

AN OUTLINED COMMENTARY ON

DANIEL

BOB WINTON



**GOSPEL
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Introduction to Daniel

A. The Author of This Prophetic Book is Daniel.

1. We are not privileged to know as much about Daniel as we would like, but a good bit is revealed about him in the book that bears his name, enough for us to see his greatness.
 - a. Other men named Daniel are mentioned elsewhere in the historical books of the Old Testament.
 - 1) 1 Chronicles 3:1: “Now these were the sons of David, which were born unto him in Hebron; the firstborn Amnon, of Ahinoam the Jezreelitess; the second Daniel, of Abigail the Carmelitess.”
 - 2) Ezra 8:2: “Of the sons of Phinehas; Gershom: of the sons of Ithamar; Daniel: of the sons of David; Hattush.”
 - 3) Nehemiah 10:6: “Daniel, Ginnethon, Baruch.”
 - b. It appears very likely that the Daniel mentioned twice by Ezekiel is the same prophet of our present study.
 - 1) Ezekiel 14:14: “Though these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, they should deliver but their own souls by their righteousness, saith the Lord GOD.”
 - a) In Noah’s day, that great man had preached for perhaps 120 years, and only members of his own immediate family were willing to accept the truth. His personal righteousness could not avert the judgment against the ungodly.
 - b) Noah’s work was directed toward the entire world of his time. The work of Daniel was directed toward the nation of Judah, and was very much involved with the Babylonian rulers and their pagan background. Job’s activities affected his family and friends.
 - c) Despite the influence of such men with God, those around them did not avoid punishment. Noah could not save his world; Job could not keep his children from being slain; Daniel, who had been taken into captivity with the many other Israelites, could not avert the disaster by his good standing with God.
 - 2) Ezekiel 28:3: “Behold, thou art wiser than Daniel; there is no secret that they can hide from thee.”
 - a) The prophet uses irony in this verse, putting words in the mouth of the prince of Tyre by which he exalts himself above even the prophet Daniel. Daniel was able to exercise a God-given power to reveal both the dream and its interpretation which Nebuchadnezzar had dreamed (Dan. 2).
 - b) "Then this Daniel was preferred above the presidents and princes, because an excellent spirit *was* in him; and the king thought to set him over the whole realm" (Dan. 6:3).
 - 3) Both Daniel and Ezekiel were in exile in Babylonia during the same period of time, and undoubtedly were well acquainted with each other. Daniel worked with the government, moving in high circles, serving God’s great ends. Ezekiel worked among the Jewish captives, to enhance their standing with God. Both prophets revealed future events which directly involved God’s vast purposes.
 2. Daniel was a descendant of an important family in Judah, perhaps even of royal birth: “And the king spake unto Ashpenaz the master of his eunuchs, that he should bring certain of the children of Israel, and of the king's seed, and of the princes” (Dan. 1:3).
 - a. “BUT now Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, took some of the most noble of the Jews that were children, and the kinsmen of Zedekiah their king, such as were remarkable for the beauty of their bodies, and the comeliness of their countenances, and delivered them into the hands of tutors, and to the improvement to be made by them. He also made some of them to be eunuchs; which course he
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took also with those of other nations whom he had taken in the flower of their age, and afforded them their diet from his own table, and had them instructed in the institutes of the country, and taught the learning of the Chaldeans; and they had now exercised themselves sufficiently in that wisdom which he had ordered they should apply themselves to. Now among these there were four of the family of Zedekiah, of most excellent dispositions, one of whom was called Daniel, another was called Ananias, another Misael, and the fourth Azarias; and the king of Babylon changed their names, and commanded that they should make use of other names. Daniel he called Baltasar; Ananias, Shadrach; Misael, Meshach; and Azarias, Abednego. These the king had in esteem, and continued to love, because of the very excellent temper they were of, and because of their application to learning, and the progress they had made in wisdom” (Josephus: *Antiquities of the Jews*, Biblesoft, *Antiquities*, Book 10, Chapter 10, Section 1).

- b. “Of his first years nothing is recorded. At an early age we find him in Babylon, among the captive Hebrews whom Nebuchadnezzar had carried away at the first deportation of the people of Judah, in the fourth year of Jehoiakim. He is mentioned in connection with three other youths, apparently of the same rank, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, who, with him, were selected for the purpose of being instructed in the language and literature of the Chaldeans, with a view to their being employed in the service of the court (Dan 1:3-4). His age at that time it is impossible to determine with accuracy, but it is not improbable that it was somewhere about twelve or fifteen years. In Dan 1:4, he and his three friends are called ‘children’” (Barnes, Biblesoft).
- c. The following information from Barnes is of importance to our study:
 - 1) How long he lived, and when and where he died, are points on which no certain information can now be obtained. Josephus gives no account of his latter days, or of his death, though he says respecting him, "he was so happy as to have strange revelations made to him, and those as to one of the greatest of the prophets, insomuch that while he was alive he had the esteem and applause both of kings and of the multitude; and now he is dead, he retains a remembrance that will never fail." (Ant. b. x. chapter xi). It is commonly believed that he died in Chaldea, having been detained there by his employments in the Persian empire. Epiphanius says that he died in Babylon, and this has been the commonly received opinion of historians. This opinion, however, has not been universal. Some suppose that he died at Shushan or Susa. Josephus (Ant. b. x. chapter xi.) says that, "on account of the opinion which men had that he was beloved of God, he built a tower at Ecbatana in Media, which was a most elegant building and wonderfully made," and that it was still remaining in his day.
 - 2) Benjamin of Tudela says that his monument was shown at Chuzestan, which is the ancient Susa. As Benjamin of Tudela professes to record what he saw and heard, and as his Itinerary is a book which has been more frequently transcribed and translated than almost any other book, except the Travels of Maundeville, it may be of some interest to copy what he has said of the tomb of Daniel. It is a record of the traditions of the East—the country where Daniel lived and died, and it is not improbably founded in essential truth. At any rate, it will show what has been the current tradition in the East respecting Daniel, and is all that can now be known respecting the place of his death and burial. Benjamin of Tudela was a Jewish rabbi of Spain, who traveled through Europe, Asia, and Africa, from Spain to China, between 1160 and 1173 A.D. His Itinerary was first printed in 1543, It was a work in wide circulation in the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth centuries, and has been translated from the original Hebrew into Latin, English, French, Dutch, and Jewish German, and in these languages has passed through not less than twenty-two editions.
 - 3) I quote from the London and Berlin edition of 1840. "Four miles from hence begins Khuzestan, Elam of Scripture, a large province which, however, is but partially inhabited, a portion of it lying in ruins. Among the latter are the remains of Shushan, the metropolis and palace of king

Achashverosh, which still contains very large and handsome buildings of ancient date. Its seven thousand Jewish inhabitants possess fourteen synagogues, in front of one of which is the tomb of Daniel, who rests in peace. The river Ulai divides the parts of the city, which are connected with a bridge; that portion of it which is inhabited by the Jews contains the markets; to it all trade is confined, and there dwell all the rich; on the other side of the river they are poor, because they are deprived of the above-named advantages, and have even no gardens nor orchards. These circumstances gave rise to jealousy, which was fostered by the belief that all honor and riches originated from the possession of the remains of the prophet Daniel, who rests in peace, and who was buried on their side.

- 4) A request was made by the poor for permission to remove the sepulchre to the other side, but it was rejected; upon which a war arose, and was carried on between the two parties for a length of time. This strife lasted 'until their souls became loath' (Num 21:4-5; Judg 16:16), and they came to a mutual agreement, by which it was stipulated that the coffin which contained Daniel's bones should be deposited alternately every year on either side. Both parties faithfully adhered to this arrangement, which was, however, interrupted by the interference of Sanjar Shah Ben Shah, who governs all Persia, and holds supreme power over forty-five of its kings.
 - 5) "When this great emperor Sanjar, king of Persia, came to Shushan, and saw that the coffin of Daniel was removed from side to side, he crossed the bridge with a very numerous retinue, and accompanied by Jews and Mahometans, inquired into the nature of these proceedings. Upon being told what we have related above, he declared that it was derogatory to the honor of Daniel, and recommended that the distance between the two banks should be exactly measured; that Daniel's coffin should be deposited in another coffin, made of glass, and that it should be suspended from the very middle of the bridge, fastened by chains of iron. A place of public worship was erected on the very spot, open to every one who desired to say his prayers, whether he be Jew or Gentile, and the coffin of Daniel is suspended from the bridge unto this very day." —(Vol. i. pp. 117-120).
 - 6) This story, trifling as it is in some of its details, may be admitted as evidence of a tradition in the East that Daniel died and was buried at Shushan. This tradition, moreover, is very ancient. In a note on this passage (vol. ii. p. 152). Asher, the publisher of the Itinerary of Benjamin, says: "Aasim of Cufah, a venerable historian, who preceded Ibn Hankel by two hundred years (for he died 735), mentions the discovery of Daniel's coffin at Sus. Ibn Haukel, who traveled in the tenth century, speaks of it, and ascribes to the possession of the bones of Daniel the virtue of dispelling all sorts of distress, particularly that of famine from want of rain." Regarding the Greatness of Daniel and His Prophecies.
3. We learn that he did not quail when his enemies set him up to violate a law which they had engineered to be passed by the king (Dan. 6). Despite knowing that he was endangering his life by praying to God, he ignored the new law that forbade such. "Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house; and his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime" (Dan. 6:10). He was put into a den of lions as punishment for disobeying the decree. God delivered him from the lions during the night he spent in their den.
 4. Daniel's three companions were likewise great and faithful men. Many Israelites had been conquered and exiled to Babylon because of their idolatry, but these three young men refused to worship the great image of gold which the king had erected. For their refusal, they were cast into the burning fiery furnace. Of course, they were preserved by God's great power (see Dan. 3).
 5. Daniel was privileged to receive and reveal a prophetic history of the world for the following several hundred years (Dan. 2). This accurate prediction establishes for all time the inspiration of the book of Daniel and the New Testament.
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6. In the setting of the prophecies of Daniel 2, God revealed that during the time when the fourth great kingdom was in its strength, that he would establish a kingdom which would never be destroyed: "And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever" (Dan. 2:44).
7. In interpreting Nebuchadnezzar's dream, Daniel revealed God's plan to establish his spiritual kingdom. God promised to establish his kingdom during the days of the Roman kings. If he was true to his word, we may confidently look for the beginning of his kingdom during the span of time between 63 B.C. and 476 A.D., a period of 539 years, which included the time when Rome's empire was at its zenith.
 - a. The Kingdom was at hand during the days of John the Baptizer and Jesus.
 - 1) John's message prominently featured a promise of the nearness of the kingdom. "In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea, And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matt. 3:1-2).
 - 2) The events of Matthew 3 are separated from the events with which chapter two closed by almost thirty years; Matthew began this chapter with these words: *in those days*. Daniel 2:44 had predicted: "And in the days of these kings...."
 - 3) Luke 3:1-3: "Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judaea, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip tetrarch of Ituraea and of the region of Trachonitis, and Lysanias the tetrarch of Abilene, Annas and Caiapas being the high priests, the word of God came unto John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness. And he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins."
 - 4) Daniel had predicted that the kingdom would be established during the time when the Roman kings were in power; Luke identified the Roman king then on the throne, and named several of the other great men who were also in power at the time.
 - b. Jesus began his ministry with the same message as did John. "From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matt. 4:17).
 - 1) Jesus instructed the twelve to preach the same message when he sent them on the limited commission. "And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matt. 10:7).
 - 2) Christ gave this same message to the seventy disciples when he sent them forth to preach. "And heal the sick that are therein, and say unto them, The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you" (Luke 10:9).
 - 3) These eighty-four preachers had the same message: the kingdom was about ready to be established. How can anyone who respects the integrity of God's word think that all of these were wrong?
 - 4) Premillennialism teaches that Christ planned to establish an earthly kingdom and reign over it from a literal throne in Jerusalem, but that the Jews rejected his efforts. The truth is, a powerful group of Jews tried to enthrone Christ on a literal throne, which the Lord refused. "When Jesus therefore perceived that they would come and take him by force, to make him a king, he departed again into a mountain himself alone" (John 6:15).
 - 5) His kingdom was never intended to be a worldly kingdom. "Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence" (John 18:36).

B. Outline of the Book of Daniel the Prophet.

1. Chapter 1.
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- a. Verses 1-2: Jehoiakim's captivity.
 - b. Verses 3-7: Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah are taken to Babylon.
 - c. Verses 8-16: They refuse to eat the king's food.
 - d. Verses 17-21: Their wisdom.
2. Chapter 2.
- a. Verses 1-9: Nebuchadnezzar forgets his dream.
 - b. Verses 10-13: His *magicians* cannot interpret the dream.
 - c. Verses 14-18: Daniel learns the dream.
 - d. Verses 19-23: He blesses God.
 - e. Verses 24-30: Daniel brought to the king.
 - f. Verses 31-35: The dream.
 - g. Verses 36-45: The interpretation.
 - h. Verses 46-49: Daniel's advancement.
3. Chapter 3.
- a. Verses 1-7: Nebuchadnezzar dedicates a golden image in Dura.
 - b. Verses 8-12: Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego are accused for not worshipping the image.
 - c. Verses 13-18: They being threatened, make a good confession.
 - d. Verses 19-23: They are cast into the furnace.
 - e. Verses 24-27: God delivers them.
 - f. Verses 28-30: Nebuchadnezzar seeing the miracle blesses God, and advances them.
4. Chapter 4.
- a. Verses 1-3: Nebuchadnezzar acknowledges the God of Daniel.
 - b. Verses 4-7: Makes relation of his dreams, which the magicians could not interpret.
 - c. Verses 8-18: Daniel hears the dream.
 - d. Verses 19-27: Daniel interprets the dream.
 - e. Verses 28-37: The dream fulfilled.
5. Chapter 5.
- a. Verses 1-4: Belshazzar's impious feast.
 - b. Verses 5-9: A hand-writing unknown to the magicians, troubles the king.
 - c. Verses 10-16: Daniel is brought.
 - d. Verse 17-24: Daniel reproves the king of pride and idolatry.
 - e. Verses 25-29: Daniel reads and interprets the writing.
 - f. Verses 30-31: The empire is taken over by the Medes.
6. Chapter 6.
- a. Verses 1-3: Daniel is made chief of the presidents.
 - b. Verses 4-9: The other presidents conspire against Daniel.
 - c. Verses 10-17: Daniel, accused of the breach thereof, is cast into the lion's den.
 - d. Verses 18-23: Daniel is saved.
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- e. Verse 24: His adversaries are devoured.
 - f. Verses 25-28: God is magnified by a decree.
7. Chapter 7
- a. Verses 1-8: Daniel's vision of the four beasts.
 - b. Verses 9-14: Vision of God's kingdom.
 - c. Verses 15-28: The interpretation of the vision.
8. Chapter 8.
- a. Verses 1-12: Daniel's vision of the ram and he goat.
 - b. Verses 13-14: The two thousand three hundred days of the suspension of the daily sacrifice.
 - c. Verses 15-17: Gabriel comforts Daniel, and interprets the vision.
9. Chapter 9.
- a. Verses 1-2: Daniel considers the time of the captivity.
 - b. Verses 3-15: Daniels Prayer.
 - c. Verses 16-19: Prays for the restoration of Jerusalem.
 - d. Verses 20-27: The Seventy Weeks.
10. Chapter 10.
- a. Verses 1-9: Daniel sees another vision.
 - b. Verses 10-21: He is comforted by the angel.
11. Chapter 11.
- a. Verses 1-4: The overthrow of Persia by the king of Grecia.
 - b. Verses 5-29: Leagues and conflicts between the kings of the south and of the north.
 - c. Verses 30-45: The invasion and tyranny of the Romans.
12. Chapter 12.
- a. Verses 1-4: Michael shall deliver Israel from their troubles.
 - b. Verses 5-13: Daniel is informed of the times.
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Daniel 1

A. Daniel 1:1-2: Jehoiakim's Captivity.

1. Verse 1: “In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah came Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon unto Jerusalem, and besieged it.”
 - a. Josephus provides some information that we find interesting and helpful regarding the time element:
 - 1) NOW in the fourth year of the reign of Jehoiakim, one whose name was Nebuchadnezzar took the government over the Babylonians, who at the same time went up with a great army to the city Carchemish, which was at Euphrates, upon a resolution he had taken to fight with Neco king of Egypt, under whom all Syria then was. And when Neco understood the intention of the king of Babylon, and that this expedition was made against him, he did not despise his attempt, but made haste with a great band of men to Euphrates to defend himself from Nebuchadnezzar; and when they had joined battle, he was beaten, and lost many ten thousands [of his soldiers] in the battle. So the king of Babylon passed over Euphrates, and took all Syria, as far as Pelusium, excepting Judea. But when Nebuchadnezzar had already reigned four years, which was the eighth of Jehoiakim's government over the Hebrews, the king of Babylon made an expedition with mighty forces against the Jews, and required tribute of Jehoiakim, and threatened upon his refusal to make war against him. He was affrighted at his threatening, and bought his peace with money, and brought the tribute he was ordered to bring for three years.
 - 2) But on the third year, upon hearing that the king of the Babylonians made an expedition against the Egyptians, he did not pay his tribute; yet was he disappointed of his hope, for the Egyptians durst not fight at this time. And indeed the prophet Jeremiah foretold every day, how vainly they relied on their hopes from Egypt, and how the city would be overthrown by the king of Babylon, and Jehoiakim the king would be subdued by him. But what he thus spake proved to be of no advantage to them, because there were none that should escape; for both the multitude and the rulers, when they heard him, had no concern about what they heard; but being displeased at what was said, as if the prophet were a diviner against the king, they accused Jeremiah, and bringing him before the court, they required that a sentence and a punishment might be given against him. Now all the rest gave their votes for his condemnation, but the elders refused, who prudently sent away the prophet from the court of [the prison], and persuaded the rest to do Jeremiah no harm; for they said that he was not the only person who foretold what would come to the city, but that Micah signified the same before him, as well as many others, none of which suffered any thing of the kings that then reigned, but were honored as the prophets of God. So they mollified the multitude with these words, and delivered Jeremiah from the punishment to which he was condemned. Now when this prophet had written all his prophecies, and the people were fasting, and assembled at the temple, on the ninth month of the fifth year of Jehoiakim, he read the book he had composed of his predictions of what was to befall the city, and the temple, and the multitude. And when the rulers heard of it, they took the book from him, and bid him and Baruch the scribe to go their ways, lest they should be discovered by one or other; but they carried the book, and gave it to the king; so he gave order, in the presence of his friends, that his scribe should take it, and read it. When the king heard what it contained, he was angry, and tore it, and cast it into the fire, where it was consumed. He also commanded that they should seek for Jeremiah, and Baruch the scribe, and bring them to him, that they might be punished. However, they escaped his anger.
 - 3) Now, a little time afterwards, the king of Babylon made an expedition against Jehoiakim, whom he received [into the city], and this out of fear of the foregoing predictions of this prophet, as supposing he should suffer nothing that was terrible, because he neither shut the gates, nor fought

against him; yet when he was come into the city, he did not observe the covenants he had made, but he slew such as were in the flower of their age, and such as were of the greatest dignity, together with their king Jehoiakim, whom he commanded to be thrown before the walls, without any burial; and made his son Jehoiachin king of the country, and of the city: he also took the principal persons in dignity for captives, three thousand in number, and led them away to Babylon; among which was the prophet Ezekiel, who was then but young. And this was the end of king Jehoiakim, when he had lived thirty-six years, and of them reigned eleven. But Jehoiachin succeeded him in the kingdom, whose mother's name was Nehushta; she was a citizen of Jerusalem. He reigned three months and ten days. (Josephus: *Antiquities of the Jews*, Book 11, Chapter 6, Sections 1-3; Biblesoft].

- b. Some skeptics have taken issue with the first statement of Daniel regarding the time factor given. But from Robert D. Wilson, we offer the following rebuttal facts:
- 1) That Nebuchadnezzar, before he became king, was sent by his father on an expedition against Egypt and Palestine.
 - 2) That Nebuchadnezzar took the government over the Babylonians in the fourth year of Jehoiakim.
 - 3) That Nebuchadnezzar defeated Necho at Carchemish.
 - 4) That Nebuchadnezzar conquered Syria as far as Plusium, excepting Judea, immediately after the battle of Carchemish.
 - 5) But that he did not make an expedition against Jerusalem till the eighth year of Jehoiakim, which was his own fourth year.
 - 6) That Jehoiakim paid tribute for three years.
 - 7) That Jerusalem was taken in the eleventh year of Jehoiakim; at which time Jehoiakim himself was killed and his body thrown before the wall without any burial (pp. 55f). [These conclusions were drawn from evidence recorded by Josephus].
- c. Critics allege that a discrepancy exists between the time Jehoiakim's reign began. Daniel here states that the events he first records occurred during the third year of his reign, while Jeremiah records that it was during Jehoiakim's fourth year as king: "The word that came to Jeremiah concerning all the people of Judah in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah, that was the first year of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon" (Jer. 25:1).
- 1) These critics ignore the fact that Jeremiah used the Jewish method of numbering years, while Daniel, living in Babylon, would obviously have used the Chaldean method. Both statements are correct.
 - 2) The Chaldeans started counting the year after the event began, which custom was followed by Daniel; thus it was during Jehoiakim's third year. The Jewish method was to count the first year, even though it might only be a part of the year, as a full year. Thus Jeremiah accurately stated that Jehoiakim was in his fourth year as king when the Babylonians first invested Jerusalem. The Jewish method was to count the year of the event as the first year; the Chaldeans started their count with the year following the event.
 - 3) Josiah was a very godly man, who led the nation in a great restoration of the Mosaic Law. Following the untimely death of Josiah, his youngest son, Jehoahaz, was elevated to the throne. He was a wicked man, and was removed by Pharaoh-Necho when that Egyptian king was leading his army northward through Israel to do battle with the Chaldeans; he had only ruled for three months (2 Kings 23:30; 2 Chronicles 36:1). Pharaoh replaced Jehoahaz with his brother, Eliakim, and changed his name to Jehoiakim. This new king was a son of Josiah, but did not partake of his father's piety. (2 Kings 23:24; 2 Chronicles 36:4).
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- a) 2 Kings 23:30: “And his servants carried him [Josiah] in a chariot dead from Megiddo, and brought him to Jerusalem, and buried him in his own sepulchre. And the people of the land took Jehoahaz the son of Josiah, and anointed him, and made him king in his father's stead.”
 - b) 2 Chronicles 36:1: “Then the people of the land took Jehoahaz the son of Josiah, and made him king in his father's stead in Jerusalem.”
 - c) 2 Kings 23:24: “Moreover the workers with familiar spirits, and the wizards, and the images, and the idols, and all the abominations that were spied in the land of Judah and in Jerusalem, did Josiah put away, that he might perform the words of the law which were written in the book that Hilkiah the priest found in the house of the LORD.”
 - d) 2 Chronicles 36:4: “And the king of Egypt made Eliakim his brother king over Judah and Jerusalem, and turned his name to Jehoiakim. And Necho took Jehoahaz his brother, and carried him to Egypt.”
- d. “Another objection raised against this first verse is that the first expedition against Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar took place about the time of the battle of Carchemish (May or June, 605 B.C.); and the fact of Nebuchadnezzar's being here called 'king of Babylon' is labeled as an 'error,' because Nebuchadnezzar did not actually become king of Babylon until 604 B.C. As anyone should know, 'This is a prolepsis.' Here is another example: President Eisenhower was born in Dennison. President Eisenhower led the invasion of Europe, etc. Critics are hard pressed for an error to focus upon something like this” (Coffman).
2. “Nabopolassar ascended the throne of Babylon in the year B.C. 625, so far as can be made out at present, on the overthrow of the Assyrians of Nineveh. Taking occasion of this event, Egypt, which had been conquered by Esarhaddon and Assurbanipal, reasserted itself....About sixteen years after the fall of Nineveh...Pharaoh-Necho...invaded the territory of Babylon. He maintained his conquest only a little while, for Nebuchadnezzar, the young heroic son of the peaceful Nabopolassar, marched against the Egyptians. A great battle was fought at Carchemish, and the Egyptians were totally defeated.
- a. “After this victory Nebuchadnezzar pursued his flying enemy toward Egypt, and probably visited Jerusalem and laid siege to it. He was not yet king, but it is not to be reckoned an anachronism that the writer here calls him king. We speak of the Duke of Wellington gaining his first victory at Assaye, although his ducal title was not attained till long after.
 - b. “If we follow Berosus, as quoted by Josephus (*Contra Apionem*, 119), while Nebuchadnezzar was engaged on the campaign of Palestine and Syria, he was summoned back to Babylon by the death of his father Nabopolassar. ‘Leaving the heavy-armed troops and baggage, he hurried, accompanied by a few troops, across the desert to Babylon.’
 - c. “....Moreover, we must remember that the first year of Nebuchadnezzar was not the year of his accession, but was the year following the next new year after that event. If a monarch ascended the throne actually in the month Iyyar of one year, that year would be reckoned as ‘the beginning of his reign’; not till the first of the month Nisau in the following year did his first year begin. In Jerusalem the calculation of the years of a monarch began from his accession, and was independent of the calendar. Hence, if the Babylonian method of reckoning was applied to Jehoiakim's reign, what was reckoned his fourth year in Jerusalem would be only his third....
 - d. “It has been noted by Dr. Sayce (*Higher Criticism*, 419), as a characteristic instance of the carefulness with which the materials have been treated in Kings, that while Shalmaneser is said to have besieged Samaria, it is not said that he (Shalmaneser) took it. It is to be noted that there is an equal carefulness in the verse before us. Nebuchadnezzar, we are told, came unto Jerusalem, and ‘besieged it.’ The usual and natural conclusion to such a statement would be ‘and took it’; the fact that this phrase is not added proves that the writer does not wish to assert that Nebuchadnezzar required to push the siege to
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extremities” [Pulpit Commentary, Biblesoft].

3. Verse 2: “And the Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, with part of the vessels of the house of God: which he carried into the land of Shinar to the house of his god; and he brought the vessels into the treasure house of his god.”
 - a. Coffman offers the following:
 - 1) It is strangely pathetic to find the names of these precocious young princes of Israel among the eunuchs of the king of Babylon. Now eunuchs were usually persons who had been emasculated; and, although it is true that there were sometimes eunuchs merely in the sense of 'officers' of the king, the situation here does not lend itself to such an explanation. These young men were not officers at all but captives; and we agree with Culver that, 'There is great possibility that Daniel and his friends may have been emasculated.' We favor this view because of Isaiah's prophecy: *And Isaiah said unto Hezekiah, Hear the word of Jehovah. Behold the days come, that all that is in thy house, and that which thy fathers have laid up in store unto this day, shall be carried to Babylon: nothing shall be left, saith Jehovah. And of thy sons that shall issue from thee, whom thou shalt beget, shall they take away; and they shall become eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon....*
 - 2) As for the reasons why the names of these men were changed by their Babylonian masters, several motives could have caused it: (1) Hebrew names being unfamiliar to the Babylonians, they replaced them with names they could more easily remember and pronounce. (2) A definite hostility to the religion of the Hebrews is also evident. They replaced names which were derived from the true God through the use of syllables meaning Yahweh, or Jehovah, with Babylonian names which either honored Babylonian pagan gods, or in some way might have been derogatory. Note the following:
 - a) Daniel means 'God is my judge.'
 - b) Hananiah means 'Yahweh hath been gracious.'
 - c) Mishael means 'Who is what El is?'
 - d) Azariah means 'Yahweh has helped.'
 - e) The names given in Babylon to these men had the following meanings:
 - (1) Belteshazzar means 'Bel (a pagan god) protects his life.'
 - (2) Shadrach means 'The command of Aku (the moon god).'
 - (3) Meshach means 'Who is this?'
 - (4) Abednego means 'Servant of the god Nabu.'
 - f) From this it is easy to see that the purpose of the names included the desire to eradicate all traces of the Hebrew religion and replace them with names honoring Babylonian pagan gods.
 - 3) The development of this paragraph shows that these particular Hebrew young men, along with an undetermined number of others, were enrolled in a three-year course of study to master the wisdom, the learning, and the language of the Chaldeans. They were honored by such an opportunity. Among other privileges, they enjoyed being fed from the king's kitchen.
 - b. The name *Shinar* is a very ancient name for Babylon (Gen. 10:10; 11:2). Its use here is strong evidence that Daniel was the inspired author and that it was written at the time assigned to it. If some unknown and uninspired writer had produced the book at a later age, this name for Babylon would not have been employed.
 - 1) Genesis 10:10: “And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel, and Erech, and Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar.”

- 2) Genesis 11:2: “And it came to pass, as they journeyed from the east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar; and they dwelt there.”
- 3) Genesis 14:1: “And it came to pass in the days of Amraphel king of Shinar, Arioch king of Ellasar, Chedorlaomer king of Elam, and Tidal king of nations.”
- 4) Isaiah 11:11: “And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people, which shall be left, from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea.”
- 5) Zechariah 5:11: “And he said unto me, To build it an house in the land of Shinar: and it shall be established, and set there upon her own base.”
- c. “Nebuchadnezzar took only ‘part of the vessels,’ as he did not intend wholly to overthrow the state, but to make it tributary, and to leave such vessels as were absolutely needed for the public worship of Yahweh. Subsequently, all were taken away by Nebuchadnezzar, and ‘put in the house of his gods,’ and were restored under Cyrus (Ezra 1:7). To the house of his god—Bel. His temple, as was often the case among the pagan, was made the ‘treasure-house’ of the king” [JFB, Biblesoft].

