecy than to become the focal point of the prophecy itself.

An example of this is in the "seventy weeks" prophecy of Daniel 9. From this revelation Daniel would have been more impressed by the long period of time which was to elapse to the time of "Messiah the Prince," than trying to pin-point the exact date when this would occur; for he was not in possession of the commencing date of this period (Dan. 9:25). That this date of Christ's first advent could be determined with reasonable accuracy is evident from the visitation of the wise men from the east at the birth of Jesus. These men would have had access to this prophecy of Daniel, but yet were unable to determine the exact time or location of Jesus' humble birth (Matt. 2:5,6), arriving upon the scene within two years of the event. Simeon and Anna the prophetess were also among a remnant who were vigilant at that time: able to discern "the signs of the times" but unable to determine the day or the hour when the Son of Man should come.

Similarly, if it were possible to pin-point the day or the hour of Christ's <u>second advent</u> from the book of Daniel, then Jesus himself would have done so. Jesus frankly denied being able to do this (Matt. 24:36).

We gain an insight into the role of time periods in Scripture in the fulfillment of that prophesied by Jeremiah and looked for by Daniel himself (Jer. 25:12-13; 29:10; Dan. 9:2). At this time Daniel had been looking for a complete and immediate restoration of his people to their land upon the expiration of the decreed seventyyear period. But the captivity itself began in stages (refer to notes, page 22), and while Daniel had correctly interpreted the first year of Darius the Mede as a fulfillment of this seventy-year period, there were applications of this time period to other significant dates which were to occur in similar stages later on:

For example1st Nebuchadnezzar B.C. 12 to 1st Darius the Mede B.C. 542 = 70
years
19th Nebuchadnezzar B.C. 592 to 2nd Darius Hystapes B.C. 522 =
70 years
23rd Nebuchadnezzar B.C. 588 to 6th Darius Hystapes B.C. 518 =
70 years.
(the dates are bro. Thomas' reckoning)

But the actual decree for the rebuilding of Jerusalem (Dan. 9:2,25) was not given until the twentieth year of Darius Hystaspes (B.C. 504) some 38 years after Daniel's prayer to Yahweh (Dan. 9; Neh. 2:1).

Thus we have a Divine principle demonstrated. The time period is fulfilled chronologically to the day, but 1) the events at the beginning are multiple, with a corresponding multiplicity of events fulfilling the prophecy, and 2) there is a subsequent period or "time of the end" in which the powers that be are manipulated by the angels (e.g. Dan. 10:12,13) to bring to pass the matter decreed. And so we can see these principles applying in other periods (e.g. notes on 7:25.)

In all, there are seven major time periods given in Daniel:

4:32 - 2,520 years
 7:25 - 1,260 years
 8:14 - 2,300 years
 9:24 - 490 years
 12:7 - 1,260 years
 12:11 - 1,290 years
 12:12 - 1,335 years

These time periods can be grouped into four distinct categories: political, militant, ecclesiastical, and manifestation of Messiah.

1) Political 4:17 - 2,520 years. This deals with the lycanthropic excesses of the gentile kingdom of men. The preserving of the Babylonish or "Nimroudian" stump embraced by the iron and brass dynasties for 2,520 years until sanity is once again returned to the political heavens, when that king comes whose right it is to rule over the beasts (gentile nations) of the earth in the millenial paradise of God (cp. Gen. 1:26; Heb. 2:5-8; Psa. 8). Note the key words "rule" and "dominion" in Dan. 4:3,17,22,25,26,30,32, culminating in v. 34).

This is the prime time period of Daniel, embracing all of the other periods, and covers the full development of the image of chapter 2. It has two possible beginnings:

B.C. 606-3 (overthrow of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar) + 2,520 = A.D. 1914-17 (Balfour Declaration, etc.)

B.C. 542 (overthrow of Babylon by Cyrus) = 2,520 = A.D. 1978 (Image of ch. 2 struck on the feet at Armaggedon?)

But owing to possible inaccuracies of chronology which seem to have occurred during the long periods involved from the time of Daniel to our own times, it is possible for these dates to vary by several years either side of the dates given. The notes on page 78 indeed suggest that the history of these Old Testament times may be up to 40 years closer to our time than historians indicate. If this is so, then we would have to add 40 years on to the dates given above to allow sufficient time for the 2,520 years to expire. The dates would then be 1944-47 and 2,018 respectively. But we are by no means certain that 40 years is correct, and other signs in Scripture show that this present generation is the generation which will see the return of Christ. The time periods thus take on the role of finger posts pointing along the road to the kingdom, exact only to the degree of accuracy to which our all-wise Father has intended.

It follows from this reasoning that the dates obtained from the periods beginning in A.D. times will be more accurate than those given above. This is because we can fix the starting dates more accurately from the time of Christ onwards.

2) <u>Militant</u> 8:14, - 2,300 years. This is the period given for the land of Israel and its people to be trodden underfoot first by the leopard (or the goat power) and later by the fourth beast of chapter 7 (or the little horn of chapter 8). B.C. 334 (Battle of Granicus) + 2,300 = 1966. This period completed, we have already witnessed the <u>beginning</u> of the cleansing or avenging of the land in the "Six-Day War" of 1967. The "times of the Gentiles" are fulfilled.