B. Daniel 1:3-7: Ashpenaz takes Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah.

1. Verses 3-4: “And the king spake unto Ashpenaz the master of his eunuchs, that he should bring *certain* of the children of Israel, and of the king's seed, and of the princes; Children in whom *was* no blemish, but well favoured, and skilful in all wisdom, and cunning in knowledge, and understanding science, and such as *had* ability in them to stand in the king's palace, and whom they might teach the learning and the tongue of the Chaldeans.”
 - a. Nebuchadnezzar instructed Ashpenaz, who was in charge of the king’s eunuchs, to bring to Babylon certain special individuals from among the Israelites. There were to be young men who had no physical blemish, who were well-favored in appearance, and who had the inherent talent to obtain wisdom, knowledge, scientific matters, and who could learn and speak the language of Chaldea.
 - b. The “children of Israel” is a general reference to the special people of God; the two specifications for those who are to be selected for the special training would be children of both the royal family and the nobility.
 - c. The word “children” does not of itself specify the age of the individuals. “The term does not admit of a definite conclusion respecting the age. Possibly these were youths of 14 (Maurer) or 15 (Rosenmueller). The word is the direct object of *to bring* (vs. 3). ‘What is said in vs. 5 concerning a period of three years during which Daniel was in training, corresponds remarkable with these statements’ (Zeckler)” [Young, p. 40].
 - d. Commenting on Second Kings 2:24 [“And he turned back, and looked on them, and cursed them in the name of the LORD. And there came forth two she bears out of the wood, and tare forty and two children of them”], Charles Pledge offers the following regarding the “little children” of that text:
 - 1) “The Bible text calls them *little children* in the KJV while the ASV uses the phrase, *young lads*. However, one must keep in mind that in Hebrew terminology one was a lad until he was in his early twenties and a youth while even older than that. *Young lads* would simply indicate that they were perhaps in the late teens, certainly old enough to know better than to do what they were doing” (Pledge, Vol. II, pp.76).
 - 2) It should be noted that the Hebrew word in 2 Samuel 2:24 is different from the word used in our present text (Dan. 1:4), however, brother Pledge’s comments shed some light on the likely age of the children we are considering.
 - e. The physical and intellectual qualities of these young men were to be of the highest level.

- 1) They were to have no physical blemish.
 - a) Leviticus 21:17-21: “Speak unto Aaron, saying, Whosoever he be of thy seed in their generations that hath any blemish, let him not approach to offer the bread of his God. For whatsoever man he be that hath a blemish, he shall not approach: a blind man, or a lame, or he that hath a flat nose, or any thing superfluous, Leviticus 21:19-21 Or a man that is brokenfooted, or brokenhanded, Or crookbackt, or a dwarf, or that hath a blemish in his eye, or be scurvy, or scabbed, or hath his stones broken; No man that hath a blemish of the seed of Aaron the priest shall come nigh to offer the offerings of the LORD made by fire: he hath a blemish; he shall not come nigh to offer the bread of his God.” [These restrictions applied to one who was to become a priest in Israel].
 - b) Some scholars think that Daniel and his three companions were made eunuchs. While this might be the case, it appears to this writer that the requirement for them to be without any physical blemish may preclude this. Notice that the candidate for priesthood could have no injury in his *stones*. If there was such a disorder, the man would not be without blemish. Still, this unblemished condition could be their state when they were chosen to enter Babylonian training, with their emasculation taking place after they were selected.
 - c) And there is still the statement of Isaiah 39:5-7: “Then said Isaiah to Hezekiah, Hear the word of the LORD of hosts: Behold, the days come, that all that is in thine house, and that which thy fathers have laid up in store until this day, shall be carried to Babylon: nothing shall be left, saith the LORD. And of thy sons that shall issue from thee, which thou shalt beget, shall they take away; and they shall be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon.”
 - 2) They were to be well-favored.
 - a) Compare:
 - (1) Genesis 39:6-7: “And he left all that he had in Joseph's hand; and he knew not ought he had, save the bread which he did eat. And Joseph was a goodly person, and well favoured. And it came to pass after these things, that his master's wife cast her eyes upon Joseph; and she said, Lie with me.”
 - (2) Genesis 24:16: “And the damsel was very fair to look upon, a virgin, neither had any man known her: and she went down to the well, and filled her pitcher, and came up.”
 - (3) Genesis 26:7: “And the men of the place asked him of his wife; and he said, She is my sister: for he feared to say, She is my wife; lest, said he, the men of the place should kill me for Rebekah; because she was fair to look upon.”
 - (4) 1 Samuel 16:12: “And he sent, and brought him in. Now he was ruddy, and withal of a beautiful countenance, and goodly to look to. And the LORD said, Arise, anoint him: for this is he.” [This is said in description of David].
 - b) To be *well-favored* was to be handsome [beautiful, in the case of a lady]; easy to look at; having nothing about his form and countenance to detract from his work and influence. Isaiah predicted that the Messiah would not have this pleasant physical appearance: “For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him” (53:2).
 - c) Each was to be skillful in all wisdom. Those of the specified age group selected, were the ones who were intelligent and having a propensity for wisdom. These young men were to possess the necessary faculties to grasp the *wisdom* of the Chaldean mentality. They will have already cultivated a knowledge and wisdom of Jewish matters.
 - d) Each was to be cunning in knowledge. “Cunning” indicates natural intelligence and *knowledge*
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- points to a good education.
- e) They were to have an understanding of science. “Perception or discernment in knowledge. All of these phrases simply serve to emphasize the fact that the youths were skilled in all kinds of knowledge” (Young, p.41).
 - f) They were to have the ability to stand in the king’s palace. Since their duties would involve being in the king’s presence, they were to have the physical appearance and mental aptitude to report to him and to receive his directions. Likewise, they would be able to deal with the king’s other officers and diplomats from foreign countries. Compare the following verses:
 - (1) Genesis 18:8: “And he took butter, and milk, and the calf which he had dressed, and set it before them; and he stood by them under the tree, and they did eat.”
 - (2) Genesis 41:46: “And Joseph was thirty years old when he stood before Pharaoh the king of Egypt. And Joseph went out from the presence of Pharaoh, and went throughout all the land of Egypt.”
 - (3) Deuteronomy 1:38: “But Joshua the son of Nun, which standeth before thee, he shall go in thither: encourage him: for he shall cause Israel to inherit it.”
 - g) Each was to have the capacity to become adept in understanding, speaking, reading and writing in the Chaldean tongues. The writing in Chaldean was done in cuneiform, not an easy method to learn, evidently.
 - (1) Cuneiform: “wedge-shaped: with the narrowly triangular shape of a wedge; used in ancient writing system: relating or belonging to any of several writing systems of the ancient Near East, for example, Sumerian or Linear B, in which wedge-shaped impressions were made in soft clay” [Microsoft® Encarta].
 - (2) “Throughout their history...the Jews (cf. the story of Joseph) were ready to accept secular education without doing despite to their religious beliefs. Certainly the Scriptures place no premium upon ignorance, and Daniel and his companions were but taking advantage of every opportunity in order the better to prepare themselves for the service of God” (Young, pp.41f).
2. Verse 5: “And the king appointed them a daily provision of the king's meat, and of the wine which he drank: so nourishing them three years, that at the end thereof they might stand before the king” (KJV). “And the king appointed for them a daily provision of the king's delicacies and of the wine which he drank, and three years of training for them, so that at the end of that time they might serve before the king” (NKJ).
- a. Nebuchadnezzar’s plan for these young men including a high-quality diet, such as the king himself ate and drank. The ancient custom was for the officers of the court to eat food prepared for the king’s table. Apparently he did not respect the diet of the Jews.
 - 1) Concerning the drink offered to them: “Such wine as the king was accustomed to drink. It may be presumed that this was the best kind of wine. From anything that appears, this was furnished to them in abundance; and with the leisure which they had, they could hardly be thrown into stronger temptation to excessive indulgence” (Barnes).
 - 2) Solomon provided food for a great number of people: “ And Solomon reigned over all kingdoms from the river unto the land of the Philistines, and unto the border of Egypt: they brought presents, and served Solomon all the days of his life. And Solomon's provision for one day was thirty measures of fine flour, and threescore measures of meal, Ten fat oxen, and twenty oxen out of the pastures, and an hundred sheep, beside harts, and roebucks, and fallowdeer, and fatted fowl....And Judah and Israel dwelt safely, every man under his vine and under his fig tree, from Dan even to
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Beersheba, all the days of Solomon....And those officers provided victual for king Solomon, and for all that came unto king Solomon's table, every man in his month: they lacked nothing” (1 Kings 4:21-27).

- b. Regarding the three-year period: “At the end of three years they would still be very young. The grammatical connection of the word *legaddelam* is somewhat singular. The Septuagint reading probably had the first word in this verse in the infinitive also. This is more grammatical, as it brings the whole under the regimen of the opening clause of ver. 3. The force of the word before us is represented in ‘bringing up.’ The verb in its simple form means ‘to be strong,’ ‘to be great,’ hence in the intensive form before us, ‘to make great,’ ‘to bring up.’ That at the end thereof they might stand before the king. ‘Standing before the king’ means usually becoming members of the council of the monarch, but in the present instance this does not seem to be the meaning. They were to be presented before the king, and in his presence they were to be examined. They were, then, possibly to be admitted into the college of astrologers and soothsayers, but only in lowly grade. Irrespective of the fact that they would at the latest be twenty or twenty-one when this season of education was over, and, even making all allowance for Eastern precocity, this is too young an age for being a member of a royal privy council. But the next chapter relates an event which appears to be the occasion when they stood before the king, for they were not summoned with the wise men to the king's presence to interpret his dream” (Pulpit Commentary, Biblesoft).
3. Verses 6-7: “Now among these were of the children of Judah, Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah: Unto whom the prince of the eunuchs gave names: for he gave unto Daniel *the name* of Belteshazzar; and to Hananiah, of Shadrach; and to Mishael, of Meshach; and to Azariah, of Abednego.”
 - a. We are not told in the text just how many of these young men were selected to be brought to Babylon for this special training. That there were a sizeable number is indicated by this passage. Four of them are identified by name: Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah.
 - b. The prince of the eunuchs gave each of these four young men new Chalean names. As cited earlier from Coffman, these new names and the meaning of each is as follows:
 - 1) Belteshazzar means “Bel (a pagan god) protects his life.”
 - 2) Shadrach means “The command of Aku (the moon god).”
 - 3) Meshach means 'Who is this?'
 - 4) Abednego means “Servant of the god Nabu.”

C. Daniel 1:8-16: They refuse the king's food.

1. Verse 8: “But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat, nor with the wine which he drank: therefore he requested of the prince of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself.”
 - a. Daniel determined that he would not defile himself by eating and drinking the excellent provisions he was to be given from the king's table. As we shall see in the immediate context, the other three companions also made the same commitment.
 - b. The Mosaic Law forbade the eating the flesh of certain animals and fish. Since there was no way the young Jewish lads could know everything they would be eating, they decided to refrain from eating any of those things. This not a mere whim on their part, but was to prevent a very likely violation of God's Law. They were unwilling to take a chance.
 - 1) Leviticus 11:1-8: “ And the LORD spake unto Moses and to Aaron, saying unto them, Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, These are the beasts which ye shall eat among all the beasts that are on the earth. Whatsoever parteth the hoof, and is clovenfooted, and cheweth the cud, among the beasts, that shall ye eat. Nevertheless these shall ye not eat of them that chew the cud, or of them

that divide the hoof: as the camel, because he cheweth the cud, but divideth not the hoof; he is unclean unto you. And the coney, because he cheweth the cud, but divideth not the hoof; he is unclean unto you. And the hare, because he cheweth the cud, but divideth not the hoof; he is unclean unto you. And the swine, though he divide the hoof, and be clovenfooted, yet he cheweth not the cud; he is unclean to you. Of their flesh shall ye not eat, and their carcase shall ye not touch; they are unclean to you.”

- 2) Leviticus 11:9-12: “These shall ye eat of all that are in the waters: whatsoever hath fins and scales in the waters, in the seas, and in the rivers, them shall ye eat. And all that have not fins and scales in the seas, and in the rivers, of all that move in the waters, and of any living thing which is in the waters, they shall be an abomination unto you: They shall be even an abomination unto you; ye shall not eat of their flesh, but ye shall have their carcasses in abomination. Whatsoever hath no fins nor scales in the waters, that shall be an abomination unto you.”
- 3) Keil thought that the food and drink had been used in idol worship, thus were to be shunned by the young Jewish men.
 - c. “The command of the king, that the young men should be fed with the food and wine from the king's table, was to Daniel and his friends a test of their fidelity to the Lord and to His law, like that to which Joseph was subjected in Egypt, corresponding to the circumstances in which he was placed, of his fidelity to God (Gen 39:7 f.). The partaking of the food brought to them from the king's table was to them contaminating, because forbidden by law; not so much because the food was not prepared according to the Levitical ordinance, or perhaps consisted of the flesh of animals which to the Israelites were unclean, for in this case the youths were not under the necessity of refraining from the wine, but the reason of their rejection of it was, that the heathen at their feasts offered up in sacrifice to their gods a part of the food and the drink, and thus consecrated their meals by a religious rite; whereby not only he who participated in such a meal participated in the worship of idols, but the meat and the wine as a whole were the meat and the wine of an idol sacrifice, partaking of which, according to the saying of the apostle (1 Cor 10:20-21), is the same as sacrificing to devils” (Keil, Biblesoft).
 - d. To avoid this spiritual contamination, Daniel requested that the prince of the eunuchs might allow him to eat another kind of food, provender the source of which he knew would not violate God’s word.
2. Verses 9-10: “Now God had brought Daniel into favour and tender love with the prince of the eunuchs. And the prince of the eunuchs said unto Daniel, I fear my lord the king, who hath appointed your meat and your drink: for why should he see your faces worse liking than the children which *are* of your sort? then shall ye make *me* endanger my head to the king” (KJV). “Now God made Daniel to find kindness and compassion in the sight of the prince of the eunuchs. And the prince of the eunuchs said unto Daniel, I fear my lord the king, who hath appointed your food and your drink: for why should he see your faces worse looking than the youths that are of your own age? so would ye endanger my head with the king” (ASV).
 - a. The inspired text tells us that Daniel had found favor and compassion in the eyes of the prince of the eunuchs. This individual had evidently been raised up by Jehovah to his position so that this good attitude toward Daniel might be present.
 - 1) It was necessary that this condition to be manifested to make it possible for God to work out his special plan for Daniel. This great prophet was to fill a grand role in Heaven’s marvelous purposes.
 - 2) Consider the rueful conditions that would have developed if Daniel had not risen to the prominence he received in Babylon. Later, when Alexander the Great entered Palestine with his army, he spared the city of Jerusalem from assault, when the Jewish leaders showed him what Daniel had written about him. Josephus offers this information (§52 [11.52]): “And when the Book of Daniel was showed him wherein Daniel declared that one of the Greeks should destroy the

empire of the Persians, he supposed that himself was the person intended. And as he was then glad, he dismissed the multitude for the present; but the next day he called them to him, and bid them ask what favors they pleased of him; whereupon the high priest desired that they might enjoy the laws of their forefathers, and might pay no tribute on the seventh year. He granted all they desired. And when they entreated him that he would permit the Jews in Babylon and Media to enjoy their own laws also, he willingly promised to do hereafter what they desired. And when he said to the multitude, that if any of them would enlist themselves in his army, on this condition, that they should continue under the laws of their forefathers, and live according to them, he was willing to take them with him, many were ready to accompany him in his wars" [Josephus: *Antiquities of the Jews*].

- b. "He [the prince of the eunuchs] was apprehensive that if Daniel appeared less healthful, or cheerful, or beautiful, than it was supposed he would under the prescribed mode of life, it would be construed as disobedience of the commands of the king on his part, and that it would be inferred that the wan and emaciated appearance of Daniel was caused by the fact that the food which had been ordered had not been furnished, but had been embezzled by the officer who had it in charge. We have only to remember the strict and arbitrary nature of Oriental monarchies to see that there were just grounds for the apprehensions here expressed" (Barnes).
 - c. The captain of the eunuchs reasoned that if Daniel did not eat the food provided by the monarch, his appearance and health would suffer, and that he would look sad, dejected, and unhealthy. He further thought that he would be held responsible, and lose his own life.
3. Verses 11-13: "Then said Daniel to Melzar, whom the prince of the eunuchs had set over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, Prove thy servants, I beseech thee, ten days; and let them give us pulse to eat, and water to drink. Then let our countenances be looked upon before thee, and the countenance of the children that eat of the portion of the king's meat: and as thou seest, deal with thy servants."
- a. It may be that Daniel was dealing with the prince of the eunuchs through this Melzar, who had been placed in charge of the four young Jewish men. However that may be, Daniel made the request to this man that he and his three companions be allowed to eat the food of their own choosing for ten days, to see whether their appearance, attitude and health declined. The implication would be that if there was any change for the worse within ten days, then they could go on the king's food; nearly all of the three years still remained.
 - b. The diet requested by Daniel was *pulse*, with only water to drink. This is the only appearance of this word; the reference is evidently to vegetable food in general. A similar word is used in Isaiah 61:11: "For as the earth bringeth forth her bud, and as the garden causeth the things that are sown in it to spring forth; so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations." The word of the text and that of Isaiah 61:11 Daniel 1:12, differs "only by the second vowel from *zeruim* in Isa 61:11" (Pulpit Commentary). Vegetarians do quite well without meat; Daniel and his friends flourished on this vegetable and water diet.
 - c. It is certain that Daniel is not proposing a bet with his overseers. Neither is it the case that he offered this plan on his own, since that would have been presumptuous of him. How could he have known the result on his own? It seems likely that he had received some communication from God on this matter.
 - d. Notice that Daniel includes his companions in this plan, whereas in verse eight, he is the only one specified; he was speaking to his Chaldean captain in his own behalf, but the others were certainly included, which we see as the report unfolds.
4. Verses 14-16: "So he consented to them in this matter, and proved them ten days. And at the end of ten days their countenances appeared fairer and fatter in flesh than all the children which did eat the portion of the king's meat. Thus Melzar took away the portion of their meat, and the wine that they should drink;
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and gave them pulse.”

- a. Melzar agreed to the test, and took away the food and wine the king intended for them to be fed. This seems to be a plan made only between these young Jews and Melzar. If the diet did not work, then Melzar could handle the situation as he wished, and they would cooperate. If it did work, then they would be permitted to continue to eat pulse and drink water.
- b. The trial period was only ten days, not a significant amount of time in comparison to the three years of training into which they were now entering. There was no risk for Melzar.
- c. The plan worked perfectly for these four lads. At the end of ten days, they were fairer and fatter in flesh than all of the others who followed the king’s program. Melzar did not bring them the food and drink from the king’s table henceforth to the end of the training period. Even then, we may assume that they continued their current diet.

D. Daniel 1:17-21: Their Proficiency in Wisdom.

1. Verse 17: “As for these four children, God gave them knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom: and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams.”
 - a. This verse lends credence to the thought that God may have given Daniel and his friends this plan about the pulse and water.
 - b. “The emphasis in this vs. lies in the contrast between the words ‘four youths’ and “Daniel.” All four made progress in literature and wisdom, but Daniel, in addition was favored with the understanding of visions and dreams. These attainments were not necessarily because of superior ability, but were gifts of God” (Young, p.48).
 - c. Barnes offers this:
 - 1) There is no reason to suppose that in the "knowledge and skill" here referred to, it is meant to be implied that there was anything miraculous, or that there was any direct inspiration. Inspiration was evidently confined to Daniel, and pertained to what is spoken of under the head of "visions and dreams." The fact that "all" this was to be attributed to God as his gift, is in accordance with the common method of speaking in the Scriptures; and it is also in accordance with "fact," that "all" knowledge is to be traced to God. “See, I have called by name Bezaleel the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah: And I have filled him with the spirit of God, in wisdom, and in understanding, and in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship” (Ex. 31:2-3).
 - 2) God formed the intellect; he preserves the exercise of reason; he furnishes us instructors; he gives us clearness of perception; he enables us to take advantage of bright thoughts and happy suggestions which occur in our own minds, as much as he sends rain, and dew, and sunshine on the fields of the farmer, and endows him with skill. Compare Isa 28:26, "For his God doth instruct him." The knowledge and skill which we may acquire, therefore, should be as much attributed to God as the success of the farmer should....In the case before us, there is no reason to doubt that the natural powers of these young men had been diligently applied during the three years of their trial (Dan 1:5), and under the advantages of a strict course of temperance; and that the knowledge here spoken of was the result of such an application to their studies.
 - d. Daniel received from God a special gift regarding the understanding of visions and dreams.
 - 1) The understanding he received was a special endowment which could be imparted only by God’s power; he received inspiration to know and reveal God’s will about a matter.
 - 2) *Visions* “is a term frequently employed in reference to prophecy, and designates the usual method by which future events were made known. The prophet was permitted to see those events ‘as if’ they were made to pass before the eye, and to describe them ‘as if’ they were objects of sight. Here the word seems to be used to denote all supernatural appearances; all that God permitted him to

- see that in any way shadowed forth the future” (Barnes). Joseph had also received this gift.
- a) Daniel 5:5-6: “In the same hour came forth fingers of a man's hand, and wrote over against the candlestick upon the plaister of the wall of the king's palace: and the king saw the part of the hand that wrote. Then the king's countenance was changed, and his thoughts troubled him, so that the joints of his loins were loosed, and his knees smote one against another.” Daniel was able to reveal clearly the meaning of this astounding event.
 - b) Genesis 40:5: “And they dreamed a dream both of them, each man his dream in one night, each man according to the interpretation of his dream, the butler and the baker of the king of Egypt, which were bound in the prison.” Joseph revealed the meaning of each man’s dream.
 - c) Genesis 41:1-7: “And it came to pass at the end of two full years, that Pharaoh dreamed: and, behold, he stood by the river. And, behold, there came up out of the river seven well favoured kine and fatfleshed; and they fed in a meadow. And, behold, seven other kine came up after them out of the river, ill favoured and leanfleshed; and stood by the other kine upon the brink of the river. And the ill favoured and leanfleshed kine did eat up the seven well favoured and fat kine. So Pharaoh awoke. And he slept and dreamed the second time: and, behold, seven ears of corn came up upon one stalk, rank and good. And, behold, seven thin ears and blasted with the east wind sprung up after them. And the seven thin ears devoured the seven rank and full ears. And Pharaoh awoke, and, behold, it was a dream.” Joseph was able to interpret this dream.
- 3) *Dreams* were used by God to communicate information to certain men. This kind of revelation was something that the Chaldeans, and countless others before and since, desired to have. Any such occurrence apart from God’s special activity was only human, thus faulty. There are certain things which we might perceive based on past experience, but that is entirely human. The New Testament undeniably teaches that the day of miraculous acts and revelations has ended. We have God’s completed revelation, and it is sufficient to all our spiritual needs:
- a) 2 Peter 1:1-3: “Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ: Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord, According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue.”
 - b) 2 Timothy 3:15-17: “And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.”
2. Verses 18-19: “Now at the end of the days that the king had said he should bring them in, then the prince of the eunuchs brought them in before Nebuchadnezzar. And the king communed with them; and among them all was found none like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah: therefore stood they before the king.”
- a. When the three years of training ended, the prince of the eunuchs brought the entire group of young men before Nebuchadnezzar. When the king communed with them, he perceived that the best of the group were Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah.
 - b. That God had blessed these four men is clear. They had matured in their studies, and, as verse seventeen reported, Daniel was given certain miraculous powers: special understanding in all visions and dreams.
 - c. These four men were chosen by the king to “stand before him.” The rest of the group would be given
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- other duties.
- d. Nebuchadnezzar communed with them, meaning that he talked with them. What subjects were discussed? We are not told. Perhaps they were asked about their studies; maybe he asked questions to determine the depth of their knowledge and wisdom. Anyone who has been called before some important official well knows the stress this experience can cause. However, it is hard to imagine that either of the four would have any trepidation, knowing about their subsequent trials and troubles.
 - e. These four men were in excellent health physically, their physical forms were ideal, and their minds were sharp and focused. They had not been defiled by the king's food and drink, and were perfectly pure from any contamination of idolatry.
 - f. Therefore they stood before the king. "It is not said, indeed, that the others were not permitted also to stand before the monarch, but the object of the historian is to trace the means by which 'these youths' rose to such eminence and virtue. It is clear, however, that whatever may have been the result on the others, the historian means to say that these young men rose to higher eminence than they did, and were permitted to stand nearer the throne. The phrase 'stood before the king,' is one which denotes elevated rank. They were employed in honorable offices at the court, and received peculiar marks of the royal favor" (Barnes).
3. Verses 20: "And in all matters of wisdom *and* understanding, that the king enquired of them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians *and* astrologers that *were* in all his realm."
- a. The king was acquainted with the others in his kingdom who served him in what is called *magicians* and *astrologers*. The three Jewish companions of Daniel were to serve the king in their appointed duties, perhaps including that of rulers. Daniel is to be included in this list, but he also had his God-given power to interpret dreams and explain visions; obviously, he was an inspired prophet of God.
 - b. In examining these four young men, Nebuchadnezzar knew them to be vastly superior to those others who were serving him—ten times better. As the following passages suggest, the ten may not be intended to be considered precisely nine plus one. The king is emphasizing the vast superiority of Daniel and his friends over the other servants.
 - 1) Genesis 31:6-7: "And ye know that with all my power I have served your father. And your father hath deceived me, and changed my wages ten times; but God suffered him not to hurt me." Jacob states that Laban had changed his wages ten times, during the years he had served that kinsman. It appears to this writer that he is charging Laban with having changed his wages many times, not necessarily that there were changed ten times exactly.
 - 2) Genesis 41:8: "And it came to pass in the morning that his spirit was troubled; and he sent and called for all the magicians of Egypt, and all the wise men thereof: and Pharaoh told them his dream; but there was none that could interpret them unto Pharaoh." Joseph was able to fully expound the dream and its complex meaning.
 - 3) Matthew 18:22: "Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven." The point our Lord here makes is not that we are required to forgive an offending brother four hundred and ninety times exactly, and then no more forgiveness. No one would be able to keep track of such a great number of these offenses. Rather, Christ is saying that we are not to be concerned with how many times one sins against us, we must always be ready to forgive the trespass when the offender repents (Luke 17:3-4). The number is not to be considered literal.
4. Verse 21: "And Daniel continued *even* unto the first year of king Cyrus."
- a. "Daniel continued even unto the first year of ... Cyrus— (2 Chron 36:22; Ezra 1:1). Not that Daniel did not continue beyond that year, but the expression is designed to mark the fact that he who was one of the first captives taken to Babylon, lived to see the end of the captivity....In Dan 10:1 he is
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mentioned as living ‘in the third year of Cyrus.’He lived until the first year of Cyrus, the epoch of the end of the captivity, and he lived beyond it” (JFB, Biblesoft).

- b. Here we read that Daniel continued unto the first year of king Cyrus. We are later told that, “In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia a thing was revealed unto Daniel, whose name was called Belteshazzar; and the thing was true, but the time appointed was long: and he understood the thing, and had understanding of the vision” (Dan. 10:1).
- c. “The use of the verb (lit., *was*) occurs also in Jer. 1:3, and Ruth 1:2, and the preposition *unto* does not exclude the remote future, cf. Ps. 110:1; 112:8). The thought is that Daniel continued until the time of Cyrus and beyond” (Young, p.51). The verses Young cited are included below:
 - 1) Jeremiah 1:3: “It came also in the days of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah, unto the end of the eleventh year of Zedekiah the son of Josiah king of Judah, unto the carrying away of Jerusalem captive in the fifth month.”
 - 2) Ruth 1:2: “And the name of the man was Elimelech, and the name of his wife Naomi, and the name of his two sons Mahlon and Chilion, Ephrathites of Bethlehemjudah. And they came into the country of Moab, and continued there.”
 - 3) Psalms 110:1: “The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.”
 - 4) Psalms 112:8: “His heart is established, he shall not be afraid, until he see his desire upon his enemies.”
- d. Daniel entered captivity in 606 B.C., the beginning of a very tumultuous time for Israel. His work was still in progress even to the time that Cyrus came to the throne, in 539 B.C. Three years later, the first contingent of the Jews returned to Palestine. Daniel was in Babylon throughout the seventy years that Israel was retained in Babylonia: “For thus saith the LORD, That after seventy years be accomplished at Babylon I will visit you, and perform my good word toward you, in causing you to return to this place” (Jer. 29:10). Daniel was on hand to see all of these history-changing events transpire. The greatness of this prophet could scarcely be over-esteemed.
- e. “And Daniel continued even unto the first year of king Cyrus—When the proclamation was issued by him to rebuild the temple at Jerusalem, Ezra 1:1. That is, he continued in influence and authority at different times during that period, and, of course, during the whole of the seventy years captivity. It is not necessarily implied that he did not “live” longer, or even that he ceased then to have influence and authority at court, but the object of the writer is to show that, during that long and eventful period, he occupied a station of influence until the captivity was accomplished, and the royal order was issued for rebuilding the temple. He was among the first of the captives that were taken to Babylon, and he lived to see the end of the captivity——‘the joyful day of Jewish freedom.’ —Prof. Stuart. It is commonly believed that, when the captives returned, he remained in Chaldea, probably detained by his high employments in the Persian empire, and that he died either at Babylon or at Shushan” (Barnes).

Daniel 2

A. Daniel 2:1-13: Nebuchadnezzar's Forgotten Dream.

1. Verse 1: "And in the second year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar Nebuchadnezzar dreamed dreams, wherewith his spirit was troubled, and his sleep brake from him."
 - a. There is much discussion among the scholars regarding the time period in which these dreams took place.
 - 1) Matthew Henry observes: "We meet with a great difficulty in the date of this story; it is said to be in the second year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, v. 1. Now Daniel was carried to Babylon in his first year, and, it should seem, he was three years under tutors and governors before he was presented to the king, ch. 1:5. How then could this happen in *the second year*? Perhaps, though three years were appointed for the education of other children, yet Daniel was so forward that he was taken into business when he had been but one year at school, and so in the second year he became thus considerable. Some make it to be the second year after he began to reign alone, but the fifth or sixth year since he began to reign in partnership with his *father*. Some read it, *and in the second year*, (the second after Daniel and his fellows stood before the king), *in the kingdom of Nebuchadnezzar*, or *in his reign*, this happened; as Joseph, in the second year after his skill in dreams, showed and expounded Pharaoh's, so Daniel, in the second year after he commenced master in that art, did this service."
 - 2) Young offers these comments: "The correct solution has probably been indicated by Driver, namely, the three years of training need not have been three full years but merely fractions of years, 'By Heb. Usage fractions of time were reckoned as full units: thus Samaria, which was besieged from the fourth to the sixth year of Hezekiah, is said to have been taken *at the end* of three years (2 K. 19:9, 10); and in Jer. 34:12 *at the end of seven years* means evidently when the seventh year has arrived (See also Mark 8:31, etc.)' Thus, it is perfectly possible that the third year of training might fall in the second year of the kingship of Neb. Upon this interpretation the first and third years are not to be regarded as full years" (pp.55f).

Years of Training	Nebuchadnezzar
First Year	Year of Accession
Second Year	First Year
Third Year	Second Year (in which Dream Occurred)

- 3) Jamieson states: "Dan 1:5 shows that 'three years' had elapsed since Nebuchadnezzar had taken Jerusalem. The solution of this difficulty is, Nebuchadnezzar first ruled as subordinate to his father, Nabopolassar, to which time Dan 1 refers; whereas 'the second year' in Dan 2 is dated from his sole sovereignty. The very difficulty is a proof of genuineness: all was clear to the writer and the original readers, from their knowledge of the circumstances, and so he adds no explanation. A forger would not introduce difficulties; the author did not then see any difficulty in the case. Nebuchadnezzar is called 'king' (Dan 1:1) by anticipation. Before he left Judea he became actual king by the death of his father, and the Jews always called him 'king,' as commander of the invading army."
- b. The dreams which commonly occur to people, whether young or old, involve things that we did or heard or experienced the preceding day. Sometimes we have scary dreams about snakes or something

else that upset us. Children may have nightmares about some frightening experience. Some medicines or combinations of medicines can cause bad dreams. All of these are normal and frequently happen.

- c. But Nebuchadnezzar's dreams were from God and were given for definite purposes. He was deeply troubled from these mental experiences and was unable to sleep afterwards.
- d. God used dreams as a means of communicating information to certain individuals. These were supernatural operations. Paul had a vision about a Macedonian asking him to come to Macedonia and help those people; the apostles could quickly perceive that that vision means for him and his company to make the journey into that European nation: "Now when they had gone throughout Phrygia and the region of Galatia, and were forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the word in Asia, After they were come to Mysia, they assayed to go into Bithynia: but the Spirit suffered them not. And they passing by Mysia came down to Troas. And a vision appeared to Paul in the night; There stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us. And after he had seen the vision, immediately we endeavoured to go into Macedonia, assuredly gathering that the Lord had called us for to preach the gospel unto them" (Acts 16:6-10). Both visions and dreams were done by God's miraculous power.
 - 1) Genesis 28:12: "And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it."
 - 2) Genesis 40:5-14: "And they dreamed a dream both of them, each man his dream in one night, each man according to the interpretation of his dream, the butler and the baker of the king of Egypt, which were bound in the prison. And Joseph came in unto them in the morning, and looked upon them, and, behold, they were sad. And he asked Pharaoh's officers that were with him in the ward of his lord's house, saying, Wherefore look ye so sadly to day? And they said unto him, We have dreamed a dream, and there is no interpreter of it. And Joseph said unto them, Do not interpretations belong to God? tell me them, I pray you. And the chief butler told his dream to Joseph, and said to him, In my dream, behold, a vine was before me; And in the vine were three branches: and it was as though it budded, and her blossoms shot forth; and the clusters thereof brought forth ripe grapes: And Pharaoh's cup was in my hand: and I took the grapes, and pressed them into Pharaoh's cup, and I gave the cup into Pharaoh's hand. And Joseph said unto him, This is the interpretation of it: The three branches are three days: Yet within three days shall Pharaoh lift up thine head, and restore thee unto thy place: and thou shalt deliver Pharaoh's cup into his hand, after the former manner when thou wast his butler. But think on me when it shall be well with thee, and shew kindness, I pray thee, unto me, and make mention of me unto Pharaoh, and bring me out of this house."
 - 3) Genesis 41:1-8: "And it came to pass at the end of two full years, that Pharaoh dreamed: and, behold, he stood by the river. And, behold, there came up out of the river seven well favoured kine and fatfleshed; and they fed in a meadow. And, behold, seven other kine came up after them out of the river, ill favoured and leanfleshed; and stood by the other kine upon the brink of the river. And the ill favoured and leanfleshed kine did eat up the seven well favoured and fat kine. So Pharaoh awoke. And he slept and dreamed the second time: and, behold, seven ears of corn came up upon one stalk, rank and good. And, behold, seven thin ears and blasted with the east wind sprung up after them. And the seven thin ears devoured the seven rank and full ears. And Pharaoh awoke, and, behold, it was a dream. And it came to pass in the morning that his spirit was troubled; and he sent and called for all the magicians of Egypt, and all the wise men thereof: and Pharaoh told them his dream; but there was none that could interpret them unto Pharaoh."
 - 4) Daniel 7:13-14: "I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages,

- should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.” [A dream and a vision were different things, but served the same basic purpose—to communicate heavenly information to an earthly individual].
2. Verses 2-3: “Then the king commanded to call the magicians, and the astrologers, and the sorcerers, and the Chaldeans, for to shew the king his dreams. So they came and stood before the king. And the king said unto them, I have dreamed a dream, and my spirit was troubled to know the dream.”
 - a. “The etymology of this word [*magicians*] is obscure. It occurs also in 2:2, 10, 127; 4:7, 9, 5:7 and outside of Dan. (Where it refers to the magicians of Egypt) in Gen. 4:1, 24; Ex. 7:11, 22; 8:7, 18, 19; 9:11. Perhaps the word as here employed does in some sense represent Egyptian magic, but Driver may be correct in asserting that it has reference to ‘men acquainted with occult arts in general’” (Young, p.51).
 - b. *Astrologers* is a Babylonian term which denotes Babylonian *magic*. These were enchanters and conjurers.
 - c. *The Chaldeans*: “This was a name that came to be applied to the astrologers, soothsayers, magicians, enchanters, diviners and wise men as a class, and without reference to race. The inclusion of Daniel in the number here indicates as much. (See the introduction for more on this.) It will be noted that the Chaldeans also included a special group who bore that name; but they seem to have been spokesmen for the entire group” (Coffman).
 - d. *The sorcerers* as defined by Barnes: The Hebrew word is derived from *kaashaph* meaning, in Piel, to practice magic; to use magic formulas, or incantations; to mutter; and it refers to the various arts by which those who were addicted to magic practiced their deceptions. The particular idea in this word would seem to be, that on such occasions some forms of prayers were used, for the word in Syriac means to offer prayers, or to worship. Probably the aid of idol gods was invoked by such persons when they practiced incantations. The word is found only in the following places: once as a "verb," 2 Chron 33:6, and rendered "used witchcraft;" and as a "participle," rendered "sorcerers," in Ex 7:11; Dan 2:2; Mal 3:5; and "witch," in Ex 22:18 (17); Deut 18:10.
 - e. The king, having called these various groups before him, demanding that they declare the meaning of the dreams which had so troubled his spirit. The dreams had been so ominous and frightening that he could not sleep, and even after waking up, he was much distressed by this experience.
 3. Verses 4-5: “Then spake the Chaldeans to the king in Syriack, O king, live for ever: tell thy servants the dream, and we will shew the interpretation. The king answered and said to the Chaldeans, The thing is gone from me: if ye will not make known unto me the dream, with the interpretation thereof, ye shall be cut in pieces, and your houses shall be made a dunghill.”
 - a. “In Dan. 2:4b, the Syrian language is introduced, not by the author of Daniel, but by the Chaldeans; and Daniel, the faithful author was able to report the proceedings in the language by which the communications were carried on. It is a virtual certainty that only Daniel could have done such a thing. The preposterous notion that some forger some four hundreds years subsequent to the times of Daniel could have done this is such an outlandish improbability that it seems impossible that intelligent writers should have been deceived by it. This Syrian language (the 6th century Aramaic) continues through Dan. 7” (Coffman).
 - b. “This was the vernacular tongue of the king and of his subjects, and was that in which the Chaldeans would naturally address him. It is referred to here by the author of this book, perhaps to explain the reason why he himself makes use of this language in explaining the dream. The use of this, however, is not confined to the statement of what the magicians said, but is continued to the close of the seventh chapter. Compare the Intro. Section IV. III. The language used is what is commonly called Chaldee. It is written in the same character as the Hebrew, and differs from that as one dialect differs from
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another. It was, doubtless, well understood by the Jews in their captivity, and was probably spoken by them after their return to their own land” (Barnes).

- c. They respectfully addressed the king, as the situation required, but he was not persuaded by their noble words. Nebuchadnezzar demanded that they report to him the dream and its meaning, for he could not remember the dream—it had completely vanished from his memory. Only the disturbing nature of the dream remained.
 - 1) However, some have suggested that he was testing these *wise men*, making them prove their reliability by describing the dream and telling what was meant: “But if ye will not make known unto me the dream, there is but one decree for you: for ye have prepared lying and corrupt words to speak before me, till the time be changed: therefore tell me the dream, and I shall know that ye can shew me the interpretation thereof” (Dan. 2:9). To make this argument requires that we accuse the king of stating a falsehood when he declares that he had forgotten the dream.
 - 2) It seems obvious that he retained some rudimentary awareness of the dream to recognize it if it were related to him. After Daniel had related both the dream and its meaning, Nebuchadnezzar knew that Daniel had accurately revealed what the king had demanded: “Then the king Nebuchadnezzar fell upon his face, and worshipped Daniel, and commanded that they should offer an oblation and sweet odours unto him. The king answered unto Daniel, and said, Of a truth it is, that your God is a God of gods, and a Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets, seeing thou couldst reveal this secret” (Dan. 2:46-47).
 - d. He motivated them to action by threatening to cut them all to pieces and destroy their houses if they could not reveal the dream and tell its meaning. These councillors knew that it was impossible for them to fulfill the king’s demand. Simon the Sorcerer (Acts 8) knew that his tricks and scams were false; he immediately recognized the miracles Philip wrought were undeniably genuine. Nebuchadnezzar had obvious doubts about the abilities and powers these *wise men* claimed. They were certainly being put to a most strenuous test! They must give a full and accurate report or they and their houses would be destroyed.
4. Verses 6-7: “But if ye shew the dream, and the interpretation thereof, ye shall receive of me gifts and rewards and great honour: therefore shew me the dream, and the interpretation thereof. They answered again and said, Let the king tell his servants the dream, and we will shew the interpretation of it.”
 - a. Having warned them of their own execution and the destruction of their property, the king now vows to provide them with gifts, rewards and great honor if they successfully report the dream and tell its meaning.
 - b. But these men insisted that the king must first tell them the dream, then they would interpret it. Of course, they could invent almost any explanation for the dream and the king could not dispute it.
 5. Verses 8-9: “The king answered and said, I know of certainty that ye would gain the time, because ye see the thing is gone from me. But if ye will not make known unto me the dream, there is but one decree for you: for ye have prepared lying and corrupt words to speak before me, till the time be changed: therefore tell me the dream, and I shall know that ye can shew me the interpretation thereof.”
 - a. In reply to their demand that the king reveal the dream to them, Nebuchadnezzar declared that he knew they would use some excuse to gain time. If they could not tell him the details about the dream, he would know that they were prepared to give him a lying, corrupt report about its interpretation.
 - b. On the other hand, if they could tell him what the dream was about, he would accept their report of its meaning.
 - c. *Until the time be changed.* “That is, until a new state of things shall occur; either until his purpose might change, and his anger should subside or until there should be a change of government: It was
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natural for such thoughts to pass through the mind of the king, since, as matters could be no ‘worse’ for them if the subject was delayed, there was a possibility that they might be ‘better’— for any change would be likely to be an advantage. There does not appear to have been any great confidence or affection on either side. The king suspected that they were influenced by bad motives, and they certainly had no strong reasons for attachment to him. Compare the notes at Dan 2:21, and Dan 7:25" (Barnes).

6. Verses 10-11: “The Chaldeans answered before the king, and said, There is not a man upon the earth that can shew the king's matter: therefore there is no king, lord, nor ruler, that asked such things at any magician, or astrologer, or Chaldean. And it is a rare thing that the king requireth, and there is none other that can shew it before the king, except the gods, whose dwelling is not with flesh.”
 - a. The *wise men* responded that there was no man upon the earth who would be able to know the dream the king had experienced. No king or other great ruler had ever demanded such an answer from his advisors. No magician, astrologer, or Chaldean would have the ability to reveal what the king wanted. This shows that these men possessed no such power, thus had no connection whatever with the God of Heaven. Anyone could invent some interpretation of a dream, but it would be so vague that no one could ever know whether the *interpretation* was accurate.
 - b. This is the way that the so-called miracle workers operate today—any of their “miracles” are so nebulous that they offer no evidence. Very often they claim that someone had an internal cancer which suddenly disappeared after the perpetrator went through his incantations. First, no proof is shown that the individual actually had the disease. Second, medical authorities have reported cases where the body, fighting the cancer from within, brought the cancer into remission. In the latter case, the cure was natural, with no supernatural powers involved.
 - c. The king’s advisors stated that the demand they had been given was rare [difficult], and that there was no one on earth who could reveal the information the king sought. [They did not know enough about Daniel].
 - d. They correctly stated that only the gods could fulfill the king’s ultimatum. Being pagan idolaters, their concept of *God* was very faulty. They had a concept about Deity, but their view was false. The king was soon to learn about the Living God.
7. Verses 12-13: “For this cause the king was angry and very furious, and commanded to destroy all the wise men of Babylon. And the decree went forth that the wise men should be slain; and they sought Daniel and his fellows to be slain.”
 - a. These advisors had made great claims about their knowledge and prowess in the general field of their operations; they had regretfully acknowledged their inability to do what the king wanted. He was all-powerful on his throne, and required his subordinates to fulfill the work they were assigned to do. If they could not do what he expected of them, he would destroy them for incompetence.
 - b. The order was issued to slay the *wise men*, and men were sent forth to carry out the death-dealing order. Daniel and his three friends were sought. It would take an act of the Almighty to bring about their deliverance.
 - c. Daniel and his friends did not operate as pagan priests; they had not been trained for such duties, and would not have consented to doing such, as their subsequent actions demonstrate. While the people of the empire might consider them as part of the magicians, sorcerers, etc., these four young men of God were not part of such paganistic follies.

B. Daniel 2:14-23: Daniel Promises to Reveal the Interpretation of the Dream.

1. Verses 14-16: “Then Daniel answered with counsel and wisdom to Arioch the captain of the king's guard, which was gone forth to slay the wise men of Babylon: He answered and said to Arioch the king's captain,
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Why is the decree so hasty from the king? Then Arioch made the thing known to Daniel. Then Daniel went in, and desired of the king that he would give him time, and that he would shew the king the interpretation.”

- a. When Arioch, the captain of the soldiers was sent to arrest the four Jewish friends, Daniel spoke to the man with good counsel and wisdom—which indicates his God-given powers.
- b. He asked the captain why the king’s decree had so hastily been issued. Whatever Daniel said gave Arioch reason to report to the king about slaying this special man. Evidently, this conversation must have halted the execution of the wise men. It is unclear whether the wise men were being executed the moment they were found. It may be the case that they were being rounded up to be collected in a special place before they were to be slaughtered.
- c. Daniel had already won the right to stand before Nebuchadnezzar, so he was able to approach the king with a request. A powerful ruler is prone to issue a fierce edict before calming himself down to consider the consequences of the order. Many such *diktats*, issued in anger and haste, have caused kings and generals much unnecessary trouble.
 - 1) “[Why is the decree so hasty from the king?]...The idea is, that a decree of such a nature, involving so many in ruin, ought not to have proceeded from the king without having taken all possible precautions, and having made all possible efforts to find those who might be able to disclose what the king desired. It was to Daniel a just matter of surprise that, after the favor and honor with which he had been received at court (Dan 1:19-20), and the confidence which had been reposed in him, a command like this should have been issued so comprehensive as to embrace him and his friends, when they had done nothing to deserve the displeasure of the king” (Barnes).
 - 2) Pulpit Commentary: Hasty represents to some extent, though not fully, the element of blame implied in the word *mehahetzpah* in greater degree than our English word would indicate. It means "rough," "raging," "shameless;" it might be too strong to say that "scandalous" represents Daniel's meaning. Some commentators cannot imagine a man thus criticizing a royal decree to one of the court officials. Much, however, is permitted to a man speaking about a decree which has condemned him to death without his having an opportunity to defend himself. It is possible that he might be able to use all the more freedom by seeing that Arioch had no favour for the business to which he was ordered. The Greek versions represent that Arioch showed the warrant, the king's order for the execution. As that would not be considered an answer to Daniel's question, on the one hand, so on the other, it would not be an occasion for the step Daniel immediately thereafter tookAs leader of the royal bodyguard, the place of Arioch would be beside Nebuchadnezzar, even in the council-chamber. He would thus be quite cognizant of everything that took place—the demands of the king, the arguments of the wise men. All this scene he could portray for the information of Daniel. The mere exhibition of a warrant would tell nothing more than the fact that the action of Arioch was in obedience to orders.
- d. “This is an abbreviated account. Even high servants of the king, such as Daniel, would not merely have gone into the presence of the king without observing the formalities that the occasion would have required. The daring account of how Esther defied tradition and custom by going unbidden into the presence of a Persian king at a later time shows how this was true. Therefore, we must conclude that all necessary formalities were observed on this occasion, just as they were in Dan. 2:24, below, and that they were merely passed over here by the abbreviated account. The great fact working for Daniel and the wise men was that the king had a burning desire to find out what the dream meant. Another indication that the account is abbreviated here is seen in the fact that no mention was made of the king's compliance with Daniel's request for a delay; but a delay there surely was” (Coffman).
- e. Standing before the king on this occasion, Daniel requested some time and he would be able to give the king the information he wanted. Before he could relate the interpretation of the dream, he must

- first learn the details of the dream itself. Because he was serving the Almighty, Daniel had access to the only power that could provide the essential information; the king's other advisors had no such source.
- f. Daniel needed the time to approach God in order that this unknown dream might be revealed, as well as the interpretation.
2. Verses 17-18: "Then Daniel went to his house, and made the thing known to Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, his companions: That they would desire mercies of the God of heaven concerning this secret; that Daniel and his fellows should not perish with the rest of the wise men of Babylon."
 - a. Daniel returned to his house and shared the news to his three friends what was in progress. Whether they lived in the same house with Daniel, or had been summoned to be there when Daniel returned from seeing the king, we may not know.
 - b. Daniel quickly made known to his friends what the grave danger was, and invited them to join with him in calling on the mercies of God, regarding the secret dream. If the Almighty did not reveal this information to them, he and his friends would perish along with the wise men of Babylon. These four are listed only in a broad way with the other wise men of Babylon.
 - c. "This was a wonderful way, and the only way, that the believer should confront every crisis in his life. Like these Hebrew companions, let the believer go down upon his knees in prayer whenever the issues of life and death are involved and where unaided human effort is doomed to futility. Daniel's leadership in this was wonderful; and when the victory came, when the secret was revealed, Daniel failed not to deny all credit for it, and to give the glory to God. A nobler example may hardly be found anywhere" (Coffman).
 3. Verses 19-20: "Then was the secret revealed unto Daniel in a night vision. Then Daniel blessed the God of heaven. Daniel answered and said, Blessed be the name of God for ever and ever: for wisdom and might are his."
 - a. In response to prayer, God's revealed the secret dream to Daniel in a night vision, obviously showing him also the exact significance of the dream. "The revelation was not made in a dream, but in a vision of the night. Such a vision was one which might come to a person in a waking condition" (Young, p.66). The book of Revelation was given to the apostle John by means of visions.
 - 1) Revelation 1:10-13: "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet....And I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks; And in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle."
 - 2) Revelation 4:1: "After this I looked, and, behold, a door was opened in heaven: and the first voice which I heard was as it were of a trumpet talking with me; which said, Come up hither, and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter."
 - b. Visions and dreams were frequently used by the Almighty to communicate revelations to certain individuals during Bible times.
 - 1) Daniel 7:13-14: "I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed."
 - 2) Acts 10:1-6: "There was a certain man in Caesarea called Cornelius, a centurion of the band called the Italian band, A devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God alway. He saw in a vision evidently about the ninth hour of the

- day an angel of God coming in to him, and saying unto him, Cornelius. And when he looked on him, he was afraid, and said, What is it, Lord? And he said unto him, Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God. And now send men to Joppa, and call for one Simon, whose surname is Peter: He lodgeth with one Simon a tanner, whose house is by the sea side: he shall tell thee what thou oughtest to do.”
- 3) Acts 16:6-12: “Now when they had gone throughout Phrygia and the region of Galatia, and were forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the word in Asia, After they were come to Mysia, they assayed to go into Bithynia: but the Spirit suffered them not. And they passing by Mysia came down to Troas. And a vision appeared to Paul in the night; There stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us. And after he had seen the vision, immediately we endeavoured to go into Macedonia, assuredly gathering that the Lord had called us for to preac h the gospel unto them. Therefore loosing from Troas, we came with a straight course to Samothracia, and the next day to Neapolis; And from thence to Philippi, which is the chief city of that part of Macedonia, and a colony: and we were in that city abiding certain days.”
- c. “Daniel exhibited here all of the skill and diplomacy of an accomplished statesman. Note that, even in his prayer, he included his companions. Note the ‘we’ in Dan. 2:23. Furthermore, since Daniel had already received a delay from the king and an appointed day when he might reveal the secret, Daniel, in all probability at that point, might have gone directly to the king; but he sought out the captain of the king's guard Arioch, thus going through channels. A collateral benefit of this was that it also could have delayed the execution of some of the wise men, that is, if Arioch was already proceeding with the executions. Furthermore, it gave Arioch the opportunity to play a conspicuous part in the process of the dream's revelation, an opportunity which Arioch apparently exploited fully. (See Dan. 2:25)” (Coffman).
- d. The “answer” Daniel gave was expressed in praise to God, giving thanks to him for providing the information the prophet had sought. To “bless” the God of heaven is to express grateful praise. Verses twenty-two and twenty-three contain Daniel’s words of thanks.
- e. While these were accurate expressions of his attitude toward God, they are also inspired words. Paul wrote by inspiration (1 Cor. 14:37), even when he extolled the goodness of Deity.
- 1) 1 Corinthians 14:37: “If any man thinketh himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him take knowledge of the things which I write unto you, that they are the commandment of the Lord” (ASV).
 - 2) Ephesians 1:3: “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ.”
 - 3) Colossians 1:3-5: “We give thanks to God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you, Since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus, and of the love which ye have to all the saints, For the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, whereof ye heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel.”
 - 4) 1 Thessalonians 1:1-4: “Paul, and Silvanus, and Timotheus, unto the church of the Thessalonians which is in God the Father and in the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ. We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers; Remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father; Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God.”
- f. There is no limit to God’s wisdom and power, except as he sets some limitation.
- 1) Is there any particle of wisdom that he does not possess? Is there any knowledge he does not have? Is there anything that he cannot do? Some foolish unbeliever asked whether God could build a

- rock so big and heavy that even he could not pick it up. That is an absurdity! Is there any such thing as a married bachelor or a square circle?
- 2) It is impossible for God to lie—deceit is entirely contrary to his nature. “That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us” (Heb. 6:18). He cannot do anything that is inconsistent with his nature and his word. On the other hand, he can do anything that is consistent with his nature or his will.
 - a) Matthew 5:18: "For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled."
 - b) Matthew 24:35: "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away."
 - c) 2 Corinthians 1:20: "For all the promises of God in him *are* yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us."
 - d) 2 Timothy 2:13: "If we believe not, *yet* he abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself."
 - e) Titus 1:2: "In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began."
 4. Verses 21-22: “And he changeth the times and the seasons: he removeth kings, and setteth up kings: he giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding: He revealeth the deep and secret things: he knoweth what is in the darkness, and the light dwelleth with him.”
 - a. Daniel states that God can change the times and the seasons.
 - 1) The very context of this first statement is connected with the items that follow, thus the subject is not about the way time is measured or that the usual rotation of the weather seasons were to change. We are told that the seasons will remain the same down through the ages: “While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease” (Gen. 8:22).
 - 2) The chapter deals with the upcoming changes God was to commence in the governments among men. We will learn that the Babylonian Empire was soon to be violently replaced; the new power would itself be overthrown by a third great world power; this powerful empire would be replaced by a fourth world empire.
 - 3) God has through the centuries been involved in the civil governments of men: “And he made of one every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, having determined their appointed seasons, and the bounds of their habitation; that they should seek God, if haply they might feel after him and find him, though he is not far from each one of us” (Acts 17:26-27, ASV).
 - b. The prophet states further that God can remove kings from their thrones and set up kings on the throne.
 - 1) Daniel 4:31-32: “While the word was in the king's mouth, there fell a voice from heaven, saying, O king Nebuchadnezzar, to thee it is spoken; The kingdom is departed from thee. And they shall drive thee from men, and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field: they shall make thee to eat grass as oxen, and seven times shall pass over thee, until thou know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will.”
 - 2) Romans 13:1-7: "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister

of God, a revenger to *execute* wrath upon him that doeth evil. Wherefore *ye* must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake. For for this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing. Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute *is due*; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour."

- a) In the first century, persecution frequently was directed against the church by civil rulers. How should a Christian react? If he could not flee, he was to submit humbly. In many cases, flight was the proper thing to do. Paul fled from his tormentors at Damascus: "In Damascus the governor under Aretas the king kept the city of the Damascenes with a garrison, desirous to apprehend me: And through a window in a basket was I let down by the wall, and escaped his hands" (2 Cor. 11:32-33).
 - b) In ordinary cases, when a civil authority issues a decree, Christians are to be submissive to that order, as are all other citizens. It is in the best interest of mankind to have some power in control, to make decisions in behalf of all, to provide protection for the whole. Democracy was established so that the individuals could express their wishes in regards to how they were to be governed. The republican form of government provides for the well-being of the whole nation, while insuring the rights and privileges of the individual.
 - c) Matthew 22:15-22: "Then went the Pharisees, and took counsel how they might entangle him in his talk. And they sent out unto him their disciples with the Herodians, saying, Master, we know that thou art true, and teachest the way of God in truth, neither carest thou for any man: for thou regardest not the person of men. Tell us therefore, What thinkest thou? Is it lawful to give tribute unto Caesar, or not? But Jesus perceived their wickedness, and said, Why tempt ye me, ye hypocrites? Shew me the tribute money. And they brought unto him a penny. And he saith unto them, Whose is this image and superscription? They say unto him, Caesar's. Then saith he unto them, Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's. When they had heard these words, they marvelled, and left him, and went their way."
 - (1) This places on all the citizens of a nation (or state) the obligation to obey the decrees of its rulers. We are to render unto Caesar the things that pertain to Caesar, and unto God the things that pertain to God. We are to pay taxes, and in all other ways to show that we are loyal subjects of those earthly rulers who are over us. Only when obedience to a civil law would put us in disobedience to God's law, are we to disobey civil authority.
 - (2) Acts 4:19-20: "But Peter and John answered and said unto them, Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard."
 - (3) Acts 5:29: "Then Peter and the *other* apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men."
 - d) All power (authority) resides in God; he is the source of all authority. There are two kinds of authority: primary and delegated. His is primary, but he has delegated certain authority to others. God's primary authority does not diminish to any degree when he delegates a measure of authority to another.
 - (1) He has given his Son all authority to operate in the Christian Age; his Son delegated a certain amount and degree of authority to the apostles, who received and transmitted the fullness of the gospel to humanity by the Holy Spirit (John 16:13; 2 Tim. 3:16-17). In eternity, Christ will return to the Father all things, and with the redeemed of all ages, will be subject to the Father: "Then *cometh* the end, when he shall have delivered up the
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kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy *that* shall be destroyed *is* death. For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith all things are put under *him*, *it is* manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him. And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all" (1 Cor. 15:24-28).

- (2) The authority exercised by civil rulers derives from God. Jesus shocked Governor Pilate by his statement in John 19:11: "Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above...."
- (3) God promotes and demotes earthly rulers. He can do this because, as Paul affirms, "the powers that be are ordained of God."

c. God gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to those who have understanding.

1) Proverbs 2:6-9: "For the LORD giveth wisdom: out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding. He layeth up sound wisdom for the righteous: he is a buckler to them that walk uprightly. He keepeth the paths of judgment, and preserveth the way of his saints. Then shalt thou understand righteousness, and judgment, and equity; yea, every good path."

a) The wisdom God provides issues forth from his mouth. That is, God's word is the depository of wisdom. If we want to receive wisdom, the source is God's word. Notice that wisdom is equated in the verse with knowledge and understanding. All sins and religious errors result from a lack of understanding of, or belief in, the dictates of God's word.

- (1) Psalms 119:11: "Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee."
- (2) Matthew 22:29: "Jesus answered and said unto them, Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God."
- (3) 1 John 2:1-2: "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for *the sins of* the whole world."
- (4) 1 John 3:4: "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law."
- (5) 1 John 5:17: "All unrighteousness is sin: and there is a sin not unto death."

b) God has laid up sound wisdom for the righteous; this is in his word. In the second thought, the point is enlarged: God is a shield to those who walk uprightly.

- (1) Genesis 15:1: "After these things the word of the LORD came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram: I *am* thy shield, *and* thy exceeding great reward."
- (2) Psalms 3:3: "But thou, O LORD, *art* a shield for me; my glory, and the lifter up of mine head."
- (3) Psalms 18:2: "The LORD *is* my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, *and* my high tower."
- (4) Psalms 18:30: "*As for* God, his way *is* perfect: the word of the LORD is tried: he *is* a buckler to all those that trust in him."
- (5) Psalms 35:2: "Take hold of shield and buckler, and stand up for mine help."

c) The Almighty also guards the paths of judgment. Although the way of God's people is fraught with dangers and problems, yet our ultimate safety is guaranteed by the Lord (Ps. 37).