This period is a long night of darkness in which the forces of sin are set loose to devastate the "pleasant land." It is the long evening to morning period, during which the multitudinous "man of the one" is formed, being cast out of the dust of the ground to be changed from corruption in the "twinkling of an eye" to the "last Adam" formed "a quickening spirit" (1 Cor. 15:45), to exercise dominion over the nations during the millenial sabbath outlined in Heb. 4:4-6. During this 2,300 year period both the nation of Israel (A.D. 70) and the mind of the flesh (in Christ) (A.D. 34) are symbolically sacrificed. At the end of this period there will be an avenging or cleansing of the land by a further sacrifice: the destruction of the Gogian Confederacy upon the mountains of Israel (cp. Ezek. 39:4,19; Dan. 7:11,12). This causes the antitypical Nebuchadnezzar, the gentile nations, to acknowledge that the "Most High God indeed rules in the kingdom of men" (cp. Ezek. 38:16,23) and the house of Israel shall know that Yahweh is their God from that day and forward (Ezek. 39:22).

3) <u>Ecclesiastical</u> 7:25 - 1,260 years. This is the period given for religious persecution upon the household of faith by the Papacy. The application of this period is twofold, as is shown in more detail in Revelation chapters 11 and 13. In Rev. 11 we have this period of time stated in two contexts:

- a) Rev. 11:2 ("forty two months") predicting that they which inhabit the "Courts of the Gentiles" will persecute the ecclesia for this period of time. This points to the rise of Roman Catholicism from the times of Justinian' (A.D. 533) to Phocas (606-610) spanning to 1793 - 1870 when Catholicism suffered a series of reverses.
- b) Rev. 11:3 (1,260 days) which refers to the period of warfare on the part of the two parties the Papacy (the arrogant little horn) versus "Two Witnesses" or so-called heretics (the Saints of the Most High). This period began from the establishment of the State Church and the opposition to it by the Donatists (A.D. 312) to "the Massacre of St. Bartholomew" (1572). There is a similar application of this period in Rev. 13:5.

Note that although the warfare of Dan. 7:24,25 is between the little horn power and "the saints of the most High," the fruits of the victory are given to the "people of the saints of the Most High" (v. 27) which are the true brethren of Christ.

4) <u>Manifestation of Messiah</u> 9:24 - seventy sevens. The goodness and severity of Yahweh upon Israel after the flesh - forgiven until seventy times seven (Matt. 18:22).

The birth, death and resurrection of our Lord is the starting point of all Bible chronology. Christ is indeed the one about whom is set all the ages, and the year A.D. 33 is the only date from which we can reckon Bible chronology with complete accuracy.

1260 - 1290 - 1335 years

The three periods contained in Dan. 12:7,11,12 all come under the Militant category mentioned above, and all refer to significant events dealing with the restoration of the Jews to the land of Israel during the "time of the end" period outlined in Dan. 11:40 to 12:4. The "Holy People" referred to (v. 7) are the same as those to be persecuted by the "King of fierce countenance" of 8:24 when this

"King of the North" sweeps through the "pleasant land" (11:40) prior to Armageddon.

The date 1882 is particularly significant as a fulfillment of the period 1260 years, as it is the date of the foundation of the first colony of Jews in Palestine, "Rishon-le-Zion" - which was a forerunner of Zionist resettlement of the land. However, a more significant date for the commencement of these three periods would be A.D. 632, the year of the eruption of the Saracen "locusts" from the "pit of the abyss" (the Arabian Peninsula) (Rev. 9:1,2), when the land was invaded by these desecrating hordes. This date brings us to the year 1892, a year of further resettlement in the land and the beginning of political Zionism.

The period 1,290 years (v. 11) from A.D. 632 brings a further development to the return of the Jew to Palestine. The year 1922 was a year of accelerated increase in immigration into the "pleasant land" (8,000 immigrants in 1922 to 34,000 in 1925) after the ratification of the Balfour Declaration (1917) by the League of Nations (July 24, 1922), which approved a British mandate over Palestine and included the Balfour Declaration in its terms.

The period 1335 years (notes on page 98) "Blessed is he that waiteth earnestly" (v. 12). This is a blessing to the brethren of our own time (Rev. 16:15). And indeed we have been blessed by seeing the work of Christ as Commander of Commanders moving among the nations in our very own times. While the chronology given on page 98 of these notes is significant, we have the added blessing of witnessing the miracle of the "Six-Day War" of June, 1967 in direct fulfillment of Psa. 83 occurring exactly 1335 years after A.D. 632 when the land was overrun by the Moslem powers.

And so these three periods span the great length of time until the fig-tree is once again putting forth its leaves after having been ravaged by the Roman and the Moslem abominations. The dry bones in the valley (Ezek. 37) have been shaken together and the nation of Israel is standing upon its feet awaiting the breath of Yahweh to bring them spiritually alive again.

How near is Daniel to standing upon his lot in these times"

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