- (1) Deuteronomy 33:26-29: "*There is none like unto the God of Jeshurun, who rideth upon the heaven in thy help, and in his excellency on the sky. The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms: and he shall thrust out the enemy from before thee; and shall say, Destroy them. Israel then shall dwell in safety alone: the fountain of Jacob shall be upon a land of corn and wine; also his heavens shall drop down dew. Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved by the LORD, the shield of thy help, and who is the sword of thy excellency! and thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee; and thou shalt tread upon their high places.*"
 - (2) 1 Samuel 2:9: "He will keep the feet of his saints, and the wicked shall be silent in darkness; for by strength shall no man prevail."
 - (3) Matthew 10:28: "And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell."
 - (4) Hebrews 13:5-6: "*Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.*"
- d) Those who know God's word understand righteousness, judgment, equity and every good path.
- (1) Psalms 119:105 "Thy word *is* a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path."
 - (2) Psalms 119:172: "My tongue shall speak of thy word: for all thy commandments *are* righteousness."
 - (3) Jeremiah 10:23: "O LORD, I know that the way of man *is* not in himself: *it is* not in man that walketh to direct his steps."
 - (4) Matthew 7:12: "Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets."
 - (5) Hebrews 5:12-14: "For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which *be* the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. For every one that useth milk *is* unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, *even* those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil."
- e) 1 Kings 3:9-12: "Give therefore thy servant an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and bad: for who is able to judge this thy so great a people? And the speech pleased the Lord, that Solomon had asked this thing. And God said unto him, Because thou hast asked this thing, and hast not asked for thyself long life; neither hast asked riches for thyself, nor hast asked the life of thine enemies; but hast asked for thyself understanding to discern judgment; Behold, I have done according to thy words: lo, I have given thee a wise and an understanding heart; so that there was none like thee before thee, neither after thee shall any arise like unto thee." [Solomon was given a degree of wisdom above others; this would include inspiration to receive God's revelations; also, he obtained wisdom to rule God's people well. However, when his wives contaminated him with their idolatry, he showed extreme foolishness. This writer thinks that Solomon got straightened-out before the end of his days (cf. Eccl. 12)].
- 2) God is the ultimate source of wisdom and knowledge. He created man with the ability to reason, to understand, to gain knowledge and wisdom, to make decisions, and to feel. In this sense, we are made in the image of God. None of the animals possess these qualities; no beast is said to have been made in God's likeness.
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- 3) Those who obtain a measure of wisdom and knowledge are able to obtain even more of the same. The more we learn, the more we are able to learn; the more we perceive, the more we are able to perceive.
- d. God can reveal the deep and secret things that man cannot otherwise learn.
 - 1) Deuteronomy 29:29: "The secret things belong unto the LORD our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law."
 - a) "By secret things, here, some understand 'hidden sins,' which are known only to God, and which he will punish (Targum Jon.); but the meaning rather is, things in God's purpose known only to himself: these things, it is affirmed, belong to him, are his affair, and may be left with him. On the other hand, the things revealed are the things made known by God to man in his Word, viz. his injunctions, threatenings, and promises; and with these men have to do" (Pulpit Commentary).
 - b) "God is not only the God of nature, of providence, and of man, but also of revelation. He can make known to man what otherwise man could never know. He is the very Source of all light and enlightenment. We may compare this statement with that of Paul in 1 Tim 6:16; he speaks of God as 'dwelling in light which no man can approach unto.' It seems to us the words of the Old Testament song convey a loftier idea of God than does the Pauline statement—perhaps it is even loftier than the cognate phrase of the Apostle John (1 John 1:5), 'God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.' We may compare, in regard to this whole verse, Ps 139:12, 'The darkness hideth not from thee; but the night shineth as the day: the darkness and the light are both alike to thee,' where *neheera* is used as in the passage before us. Daniel ascribes to Jehovah all the powers of all the gods of Babylon" (Pulpit Commentary). The "gods" of the pagans were unreal, had no being, no power, no knowledge; the worshipers of these "gods" attributed all sorts of powers to their *deities*. But the Living God possesses all of these powers in reality, to the fullest extent.
 - 2) Romans 16:25-26: "Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, But now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith."
 - 3) Matthew 13:14-17: "And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive: For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them. But blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear. For verily I say unto you, That many prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them."
 - 4) Ephesians 3:3-5: "How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words, Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ) Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit."
- e. He knows what is in the darkness and light dwells in him.
 - 1) Proverbs 15:3: "The eyes of the LORD are in every place, beholding the evil and the good."
 - 2) Job 28:26: "When he made a decree for the rain, and a way for the lightning of the thunder."
 - a) Psalms 69:5: "O God, thou knowest my foolishness; and my sins are not hid from thee."

- b) Proverbs 15:3: "The eyes of the LORD *are* in every place, beholding the evil and the good."
 - c) Isaiah 40:26: "Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these *things*, that bringeth out their host by number: he calleth them all by names by the greatness of his might, for that *he is* strong in power; not one faileth."
 - d) Acts 15:18: "Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world."
 - e) Hebrews 4:13: "Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things *are* naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do."
 - f) Psalm 139:1-10: "O LORD, thou hast searched me, and known *me*. Thou knowest my downsitteing and mine uprising, thou understandest my thought afar off. Thou compasses my path and my lying down, and art acquainted *with* all my ways. For *there is* not a word in my tongue, *but*, lo, O LORD, thou knowest it altogether. Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid thine hand upon me. *Such* knowledge *is* too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot *attain* unto it. Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou *art* there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou *art there*. If I take the wings of the morning, *and* dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me."
 - g) God is omniscient—He has the capacity to know everything he wills to know. There is no limit to his knowledge and understanding except as he wills to limit himself.
 - (1) His omniscience is shown by the universe. There is an obvious design and balance in nature. This design is not accidental; it could not have happened without an all-knowing Designer. The laws we observe in nature are dependable, indicating the omniscience of the one who produced those laws. These laws could not have produced themselves.
 - (2) His omniscience is shown clearly by Biblical prophecies and affirmations. These prophecies are found by the hundreds in the Bible, especially in the Old Testament, and their fulfillment in minute detail denotes the infinite knowledge that produced the utterances.
 - f. Darkness is often used to symbolize sin and ignorance. Not only does God know everything he wishes to know, there is no evil within him nor any ignorance.
 - 1) 1 John 1:5-7: "This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin."
 - 2) 1 Timothy 6:16: "Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen."
 - 3) God dwells in light unto which no man can approach. "The light where he dwells is so brilliant and dazzling that mortal eyes could not endure it. This is a very common representation of the dwelling place of God....Heaven is constantly represented as a place of the most pure and brilliant light, needing not the light of the sun, or the moon, or the stars (Rev. 21:23,24; 22:5), and God is represented as dwelling in that light, surrounded by amazing and inapproachable glory..." (*Commentary on 1 Timothy*, Barnes, p.202).
 - 5. Verse 23: "I thank thee, and praise thee, O thou God of my fathers, who hast given me wisdom and might, and hast made known unto me now what we desired of thee: for thou hast now made known unto us the king's matter."
 - a. The emphasis in the verse is upon God: "Thee, O God I praise." The Almighty is worthy of all praise, glory, honor and loving obedience.
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- b. He is the God of Daniel's ancestors, especially of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.
 - 1) Exodus 3:6: "Moreover he said, I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. And Moses hid his face; for he was afraid to look upon God."
 - 2) Matthew 22:32: "I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living."
- c. Daniel expressed his gratitude to God for providing him with the power and wisdom to receive the information he sought regarding Nebuchadnezzar's dream and its meaning.
- d. The prophet acknowledges that God has answered not only the prayer he offered, but also he perceives that the prayers of his compatriots have been answered. God had revealed the answer to Daniel for which all four had prayed. [Notice the pronouns "we" and "us" in the verse].

C. Daniel 2:24-30: Daniel Appears Before Nebuchadnezzar to Reveal the Dream and its Interpretation.

- 1. Verses 24-25: "Therefore Daniel went in unto Arioch, whom the king had ordained to destroy the wise men of Babylon: he went and said thus unto him; Destroy not the wise men of Babylon: bring me in before the king, and I will shew unto the king the interpretation. Then Arioch brought in Daniel before the king in haste, and said thus unto him, I have found a man of the captives of Judah, that will make known unto the king the interpretation."
 - a. To come into the presence of this great king would be tantamount to our entering the Oval Office to talk with the President of the United States. While the security of the president would doubtless be much more stringent than getting to see Nebuchadnezzar, it was nevertheless strictly limited to certain well-placed individuals.
 - b. Daniel went through the appropriate channels in order to be brought before the king, to reveal the dream and its interpretations. He approached Arioch, the individual who had been ordered by the king to destroy all the wise men.
 - c. Daniel advised Arioch not to carry out the order to slay the wise men, but to carry him to the king so he could unfold to Nebuchadnezzar the interpretation of the mysterious dream.
 - d. Arioch quickly brought Daniel before the king, reporting that he had found an Israelite, one of the Jewish captives, who was ready to reveal the dream. It could not have been long since Daniel had asked the king for a little time to learn the dream and its meaning: "Then Daniel went in, and desired of the king that he would give him time, and that he would shew the king the interpretation" (Dan. 2:16). Daniel had already been in the presence of the king, and wrought a great impression upon him: "And the king communed with them; and among them all was found none like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah: therefore stood they before the king" (Dan. 1:19).
 - e. Arioch told the king that "I have found" someone who can interpret the dream. Perhaps he wanted to direct regal attention upon himself. In the next passage, Daniel quickly diverts the king's thoughts toward Almighty God, who is the only source of such information that the king sought.
 - f. "It is not to be supposed that Arioch had known anything of the application which Daniel had made to the king to delay the execution of the sentence (Dan 2:16), and, for anything that appears, he had suspended that execution on his own responsibility. Ignorant as he was, therefore, of any such arrangement, and viewing only his own agency in the matter, it was natural for him to go in and announce this as something entirely new to the king, and without suggesting that the execution of the sentence had been at all delayed. It was a most remarkable circumstance, and one which looks like a Divine interposition, that he should have been disposed to delay the execution of the sentence at all, so that Daniel could have an opportunity of showing whether he could not divulge the secret. All the circumstances of the case seem to imply that Arioch was not a man of a cruel disposition, but was disposed, as far as possible, to prevent the effusion of blood" (Barnes).

2. Verse 26: “The king answered and said to Daniel, whose name was Belteshazzar, Art thou able to make known unto me the dream which I have seen, and the interpretation thereof?”
 - a. Daniel was known to the Chaldeans as Belteshazzar, having been given that name by those under whose oversight he received education (Dan. 1:7). The king directly addressed Daniel. Perhaps the king remembered the prophet.
 - b. He asked Daniel if he was able make know the dream and its interpretation. He described the dream as consisting of something he had *seen* in the dream. He could not remember what he had seen and certainly was totally at a loss as to its meaning.
3. Verses 27-28: “Daniel answered in the presence of the king, and said, The secret which the king hath demanded cannot the wise men, the astrologers, the magicians, the soothsayers, shew unto the king; But there is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets, and maketh known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days. Thy dream, and the visions of thy head upon thy bed, are these.”
 - a. Daniel stated the fact that none of the wise men and others the king had consulted could supply him with the information he desperately wanted to know. Nebuchadnezzar was already satisfied that none of those people could help him, thus he had ordered their executions.
 - b. But the prophet affirmed that there is a God in heaven who can reveal secrets, including all the information sought by the king. He next announced that the dream and vision he had experienced dealt with future events which would come to pass as time unfolded.
 - c. “The phrase ‘visions of thy head’ means conceptions or notions formed by the brain. It would seem from this, that, even in the time of Daniel, the brain was regarded as, in some sense, the organ of thinking, or that ‘thought’ had its seat in the head. We are not to suppose that by the use of these different expressions Daniel meant to describe two things, or to intimate that Nebuchadnezzar had had visions which were distinct. What he saw might be described as a dream or a vision; it, in fact, had the nature of both” (Barnes).
4. Verses 29-30: “As for thee, O king, thy thoughts came into thy mind upon thy bed, what should come to pass hereafter: and he that revealeth secrets maketh known to thee what shall come to pass. But as for me, this secret is not revealed to me for any wisdom that I have more than any living, but for their sakes that shall make known the interpretation to the king, and that thou mightest know the thoughts of thy heart.”
 - a. The New King James gives this rendering: “As for you, O king, thoughts came *to your mind while* on your bed, *about* what would come to pass after this; and He who reveals secrets has made known to you what will be. But as for me, this secret has not been revealed to me because I have more wisdom than anyone living, but for *our* sakes who make known the interpretation to the king, and that you may know the thoughts of your heart.”
 - b. Again Daniel reports that the dream revealed ahead of time some things that would later come to pass. He was being given a very great advantage which only a tiny few have had the privilege to know. We might want to know what is to come to pass in America in the next few years, given the despicable moral and spiritual condition into which our nation has descended (this is being written some four months before the general election in November of 2012).
 - 1) Through the ages, God has paved the way for some extremely evil rulers to take control of a nation. The people of those states were corrupt both morally and spiritually. God used wicked rulers as a means of punishing those nations. This happened frequently in ancient Israel, Greece, Rome, and many other countries. We can see that it happened in Hitler’s Germany and Saddam’s Iraq.
 - 2) It may very well be the case that evil leaders have been allowed to come to power in our nation in order to punish America. God will not allow the hideous sins of abortion and sexual perversion

to go unpunished. Our nation has been blessed far beyond any other civilization, but as a whole, our country has turned from the biblical principles upon which America was built. The seeds of our nation's destruction may have already been planted. "If we abide by the principles taught in the Bible our country will go on prospering, but if we and our posterity neglect its instruction and authority, no man can tell how sudden a catastrophe may overwhelm us and bury us and our glory in profound obscurity" (Daniel Webster, January 18, 1782 – October 24, 1852).

- 3) But God has raised up godly rulers to turn nations back to God.
 - a) Josiah was one such king in old Israel. His grandfather Manasseh was a very wicked man; his father Amon was likewise an evil ruler. Josiah's son Jehoahaz was a bad king, as were the remaining three kings who reigned in Judah just before the Babylonians destroyed their kingdom. But Josiah was a great restorer of the ancient order: "And the king stood by a pillar, and made a covenant before the LORD, to walk after the LORD, and to keep his commandments and his testimonies and his statutes with all their heart and all their soul, to perform the words of this covenant that were written in this book. And all the people stood to the covenant. And the king commanded Hilkiah the high priest, and the priests of the second order, and the keepers of the door, to bring forth out of the temple of the LORD all the vessels that were made for Baal, and for the grove, and for all the host of heaven: and he burned them without Jerusalem in the fields of Kidron, and carried the ashes of them unto Bethel. And he put down the idolatrous priests, whom the kings of Judah had ordained to burn incense in the high places in the cities of Judah, and in the places round about Jerusalem; them also that burned incense unto Baal, to the sun, and to the moon, and to the planets, and to all the host of heaven" (2 Kings 23:3-5).
 - b) Esther was elevated to high position in ancient Persia, for the specific purpose of aiding God's people: "For if thou altogether holdest thy peace at this time, then shall there enlargement and deliverance arise to the Jews from another place; but thou and thy father's house shall be destroyed: and who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?" (Esth. 4:14).
 - c. The secret information was not obtained by Daniel because he had superior wisdom. All the wisdom that could be derived from this world could not have revealed the dream and its meaning. "The secret is not revealed to Daniel because of any wisdom that he possesses beyond others, but solely that the interpretation may be made known. In other words, unless there is specific supernatural revelation, the interpretation cannot be made known" (Young, p.71).
 - d. "[And that thou mightest know the thoughts of thy heart]: In reference to this matter; that is, that he might be able to recall the thoughts which passed through his mind in the dream. This (Dan 2:27-30) is the introduction to the important disclosure which Daniel was about to make to the king. This entire disclaimer of the honor of having originated the interpretation by his own wisdom, and the ascribing of it to God, are worthy here of special attention. It is probable that the magicians were accustomed to ascribe to their own skill and sagacity the ability to interpret dreams and the other prognostics of the future, and to claim special honor on that account. In opposition to this, Daniel utterly disclaims any such wisdom himself, and attributes the skill which he has entirely to God. This is a beautiful illustration of the nature of modesty and piety. It places before us a young man, having now the prospect of being elevated to great honors; under every temptation to arrogate the possession of extraordinary wisdom to himself; suddenly exalted above all the sages of the most splendid court on earth, disclaiming all merit, and declaring in the most solemn manner that whatever profound wisdom there might be in the communication which he was about to make, it was not in the slightest degree to be traced to himself" (Barnes).

D. Daniel 2:31-35: Daniel Describes the Forgotten Dream.

1. Verse 31: “Thou, O king, sawest, and behold a great image. This great image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee; and the form thereof was terrible.”
 - a. The dream that afflicted Nebuchadnezzar is here described in detail by Daniel. It consisted of a great image, exceedingly bright, and extremely frightening. The image was of a human form; there was nothing about it to cause the king to think it was an idol. The material of which the image was constructed was metal (except for the clay in the feet); the metal being polished would reflect the light, thus would be very bright in appearance; its size and form would generate fear in the king, shocking him so much that he could not remember the dream’s details.
 - b. Most of us have had nightmares which upset us greatly. Some of these are so upsetting that we may awake suddenly, very tense and with our heart pounding. Our dreams are often generated by something we saw, heard or experienced the day before. These are not communications from God, but derive from our own subconscious mind.
 - c. The image was frightening by its great size. Something huge can be intimidating, whether it be a beast, man, or machine. This image may have had a frightful face or perhaps have had an intimidating stance. “Vast, imposing, grand, fearful. The sudden appearance of such an object as this could not but fill the mind with terror. The design for which this representation was made to Nebuchadnezzar is clearly unfolded in the explanation which Daniel gives. It may be remarked here, in general, that such an appearance of a gigantic image was well adapted to represent successive kingdoms, and that the representation was in accordance with the spirit of ancient times. ‘In ancient coins and medals,’ says the editor of the *Pictorial Bible*, ‘nothing is more common than to see cities and nations represented by human figures, male or female. According to the ideas which suggested such symbols, a vast image in the human figure was, therefore, a very fit emblem of sovereign power and dominion; while the materials of which it was composed did most significantly typify the character of the various empires, the succession of which was foreshown by this vision. This last idea, of expressing the condition of things by metallic symbols, was prevalent before the time of Daniel. Hesiod, who lived about two centuries before Daniel, characterizes the succession of ages (four) by the very same metals—gold, silver, brass, and iron’” (Barnes).
 - d. It is obvious from what follows in the chapter that Nebuchadnezzar’s dream was a communication from Heaven to the king. We might ordinarily think that a dream of such dramatic impact on his mind would not have been forgotten. Heavenly power may somehow have been involved in his forgetting the details of the dream. Thus gave God the opportunity to reveal both the dream and its meaning to Daniel, which would convince Nebuchadnezzar that the Almighty was the author of the dream, that Daniel was a true prophet, and that the interpretation was accurate.
 - e. When Daniel concluded his revelation of the dream, the king was entirely convinced that the interpretation given by Daniel was indisputably correct: “Then the king Nebuchadnezzar fell upon his face, and worshipped Daniel, and commanded that they should offer an oblation and sweet odours unto him. The king answered unto Daniel, and said, Of a truth it is, that your God is a God of gods, and a Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets, seeing thou couldest reveal this secret” (Dan. 2:46-47).
 2. Verses 32-33: “This image's head was of fine gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass, His legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay.”
 - a. Other versions:
 - 1) American Standard Version: “As for this image, its head was of fine gold, its breast and its arms of silver, its belly and its thighs of brass, its legs of iron, its feet part of iron, and part of clay.”
 - 2) The New King James Version: “This image's head *was* of fine gold, its chest and arms of silver, its belly and thighs of bronze, its legs of iron, its feet partly of iron and partly of clay.”
 - 3) The English Standard Version: “The head of this image was of fine gold, its chest and arms of
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- silver, its middle and thighs of bronze, its legs of iron, its feet partly of iron and partly of clay.”
- b. Daniel was able to describe all the details of the great image the king had beheld in his dream.
- 1) The head was made of fine gold—pure gold, unadulterated by any kind of impurities. There was no alloy included in this pure gold. We would not expect to see an ancient statue comprised of the four different metals; we would not be surprised to see one made entirely of gold in those days when kings collected vast amounts of this precious metal. The image being so large, the head of gold would also be huge in direct proportion to the rest of the body.
 - 2) The breast and arms were of silver. This part of the body includes the chest, the shoulders, and the arms. Silver was a valuable metal, but of less value than gold. As we shall see in Daniel’s interpretation, the second kingdom would be of less strength and value than Babylon, the first kingdom.
 - 3) The belly and thighs were of brass. This reference is to the abdomen, hips, and the upper parts of the legs. Brass was used in the composition of the great image for these parts of the body.
 - a) Encarta gives this definition of brass: “brass yellow alloy: a hard yellow shiny metal that is an alloy of zinc and copper, frequently with the addition of other metallic elements to impart specific properties.”
 - b) Encarta’s definition of bronze is: “copper and tin alloy: a hard yellowish-brown alloy of copper and tin, sometimes containing small amounts of other metals. Bronze is harder than copper and is often cast to make statues.”
 - c) Brass: “which is an alloy of copper and zinc, was not known till the thirteenth century. What is designated by this word in Scripture is properly copper (De 8:9). It was used for fetters (Jg 16:21; 2Ki 25:7), for pieces of armour (1Sa 17:5-6), for musical instruments (1Ch 15:19; 1Co13:1), and for money (Mt 10:9). [Easton’s].
 - d) Easton’s Dictionary offers this definition of copper: “Derived from the Greek *kupros* (the island of Cyprus), called "Cyprian brass," occurs only in the Authorized Version in Ezr 8:27. Elsewhere the Hebrew word (*nehosheth*) is improperly rendered "brass," and sometimes "steel" (2Sa 22:35; Jer 15:12). The "bow of steel" (Job 20:24; Ps 18:34) should have been "bow of copper" (or "brass," as in the R.V.). The vessels of "fine copper" of Ezr 8:27 were probably similar to those of "bright brass" mentioned in 1Ki 7:45; Da 10:6. Tubal-cain was the first artificer in brass and iron (Ge 4:22). Hiram was noted as a worker in brass (1Ki 7:14). Copper abounded in Palestine (De 8:9; Isa 60:17; 1Ch 22:3,14). All sorts of vessels in the tabernacle and the temple were made of it (Le 6:28; Nu 16:39; 2Ch 4:16; Ezr 8:27); also weapons of war (1Sa 17:5-6; 2Sa 21:16). Iron is mentioned only four times (Ge 4:22; Le 26:19; Nu 31:22; 35:16) in the first four books of Moses, while copper (rendered "brass") is mentioned forty times.”
 - 4) The legs and feet were of iron, and part of iron and of clay. Of the metals named, iron is hardest. The *brass* of the passage is likely brass, bronze, or copper. The NKJ Version translates the word as *bronze* as also does the ESV.
- c. Pulpit Commentary offers these comments:
- 1) In this statue the progressive degradation of the material and situation is to be observed. The head, the highest part, gold; the shoulders, lower, silver; the belly and thighs, lower still, brass; the legs, lower yet, iron; and the feet and toes, lowest of all, a mixture of iron and clay.
 - 2) It is observed by Kliefoth that there is further a growing division. The head is one, without any appearance of division; the portion consisting of the breast and arms is divided, though slightly, for the chest is more important and bulky than the arms; the belly and thighs form a portion which
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- from the plural form given to the word translated "belly,"...(*m'ohi*), suggests more of dividedness than does that above. The lowest portion, that forming the legs and toes, has the greatest amount of division.
- 3) Kliefoth also refers to another point—that while there is a progressive degradation of the metal, there is also progression in degrees of hardness, silver being harder than gold, copper harder than silver, and iron hardest of all; then suddenly the iron is mingled with clay. There is not a new, softer material added to form a new fifth part; but there is a mingling of "clay"—clay suitable for the potter, or rather that has already been baked in the kiln, and therefore in the last degree brittle. In fact, there is a progress in frangibility [*breakable*]*—gold the most ductile [malleable] of metals, and iron the least so, then clay, when baked, more brittle still. There are many other successions that might be followed, which are at least ingenious.*
 - 4) The idea suggested by the phrase, "part of iron and part of clay," is that there was not a complete mingling, but that portions were seen that were clearly clay, and other portions as clearly still iron; there was therefore the superadded notion of the imperfect union of the parts with the necessary additional weakness which follows.
- d. Our dreams are not nearly as distinct and detailed as this one was. There may be parts of our dreams that are clear to our minds, but the overall picture is usually indistinct. Daniel gave a clear and vivid description of the image, which was confirmed by Nebuchadnezzar's returning memory of it. That Daniel could reveal and describe the image was sufficient proof to him that the interpretation he gave was accurate in every detail.
3. Verse 34: "Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces."
 - a. In the next sequence of the terrifying dream, Nebuchadnezzar saw a stone that was cut out without hands. We are not told from what the stone was cut; possibly a mountain, but that fact is unstated.
 - b. It was cut out without hands—without the instrumentality of human hands or effort. This same phrase appears in the KJV three times, in each case denoting something which resulted from divine action:
 - 1) Daniel 2:45: "Forasmuch as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold; the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter: and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure."
 - 2) Mark 14:58: "We heard him say, I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and within three days I will build another made without hands." Here, the Lord spoke of bringing his body back to life in his resurrection, a supernatural process involving no human hands.
 - 3) Colossians 2:11-12: "In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ; Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead."
 - a) This spiritual circumcision is an operation which God performs, when he removes the guilt of an alien sinner's guilt in the God-ordained process of baptism. We cannot remove our own sins; no man can do so for us. But God pardons us when we meet the conditions of pardon which culminate in baptism.
 - b) Acts 22:16: "And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord."
 - c) Hebrews 8:12: "For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more."
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- d) Matthew 26:28: "For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins."
 - e) Acts 2:38: "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."
 - f) 1 Peter 1:18-19: "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot."
 - c. This stone smote the great image upon its feet, which were made of iron and clay. This mighty blow delivered at the image's weakest point shattered this great image, pulverizing it totally.
4. Verse 35: "Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshingfloors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth."
- a. The iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold were stricken so hard that they were reduced to powder, and like the chaff on the threshing floors during harvest season, this dust of the image was scattered by the wind. It disappeared so that no trace was to be seen. Threshing-floors were flat places, exposed to the passing wind, where newly harvested grain was placed. Using oxen, human feet, etc., the grain was separated from the husks. Large fans were used to scatter the chaff into the wind to be carried away.
 - b. As Daniel will point out in the interpretation, the Babylonian kingdom was represented by the head of gold, the Medo-Persian empire is depicted by the silver arms and breast, the Grecian empire is pictured by the brazen legs and thighs, and the Roman empire was represented by the legs and feet. Following the great blow dealt by the stone, the last of these empires would disappear from sight. The Persians destroyed the Babylonian government, the Grecians destroyed the Persian entity, and Rome overthrew the Greeks. The Roman empire was destroyed in 476 A.D.
 - c. From a secular point of view, it would appear to human thinking that they were destroyed by some greater earthly power. God had already decreed their destruction, and he used these worldly forces to overcome and grind to powder these mighty empires. In the case of Rome, they were brought down piecemeal, as their various enemies continued to attack them.
 - d. Babylon rose to power when it defeated the Assyrians at Nineveh in 612 B.C and the Egyptians in 606 B.C. at Carchemish. It subdued Judah also in 606 B.C. Babylon fell to the combined armies of the Medes and Persians in 539 B.C.
 - 1) The Medo-Persian Empire captured Babylon in 539 B.C., taking over its vast empire. They were in turn conquered by the Grecians in 330 B.C., when Alexander the Great invaded the East.
 - 2) The Grecian Empire prevailed from 330 B.C. until they were overcome by the Romans in 63 B.C.
 - 3) The Roman Empire extended their influence throughout the *civilized* world, conquering nation-after-nation, subjugating the ancient world to their iron rule. The Roman Empire fell into ruin about 476 A.D. [The eastern part of the empire lasted until 1453].
 - e. In connection with this fourth kingdom (the Roman Empire), Daniel uttered his awesome prophecy of the Lord's coming kingdom.
 - 1) Daniel 2:44: "And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, *but* it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever." God promised to establish his kingdom during the days of the Roman kings.
 - 2) After this destructive action by the stone upon the image, the stone grew into such a gigantic size that it filled the whole earth. The stone represents the spiritual kingdom of God, the church for
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- which Christ died; it would take the message of the gospel throughout the world, converting great numbers of honest men and women.
- a) Matthew 28:18-20 : “And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.”
 - b) Acts 1:8: “But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.”
 - c) Mark 16:15-20 : “And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to the whole creation. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that disbelieveth shall be condemned. And these signs shall accompany them that believe: in my name shall they cast out demons; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents, and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall in no wise hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover. So then the Lord Jesus, after he had spoken unto them, was received up into heaven, and sat down at the right hand of God. And they went forth, and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word by the signs that followed. Amen” (ASV).
 - d) Acts 2:36-41: “Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ. Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call. And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation. Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.”
 - e) Acts 6:7: “And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith.”
 - f) Romans 15:19: “Through mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God; so that from Jerusalem, and round about unto Illyricum, I have fully preached the gospel of Christ.”
 - g) Colossians 1:6, 23: “Which is come unto you, as it is in all the world; and bringeth forth fruit, as it doth also in you, since the day ye heard of it, and knew the grace of God in truth....If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister.”
- f. Other prophecies making a similar point to that of our text are found in the following passages:
- 1) Isaiah 2:2-5: “And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the LORD'S house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up
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- sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. O house of Jacob, come ye, and let us walk in the light of the LORD.”
- 2) Micah 4:1-4: “But in the last days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of the house of the LORD shall be established in the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and people shall flow unto it. And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. But they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree; and none shall make them afraid: for the mouth of the LORD of hosts hath spoken it.”
 - 3) Jeremiah 31:31-34: “Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD: But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.”

E. Daniel 2:36-45: The Divine Interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar’s Dream.

1. Verse 36: “This is the dream; and we will tell the interpretation thereof before the king.”
 - a. Nebuchadnezzar had doubtless been closely attentive to Daniel’s description of the dream. What the young prophet had related stirred the king’s memory; he could know without doubt that Daniel had uncovered the forgotten dream.
 - b. Daniel now announces to the king that *we* will unfold the interpretation of the dream to him. The “we” may be a reference to himself and his three companions. Or possibly, he used this pronoun as Paul often did, as in 1 Corinthians 2:6: “Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect: yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to nought.” Daniel did not take the credit; indeed, he took none of the credit for God had provided all the information to him.
 - c. As we will see, Nebuchadnezzar was fully persuaded that the dream and its meaning would be given by Daniel, and that he could rest assured in the accuracy of what he revealed. “Then the king Nebuchadnezzar fell upon his face, and worshipped Daniel, and commanded that they should offer an oblation and sweet odours unto him” (Dan. 2:46).
 2. Verses 37-38: “Thou, O king, art a king of kings: for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory. And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath he given into thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all. Thou art this head of gold.”
 - a. Edward J. Young gave this insightful comment: “The phrase *king of kings* stands in apposition to *O king*. The remainder of the vs. and all of vs. 38a constitute a parenthesis. Thus, the force of the passage is *Thou O king, king of kings, thou are the head of gold*” (p.72).
 - b. Nebuchadnezzar is told that the God of heaven had given him the kingdom, the power, the strength, and the glory he possessed. He could not have obtained this great position without the aid of God. Of course, God used the Babylonian army in defeating the opposing armies, but without God’s overriding providence, this man would not have mounted the Babylonian throne.
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- 1) Although Pilate occupied a much inferior position, nevertheless he exercised the power of Rome as he served as the emperor's governor in Palestine. Our Lord showed this man that he would not have obtained his secular position without God's providence and permission: "The Jews answered him, We have a law, and by our law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God. When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he was the more afraid; And went again into the judgment hall, and saith unto Jesus, Whence art thou? But Jesus gave him no answer. Then saith Pilate unto him, Speakest thou not unto me? knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee? Jesus answered, **Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above:** therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin" (John 19:7-11).
 - 2) God is involved in the governments of men:
 - a) Daniel 4:32: "And they shall drive thee from men, and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field: they shall make thee to eat grass as oxen, and seven times shall pass over thee, until thou know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will."
 - b) Acts 17:24-28: "The God that made the world and all things therein, he, being Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; neither is he served by men's hands, as though he needed anything, seeing he himself giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; and he made of one every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, having determined their appointed seasons, and the bounds of their habitation; that they should seek God, if haply they might feel after him and find him, though he is not far from each one of us: for in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain even of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring" (ASV).
 - c) Romans 13:1-7: "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil. Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake. For for this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing. Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour."
 - d) 1 Peter 2:13-17: "Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme; Or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well. For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men: As free, and not using your liberty for a cloke of maliciousness, but as the servants of God. Honour all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the king."
 - 3) Wherever men lived, God had given Nebuchadnezzar authority. Obviously, he did not rule in North or South America, or in the British Isles. His authority was over the entire region of his God-given territory, and anyone who entered therein fell subject to his power. He was absolute ruler over the known world of civilized mankind. His area of control did include much of civilized Asia.
 - 4) Likewise, the animal creation within his territory belonged to him.
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- c. The golden head of the image represented Nebuchadnezzar and his great Babylonian Empire. “Thou, O king, art a king of kings: for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory. And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath he given into thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all. Thou art this head of gold.”
 - 1) The breast and arms represented another kingdom which would replace Nebuchadnezzar’s great empire; it would be inferior to that of Babylonia: “And after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee, and another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth” (Dan. 2:39). The reference to this kingdom is connected to the third, and the descriptive clause apparently applies to both the second and third kingdoms; that is, both would bear rule over all the earth.
 - 2) The belly and thighs represented the kingdom which would succeed the second kingdom (Dan. 2:39). This third kingdom would also bear rule over all the earth.
 - 3) The legs and feet represented a fourth kingdom. This would be a mighty kingdom, inasmuch as iron breaks gold, silver, and brass into pieces, but it would be divided: “And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron: forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things: and as iron that breaketh all these, shall it break in pieces and bruise. And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of potters' clay, and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; but there shall be in it of the strength of the iron, forasmuch as thou sawest the iron mixed with miry clay. And as the toes of the feet were part of iron, and part of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong, and partly broken. And whereas thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men: but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay” (Dan. 2:40-43).
- d. Having plainly named the first of these four great kingdoms to be that of Babylon, the other three powers are easily identified from history. As we noted earlier:
 - 1) Babylon rose to power when it defeated the Assyrians at Nineveh in 612 B.C. and the Egyptians in 606 B.C. at Carchemish. It subdued Judah also in 606 B.C. Babylon fell to the combined armies of the Medes and Persians in 539 B.C.
 - 2) The Medo-Persian Empire captured Babylon, taking over its vast empire. They were in turn conquered by the Grecians in 330 B.C., when Alexander the Great invaded the East.
 - 3) The Grecian Empire prevailed from 330 B.C. until they were overcome by the Romans in 63 B.C.
 - 4) The Roman Empire extended their influence throughout the *civilized* world, conquering nation-after-nation, subjugating the ancient world to their iron rule. The Roman Empire fell into ruin in 476 A.D. [The eastern part of the empire lasted until 1453].
3. Verse 39: “And after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee, and another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth.”
 - a. Three kingdoms are very briefly mentioned in this verse, the Babylonian, the Medo-Persian, and the Grecian kingdom. Babylon’s Empire would be much stronger than the next two succeeding kingdoms, even though each of them would last longer.
 - b. What caused the second and third to be inferior to Babylon? Various suggestions have been made, but perhaps the one made by Keil is the best, that these other two empires did not have the unity that Babylon possessed:
 - 1) The Medo-Persian world-kingdom is spoken of as "inferior" to the Babylonian perhaps only in this respect, that from its commencement it wanted inner unity, since the Medians and Persians did not form a united people, but contended with each other for the supremacy, which is intimated in the expression, Dan 7:5, that the bear "raised itself up on one side:" see under that passage. In the want

- of inward unity lay the weakness or the inferiority in strength of this kingdom, its inferiority as compared with the Babylonian. This originally divided or separated character of this kingdom appears in the image in the circumstance that it is represented by the breast and the arms. "Medes and Persians," as Hofm. (Weiss. u. Ef. i. S. 279) well remarks, "are the two sides of the breast. The government of the Persian kingdom was not one and united as was that of the Chaldean nation and king, but it was twofold. [Keil].
- 2) At the death of Alexander the Great, who was able to conquer Asia Minor, the middle east, and even on into India, had a vast empire. But his empire was divided into four parts, with four of his leading generals taking control over those parts.
 - a) Cassander ruled Macedonia.
 - b) Lysimachus ruled Thrace and Bythynia.
 - c) Seleucus established his throne in Syria, ruling from Antioch. His territory included Judaea.
 - d) Ptolemy ruled in Egypt, from Alexandria.
 4. Verses 40-43: "And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron: forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things: and as iron that breaketh all these, shall it break in pieces and bruise. And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of potters' clay, and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; but there shall be in it of the strength of the iron, forasmuch as thou sawest the iron mixed with miry clay. And as the toes of the feet were part of iron, and part of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong, and partly broken. And whereas thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men: but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay."
 - a. Any person reasoning sensibly, comparing secular history of ancient times with the biblical facts set forth in this passage of Daniel, will deny that this fourth kingdom can only be the Roman Empire. The prophet began the list of four kingdoms by naming Babylonia as the first; it is indisputable that the second and third were the Medo-Persian and Grecian Empires.
 - 1) Despite the clear affirmations of scripture and secular history, those who deny the reality of predictive prophecy are forced to the illogical position that the Roman Empire is not the fourth kingdom of Daniel's record. To get four kingdoms they divide the Medes and Persians into two separate kingdoms; but the Medes never had a world-wide empire; the Medes and Persians joined forces, with the Medes being the junior partners, to build a force sufficiently large to overthrow the Babylonians and take over their empire.
 - 2) These modernists foolishly separate the Medes and Persians and thus make the Grecians to be the fourth kingdom. We have already shown that God's spiritual kingdom was established during the time when the Romans ruled. In fact, in Luke 3 we find some of the Roman rulers identified by name.
 - b. "Now, as any student of history knows, Babylon was succeeded by the Medo-Persian Empire, not two empires, but only one. The Medes and the Persians are repeatedly mentioned in the Book of Esther as joint names of a single government (Esther 1:19, etc.)... There was, of course, a state called Media (never a world empire); but it was conquered by Babylon in 550 B.C., years before Babylon itself was conquered by the Medo-Persians. Even more disastrous to the theory of making the Medes a successive empire to that of Babylon, is the fact that the Medes were also subjugated by Alexander the Great in 330 B.C., thus forming a portion of the Greek Empire, exactly as they had been subjugated at an earlier time by the Babylonians. Thus, the Medes were an important subordinate part of both the Babylonian and Greek empires. In the days after Babylon, they enjoyed their greatest worldly authority as identified with Medo-Persia.
 - 1) "The Medes first appear in ancient history in the year 836 B.C.; but throughout the greater part of

- their entire history they were subject to Assyria, Babylon, (subordinate partners with Persia for awhile) and then subject to Alexander the Great. Herodotus referred to Media as an empire; but in view of what is known concerning them they were never an empire in the worldwide sense indicated in this vision, and certainly not after the fall of Babylon!
- 2) “....Critics misconstrue Dan. 5:31, which declares that Darius the Mede took the kingdom. However, there is no reference in that to a Median kingdom, for the same passage says that, ‘The kingdom was divided and given to the Medes and Persians’ (Daniel 5:19); thus it was one kingdom with two prominent elements, The Medo-Persian Empire. The mention of Darius' race in Dan. 5:31 did not change the facts. It was just like saying that Herod the Idumean (the Great) ascended the throne of Judea; but that could never have meant that he took over the Kingdom of Esau! (Idumeans were Edomites, the posterity of Esau)” (Coffman).
- c. The lower part of the great image of Nebuchadnezzar’s dream was comprised of iron and clay. This part was not made entirely of iron in one section and the rest made altogether of clay. These two elements were intermingled. There is “nothing in one that would coalesce with the other, or that could be permanently united to it, as two metals might be fused or welded together and form one solid compound. Iron and clay cannot be welded; and the idea here clearly is, that in the empire here referred to there would be two main elements which could never be made to blend....It does not necessarily mean that there would be an open rupture—an actual separation into two parts; but that there would be ‘such a diversity in the internal constitution’ that, while there would be the element of great power, there would be also an element of weakness; there would be something which could never be blended with the element of strength, so as to produce one harmonious and homogeneous whole....No one can fail to perceive how this applies to the Roman empire; a mighty power which, through all its long history, was distinguished for the vigour with which it carried forward its plans, and pressed on to universal dominion” (Barnes).
- d. The clay that was intermingled with the iron would indicate a built-in weakness. Looking at this great Roman Empire in its strength, one might not perceive any evident weakness. But in retrospect, there were several such flaws that are discernible, which are set forth in: Romans 1:18-28: “For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness; Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse: Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things. Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves: Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen. For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature: And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompence of their error which was meet. And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient.”
- 1) The empire was given over to idolatry. God will not long bless a society which has this sinful defect.
- a) Psalms 9:17: “The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God.”
- b) Proverbs 14:34: “Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people.”
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- 2) They condoned and practiced sexual perversion
 - 3) They weakened marriage, which is the foundation of every healthy society.
 - 4) They were characterized by covetousness, which motivated them to conquer other nations.
 - 5) They practiced cruelty in their treatment of prisoners and others, in many cases forcing them to fight each other or wild beasts in an arena for the entertainment of large audiences.
 - 6) They opposed the religion of God, even to deadly persecutions.
 - 7) The citizens were from a broad assortment of language and background. Daniel 2:43 reports that "they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men." People from different backgrounds and nationalities were forced into the Empire, but they retained their religions and attitudes. Many of these eventually migrated to Rome where they mingled with the Romans. This intermingling of languages, laws, and customs divided and weakened the national unity. The three earlier empires enjoyed a wide unity, being comprised mostly of people of Semitic background.
5. Verse 44: "And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever."
- a. Growing out of the description of this fourth kingdom (the Roman Empire), Daniel uttered his awesome prophecy of the coming heavenly kingdom.
 - 1) Daniel 2:44: "And in the days of those kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed, nor shall the sovereignty thereof be left to another people; but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever" (ASV).
 - 2) God promised to establish his kingdom during the days of the Roman kings. If he was true to his word, we may confidently look for the beginning of the kingdom during the span of time between 63 B.C. and 476 A.D., a period of 539 years. The New Testament furnishes ample details to validate the prophecy:
 - a) Luke 3:1-2: "Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judaea, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip tetrarch of Ituraea and of the region of Trachonitis, and Lysanias the tetrarch of Abilene, Annas and Caiaphas being the high priests, the word of God came unto John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness." Tiberius Caesar is specifically named, along with certain other lesser Roman rulers.
 - b) Matthew 3:1-2: "In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea, And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."
 - c) Matthew 4:17: "From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."
 - d) Matthew 10:7: "And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand."
 - e) Luke 10:9: "And heal the sick that are therein, and say unto them, The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you."
 - f) Matthew 16:16-19: "And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."

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- g) Colossians 1:13-14: “Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins.”
- h) Hebrews 12:28: “Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear.”
- b. The God of Heaven would set up a kingdom during the days when the Roman emperors were ruling the western world. Although God had a hand in raising up the four preceding worldly powers, and he accomplished certain important results by and through them, they were essentially and entirely secular concerns. The kingdom which God here proposes to establish would have its authority and power from Heaven; it would not have an earthly headquarters; its continuing existence would not depend on human procedures or worldly powers.
- 1) The God of Heaven is the Creator, the true and living God. He who could design and construct the entire universe, with all of its diverse and complicated creatures, would have no difficulty in establishing his Kingdom.
 - 2) God’s kingdom would not depend on the ordinary causes by which human governments are brought into being. There would be no military conquest; there would be no threat of violence; it would not grow out of some earthly kingdom; it would not materialize from an alliance of certain kingdoms of men. It would be established through God’s own unique plan.
 - 3) A Kingdom requires three components:
 - a) There must be a king—Christ is the King of God’s Spiritual Kingdom:
 - (1) Zechariah 6:13: “Even he shall build the temple of the LORD; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne: and the counsel of peace shall be between them both.”
 - (2) Matthew 28:18: “And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.”
 - (3) Colossians 1:13-14: “Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins.”
 - (4) 1 Corinthians 15:22-26: “For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming. Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.”
 - b) There must be a law: the New Testament, the Gospel of Christ, is the Law of the Kingdom:
 - (1) Isaiah 2:2-4: “And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the LORD'S house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.”
 - (2) Mark 16:15-16: “And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel
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to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.”

- (3) Luke 24:46-49: “And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things. And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.”
 - (4) John 16:12-14: “I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you.”
 - (5) Acts 2:1-4: “And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.”
 - (6) Galatians 6:2: “Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.”
 - (7) James 1:25: “But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.”
 - (8) James 2:8: “If ye fulfil the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well.”
- c) There must be citizens: The Citizens of the Kingdom are Christians, the Followers of Christ:
- (1) Matthew 28:19-20: “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.”
 - (2) Acts 2:41: “Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.”
 - (3) Acts 2:47: “Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.”
 - (4) Philippians 1:1: “Paul and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons.”
 - (5) Acts 11:26: “And when he had found him, he brought him unto Antioch. And it came to pass, that a whole year they assembled themselves with the church, and taught much people. And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch.”
 - (6) Acts 18:8: “And Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his house; and many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized.”
 - (7) Hebrews 12:28: “Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear.”
 - (8) 1 Peter 4:16: “Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf.”
- 4) Roman Catholicism alleges that it is the church (the kingdom God established) pursuant to the promise of Daniel 2:44. This is merely a baseless assertion.
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- a) There is no mention of Roman Catholicism in the New Testament! However, there are numerous statements which clearly expose the doctrines of this corrupt organization.
- (1) Matthew 23:8-9: “But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren. And call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven.”
 - (2) 1 Timothy 2:4: “Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.”
 - (3) 1 Timothy 4:1-5: “Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth. For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving: For it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer.”
- b) They claim that Peter was the first pope and all subsequent popes possess the same powers and authority that were given to Peter.
- (1) But the apostle was empowered (as were all of the apostles of Christ) with supernatural power to heal the sick, raise the dead, and confer upon certain Christians one or more of the spiritual gifts. He received inspired messages from Heaven (as did the other apostles and New Testament prophets) until the faith was once for all time delivered (Jude 3). The pope can do none of these.
 - (2) Peter was a married man and had believing children. Catholics do not allow their priests, popes, and other authority figures to enter marriage, although it is an honorable union: “Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge” (Heb. 13:4).
 - (a) We know that Peter was married because he had a mother-in-law (Matt. 8:14-15) and had his wife with him in at least some of his travels (1 Cor. 9:1-5).
 - (b) We know that he had believing children because that is one of the qualifications of an elder (1 Tim. 3:2; Titus 1:6); Peter plainly stated that he was an elder (1 Pet. 5:1).
- c) Roman Catholicism did not exist until 606 A.D., when a certain pompous man in Rome declared himself to be the universal bishop of the apostate church! The secular Roman Empire fell into utter ruin in 476 A.D. The self-exalted leaders of the great apostasy began to take over the reins of civil government, and soon extended their rule far and wide. There was no power on earth to resist their power-grab. While this secular-religious monstrosity grew from the ruins of the Roman Empire, the Kingdom of God is not of this world (John 18:36), did not begin by any earthly authority, does not rely on worldly powers to sustain it, and does not rule over the world. Its rule is limited to the hearts of its adherents.
- c. The kingdom the God of Heaven would set up would never be destroyed.
- 1) What worldly power could destroy the spiritual entity (the kingdom) which Jehovah established? God allows stubborn, unbelieving men the right to do as they please, since he is longsuffering (1 Pet. 3:9). But a day of reckoning awaits all those who do not submit to God’s rule (Acts 17:30). No worldly might has any power against that which is spiritual.
 - 2) God established his kingdom (the church of Christ) on the day of Pentecost of Acts Two. Those who would not accept the gospel of Christ soon began a strong opposition to it. The apostles were imprisoned and beaten; Stephen was stoned to death; the saints were scattered from Jerusalem by
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- the persecution; James was beheaded; Saul of Tarsus persecuted the saints even to strange cities.
- 3) However, when he encountered Jesus in a vision near Damascus, he became a believer in the Lord, and after entering the city, received baptism. Receiving the same endowment as the twelve in Acts Two had received, he began to preach the gospel. The same hatred was directed toward him that he and others had heaped upon the other Christians. Though he suffered many things for the cause of Christ, yet he did not succumb to their assaults (2 Cor. 11:24-28). Most of the other brethren likewise remained faithful.
 - 4) The spiritual nature of God's kingdom is such that no physical attack can destroy its component parts. It is certain that no man can destroy its King or its Law (the Gospel). And as long as his law remains intact, there will be some who will learn it, believe it, obey it, and follow it. Wherever one or more Christians are, the kingdom of God is there!
 - 5) No outside force can enter into God's kingdom and take it over for their sinful purposes. If an individual citizen of the kingdom is overcome by sin, he ceases to remain part of the kingdom; there are others who remain faithful. In the case of a congregation being taken over by sinful men, that congregation might be destroyed, but there are other faithful congregations elsewhere.
 - a) One of the beauties of God's kingdom (his church) is that each congregation operates independently of the other congregations. It is like a large window in a building which is divided into many separate panes. A rock thrown through the window may destroy one or more of the panes, but the window survives.
 - b) If the window was only one large pane, a rock through it would destroy the entire window. In the Lord's arrangement for his church (his kingdom), there is no provision made for a central headquarters on earth; each congregation is autonomous.
 - 6) The church of our Lord has always thrived during times of persecution, but usually becomes very weak and worldly during prosperous times. During the frontier days in America, great men of God went forth preaching the pure gospel of Christ. They found many with honest and good hearts who were receptive to the old Jerusalem gospel, but they also met much hatred and opposition, just as our brethren in the first century did:
 - a) Acts 18:8: "And Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his house; and many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized."
 - b) 1 Corinthians 16:9: "For a great door and effectual is opened unto me, and there are many adversaries."
- d. The kingdom will not be left to other people.
- 1) "'Its kingdom shall not be left to other people;' that is, the ruling power appropriate to this kingdom or dominion shall never pass away from its rightful possessor, and be transferred to other hands. In respect to other kingdoms, it often happens that their sovereigns are deposed, and that their power passes into the hands of usurpers. But this can never occur in this kingdom. The government will never change hands. The administration will be perpetual. No foreign power shall sway the scepter of this kingdom. There 'may be' an allusion here to the fact that, in respect to each of the other kingdoms mentioned, the power over the same territory 'did' pass into the hands of other people. Thus, on the same territory, the dominion passed from the hands of the Babylonian princes to the hands of Cyrus the Persian, and then to the hands of Alexander the Macedonian, and then to the hands of the Romans. But this would never occur in regard to the kingdom which the God of heaven would set up. In the region of empire appropriate to it, it would never change hands; and this promise of perpetuity made this kingdom wholly unlike all its predecessors" (Barnes).
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- 2) What a marvelous promise! What a glorious kingdom! What supernal blessings its citizens have! How loving, faithful, active, and happy we ought to be! As Gus Nichols, the great gospel preacher of the preceding generation used to say frequently, "I'm afraid the devil is going to get us all unless we have greater happiness!"
 - 3) No one can steal the kingdom from the Lord. No one can steal our heavenly promises from us against our will. As the Word of God will never be destroyed, so the Kingdom of God will never be destroyed.
 - a) Matthew 24:35: "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away."
 - b) 1 Peter 1:22-25: "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently: Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever. For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you."
 - c) Matthew 6:19-21: "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."
 - d) Romans 8:35-39: "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, and which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Nothing can separate us from the love we have for God and Christ, and it is certain that nothing can deprive us of the love of God and Christ—as long as we walk in the light of God's word (1 John 1:6-10; 2 Peter 1:1-12).
 - e. The kingdom of God shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms.
 - 1) This does not suggest that the Roman Empire would violently and suddenly be demolished at the first appearance of God's kingdom. Rather, as is shown by secular history, Christians spread the gospel far and wide, with multiplied thousands obeying the gospel. Christianity was not recognized as an authorized religion, but as long as Roman rulers perceived it as part of Judaism, the religion of Christ was tolerated by the Roman authorities. But before very long, it became obvious that Judaism was at war with the Lord's church. They sought to eradicate it from the earth—without success! The more they persecuted our brethren, the more the saints spread the truth. Though all but the apostles were forced from Jerusalem, those that were scattered abroad, went everywhere, preaching the word (Acts 8:1-4). A brush fire is hard to stop, for the more we beat at the flames, the more they spread.
 - 2) Except for Judaism, the religions countenanced by Roman law were pagan. Idolatry consumed the population. In Athens, it was commonly alleged it was easier to find a "god" than a man. Paul was tormented by this ruinous condition: "Now while Paul waited for them at Athens, his spirit was stirred in him, when he saw the city wholly given to idolatry" (Acts 17:16). What was true in this city, was true throughout the empire.
 - 3) When our brethren began exposing the lifeless nature of the idols, and to demonstrate the vast supremacy of the gospel to idolatry, many gave up their paganism. The miracles wrought by some of the saints would cause any thinking individual to repudiate idolatry and accept the gospel. The
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- city of Corinth was reported to be the vilest city of the time, yet “many of the Corinthians” heard the gospel, believed it, and were baptized into Christ (Acts 18:8).
- 4) As the uplifting nature of the gospel became widely known, it had a tremendous effect on the thinking of pagans. It offered hope in death and eternal life in a glorious Heaven. The lifestyle promoted by the gospel enhanced each individual who obeyed it, improved each family thus influenced, and uplifted each community where it was successfully preached. This influence was slow but steady, and it ate deeply into the consciousness of countless people.
 - 5) Persecution by the Jews caused the gospel to spread even more; a much wider and more harsh persecution by the Romans had an even greater effect. Slowly the pagan temples began to be neglected. When the truth makes progress, error is harmed. That is why the unbelieving Jews hated the church, and that is why sectarians hate us today. The only time that the denominations would be in agreement about anything, in previous generations in America, was when they united in their opposition to us. In other words, they would compromise their precious opinions in order to oppose the truth of the gospel.
 - 6) "There is no greater drama in human record than the sight of a few Christians, scorned or oppressed by a succession of emperors, beating all trials with fierce tenacity, multiplying quietly, building order while their enemies generated chaos, fighting the sword with the word, brutality with hope, and at last defeating the strongest state that history has known. Caesar and Christ had met in the arena, and Christ had won" [Will Durant, *Caesar and Christ*, (New York, Simon and Schuster, 1944, p. 652)].
 - 7) The Roman Empire was the strongest and lasted longer than any other western empire. Its army was dedicated, well-equipped, had great leaders, and was large in number. They swept aside the other nations at will as they went forth to conquer. But the empire was comprised not only of Romans and Italians, but also of all the conquered lands and people. These people were not happy in their servitude to Rome, but they had no choice. The very nature of an empire so-comprised of such a diverse set of nations and people, would be weakened by this condition. As long as Rome's army remained strong and intact, the Empire would brook no insurrection. Later, as prosperity weakened the people of Rome and sapped the strength and dedication of the Roman legions, their weakness became apparent. Other nations began winning battles. The army in the latter stages of the kingdom was made up of foreigner mercenaries, who are not known for dedicated fighting.
 - a) The prophet described the Empire of Rome as being comprised (figuratively) of part of iron and part of clay. These two do not adhere to each other in nature. The Empire would have this built-in strength and weakness. Our Lord stated the principle in these words: "...Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand" (Matt. 12:25). Lincoln lifted this statement from the Lord to apply it to the United States not long after he ascended to the presidency. During the War Between the States, the United States were not *united*. Unity between the northern and southern states was not restored for many years; there is still a certain animosity that can be seen even now.
 - b) As time proceeded after the establishment of God's kingdom, Rome divided its capital between Rome and Constantinople. In its heyday, Rome's iron-like strength crushed all enemies, but it grew soft as it plunged into degradation and debauchery. The iron-like nature of the Roman power to break in pieces and crush all nations was itself splintered by their internal political and spiritual diseases. They had descended below the level of morality that God requires of nations and individuals.
 - (1) Psalms 9:17: "The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God."
 - (2) Proverbs 14:34: "Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people."
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- 8) The brutality and harshness of Rome in dealing with subdued nations could not unite those conquered peoples to make a completely harmonious empire. The Jews were special thorns in the flesh of Rome, and their legions were never able to conquer the Parthians, a particularly tough nation.
- 9) The reference to their being like iron mixed with clay denotes its internal weakness due to their failure to absorb foreign people into the Roman system. America is making the very same error today.
 - a) America's armed forces are now made up of groups of people that are not naturally homogeneous. How can sexual perverts and those who live by God's standards serve harmoniously in the common cause of a military unit? How can people who speak different languages communicate perfectly under high-pressure combat situations?
 - b) For the first two centuries of our nation's history, people who emigrated here learned the languages and adopted the customs of America. Our values and ways became their values and ways. But there are several nationalities who come to the states now who will not adapt themselves to our standards and ways. They want to remain a separate entity from the rest of the country.
 - c) A nation divided within itself cannot long endure without the essential unity a strong nation must have. Yugoslavia was a group of nations united under the iron hand of Communism, after the Second World War. It later suffered civil war and splintered. Our nation is undoubtedly headed for a similar fate. Those who will not assimilate are apt to congregate. We could have Asians occupying a part of our land, Hispanics another, Muslims another, etc., sub-dividing our nation. Let us pray and hope that such a division will never occur.
- f. It shall stand forever.
 - 1) It will not be destroyed; it will stand forever. We have God's word on it! Souls cannot be harmed by bullets or bombs, by grenades or by poisonous gas; neither atomic, toxic or bacterial weapons can kill a soul.
 - a) Matthew 10:28: "And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell."
 - b) Luke 12:4-5: "And I say unto you my friends, Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: Fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear him."
 - 2) As noted earlier, the Kingdom of God cannot be assaulted by human weapons, for there is nothing on earth that can endanger its King or its Eternal Law. Despite the heinous persecutions Satan may be able to raise against the citizens of the Eternal Kingdom, as long as the King and his Word exist, and his providence brings the Bible and honest hearts together, there will be citizens in the Kingdom of the Almighty!
- g. The kingdom is God's rule over the souls of men and women.
 - 1) In some cases, the *kingdom* of God denotes the world in general: "The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear" (Matt. 13:41-43).
 - a) The context shows how the term kingdom is used in this unique case. That the kingdom in this parable is used in reference to the world is clear for two reasons:
 - (1) The field in which both the good and bad seeds were sown is plainly said to be the world;

obviously, the harvest of these two crops would be made from the same field.

- (2) The good seed represents the children of the kingdom (Christians) and the bad seed represents the followers of the wicked one (these are the lost ones of the world).
- b) “If it be objected to this, that the enemy sowed after the good seed had been sown, and therefore the wicked represented by the tares must be the wicked who sprang up among the disciples after the kingdom was established: we answer, that this point of comparison is not found in the Savior’s interpretation, and this is sufficient proof that it was not in his mind” (McGarvey, *Commentary on Matthew and Mark*, p.123). All those represented by the wheat and tares are in the kingdom, and the kingdom (in this context) is the world.
- 2) In Daniel 2:44, a definite promise is given that God would establish a very special kingdom—one that would rule over the hearts of believers; the general time-period is given in which it would be built [during the reign of the Roman kings]. Its coming was at hand when John the Baptizer began his work, when our Lord began his public ministry, when he sent forth the twelve apostles, and later the seventy disciples.
- a) Matthew 3:2: “And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”
- b) Matthew 4:17: “From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”
- c) Matthew 10:7: “And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand.”
- d) Luke 10:9: “And heal the sick that are therein, and say unto them, The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you.”
- 3) These eighty-four preachers all proclaimed that the establishment of the kingdom was imminent.
- a) Mark 9:1: “And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That there be some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power.”
- b) Luke 24:49: “And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.”
- c) Acts 1:5: “For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.”
- d) Acts 1:8: “But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.”
- e) The kingdom came when the apostles received the baptism of the Holy Spirit; they were given that miraculous power on the Pentecost Day of Acts 2 (Acts 2:1-4).
- 4) The kingdom is also called the church: “And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven” (Matt. 16:16-19).
6. Verse 45: “Forasmuch as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold; the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter: and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure.”
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- a. The four kingdoms represented by the imposing figure Nebuchadnezzar beheld in his dream existed at different times, but each successive kingdom drew from the power, influence and wealth of the preceding kingdoms. When the Roman Empire was undermined, overthrown and destroyed, the powers, influence and wealth it gained from Babylon, Persia and Greece were dispersed or destroyed.
- b. In the vision, Nebuchadnezzar watched as the stone which had been cut from a mountain smote the great image, utterly demolishing it. Notice that the stone was cut from the mountain without hands—meaning that no human agency was involved in the removal of the stone. The awesome power of God did this work; and it was his power that caused the stone to crash against the feet of the image.
- c. The materials from which the image was constructed are listed in reverse order in the destruction of the image. When God overthrew the Roman Empire, all of the vestiges of the preceding empires were likewise devastated.
- d. God's kingdom would be thoroughly triumphant and the human empires that had opposed the will of Heaven would be gone. The evils of Babylon, of Persia, of Greece, and of Rome would be brought low. Even during the history of men are their wicked deeds sometimes punished. The ultimate penalty will be paid in the Judgment of the Last Day, and the full vindication of the righteous will be made known to all—and fully blessed eternally!
 - 1) "Matthew 25:46: "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal."
 - 2) 2 Thessalonians 1:8-10: "In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day."
- e. King Nebuchadnezzar was being greatly blessed by having the ominous dream and receiving the interpretation made known to him by the prophet, Daniel. God was the Author of the dream and also its interpretation. It was not because of the king's goodness that the dream came to him, but it was in keeping with God's marvelous plan. It was a great privilege for him to be given a view of future events. Perhaps he was somewhat dismayed to learn that his own great kingdom would come to an end. Its might was established during the great events of 606 B.C., and it ended in 639 B.C., when the Persians captured Babylon (cf. Dan. 5).
- f. How was God able to bring down the mighty Empire of Rome?
 - 1) "The Roman Empire was the climax of paganism; and even in the days of Theodosius there yet remained four hundred twenty four pagan temples, each of them manned by a tremendous staff of pagan priests. Every emperor was a self-styled god; and well into the second century Christians were being burned alive for refusing to burn incense to the emperor, as proved by the martyrdom of Polycarp at Smyrna (155 A.D.). Did Christianity win over that? Yes. In the year 389 A.D., the Emperor Theodosius closed down all the pagan temples, proscribed and outlawed the pagan priesthood, and initiated many other changes that emphasized the totality of the Christian victory" (Coffman).
 - 2) According to prominent historians, Rome fell because of these sets of conditions:
 - a) Five reasons why pagan Rome fell (Edward Gibbon).
 - (1) Rapid increase of divorce with the undermining of the sanctity of the home which is the basis of society. Laws had to be passed to force people to marry. Some women counted their age by the number of husbands they had had.
 - (2) Higher and higher taxes. Public money was spent on bread and celebrations. This was

- done to keep the lower classes contented.
- (3) The mad craze for pleasure. Sports became more exciting and more brutal.
 - (4) The building of gigantic armaments, while the real enemy was within: the decadence of the people.
 - (5) The decay of religion.
- b) Causes for the fall of Rome (Will Durant, *Caesar and Christ*, Simon and Schuster, NY, 1944, pp.665-670).
- (1) Importation of foreigners in great number who later gained the majority.
 - (2) Pestilence, revolution, and war.
 - (3) Moral decay: sex ran riot in freedom while liberty decayed.
 - (4) Christianity: undermined and exposed the weak underpinnings of a corrupt empire.
 - (5) Economic causes: farms were abandoned when the tillers of the soil thought they could live as well on the public dole as from farming.
 - (6) The Roman army was manned by foreigners who were not committed to the Empire's best interests.
- 3) With the crumbling of the Roman Empire, the spread of God's kingdom [*i.e.*, the church of our Lord], spread rapidly. Even with increased persecution, the gospel gained more and more souls. But as the church became wide-spread, opposition arose greatly. A religion that was not licensed by the Roman senate was illegal. Pagan religion and the Roman government were closely allied, to the extent that one who would not burn incense to the Roman Emperor was viewed as a foe of Rome. Patriotism and pagan religion operated together; one who opposed Roman religion, also opposed Rome, and could be persecuted.
- 4) Christians had many false charges laid against them. They were accused of cannibalism, incest, ingesting blood, and plotting to overthrow the government. Their eating the Lord's Supper was twisted to mean they were eating the flesh and drinking the blood of Christ. Inspired writers gave explicit instructions about being subject to civil authority.
- a) Romans 13:1-7: "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil. Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake. For for this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing. Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour."
 - b) 1 Peter 2:12-17: "Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation. Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme; Or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well. For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men: As free, and not using your liberty for a cloke of maliciousness, but as the servants of God. Honour all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the king."
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- c) The Druids were an illegal religious cult which practiced human sacrifice; their meetings were secret. The Bacchanalia were also illegal; in their secret meetings they planned all sorts of crimes; they were known for their adherence to strong drink and immoral conduct, including cannibalism. The reputation of these corrupt secret societies was opposed by most Roman citizens. The secret meetings of the saints caused them to be linked to these two outlaw groups, especially when the communion service was misrepresented.
 - d) During the later part of the first century, a faction known as Gnosticism developed within the Lord's church. One extreme side of this digression taught asceticism; the other extreme taught self-indulgence. Although these digressions were not countenanced by the faithful brethren, the entire body of Christ was tainted in the eyes of the population with these false doctrines. Thus, more opposition was brought against our brethren.
- 5) In summary, why did Rome and others want to oppose and destroy Christianity?
- a) Christianity was an illegal religion—from the Roman perspective.
 - b) It aspired to universal acceptance, calling on all men everywhere to accept it at the expense of other religions.
 - c) It was an exclusive religion, denying that any other religious system had the approval of God. Thus, as it spread, it uprooted other systems.
 - d) Christians were accused of all kinds of evil activity, which brought them opposition from those who believed the charges, including the officials of the Empire.
 - e) Christians refused to sanction every act of Rome in her wars.
 - f) Many of those who accepted Christianity were from the ranks of the poor and outcast, which would tend to besmirch the official view of the church.
 - g) They would not compromise the faith, thus refused to worship the emperor.
 - h) Their zeal led many to believe they were fanatics.
 - i) Christianity conflicted with the temporal interests of some. "For a certain *man* named Demetrius, a silversmith, which made silver shrines for Diana, brought no small gain unto the craftsmen; Whom he called together with the workmen of like occupation, and said, Sirs, ye know that by this craft we have our wealth. Moreover ye see and hear, that not alone at Ephesus, but almost throughout all Asia, this Paul hath persuaded and turned away much people, saying that they be no gods, which are made with hands: So that not only this our craft is in danger to be set at nought; but also that the temple of the great goddess Diana should be despised, and her magnificence should be destroyed, whom all Asia and the world worshippeth. And when they heard *these sayings*, they were full of wrath, and cried out, saying, Great *is* Diana of the Ephesians. And the whole city was filled with confusion: and having caught Gaius and Aristarchus, men of Macedonia, Paul's companions in travel, they rushed with one accord into the theatre" (Acts 19:24-29).
- 6) There were several persecutions against the church by Rome.
- a) Nero—67 A.D.
 - b) Domitian—81 A.D.
 - c) Trajan—108 A.D.
 - d) Marcus Aurelius —162 A.D.
 - e) Severius—192 A.D.
 - f) Maximus—235 A.D.
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- g) Decius—249 A.D.
 - h) Valerian—257 A.D.
 - i) Diocletian—303 A.D.
- g. That the kingdom envisioned is the Kingdom of God's Dear Son (Col. 1:13), is made clear by several definite factors, which cannot be dismissed.
- 1) It was to have a supernatural origin. As already discussed, in the vision, the kingdom is cut from a mountain and sent to smash against the feet of the great image. No human hands were used in removing the stone from the mountain; this was accomplished by God's divine power. There is no special significance to the mountain from which the stone was cut. The point that matters is that the stone was quarried by miraculous power and not by human agency.
 - a) The heavenly power produced the stone and propelled it against the image seen by King Nebuchadnezzar in his fearsome dream.
 - b) The spread of the kingdom, described figuratively as the growth of the stone to fill the earth, was also accomplished by God's might.
 - c) "The point of interest and of marvel, the mysterious thing that attracted the eye, was that there was no human agency employed; that no hands were seen at work; that none of the ordinary instrumentalities were seen by which great effects are accomplished among men. Now this would properly represent the idea that the kingdom of the Messiah would have a supernatural origin. Its beginnings would be unlike what is usually seen among men. How appropriately this applies to the kingdom of the Messiah, as having its origin not in human power, need not here be stated. Nothing is more apparent; nothing is more frequently dwelt on in the New Testament, than that it had a heavenly origin. It did not owe its beginning to human plans, counsels, or power" (Barnes).
 - 2) The kingdom of God had a beginning that would not be accounted as powerful by worldly-minded people. At the first, the stone cut from the mountain was small, but grew to mighty proportions. When it first came from the mountain, no one would have thought this small stone would be able to do what it did—pulverize the great statue of gold, silver, silver, brass and iron. Before long it grew to such a gigantic size to fill the land.
 - a) "It is hardly necessary to say that this corresponds entirely with the origin of the Messiah's kingdom. Everywhere it is represented as of feeble beginnings, and, as a system, to human view, entirely inadequate to so great a work as that of bringing other kingdoms to an end, and subduing it to itself" (Barnes).
 - b) The King himself entered the human family, being born into a weak and conquered nation, and was a member of a poor family, and came to live in a despised village (Nazareth). His birth was not in a palace, but in a stable.
 - c) As he grew to manhood, he had no powerful friends or political connections; he owned not a place to live, and did not have a steady source of daily food. "And Jesus saith unto him, The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head" (Matt. 8:20).
 - d) He shocked his adversaries who perceived that he was well-educated, but had never gone to school. "And the Jews marvelled, saying, How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?" (John 7:15). "No one would have supposed that the religion originated by one of so humble an origin would have power to change the destiny of the kingdoms of the earth" (*ibid.*).
 - 3) During his public ministry, he had only a rather small band of dedicated followers. While there were many who came to hear him and to see his miracles, they could not be thought of as solid
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- citizens for his forth-coming kingdom. Indeed, when he taught them the serious nature of his message, many turned back and walked no more with him (John 6:60-69).
- a) A considerable number of those who came to hear him, came only for the material advantages he sometimes provided. “Jesus answered them and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled. Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed” (John 6:26-27).
 - b) He had no army equipped with powerful weapons; his message was one of peace; his goal was to prepare as many for Heaven as were willing to accept the challenge. “(For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ” (2 Cor. 10:4-5).
 - c) His band of followers, a relatively small number of twelve apostles, one hundred and twenty faithful ones in Jerusalem (the number of those in other places, we cannot know), plus the three thousand who obeyed the gospel on Pentecost Day (Acts 2), could hardly be counted as a world-changing force. Not by worldly standards.
 - d) They had no money and no political or military power. Their message was not popular with the masses. There was no way that this band of saints could overthrow the mighty Roman Empire; they could not even take over the control of Palestine! Such a work was of no concern to them. Their Master was in Heaven, and their work was to serve him in his spiritual kingdom.
 - e) Our Lord showed through his parables that his kingdom would have a small beginning, but would in time grow into a might force in the world of humanity. “Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and sowed in his field: Which indeed is the least of all seeds: but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof. Another parable spake he unto them; The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened” (Matt. 13:31-33).
- 4) “It may be argued, from the fact that the efforts which have been made to destroy it have shown that this cannot be done by any human power. Eighteen hundred years have now passed away—a period sufficiently long to test the question whether it can be destroyed by force and violence; by argument and ridicule. The experiment has been fairly made, and if it were possible that it should be destroyed by external force, it would have been done. It cannot be imagined that more favorable circumstances for such a purpose will ever occur. The church of Christ has met every form of opposition that we can conceive could be made against it, and has survived them all. Particularly it has survived the trial which has been made in the following respects:
- a) “The Roman power, the whole might of the Roman arms, that had subdued and crushed the world, was brought to bear upon the kingdom of Christ to crush and destroy it, but wholly failed. It cannot be supposed that a new power will ever arise that will be more formidable to Christianity than the Roman was.
 - b) “The power of persecution. That has been tried in every way, and has failed. The most ingenious forms of torture have been devised to extinguish this religion, and have all failed. It has always been found that persecution has only contributed ultimately to the triumph of the cause which it was hoped to crush.
 - c) “The power of philosophy. The ancient philosophers opposed it, and attempted to destroy it
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by argument. This was early done by Celsus and Porphyry; but it soon became apparent that the ancient philosophy had nothing that could extinguish the rising religion, and not a few of the prominent philosophers themselves were converted, and became the advocates of the faith.

- d) “The power of science. Christianity had its origin in an age when science had made comparatively little progress, and in a country where it was almost unknown. The sciences since have made vast advances; and each one in its turn has been appealed to by the enemies of religion, to furnish an argument against Christianity. Astronomy, history, the discoveries in Egypt, the asserted antiquity of the Hindoos, and geology, have all been employed to overthrow the claims of the Christian religion, and have all been compelled to abandon the field. See this admirably demonstrated in Dr. Wiseman's ‘Lectures on the Connection between Science and Revealed Religion.’
 - e) “The power of ridicule. At one time it was held that ‘ridicule is the test of truth,’ and this has been applied unsparingly to the Christian religion. But the religion still lives, and it cannot be supposed that there will be men endued with the power of sarcasm and wit superior to those who, with these weapons, have made war on Christianity, or that infidelity has any hope from that quarter. It may be inferred, therefore, that there is no ‘external’ source of corruption and decay which will prevent its being perpetual. Other kingdoms usually have; and after a few centuries at most the internal corruption—the defect of the organization—develops itself, and the kingdom falls. But nothing of this kind occurs in the kingdom of Christ. It has lived now through eighteen hundred years, through periods of the world in which there have been constant changes in the arts, in the sciences, in manners, in philosophy, in forms of government. During that time many a system of philosophy has been superseded, and many a kingdom has fallen, but Christianity is as fresh and vigorous, as it meets each coming generation, as it ever was; and the past has demonstrated that the enemies of the gospel have no reason to hope that it will become weak by age, and will fall by its own decrepitude” (Barnes, 1798-1870).
- 5) Although the great growth of the Lord’s spiritual kingdom, with many millions of precious souls having obeyed the gospel through the centuries, has had such an influence on the world, humanity has lost nothing by the kingdom’s advance. Instead, the gospel has added many great advantages to every society upon which it has wrought its proper impact. God’s word exposes the dangers of the many wicked practices that have dominated our race. The manner of life it promotes makes great improvements in the relationship between individuals, societies, and nations. It uplifts society morally, spiritually, religiously, economically, and in many other ways. It is the greatest benefit that the human race has ever received.

F. Daniel 2:46-49: The King is Overjoyed to Learn the Meaning of the Dream.

1. Verse 46: “Then the king Nebuchadnezzar fell upon his face, and worshipped Daniel, and commanded that they should offer an oblation and sweet odours unto him.”
 - a. “It may be that Daniel protested against divine honors being offered to him by the king, because the king's ‘reply’ seems to indicate such a protest. At any rate, the worship conferred upon Daniel was intended to honor Daniel's God, as the king plainly indicated” (Coffman). Men and angels of God refused worship offered to them by men.
 - 1) Acts 10:25-26: “And as Peter was coming in, Cornelius met him, and fell down at his feet, and worshipped him. But Peter took him up, saying, Stand up; I myself also am a man.”
 - 2) Acts 14:10-15: “Said with a loud voice, Stand upright on thy feet. And he leaped and walked. And when the people saw what Paul had done, they lifted up their voices, saying in the speech of Lycaonia, The gods are come down to us in the likeness of men. And they called Barnabas,

- Jupiter; and Paul, Mercurius, because he was the chief speaker. Then the priest of Jupiter, which was before their city, brought oxen and garlands unto the gates, and would have done sacrifice with the people. Which when the apostles, Barnabas and Paul, heard of, they rent their clothes, and ran in among the people, crying out, And saying, Sirs, why do ye these things? We also are men of like passions with you, and preach unto you that ye should turn from these vanities unto the living God, which made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein.”
- 3) Revelation 19:10: “And I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said unto me, See thou do it not: I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God: for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.”
 - 4) Revelation 22:8-9: “And I John saw these things, and heard them. And when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which shewed me these things. Then saith he unto me, See thou do it not: for I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God.”
- b. “Porphyry criticized this vs. as not being true to life, in that it represents a most haughty king adoring a mere captive. Jerome replied to this by citing the attempt of the Lycaonians to worship Paul and Barnabas. Porphyry further criticized Daniel for receiving these rewards, and Jerome replied by commenting upon the magnitude of the task which Daniel, as a boy, had accomplished, and sought to exonerate Daniel from all blame” (Young, pp.80f). Also, what would have been the king’s attitude if Daniel had turned down the rewards? Further, as a prominent man in the employ of the throne, the prophet would have had certain significant financial obligations to pay.
 - c. The prone position of Nebuchadnezzar before Daniel does not necessarily denote the actual worship being directed to a mere man. If any such adoration was intended, we might perceive it as directed to the God of Daniel. Josephus offers the following information, describing what happened when Alexander the Great approached Jerusalem:
 - 1) And when the Phoenicians and the Chaldeans that followed him thought they should have liberty to plunder the city, and torment the high priest to death, which the king's displeasure fairly promised them, the very reverse of it happened; for Alexander, when he saw the multitude at a distance, in white garments, while the priests stood clothed with fine linen, and the high priest in purple and scarlet clothing, with his mitre on his head, having the golden plate whereon the name of God was engraved, he approached by himself, and adored that name, and first saluted the high priest. The Jews also did all together, with one voice, salute Alexander, and encompass him about; whereupon the kings of Syria and the rest were surprised at what Alexander had done, and supposed him disordered in his mind.
 - 2) However, Parmenio alone went up to him, and asked him how it came to pass that, when all others adored him, he should adore the high priest of the Jews? To whom he replied, "I did not adore him, but that God who hath honored him with his high priesthood; for I saw this very person in a dream, in this very habit, when I was at Dios in Macedonia, who, when I was considering with myself how I might obtain the dominion of Asia, exhorted me to make no delay, but boldly to pass over the sea thither, for that he would conduct my army, and would give me the dominion over the Persians; whence it is that, having seen no other in that habit, and now seeing this person in it, and remembering that vision, and the exhortation which I had in my dream, I believe that I bring this army under the Divine conduct, and shall therewith conquer Darius, and destroy the power of the Persians, and that all things will succeed according to what is in my own mind." And when he had said this to Parmenio, and had given the high priest his right hand, the priests ran along by him, and he came into the city. And when he went up into the temple, he offered sacrifice to God, according to the high priest's direction, and magnificently treated both the high priest and the priests. And when the Book of Daniel was showed him wherein Daniel declared that one of the
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- Greeks should destroy the empire of the Persians, he supposed that himself was the person intended. And as he was then glad, he dismissed the multitude for the present; but the next day he called them to him, and bid them ask what favors they pleased of him; whereupon the high priest desired that they might enjoy the laws of their forefathers, and might pay no tribute on the seventh year. He granted all they desired. And when they entreated him that he would permit the Jews in Babylon and Media to enjoy their own laws also, he willingly promised to do hereafter what they desired. And when he said to the multitude, that if any of them would enlist themselves in his army, on this condition, that they should continue under the laws of their forefathers, and live according to them, he was willing to take them with him, many were ready to accompany him in his wars. [*Antiquities of the Jews*, PC Study Bible].
- d. Nebuchadnezzar recognized the great value of Daniel. He had never another who could relate the king's forgotten dream, and also give the interpretation of it that was so obviously accurate. He did not want to lose the services of such a man!
2. Verse 47: "The king answered unto Daniel, and said, Of a truth it is, that your God is a God of gods, and a Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets, seeing thou couldest reveal this secret."
 - a. The king could now know that among all the "gods," the God of Daniel is the true Deity. But, Young gives this comment: "The profession of the king, however, was nothing more than the professions of a polytheist. He had not yet come to see that Daniel's God is the only God. However, the superiority of Daniel's God is recognized when the king calls Him a *revealer of secrets*, and the reason why he bestows this epithet is that Daniel...was able to reveal this secret" (p.81).
 - b. By the time of the end of Chapter Four, the king had come to view the God of Daniel as the only true God: "Now I Nebuchadnezzar praise and extol and honour the King of heaven, all whose works are truth, and his ways judgment: and those that walk in pride he is able to abase" (Dan. 4:37).
 3. Verse 48: "Then the king made Daniel a great man, and gave him many great gifts, and made him ruler over the whole province of Babylon, and chief of the governors over all the wise men of Babylon."
 - a. Nebuchadnezzar "gave him an honorable appointment; he so honored him that he was regarded as a great man. He was really made great by the grace of God, and the extraordinary favor which God had bestowed upon him, but the estimate which the king had of his greatness was shown by the tokens of the royal favor. 'And gave him many great gifts.' This is a common way of showing esteem in the East. The estimate in which one holds another is evinced by the variety and richness of the presents conferred on him" (Barnes).
 - b. Daniel's prominence and influence with the king would provide the Jews with certain benefits that otherwise they would not have obtained. Since Nebuchadnezzar highly prized Daniel and the God of Daniel, this esteem would also extend to the people of God and of Daniel. What these advantages may have been, we are not able to identify specifically; what the attitude of the Jews to Daniel was, must have been excellent.
 - c. Daniel was aware of the use God was making of the Babylonian Empire, that three other great kingdoms would follow the Babylonians in succession, until finally during the days of the fourth kingdom, God would set up his own mighty kingdom [the church, the body of Christ, the family of God]. The prophet could sinlessly accept Nebuchadnezzar's gifts and, using them in support of God's plan, he would promote the greatest design of the ages.
 4. Verse 49: "Then Daniel requested of the king, and he set Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, over the affairs of the province of Babylon: but Daniel sat in the gate of the king."
 - a. "Notice also that Daniel's being made to 'rule' over the province of Babylon did not mean that this "rule" was absolute. Daniel recognized this in procuring the king's permission to name his companions to responsible posts. The magnificent prophecy of the establishment of Christ's kingdom reaching its
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climax in Dan. 2:44 above is one of the great features of the Book of Daniel. It is significant that all schools of interpreters accept this as a prophecy of the establishment of Christ's kingdom" (Coffman).

- b. Daniel's three companions had assisted him in every way, including their prayers. The prophet here asks the king to promote these three young men to take care of the business of the province of Babylon, which was not an unimportant work. No other could serve in this capacity better; and they would be in a position to promote the welfare of the Jews in captivity, as well as that of the rest of the population.
 - c. The three companions are named in this final verse of Chapter Two, which naturally introduces the events which are about to be described and discussed.
5. "To reject Daniel's prophecy is to reject the Christian religion, for this religion is founded upon his prophecy of the Messiah. This vision composed of the four metals is the foundation of all of Daniel's prophecies. It represents four great nations who should reign over the earth successively, viz. the people of Babylonia, the Persians, the Greeks, and the Romans ... And the stone cut out without hands which smote the image and filled the whole earth shows that in the days of those Roman kings, the God of heaven would set up a kingdom that should never be destroyed, the Kingdom of Messiah." [Sir Isaac Newton, Observations upon the Prophecies of Daniel, and the Apocalypse of St. John (London: J. Darby and T. Browne in Bartholomew Close: MDCCXXXIII), pp. 25,27, quoted by Coffman].
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Daniel 3

- A. Daniel 3:1-7: The King Foolishly Set Up a Great Golden Idol, Which the People Are Required to Worship.
1. Verse 1: “Nebuchadnezzar the king made an image of gold, whose height was threescore cubits, and the breadth thereof six cubits: he set it up in the plain of Dura, in the province of Babylon.”
 - a. “If one may take somewhat of a speculative glance at the probable psychology that controlled Nebuchadnezzar at this point, it is easy to see what this pagan egotist meant by this image. The previous chapter tells us of his dream of the great image which, according to Daniel's interpretation, represented Nebuchadnezzar as being 'the head of gold!' This was not enough for this ruthless despot; he wanted to be the whole cheese! Therefore, he made a great image all of gold. Of course, when he commanded everyone to worship it, he might have identified it as an image of one or more pagan deities. That would have made it easier for the chief officers of the kingdom to comply with his request; but our own view is that the image here was clearly one of Nebuchadnezzar himself” (Coffman).
 - b. The great size of this image (ninety feet tall and nine feet wide) probably means that it was not made of solid gold, but of some other material which was overlaid with gold. The ark of the covenant was constructed of acacia wood, which was then overlaid with pure gold. Babylon no doubt had huge amounts of gold taken from their various conquests, and possibly could have constructed the image with solid gold, but the former view seems more likely. Israel brought with them a considerable amount of gold from Egypt, but the ark was not made of solid gold.
 - 1) Exodus 25:10-11: “And they shall make an ark of acacia wood: two cubits and a half shall be the length thereof, and a cubit and a half the breadth thereof, and a cubit and a half the height thereof. And thou shalt overlay it with pure gold, within and without shalt thou overlay it, and shalt make upon it a crown of gold round about” (ASV).
 - 2) Hebrews 9:4: “Which had the golden censer, and the ark of the covenant overlaid round about with gold, wherein was the golden pot that had manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant.”
 - c. Where the plain of Dura was located is unimportant to the modern student of the Bible, but would not have been a great distance from Babylon.
 - 1) “On the flat plains of Mesopotamia, this obelisk of a hundred feet high would be seen for nearly thirteen miles in every direction, and the gleam from its gilded top would be visible even further” (Pulpit Commentary).
 - 2) “Oppert has probably suggested the approximate location. He says, ‘On seeing this mound, one is immediately struck with the resemblance which it presents to the pedestal of a colossal statue, as, for example, that of Bavaria near Munich, and everything leads to the belief that the statue mentioned in the book of Daniel was set up in this place’” (Young, p.85). The statue at Munich was constructed in the mid-1800s, and “it is 18.52 metres high and weighs about 87.36 tons. It rests on a stone base which is 8.92 metres high” (Encarta).
 - 3) “The Colossus of Rhodes was a statue of the Greek Titan Helios, erected in the city of Rhodes on the Greek island of Rhodes by Chares of Lindos between 292 and 280 BC. It is considered one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World. It was constructed to celebrate Rhodes' victory over the ruler of Cyprus, Antigonos I Monophthalmus, whose son unsuccessfully besieged Rhodes in 305 BC. Before its destruction in 226 BC—due to an earthquake—the Colossus of Rhodes stood over 30 meters (107 ft) high, making it one of the tallest statues of the ancient world” (*Wikipedia*).
 - d. The height of the image may seem to be out of proportion to its width (90 feet by 9 feet), but to visualize it in the shape of an obelisk would explain the relative dimensions.

2. Verses 2-3: “Then Nebuchadnezzar the king sent to gather together the princes, the governors, and the captains, the judges, the treasurers, the counsellors, the sheriffs, and all the rulers of the provinces, to come to the dedication of the image which Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up. Then the princes, the governors, and captains, the judges, the treasurers, the counsellors, the sheriffs, and all the rulers of the provinces, were gathered together unto the dedication of the image that Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up; and they stood before the image that Nebuchadnezzar had set up.”
 - a. The New King James gives this rendering: “And King Nebuchadnezzar sent *word* to gather together the satraps, the administrators, the governors, the counselors, the treasurers, the judges, the magistrates, and all the officials of the provinces, to come to the dedication of the image which King Nebuchadnezzar had set up. So the satraps, the administrators, the governors, the counselors, the treasurers, the judges, the magistrates, and all the officials of the provinces gathered together for the dedication of the image that King Nebuchadnezzar had set up; and they stood before the image that Nebuchadnezzar had set up.”
 - b. Various governmental officials were directed to present themselves before the great image for a dedication ceremony. An invitation issued by a dictator carries the same authority as a direct order. Remember also that the distances some of the men would have to travel would not be small. Travel then was hazardous and arduous. Our word for *travel* is derived from our word *travail*.
 3. Verses 4-6: “Then an herald cried aloud, To you it is commanded, O people, nations, and languages, That at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, dulcimer, and all kinds of musick, ye fall down and worship the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king hath set up: And whoso falleth not down and worshipping shall the same hour be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace.”
 - a. New King James: Then a herald cried aloud: "To you it is commanded, O peoples, nations, and languages, that at the time you hear the sound of the horn, flute, harp, lyre, and psaltery, in symphony with all kinds of music, you shall fall down and worship the gold image that King Nebuchadnezzar has set up; and whoever does not fall down and worship shall be cast immediately into the midst of a burning fiery furnace."
 - b. The crowd which had assembled at the Great Dedication of the image would doubtless have been great. The herald made know clearly what was expected of the vast assemblage—one and all were to bow down and pay homage to the great image. Any refusal would naturally be viewed as a blatant insult to King Nubuchadnezzar.
 - c. The penalty for refusing to bow before the image was to be cast immediately into a burning fiery furnace. We would not likely be wrong to suppose that one or more burning fiery furnaces was already heated up for the job!
 4. Verse 7: “Therefore at that time, when all the people heard the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and all kinds of musick, all the people, the nations, and the languages, fell down and worshipped the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up.”
 - a. Under the grandeur and power of the occasion, only one who was mightily convinced by great faith in the Mighty God of Israel would have had the courage to refuse to worship.
 - b. The great multitude had no such compunction. They all prostrated themselves before the imposing image. Perhaps the nearest we can come to such a sight this must have been is to see pictures of the vast numbers of Moslems bowing at the shrine at Mecca, as they go through their prayer routines.
 - c. If the image was visible for a considerable distance, it may be that when the sound of the instruments was presented, those with hearing of the music, even though they might not be in the immediate vicinity of the statue, were still required to worship. Were Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego in the crowd at the image? Most likely.
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B. Daniel 3:8-12: Daniel's Three Companions Are Accused of Failing to Worship the Image.

1. Verses 8-10: "Wherefore at that time certain Chaldeans came near, and accused the Jews. They spake and said to the king Nebuchadnezzar, O king, live for ever. Thou, O king, hast made a decree, that every man that shall hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and dulcimer, and all kinds of musick, shall fall down and worship the golden image."
 - a. These Chaldeans who approached the king addressed him with the most respectful of words. They stated that it was their desire that the king should live forever; this evidently was a common phrase of honor which was directed to those in royal office.
 - b. Our author makes it plain from the outset that their intention was to bring charges against Daniel's three companions, who had been advanced to high office.
 - c. "Of very great interest in this passage is the prominence of instrumental music in the ceremonies of pagan religious rites. It has ever been thus, and there can be no doubt whatever that this longtime association of instrumental music with paganism was one of the prime reasons why Jesus Christ did not include it in the New Testament worship which Our Lord established. This association of instruments of music with pagan religion continued unto the times of the apostles, when, for example, the Temple of Aphrodite Pan Demos, located atop the Acro Corinthus, encouraged the patronage of their one thousand sacred prostitutes by a cacophonous blast of instrumental music five times a day, signaling that, the prostitutes had changed their clothes and that another feast on the sacrifices had been made ready. In our own times, with the continued degeneration of the whole science of instrumental music into the vulgar rhythms and noisy cacophony of the current era, such later styles of instrumental music are impossible of reconciliation with any conception whatever of holy worship" (Coffman).
 2. Verses 11-12: "And whoso falleth not down and worshippeth, that he should be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace. There are certain Jews whom thou hast set over the affairs of the province of Babylon, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego; these men, O king, have not regarded thee: they serve not thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up."
 - a. They presumed to remind the king of his order, that everyone was to prostrate himself before the image, and worship it. Further, they directed their sovereign's attention to the penalty to be imposed upon anyone who did not worship the image.
 - b. These Chaldeans somehow knew that these three Jewish men had not bowed before the image. They were not slow in bringing this accusation against them before the king. Daniel and his three companions had been greatly advanced by Nebuchadnezzar; this would be resented by the Chaldeans who may have wanted those positions.
 - c. "Implied in this accusation is the charge of ingratitude. The king, it is argued, has honored these men but they have paid no heed to him as may be seen by the fact that they do not honor the king's god, nor worship his image" (Young, p.89).
 - d. The accusations were leveled against the three companions of Daniel, not against the Jews in general. It is noteworthy that Daniel is not included in this charge. He may have been on some state business in some other part of the vast empire. Perhaps it might be because of Daniel's prestigious position in the court. The king held Daniel in the highest of regards, so much so that he was considered beyond the reach of their hatred and envy. We recall his words and actions regarding Daniel: "Then the king Nebuchadnezzar fell upon his face, and worshipped Daniel, and commanded that they should offer an oblation and sweet odours unto him. The king answered unto Daniel, and said, Of a truth it is, that your God is a God of gods, and a Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets, seeing thou couldest reveal this secret" (Dan 2:46-47).
 - e. The three men "...were present on the occasion, being summoned with the other officers of the realm
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(Dan 3:2), but they could not unite in the idolatrous worship. It has been frequently said that the whole thing was arranged, either by the king of his own accord, or by the instigation of their enemies, with a view to involve the Jews in difficulty, knowing that they could not conscientiously comply with the command to worship the image. But nothing of this kind appears in the narrative itself. It does not appear that the Jews were unpopular, or that there was any less disposition to show favor to them than to any other foreigners. They had been raised indeed to high offices, but there is no evidence that any office was conferred on them which it was not regarded as proper to confer on foreigners; nor is there any evidence that in the discharge of the duties of the office they had given occasion for a just accusation. The plain account is, that the king set up the image for other purposes, and with no malicious design toward them; that when summoned to be present with the other officers of the realm at the dedication of the image they obeyed the command; but that when the order was issued that they should render 'religious homage' to the idol, every principle of their religion revolted at it, and they refused" (Barnes).

- f. Some period of time appears to have passed between the events of chapter two and chapter three. Barnes thinks it might have been eighteen years.

C. Daniel 3:13-18: Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego Are Brought Before the King for Judgment.

1. Verse 13: "Then Nebuchadnezzar in his rage and fury commanded to bring Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. Then they brought these men before the king."
 - a. The king was enraged at what he perceived to be a flagrant rejection of his regal decree. But, as we shall see, he gave them the opportunity to rectify their actions and worship the image. He wanted to know for sure that they were guilty.
 - b. He was not going to execute these men on an accuser's bootless charge. He remembered his former associations with the three, and would slay them only after their guilt was demonstrated to him.
 - c. "Everything that we learn of this monarch shows that he was a man of violent passions, and that he was easily excited, though he was susceptible also of deep impressions on religious subjects. There was much here to rouse his rage. His command to worship the image was positive. It extended to all who were summoned to its dedication. Their refusal was an act of positive disobedience, and it seemed necessary that the laws should be vindicated. As a man and a monarch, therefore, it was not unnatural that the anger of the sovereign should be thus enkindled" (Barnes).
 2. Verses 14-15: "Nebuchadnezzar spake and said unto them, Is it true, O Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, do not ye serve my gods, nor worship the golden image which I have set up? Now if ye be ready that at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and dulcimer, and all kinds of musick, ye fall down and worship the image which I have made; well: but if ye worship not, ye shall be cast the same hour into the midst of a burning fiery furnace; and who is that God that shall deliver you out of my hands?"
 - a. The king was fully aware of their names, despite the possible passage of several years since he first became acquainted with them. They were given the opportunity to defend themselves or to renounce their actions.
 - b. "These arrogant words remind us of what Sennacherib's Rabshakeh said to Hezekiah (2 Kings 18:19ff); and that, of course, was another occasion when God miraculously intervened. There would appear to be somewhat of a pattern here. When any pagan ruler tauntingly challenged Jehovah's power and dared to defy the Lord, it resulted in disaster for the audacious challenger. Certainly, in this case, the Chaldean accusers were foiled completely; and the Jewish religion was made to be legitimate throughout the whole period of their captivity!" (Coffman).
 - c. "Who is the God who will deliver you out of my hands?" This is the same mistake that Pharaoh made when he asked, "...Who is the LORD, that I should obey his voice to let Israel go? I know not the
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LORD, neither will I let Israel go” (Ex. 5:2).

- 1) He implies that no being could keep him from roasting Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego if they persisted in their refusal to worship the image. The king is still in his rage.
 - 2) With that allegation put before them, the three friends were given another opportunity to pay homage to the image. Despite his inflamed disposition, he was willing to allow the three to amend their ways.
 - 3) The threat of the burning fiery furnace was the penalty, regardless of his former friendly attitude toward these men.
- d. “Despite his rage and fury, Nebuchadnezzar refused to act against the Jews without an investigation. He perhaps was aware of the vicious jealousy that prompted the charges. Therefore the king gave the Hebrews another chance to clear themselves of the charges. It is important to note that Nebuchadnezzar in his taunting of the disobedient trio specifically challenged the authority and the power of their God. That, no doubt, contributed to the dramatic manner in which God accepted the challenge and dramatically rescued his children and delivered them from the king's wrath 'with a high hand' “ (Coffman).
3. Verses 16-18: “Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, answered and said to the king, O Nebuchadnezzar, we are not careful to answer thee in this matter. If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king. But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up.”
- a. Other translations of this passage:
 - 1) “Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego answered and said to the king, "O Nebuchadnezzar, we have no need to answer you in this matter. If that *is the case*, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and He will deliver *us* from your hand, O king. But if not, let it be known to you, O king, that we do not serve your gods, nor will we worship the gold image which you have set up" (NKJ).
 - 2) “Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego answered and said to the king, O Nebuchadnezzar, we have no need to answer thee in this matter. If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace; and he will deliver us out of thy hand, O king. But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up” (ASV).
 - b. There was no need for the three men to deliberate regarding their response to this royal demand. Their basic principles of their service to Jehovah under the Law of Moses had already established their faith. There would not worship the idol! And when Nebuchadnezzar had them committed to the fires of the furnace, they would rest on God’s ability to deliver them. Their answer was quickly given; there was no hesitation; there was no fear; they did not beg.
 - c. They further declared that even if they were not to be delivered from their fiery fate, they still refused to worship the gods of the king, and neither would they worship the golden image! They did not dictate to God that he was obligated to save them from death. They knew, as do we, that God does what is the best, considering the individuals directly involved, as well as others of the time, and those who would live in future generations. Our prayers are always to be answered in accordance with God’s will.
 - 1) 1 John 5:14: “And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us.”
 - 2) Luke 23:34: “Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do....”
 - 3) Acts 2:36-38: “Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same
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- Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ. Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.”
- 4) Acts 9:1-9: “And Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest, And desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem. And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven: And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks. And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do. And the men which journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing a voice, but seeing no man. And Saul arose from the earth; and when his eyes were opened, he saw no man: but they led him by the hand, and brought him into Damascus. And he was three days without sight, and neither did eat nor drink.”
- 5) Acts 22:16: “And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.”
- d. “The meaning...that it was not ‘necessary’ that they should reply to the king on that point; they would not give themselves trouble or solicitude to do it. They had made up their minds, and, whatever was the result, they could not worship the image which he had set up, or the gods whom he adored. They felt that there was no necessity for stating the reasons why they could not do this. Perhaps they thought that argument in their case was improper. It became them to do their duty, and to leave the event with God. They had no need to go into an extended vindication of their conduct, for it might be presumed that their principles of conduct were well known. The state of mind, therefore, which is indicated by this passage, is that their minds were made up; that their principles were settled and well understood; that they had come to the deliberate determination, as a matter of conscience, not to yield obedience to the command; that the result could not be modified by any statement which they could make, or by any argument in the case; and that, therefore, they were not anxious about the result, but calmly committed the whole cause to God” (Barnes).

D. Daniel 3:19-25: The Three Young Men are Cast into the Burning Fiery Furnace.

1. Verse 19: “Then was Nebuchadnezzar full of fury, and the form of his visage was changed against Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego: therefore he spake, and commanded that they should heat the furnace one seven times more than it was wont to be heated.”
- a. Other translations:
- 1) New King James: “Then Nebuchadnezzar was full of fury, and the expression on his face changed toward Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego. He spoke and commanded that they heat the furnace seven times more than it was usually heated.”
 - 2) American Standard: “Then was Nebuchadnezzar full of fury, and the form of his visage was changed against Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego: therefore he spake, and commanded that they should heat the furnace seven times more than it was wont to be heated.”
- b. The king’s fury was full and the expression on his face clearly displayed his intention to destroy these men. Former service they had given the king was completely set aside as though it had never occurred. Their punishment was firmly determined.
- c. He instructed his servants to heat the furnace to a temperature seven times higher that was the usual case. The death of the three victims would be assured.
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2. Verses 20-21: “And he commanded the most mighty men that were in his army to bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, and to cast them into the burning fiery furnace. Then these men were bound in their coats, their hosen, and their hats, and their other garments, and were cast into the midst of the burning fiery furnace.”
 - a. “And he commanded certain mighty men of valor who *were* in his army to bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, *and* cast *them* into the burning fiery furnace. Then these men were bound in their coats, their trousers, their turbans, and their *other* garments, and were cast into the midst of the burning fiery furnace” (NKJ).
 - b. “The exact meaning of the words describing the articles of clothing in which the condemned men were bound before being cast into the furnace is not known. This is proof that Daniel was not written in the period of Antiochus. Many guesses have been advanced as to what the various articles of clothing here mentioned actually meant; but the most probable guess which we have encountered is that of Kennedy who said, 'It is probable that the articles of clothing here mentioned were articles of official attire, and that they had come to the assembly in court dress. Customarily the condemned would be stripped of clothing.' As translated in this version (ASV), the clothing consisted of breeches, tunics, and mantles. Andrews rendered the words, 'mantles, trousers, and hats.' There are a number of other guesses. The only thing certain is that all three of these ancient words belong to the court of Babylonian and Persian kings, and that they pertain to the vocabulary of Daniel himself, not to that of some pseudonymous forger in the days of the Maccabees. The urgency and fury of the king served to highlight the wonder about to be enacted. He did not even allow time for the customary stripping of condemned men” (Coffman).
 3. Verses 22-23: “Therefore because the king's commandment was urgent, and the furnace exceeding hot, the flame of the fire slew those men that took up Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. And these three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, fell down bound into the midst of the burning fiery furnace.”
 - a. He ordered his strong and exalted soldiers to bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. None of their clothing was removed. The binding was placed over their clothes; they were then cast into the midst of the conflagration.
 - b. The heat of the furnace was so great that the men casting in the three victims were consumed by the fire. Perhaps the fire blazed out as they approached its entrance, or that throwing the victims into the furnace caused a great spurt of flame to kill the executioners. Brave, strong men were necessary to carry out this grisly task; few would be willing to approach the door of the furnace; these men lost their lives carrying out their king's orders. His order was urgent, thus they were insistently urged to get it done!
 - c. This shows that the fire was more than hot enough to consume Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego. The soldiers probably rushed their victims up to the furnace to push them in quickly, but that was their last earthly act. Did the king feel any sorrow or compassion over their painful death? Probably not. Secular records report that Nero tied Christians to posts, covered them with flammable substance, and set them afire—to give light to a drunken feast. Compassion was not a common trait of despotic dictators.
 4. Verse 24: “Then Nebuchadnezzar the king was astonished, and rose up in haste, and spake, and said unto his counsellors, Did not we cast three men bound into the midst of the fire? They answered and said unto the king, True, O king.”
 - a. The three men were still bound when they were thrown into the fire. Apparently Nebuchadnezzar was sitting in place where he could see the entire event. He knew the three were bound when they were cast into the fire, but something dramatic had occurred.
 - b. The king arose quickly, and asked his counselors, *Did we not cast three bound men into the furnace?*
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They agreed that that had been the case.

5. Verse 25: “He answered and said, Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God.”
 - a. But the king reported that he now saw four men, without any binding, walking in the midst of the fire! And they were not being harmed by the flames! A great change is now being wrought on the king’s attitude. He is not longer filled with rage, but with wonder. Apparently the fire had burned off the binding cords (ropes), but did not harm their clothes or their bodies.
 - b. He describes the fourth man as being like “the Son of God.” He referred Israel’s God as *the most high God* (Verse 26).
 - c. Why did God miraculously deliver Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego from the blazing fire? Not merely for their own personal good. Israel lay at the very core of God’s eternal plan to bring the Messiah into the world. Israel was now a conquered people, living in captivity in a pagan land, far from their home; their capital city was in ruins, the temple had been destroyed, they were unable to carry out the requirement of the Mosaic Law, and were in danger of being absorbed by idolatrous nations. It they had thus lost their identity as the descendants of Abraham, God’s marvelous plan would have been disrupted, or have fallen into limbo.
 - 1) Miracles were intended to verify the identity of a spokesman of God and thus prove that the message presented was from the Almighty, not from some human source. This miracle would verify that Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were truly servants of the Most High God! One would think that Daniel’s revelation and interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar forgotten dream would have convinced the king that Daniel and his three companions were indeed being guided by the Most High God, and that Israel was the nation of this same True God. This miracle would open the king’s eyes a little wider to the understanding that Israel’s God is the Most High God.
 - a) Exodus 4:1: “And Moses answered and said, But, behold, they will not believe me, nor hearken unto my voice: for they will say, The LORD hath not appeared unto thee.” Moses did not think Israel (at this time under slavery in Egypt) would not believe that God had sent him to effect their freedom. God gave him some miraculous signs that would prove his mission to be from God.
 - b) Mark 12:1-12: “And he began to speak unto them by parables. A certain man planted a vineyard, and set an hedge about it, and digged a place for the winefat, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into a far country. And at the season he sent to the husbandmen a servant, that he might receive from the husbandmen of the fruit of the vineyard. And they caught him, and beat him, and sent him away empty. And again he sent unto them another servant; and at him they cast stones, and wounded him in the head, and sent him away shamefully handled. And again he sent another; and him they killed, and many others; beating some, and killing some. Having yet therefore one son, his wellbeloved, he sent him also last unto them, saying, They will reverence my son. But those husbandmen said among themselves, This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and the inheritance shall be ours. And they took him, and killed him, and cast him out of the vineyard. What shall therefore the lord of the vineyard do? he will come and destroy the husbandmen, and will give the vineyard unto others. And have ye not read this scripture; The stone which the builders rejected is become the head of the corner: This was the Lord’s doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes? And they sought to lay hold on him, but feared the people: for they knew that he had spoken the parable against them: and they left him, and went their way.” This miracle proved that he was the Son of God and had the full authority of God behind him.
 - c) Mark 16:20: “And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them,

and confirming the word with signs following. Amen.”

- d) Hebrews 2:3-4: “How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him; God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will?”
- 2) This miracle could not have been kept hidden from the knowledge of other people. Can you imagine one of the counselors leaving that place, going home, and never mention this astounding event to anyone? And with every report, greater respect would have accumulated toward Israel’s God and the Israelites themselves.
- 3) History was at a great crossroads. Would Israel survive their captivity? Would they return to their own land? Would they be reestablished in Palestine? Would they disappear from history? But we may be certain that God would never allow his plan of the ages to be destroyed, or his people to be utterly destroyed.
 - a) Jeremiah 30:11: “For I am with thee, saith the LORD, to save thee: though I make a full end of all nations whither I have scattered thee, yet will I not make a full end of thee: but I will correct thee in measure, and will not leave thee altogether unpunished.”
 - b) Isaiah 55:8-9: “For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.”
 - c) Isaiah 55:11: “So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.”
 - d) Isaiah 14:24: “The LORD of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand.”
 - e) 1 Peter 1:22-25: “Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently: Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever. For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you.”
- d. How did Nebuchadnezzar know that the fourth man was like the Son of God? It is unlikely that the king understood the meaning of his statement about the Son of God.
 - 1) Wicked Caiaphas stated a truth regarding the death of Jesus: “Then gathered the chief priests and the Pharisees a council, and said, What do we? for this man doeth many miracles. If we let him thus alone, all men will believe on him: and the Romans shall come and take away both our place and nation. And one of them, named Caiaphas, being the high priest that same year, said unto them, Ye know nothing at all, Nor consider that it is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not. And this spake he not of himself: but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation; And not for that nation only, but that also he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad” (John 11:47-52).
 - 2) It maybe possible that Nebuchadnezzar was inspired to make this statement. But if so, why did he refer to the *Son of God* in verse 28 as an “angel?” Perhaps he merely meant in the latter verse that the Son of God was an angel in the sense that he was a *messenger*, for that is the definition of the word “angel.”

- 3) “The great thing in the passage, over and beyond the amazing deliverance itself, is the appearance of that Fourth Person in the fire walking with the three. Who was he? Nebuchadnezzar's explanation was that 'The Most High God had sent his angel, who delivered his servants who trusted in him' (verse 28). Nebuchadnezzar responded and said, ‘Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego, who has sent His angel and delivered His servants who put their trust in Him, violating the king's command, and yielded up their bodies so as not to serve or worship any god except their own God....’ We are shocked that commentators prefer Nebuchadnezzar's opinion in such a matter and make it the basis of denying that here indeed is a genuine Christophany of the Old Testament” (Coffman).
- 4) “Unconsciously, like Saul, Caiaphas (John 11:49-52), and Pilate, he is made to utter divine truths, the full import of which he did not himself understand...” (JFB).

E. Daniel 3:26-30: Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego Are Called Forth From the Furnace.

1. Verse 26: “Then Nebuchadnezzar came near to the mouth of the burning fiery furnace, and spake, and said, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, ye servants of the most high God, come forth, and come hither. Then Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, came forth of the midst of the fire.”
 - a. On the surface it might appear that Nebuchadnezzar acknowledges the God of Israel as the one true God, but in in verse twenty-eight, speaks of the “god” of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego as though he is on a par with the various other so-called gods.
 - b. After witnessing such a momentous miracle as the supernatural deliverance of Daniel’s three friends, how did the king fail to recognize Jehovah as the only real God? Certainly he had never seen any of his “gods” do anything like this! He should have quickly perceived that his deities were only lifeless objects made of earthly material; they had not life, no being, no power; they could not talk, they could not act, and they had no will.
 - c. Isaiah 44:9-20: “They that make a graven image are all of them vanity; and their delectable things shall not profit; and they are their own witnesses; they see not, nor know; that they may be ashamed. Who hath formed a god, or molten a graven image that is profitable for nothing? Behold, all his fellows shall be ashamed: and the workmen, they are of men: let them all be gathered together, let them stand up; yet they shall fear, and they shall be ashamed together. The smith with the tongs both worketh in the coals, and fashioneth it with hammers, and worketh it with the strength of his arms: yea, he is hungry, and his strength faileth: he drinketh no water, and is faint. The carpenter stretcheth out his rule; he marketh it out with a line; he fitteth it with planes, and he marketh it out with the compass, and maketh it after the figure of a man, according to the beauty of a man; that it may remain in the house. He heweth him down cedars, and taketh the cypress and the oak, which he strengtheneth for himself among the trees of the forest: he planteth an ash, and the rain doth nourish it. Then shall it be for a man to burn: for he will take thereof, and warm himself; yea, he kindleth it, and baketh bread; yea, he maketh a god, and worshippeth it; he maketh it a graven image, and falleth down thereto. He burneth part thereof in the fire; with part thereof he eateth flesh; he roasteth roast, and is satisfied: yea, he warmeth himself, and saith, Aha, I am warm, I have seen the fire: And the residue thereof he maketh a god, even his graven image: he falleth down unto it, and worshippeth it, and prayeth unto it, and saith, Deliver me; for thou art my god. They have not known nor understood: for he hath shut their eyes, that they cannot see; and their hearts, that they cannot understand. And none considereth in his heart, neither is there knowledge nor understanding to say, I have burned part of it in the fire; yea, also I have baked bread upon the coals thereof; I have roasted flesh, and eaten it: and shall I make the residue thereof an abomination? shall I fall down to the stock of a tree? He feedeth on ashes: a deceived heart hath turned him aside, that he cannot deliver his soul, nor say, Is there not a lie in my right hand?”
2. Verse 27: “And the princes, governors, and captains, and the king's counsellors, being gathered together,

saw these men, upon whose bodies the fire had no power, nor was an hair of their head singed, neither were their coats changed, nor the smell of fire had passed on them.”

- a. The important and influential leaders of the kingdom saw firsthand that no damage had been done to Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego by the super-hot furnace. Not even a hair of their head was singed; their garments had not been altered in any way by the fire; there was not even the smell of fire upon them.
 - b. To singe even the hair on our finger creates a very noticeable smell. The odor is distinctive. The smell of burning flesh is also obvious. No one who beheld these three men exiting the furnace could not deny the reality of the miracle!
3. Verse 28: “Then Nebuchadnezzar spake, and said, Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who hath sent his angel, and delivered his servants that trusted in him, and have changed the king's word, and yielded their bodies, that they might not serve nor worship any god, except their own God.”
- a. Nebuchadnezzar attributed the deliverance of these three Jews to the fact that their God had sent his angel to protect them from the fire and bring about their salvation from the furnace. He knew that no mortal could have survived such an experience by his own power.
 - b. “The meaning is, that rather than bow clown to worship gods which they regarded as no gods; rather than violate their consciences, and do wrong, they had preferred to be cast into the flames, committing themselves to the protection of God. It is implied here that they had done this voluntarily, and that they might easily have avoided it if they had chosen to obey the king. He had given them time to deliberate on the subject (Dan 3:14-15), and he knew that they had resolved to pursue the course which they did from principle, no matter what might be the results (Dan 3:16-18). This strength of principle—this obedience to the dictates of conscience—this determination not to do wrong at any hazard—he could not but respect; and this is a remarkable instance to show that a firm and steady course in doing what is right will command the respect of even wicked men. This monarch, with all his pride, and haughtiness, and tyranny, had not a few generous qualities, and some of the finest illustrations of human nature were furnished by him” (Barnes).
4. Verses 29-30: “Therefore I make a decree, That every people, nation, and language, which speak any thing amiss against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, shall be cut in pieces, and their houses shall be made a dunghill: because there is no other God that can deliver after this sort. Then the king promoted Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, in the province of Babylon.”
- a. “What a blessing this decree of Nebuchadnezzar must have been to the Jews throughout their captivity! Right here is the secret of why they were able to return; and the absence of such a wonder upon behalf of the Northern Israel who went captive into Assyria is exactly why they were never able to go back to Jerusalem. Thus this great miracle was a vital link in the long chain of God's dealings with the apostate human race, and also a very necessary one, in the achievement of God's purpose of redemption” (Coffman). [Note: The ten tribes of the northern kingdom did not return as a nation, for their kingdom was destroyed; however, certain individuals from some of those tribes returned, as in the case of the forebears of Anna (Luke 2:36), who was of the tribe of Aser (Ashur)].
 - b. Nebuchadnezzar made a formal decree that a severe punishment was prescribed for anyone who would speak against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. The offenders were to be cut in pieces and their houses destroyed.
 - c. The reason given for this decree was that *no other God could deliver as Israel's God had saved the three friends*. “He does not say that there was no other god at all, for his mind had not yet reached this conclusion, but there was no other one who had equal power with the God of the Hebrews. He had seen a manifestation of his power in the preservation of the three Hebrews such as no other god had
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ever exhibited, and he was willing to admit that in this respect he surpassed all other divinities” (Barnes).

- d. The king advanced the status of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego in the province of Babylon. They received some kind or degree of promotion in the king’s service. Their position in the province was now secured.
- e. Thoughts from Barnes:
 - 1) The "general" doctrine among the pagan has been, that there were many gods in heaven and earth, and that all were entitled to reverence. One nation was supposed to have as good a right to worship its own gods as another, and it was regarded as at least an act of courtesy to show respect to the gods that any nation adored, in the same way as respect would be shown to the sovereigns who presided over them. Hence, the gods of all nations could be consistently introduced into the Pantheon at Rome; hence, there were few attempts to "proselyte" among the pagan; and hence, it was not common to "persecute" those who worshipped other gods. Persecution of idolaters "by" those who were idolaters was, therefore, rarely known among the pagan, and "toleration" was not contrary to the views which prevailed, provided the gods of the country were recognized. In ancient Chaldea, Assyria, Greece, and Rome, in the earliest ages, persecution was rare, and the toleration of other forms of religion was usual.
 - 2) But it should be remembered that pagan nations required of every citizen conformity to their national idolatries. When this was refused, persecution arose as a matter of course. Stilpo was banished from Athens for affirming that the statue of Minerva in the citadel was no divinity, but only the work of the chisel of Phidias. Protagoras received a similar punishment for this sentence: "Whether there be gods or not, I have nothing to offer." Prodicus, and his pupil Socrates, suffered death for opinions at variance with the established idolatry of Athens. Alcibiades and Aeschylus narrowly escaped a like end for a similar cause. Cicero lays it down as a principle of legislation entirely conformable to the laws of the Roman state, that "no man shall have separate gods for himself; and no man shall worship by himself new or foreign gods, unless they have been publicly acknowledged by the laws of the state." - "De Legibus," ii. 8. Julius Paulus, the Roman civilian, gives the following as a leading feature of the Roman law: "Those who introduced new religions, or such as were unknown in their tendency and nature, by which the minds of men might be agitated, were degraded, if they belonged to the higher ranks, and if they were in a lower state, were punished with death."

Daniel 4

A. Daniel 4:1-7: Nebuchadnezzar Reveals a New Dream.

1. Verse 1: “Nebuchadnezzar the king, unto all people, nations, and languages, that dwell in all the earth; Peace be multiplied unto you.”
 - a. This great king had been enabled to conquer the Assyrians and their vast empire; he had mastered the Egyptians and all of Palestine. His rule extended to what we call the civilized world, although with the paganism, sin and cruelty which characterized humanity at that time, we might not think it as being civil. Is our world today any less cruel? Any less sinful? Certainly, the power of the gospel has had an uplifting effect of our world today, but it is obvious to the observant that paganism, sin and cruelty are growing to huge proportions in our generation.
 - b. Nebuchadnezzar here announces to his empire the fact that the high God has given him signs [see the following verses]. One was revealed in chapter two. The king wants the entire population to know the information he is here publishing.
2. Verses 2-3: “I thought it good to shew the signs and wonders that the high God hath wrought toward me. How great are his signs! and how mighty are his wonders! his kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and his dominion is from generation to generation.”
 - a. Coffman: “God here enlightened the governing head of the whole Gentile world. In keeping with the respect and awe in which the whole pagan world looked upon dreams, God chose exactly that instrument of conveyance for the information that God determined should be imparted to Nebuchadnezzar. It is remembered that the dream was usually the method God chose when speaking to pagans, as for example in the case of Pharaoh. Why should God have done such a thing as to teach Nebuchadnezzar of the existence and power of the one true and Almighty God? He did so in order that the Gentile world could have no excuse for their terrible apostasy during the pre-Christian centuries.”
 - b. Nebuchadnezzar perceives that the God of Israel is high, that and his signs are great, that his wonders are marvelous, that his rule is everlasting, and his dominion extends over the generations. “These signs were events of an extraordinary or miraculous nature, and the word *wonders* serves to designate the effect which they produced” (Young, p.97).
 - c. Some writers have alleged that the phraseology of the passage is characteristic of Jewish expression, and that Daniel or some unknown Jew is the source of the decree. But what Nebuchadnezzar here writes is a natural response to the experiences he has had through his dealings with Daniel and his three friends. The king could know assuredly that the God of Heaven had revealed the initial dream and its interpretation; he was just as certain that only God could have delivered Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego from the horrible flames of the terrible furnace. With this knowledge in the background, it was entirely natural that he should issue such a decree as that recorded here.
 - d. God’s eternal plan was to bring the Messiah into the world to offer salvation to all mankind. But the chosen nation (Israel) had rebelled against God and now found themselves enslaved in a foreign land. It was necessary for Jehovah to deliver them from their captivity and restore them to their own place so that the prophecies could all be fulfilled. There was a time limit involved, for Jeremiah had foretold that they would be in bondage for seventy years:
 - 1) “For thus saith the LORD, That after seventy years be accomplished at Babylon I will visit you, and perform my good word toward you, in causing you to return to this place” (Jer. 29:10).
 - 2) “In the first year of his reign I Daniel understood by books the number of the years, whereof the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah the prophet, that he would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem” (Dan. 9:2).

- e. In order to fulfill his prophecies, God would have to find a way to deliver Israel from bondage and return them to this own land. He could have done so by miraculous act, thus transporting them back to Palestine instantly and directly. God does not do for man what man can do himself. By directing the affairs of kings and nations, Jehovah providentially set up the situation by which the Israelites could willingly return home. They were given the opportunity, but they had to make the choice to return. Not all of them went back. Mordecai and Esther are notable for their remaining in that foreign land. By staying there, they were enabled so act that the Jewish people all over the empire were saved from extermination (see the book of Esther).
- 1) 2 Chronicles 36:22-23: “Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the LORD spoken by the mouth of Jeremiah might be accomplished, the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing, saying, Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, All the kingdoms of the earth hath the LORD God of heaven given me; and he hath charged me to build him an house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Who is there among you of all his people? The LORD his God be with him, and let him go up.”
 - 2) Ezra 1:1-4: “Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled, the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing, saying, Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, The LORD God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth; and he hath charged me to build him an house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Who is there among you of all his people? his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem, which is in Judah, and build the house of the LORD God of Israel, (he is the God,) which is in Jerusalem. And whosoever remaineth in any place where he sojourneth, let the men of his place help him with silver, and with gold, and with goods, and with beasts, beside the freewill offering for the house of God that is in Jerusalem.”
 - 3) To bring this about, God had allowed the Persians (with the aid of the Medes) to overthrow the Babylonian empire (in 539 B.C.). The first contingent of Jews returned home in 536 B.C. A second and third group returned in 457 and 444 B.C. Just a brief review of these providential measures taken by Jehovah ought to build a burning faith in the heart of any honest investigator.
3. Verses 4-5: “I Nebuchadnezzar was at rest in mine house, and flourishing in my palace: I saw a dream which made me afraid, and the thoughts upon my bed and the visions of my head troubled me.”
- a. In this message the king wrote for the benefit of all his subjects, he relates that he was resting in his house; his reign was secure and he had no appreciable worry. But during his sleep that particular night he was given a dream which caused him much anxiety. In the dream he saw certain troubling sights that stirred up his emotions. He plainly stated that he was afraid, something that no strong ruler can ordinarily afford to admit.
 - b. It is manifest that the source of this dream is God. The dream was part of the overall plan to build faith in the king’s mind, which would help set the stage for future developments. By taking such actions with the leader of the pagan world, the Almighty would bring about some good influences upon the Gentiles. He had special purposes for the Israelites and had given them a law which was intended in part to make them a great example for the Gentiles to follow; many Gentiles were thus influenced.
 - c. While God had a special interest in the Israelites, he had not ignored the Gentiles. When Noah and his family emerged from the ark, they were obedient servants of God. As their descendants multiplied on the earth, the same results began to occur that took place when Adam’s progeny multiplied and spread out over the earth—sin increased! But Noah and his sons had doubtless inculcated in the next generation a knowledge of God.
 - 1) Years later, when Abraham came to Gerar, he stated, “Surely the fear of God is not in this place”
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- (Gen. 20:11). He had expected to see the fear of God manifested there, but was frightened when there was none to be quickly seen.
- 2) When King Abimelech took Sarah to be a wife, God interfered with this action. This king replied to God who had spoken to him in a dream, “Lord, wilt thou slay also a righteous nation?” (Gen. 20:4). If Abimelech accurately described his subjects as being righteous, how else could they have been so except by God’s moral standards being transmitted to them through the generations from Noah’s time.
 - 3) But with the passing of time, men became more and more wicked, as they strayed farther and farther from the moral standards which had been given them in earlier times. Their knowledge of the True God became polluted by their own inventions.
 - 4) Paul describes the departure of the Gentiles: “For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness; Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse: Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things. Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves: Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen. For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature: And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompence of their error which was meet. And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient; Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, Backbiters, haters of God, spiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, Without understanding, covenantbreakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful: Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them” (Rom. 1:18-32).
 - 5) The gospel of Christ was designed as God’s power to save anyone who will learn it, believe it, obey it, and conform his life to the requirements it sets forth.
4. Verses 6-7: “Therefore made I a decree to bring in all the wise men of Babylon before me, that they might make known unto me the interpretation of the dream. Then came in the magicians, the astrologers, the Chaldeans, and the soothsayers: and I told the dream before them; but they did not make known unto me the interpretation thereof.”
 - a. “The critics are perplexed by the fact that Daniel was not here called in with the rest of the wise men, over whom Daniel was the governor. However, it appears to be certain that Nebuchadnezzar already had a fairly good idea of what this dream indicated. He, no doubt, had already identified that great tree in the middle of the earth with a top reaching to heaven as himself; and he must have suspected that its being cut down signified some disaster coming upon himself....Having suspected that the real meaning of the dream probably foretold some spectacular humiliation for himself, this call for all the wise men except Daniel was likely an appeal for the pagan magicians, etc., to devise something against it. Also, we should not overlook the fact that the text does not say that Daniel was the last one
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to be called, but that he was the last one to arrive on the scene. He might have been out of town on official business at first” (Coffman).

- b. Being deceivers and without any power to accurately interpret dreams, these so-called wise men, magicians, astrologers and soothsayers were totally unable to discern the king’s dream. They would be aware of Daniel’s triumph over them in revealing and interpreting the dream of chapter two, they were doubtless afraid to venture any explanation of the last dream, fearing that Daniel would expose them as frauds. The prophet may have timed his arrival to give these charlatans an opportunity to give their interpretation.
- c. Why did not Nebuchadnezzar cut off all ties with these *quacks*? They had shown their inability to come to the king’s aid in the matter of interpreting visions and dreams.

B. Daniel 4:8-18: Daniel Comes Before Nebuchadnezzar to Interpret This Dream.

1. Verses 8-9: “But at the last Daniel came in before me, whose name was Belteshazzar, according to the name of my god, and in whom is the spirit of the holy gods: and before him I told the dream, saying, O Belteshazzar, master of the magicians, because I know that the spirit of the holy gods is in thee, and no secret troubleth thee, tell me the visions of my dream that I have seen, and the interpretation thereof.”
 - a. Nebuchadnezzar was still clinging to his pagan concept of deities. Daniel’s Babylonian name was after one of the king’s imaginary gods. We are not told which *god* it was from whom *Belteshazzar* received his name. One Babylonian god was known as *Bel* and another was *Nabu*. Little is known about the many gods of that ancient nation.
 - b. The monarch declared his belief that the spirit of the holy gods were in Daniel, giving him certain special powers.
 - c. He then asked Daniel to provide the meaning of the latest dream to trouble him. He was confident that the prophet would be able to do so.
 2. Verses 10-12: “Thus were the visions of mine head in my bed; I saw, and behold a tree in the midst of the earth, and the height thereof was great. The tree grew, and was strong, and the height thereof reached unto heaven, and the sight thereof to the end of all the earth: The leaves thereof were fair, and the fruit thereof much, and in it was meat for all: the beasts of the field had shadow under it, and the fowls of the heaven dwelt in the boughs thereof, and all flesh was fed of it.”
 - a. Nebuchadnezzar described the vision as being one in which a great, tall tree stood forth before him. Its size was massive and impressive; its height reached into the heavens; it could be seen from great distances. The leaves were beautiful and its fruit was plenteous.
 - b. The tree was a bounty to the beasts and birds. The birds could live in the boughs and the animals could find shelter in its shade. Its fruit provided an abundance of food for all.
 - c. To this point in the vision, the tree is presented as an important source of food and shelter to all flesh, apparently including mankind. It was a beautiful sight.
 3. Verses 13-16: “I saw in the visions of my head upon my bed, and, behold, a watcher and an holy one came down from heaven; He cried aloud, and said thus, Hew down the tree, and cut off his branches, shake off his leaves, and scatter his fruit: let the beasts get away from under it, and the fowls from his branches: Nevertheless leave the stump of his roots in the earth, even with a band of iron and brass, in the tender grass of the field; and let it be wet with the dew of heaven, and let his portion be with the beasts in the grass of the earth: Let his heart be changed from man's, and let a beast's heart be given unto him; and let seven times pass over him.”
 - a. The frightful aspect of the vision now enters. A *watcher* and an *holy one* came down from heaven. “He evidently does not intend to refer to two beings, a ‘watcher,’ and ‘one who was holy;’ but he means to designate the character of the watcher, that he was holy, or that he was one of the class of
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‘watchers’ who were ranked as holy—as if there were others to whom the name ‘watcher’ might be applied who were not holy. So Bertholdt, ‘not two, but only one, who was both a watcher, and was holy; one of those known as watchers and as holy ones’” (Barnes).

- b. We are told by lexicographers that this is the only Old Testament passage in which the word *watcher* appears. A watcher was one who kept a vigilant oversight. The old cities kept watchers on their walls to warn of any approaching danger. This holy watcher became directly involved in the dream being presented.
 - c. “[Hew down the tree] This command does not appear to have been addressed to any particular ones who were to execute the commission, but it is a strong and significant way of saying that it would certainly be done. Or possibly the command may be understood as addressed to his fellow-watchers (Dan 4:17), or to orders of angels over whom this one presided. [And cut off his branches ...] The idea here, and in the subsequent part of the verse, is, that the tree was to be utterly cut up, and all its glory and beauty destroyed. It was first to be felled, and then its limbs chopped off, and then these were to be stripped of their foliage, and then the fruit which it bore was to be scattered. All this was strikingly significant, as applied to the monarch, of some awful calamity that was to occur to him after he should have been brought down from his throne. A process of humiliation and desolation was to continue, as if the tree, when cut down, were not suffered to lie quietly in its grandeur upon the earth. ‘Let the beasts get away,’ etc. That is, it shall cease to afford a shade to the beasts and a home to the fowls. The purposes which it had answered in the days of its glory will come to an end” (Barnes).
 - d. Coffman observes: “Barnes discussed the singular mixture of monotheistic and polytheistic language in Nebuchadnezzar's words in this chapter, pointed out that Nebuchadnezzar had been a heathen all of his life, despite his also having some knowledge of the true God, and concluded that this unusual mixture of heathenism and true religion in the language of Nebuchadnezzar was 'neither unnatural nor improbable.’”
 - e. The cry of the watcher called for the stump of the tree to remain rooted in the earth, and that bands of iron and brass be attached to it. The metal attachments would protect the stump from being infested by insects or harmed by the penetration of water. The covering and straps would also keep the heat of the sun and dryness of the air from splitting the great stump, which would have hurried its destruction.
 - 1) In the vision, we perceive God’s intention of preserving the stump. The presence of the grass shows that the stump had no overhead cover. The tender grass would grow around it and its roots would receive water from the moisture that would fall or form as dew around the stump. It would remain in the area where the beasts of the earth roam.
 - 2) The meaning of the stump seems clear. Since the great tree in the vision represented the great power of Nebuchadnezzar, so the living stump show that the king would be restored to his former position.
 - f. The great call from the watcher in the vision also demanded that the king’s mind be changed from that of a man to that of a beast. The great difference between a man and a beast is the spirit God places into each human being. A man can become so debased that he acts and lives like a wild beast. Most animals in the wild are less dangerous to us than a man who conducts himself as an unconcerned beast. Dogs and swine are known for their utter selfishness over food; they often fight and make fearful noises as they try to get at the food. The king will soon learn a tremendous lesson from his upcoming experience. His haughtiness will be turn to humility.
 - g. The time period in which this condition would continue is denoted as “until seven times pass over him.” “While the Chaldee word is indeterminate in respect to the length of time, the most natural and obvious construction here and elsewhere, in the use of the word, is to refer it to years. Days or weeks
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would be obviously too short, and though in this place the word ‘months’ would perhaps embrace all that would be necessary, yet in the other places where the word occurs in Daniel it undoubtedly refers to years, and there is, therefore, a propriety in understanding it in the same manner here” (Barnes).

- h. Notice that verse sixteen refers to the stump with personal masculine pronouns [‘his’ and ‘him’]. Clearly the vision was not merely about a tree being cut down to a stump, but that a great personage was to be humbled—for a period of time. That Nebuchadnezzar is the individual meant is beyond controversy; that he would be restored to power afterward is obviously implied.
 - i. During this time of the king’s affliction, he would live more like a beast than a man. His condition would be such that his enemies would drive him out from the city and into the fields. His food would be such as he could find; he would be exposed to the elements; no man would show interest in his sorrowful state. But he would survive this harsh ordeal! “That they shall drive thee from men, and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field, and they shall make thee to eat grass as oxen, and they shall wet thee with the dew of heaven, and seven times shall pass over thee, till thou know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will” (Dan. 4:25).
4. Verse 17: “This matter is by the decree of the watchers, and the demand by the word of the holy ones: to the intent that the living may know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will, and setteth up over it the basest of men. This dream I king Nebuchadnezzar have seen.”
- a. Jamieson offers this insightful comment:
 - 1) The demand by the word of the holy ones—i.e., determination; namely, as to the change to which Nebuchadnezzar is to be doomed. A solemn council of the heavenly ones is supposed (cf. Job 1:6; 2:1), over which God presides supreme. His "decree" and "word" are therefore said to be theirs (cf. Dan 4:24, where the "decree of the Most High" answers to "the decree of the watchers," "the word of the holy ones" here). For He has placed particular kingdoms under the administration of angelic beings, subject to Him (cf. Dan 10:13,20; 12:1, where Michael is represented as being "the great prince which standeth up for the children of thy people," Israel). The word "demand," in the second clause, expresses a distinct idea from the first clause.
 - 2) Not only as members of God's council (Dan 7:10; 1 Kings 22:19; Ps 103:21; Zech 1:10) do they subscribe to His "decree," but that decree is in answer to their prayers, wherein they DEMAND that every mortal shall be humbled, whosoever tries to obscure the glory of God (Calvin). Angels are grieved when God's prerogative is in the least infringed. How awful to Nebuchadnezzar to know that angels plead against him for his pride, and that the decree has been passed in the high court of heaven for his humiliation, in answer to angels' demands! The conceptions are moulded in a form peculiarly adapted to Nebuchadnezzar's modes of thought.
 - b. The angelic beings in the vision expressed the will of the Almighty. The point of this vision and its fulfillment was to show the great truth that the God of Heaven rules in the kingdom of men and gives it to whomsoever he will. In working out his will among humanity, it has often been necessary for the worst sort of man to be exalted over a great nation.
 - 1) We might not be able to perceive the purposes involved, but sometimes we can discern the outcome. A survey of the history of such nations as China, Russia, Japan, Britain, Egypt, Mexico, and even the United States, may reveal to perceptive minds some shocking discoveries. Some wonderful cases may also be learned, as in George Washington, Winston Churchill, and Peter the Great [not that these were sinless, but that they wrought great things for their countries].
 - 2) Certain modern powerful leaders may glory in their exaltation, but they may come to see that they did not attain their lofty status by their own merits. Both gravity and Providence can bring the unworthy back to earth.
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5. Verse 18: “Now thou, O Belteshazzar, declare the interpretation thereof, forasmuch as all the wise men of my kingdom are not able to make known unto me the interpretation: but thou art able; for the spirit of the holy gods is in thee.”
 - a. Nebuchadnezzar urges Daniel to reveal the true meaning of the vision to him, regardless of its portent. The so-called wise men of the kingdom were unable to explain the vision, but the king is convinced that this man of God can tell it. From past experiences, he has learned of Daniel’s marvelous gifts, which the king rightfully attributes to supernatural powers. He has not yet entirely learned that the God of Daniel is the only true and living God, for he again uses the plural word *gods*.
 - b. The nature of the vision must have had a foreboding effect on the king. It was clear that some great disaster was impending for someone or some entity. Perhaps he even feared that he was the focus of this looming cataclysm. In verse nineteen, he urged Daniel to tell the whole meaning without fear.

C. Daniel 4:19-27: Daniel Reveals the Dream’s Meaning.

1. Verse 19: “Then Daniel, whose name was Belteshazzar, was astonished for one hour, and his thoughts troubled him. The king spake, and said, Belteshazzar, let not the dream, or the interpretation thereof, trouble thee. Belteshazzar answered and said, My lord, the dream be to them that hate thee, and the interpretation thereof to thine enemies.”
 - a. Daniel was “astonished” for an hour. “As Daniel at once understood the interpretation of the dream, he was for a moment so astonished that he could not speak for terror at the thoughts which moved his soul. This amazement seized him because he wished well to the king, and yet he must now announce to him a weighty judgment from God” (Keil).
 - b. Daniel hesitated for a time before responding to the king. “In Arabic the word means both a moment and an hour. In Dan 3:6,15, it evidently means immediately. Here it would seem to mean a short time. That is, Daniel was fixed in thought, and maintained a profound silence until the king addressed him. We are not to suppose that this continued during the space of time which we call an hour, but he was silent until Nebuchadnezzar addressed him. He would not seem to be willing even to speak of so fearful calamities as he saw were coming upon the king” (Barnes).
 - c. The shock of the vision’s painful import to the king stunned the prophet. Through the time of their association, doubtless a strong feeling of mutual respect and admiration had developed between these two great men. The influence of these two men had a tremendous effect of their generation, and for many which followed.
 - d. It is likely that Nebuchadnezzar sensed that the vision presaged some fearful future for him or his kingdom. What lay in his future would not be fatal, as we shall see, but it would surely be both painful and humiliating. Mature Christians learn that hardship is not to be viewed as disastrous, but as a necessary struggle intended to provide them with greater spiritual strength, more humility, a stronger faith, and an undying hope.
 - e. Many monarchs would have punished or slain someone who brought unpleasant news. This king was far above such actions as far as Daniel was concerned.
 - f. The prophet prefaced his interpretation by stating that harsh effects depicted by the dream ought to be visited upon the enemies of the king. “Let such things as are foreboded by the dream happen to your enemies rather than to you. This merely implies that he did not desire that these things should come upon him. It was the language of courtesy and of respect; it showed that he had no desire that any calamity should befall the monarch, and that he had no wish for the success of his enemies. There is not, in this, anything necessarily implying a hatred of the enemies of the king, or any wish that calamity should come upon them; it is the expression of an earnest desire that such an affliction might not come upon him. If it must come on any, such was his respect for the sovereign, and such his desire for his welfare and prosperity, that he preferred that it should fall upon those who were his enemies,

and who hated him. This language, however, should not be rigidly interpreted. It is the language of an Oriental; language uttered at a court, where only the words of respect were heard. Expressions similar to this occur not unfrequently in ancient writings” (Barnes).

- g. A similar thought is expressed in the following biblical statement: “And the king said unto Cush, Is the young man Absalom safe? And Cush answered, The enemies of my lord the king, and all that rise against thee to do thee hurt, be as that young man is” (2 Sam. 18:32).
 2. Verses 20-22: “The tree that thou sawest, which grew, and was strong, whose height reached unto the heaven, and the sight thereof to all the earth; Whose leaves were fair, and the fruit thereof much, and in it was meat for all; under which the beasts of the field dwelt, and upon whose branches the fowls of the heaven had their habitation: It is thou, O king, that art grown and become strong: for thy greatness is grown, and reacheth unto heaven, and thy dominion to the end of the earth. It is thou, O king, that art grown and become strong: for thy greatness is grown, and reacheth unto heaven, and thy dominion to the end of the earth.
 - a. Daniel briefly repeats the description earlier given of the great tree: it grew and was strong; it reached into the atmosphere; it could be seen from afar; it had beautiful leaves; it produced an abundance of fruit, which fed man and beast; animals lived in its shade and birds lodged in its branches. It was truly a magnificent and benevolent tree!
 - b. The one which the tree represented was Nebuchadnezzar. This monarch had grown and become strong; his greatness had reached up into the heavens; his domain extended to cover vast areas of the earth. He was known by all and feared by all.
 3. Verse 23: “And whereas the king saw a watcher and an holy one coming down from heaven, and saying, Hew the tree down, and destroy it; yet leave the stump of the roots thereof in the earth, even with a band of iron and brass, in the tender grass of the field; and let it be wet with the dew of heaven, and let his portion be with the beasts of the field, till seven times pass over him.”
 - a. The chilling words of the angelic messenger are next repeated: Cut down the tree; destroy it; but leave the stump rooted in the earth, and protect it by the band of iron and brass; let the stump continue amid the grass of the field (unprotected by any over-growth); let it be moistened by the dew of heaven, and let it continue out where the beasts of field roam; the stump is to continue until seven times have passed. As we noted earlier, these periods of time could be construed as months, but more than likely they would be years.
 - b. Daniel has already stated directly that the tree represented Nebuchadnezzar. Obviously, he was to be afflicted in some dreadful way! But the preservation of the stump would give him a measure of hope. It would be protected from the elements and watered; there would be hope that it would sprout anew.
 4. Verses 24-25: “This is the interpretation, O king, and this is the decree of the most High, which is come upon my lord the king: That they shall drive thee from men, and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field, and they shall make thee to eat grass as oxen, and they shall wet thee with the dew of heaven, and seven times shall pass over thee, till thou know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will.”
 - a. The prophet now gives the interpretation of the vision. The decree for the tree to be cut down is here stated as God’s divine edict. Therefore, it was God’s will that Nebuchadnezzar should be driven from men and that his habitation should be with the beasts of the field, and that he should eat grass as do the oxen. He would be exposed to the elements, but he would not be slain. Following the seven times, he would be removed from this desperate condition.
 - b. Ancient records report the tall tales of certain people being turned into animals for a time. Herodotus relates the claims of the Sythians that they could turn into wolves, but states that he did not believe such tales (See Barnes).
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- c. Because of his colossal pride, God send the punishment upon him: “The king spake, and said, Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty? While the word was in the king's mouth, there fell a voice from heaven, saying, O king Nebuchadnezzar, to thee it is spoken; The kingdom is departed from thee. And they shall drive thee from men, and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field: they shall make thee to eat grass as oxen, and seven times shall pass over thee, until thou know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will” (Dan. 4:30-32).
- d. This divine decree brought upon the king the heinous condition that was to isolate him from the people and deprive him of his throne. His condition is a medical ailment called *boanthropy*.
- 1) A rare form of insanity, written of in the nineteenth century, in which a man imagines himself to be an ox. Such madness (or at least its diagnosis) is found in the Bible in the book of Daniel, which reports that King Nebuchadnezzar “was driven from men, and did eat grass as oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven.” The same Greek prefix *bo* as in *bovine*, was used in other words, such as *boopic*, “having prominent eyes like an ox” [Internet website].
 - 2) “The particular manifestation of the disease described in the story of Nebuchadnezzar is *Boanatrophy*, where the diseased person believes that he or she is an ox, a cow, or a bull. Roland Kenneth Harrison described a case he observed in the winter of 1946-47 while visiting a mental hospital in England (*Old Testament Introduction* [Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdsman's Publishing Company 1969], pages 1116,1117). The description he provides of this mental patient closely resembles that of Nebuchadnezzar as described in Daniel (4:32,33)” [*King of Kings*, VBS Adult Course, Lambert, 2006].
- e. Quotation from Coffman:
- 1) “The description here of the king's condition during the days of his punishment should not be pressed as to details. They have the general meaning that, The king would be in such a state as to be treated like a beast; he would be removed from his ordinary abode, and become a miserable and neglected outcast.
 - 2) “The nature of the king's strange malady is readily identified by a number of writers as ‘lycanthropy,’ a strange form of insanity in which the victim imagines that he is a beast and adopts a form of behavior appropriate to such a delusion. A dissenting view was quoted by Thomson from a famed British medical doctor, David Yellowlees, of the University of Glasgow: ‘Nebuchadnezzar's illness was not lycanthropy; it was an attack of acute mania, from which he likely recovered, as usually in such attacks, if uncomplicated, in seven months. In its extreme form, acute mania causes victims to exhibit all kinds of degraded habits such as stripping or tearing of clothes, eating filth and garbage of all sorts, wild and violent gesticulations, dangerous assaults, howling noises, and utter disregard of personal decency.”
 - 3) “This quotation has been included here not from any personal acceptance of it as true, but as a matter of general interest. Our own viewpoint is that, since the visitation upon Nebuchadnezzar was a heaven sent punishment, it might not have been any particular disease with which men are familiar. We simply do not know what it was.
 - 4) “Whatever was the length of time that Nebuchadnezzar was deprived of his throne, the government of Babylon would have been taken care of by a regent. Adam Clarke gives us the name of that regent. ‘Evil-merodach his son was regent during his father's insanity.’
 - 5) “The destructive critics gleefully remark that, ‘The silence of the inscriptions is inexplicable!’ Such a remark is based on the fact that none of the monuments or inscriptions uncovered from the mud of Mesopotamia have any report of king Nebuchadnezzar's terrible malady. Apparently critics know nothing at all of human rulers. Do they suppose that Senator Ted Kennedy would have a
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- monument erected to his escapade at Chappaquiddick? or that President John Kennedy would have memorialized his sexual escapades in the White House?
- 6) “How can anyone on earth suppose that Nebuchadnezzar would have erected a monument to his status while in the throes of that awful malady? Despite that, however, the king did publish the decree which we have before us in the historic Book of Daniel; and this writer believes, along with a great many other conservative scholars, that the discoveries in the ancient Babylonian area may yet reveal a copy of this very decree. But if and when that should happen, the enemies of the Word would not stop denying it.”
5. Verses 26-27: “And whereas they commanded to leave the stump of the tree roots; thy kingdom shall be sure unto thee, after that thou shalt have known that the heavens do rule. Wherefore, O king, let my counsel be acceptable unto thee, and break off thy sins by righteousness, and thine iniquities by shewing mercy to the poor; if it may be a lengthening of thy tranquillity.”
 - a. The fact that the tree roots were to be left unharmed showed that Nebuchadnezzar would not be entirely cut off from his kingdom. During the seven times he would be separated from his people and his throne, but in time, after his repentance, he would be restored to his kingdom. The king has been told more than once that this penalty is being imposed in order that he might learn that God’s authority is supreme.
 - b. The phrase *the heavens* is a reference to God’s dwelling place, and stands for his authority and power. God, in his own time and way, will always have the last word, regardless of how powerful a man or an institution or a movement may appear to be.
 - 1) The so-called *gay rights* movement, in our country and around the world in general, seems to be an unstoppable avalanche at present. Anyone who speaks out against this moral evil can be in trouble with the law in today’s world. This is being written on January 30, 2013, on a day when the boy scouts stated their intention of receiving into their group scouts and scout leaders and volunteers who are openly gay [i.e., sexually perverted).
 - a) Why did most societies over the past several generations outlaw or strongly oppose homosexuality? They had learned the disastrous effects that wicked lifestyle brought! As Confucius wisely stated, “He who thinks the old embankments useless and destroys them is sure to suffer from the desolation caused by overflowing water.”
 - b) The restraints imposed by older and wiser people ought not to be challenged without an open-minded and full study!
 - 2) Sodom and their kindred sister cities of Abraham’s time (Gen. 18-19) met with utter destruction, directly from God, because of their evil and corrupted practices. Other ancient civilizations such as Greece and Rome also met with a fatal end, although not in the direct way of Genesis 19. Other nations and societies who allowed this wicked lifestyle to infect them also came to an end.
 - a) Psalms 9:17: “The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God.”
 - b) Proverbs 14:34: “Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people.”
 - 3) Hitlerism was destroyed after a life-span of only a dozen years. History overflows with uncounted numbers of societies and individuals who have been divinely punished because of their wicked ways. The most usual cases of punishment are indirectly, by God’s providence. In every case, direct, painful and eternal punishment will be meted out at the Judgment of the last day.
 - a) Matthew 25:46: “And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.”
 - b) 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9: “And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that

know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power.”

c) Revelation 20:12-15: “And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.”

c. Daniel advises the king to accept the penalty as it was revealed, and to break off his sinful practices by doing righteousness. His lawlessness [iniquity] could be ended by showing mercy to the poor. By doing this, it might be possible for a tranquil life to be restored and extended.

D. Daniel 4:28-37: The Dream Further Delieniated and Fulfilled.

1. Verses 28-29: “All this came upon the king Nebuchadnezzar. At the end of twelve months he walked in the palace of the kingdom of Babylon.”

a. God meant exactly what he said about punishing the king. At the end of twelve months, we are told that all the harsh things God had threatened came upon Nebuchadnezzar.

b. When a year had passed, the king was walking in his palace, surveying his great possessions and power. One would think that he would have been more cautious, but even great impressions can utterly subside with the passing of time. Unruly children can forget strong warnings issued by their parents. If the authority figure is not present, rebellious individuals (young or old) are apt to ignore the warnings. “Out of sight, out of mind!”

c. After a farmer’s crops have been planted and have come up, he might walk over his fields, admiring the products of his labors, but never forgetting that it was God who gave the natural laws by which seeds germinate and produce, and that the farmer is only a workman in the process.

d. The Babylonian king blundered greatly, but he was restored to his former place. But King Ahab made a fatal error akin to that of Nebuchadnezzar. Elijah warned Ahab that. “...Thus saith the LORD, Hast thou killed, and also taken possession? And thou shalt speak unto him, saying, Thus saith the LORD, In the place where dogs licked the blood of Naboth shall dogs lick thy blood, even thine” (1 Kings 21:19).

1) The wickedness of Ahab was great: “But there was none like unto Ahab, which did sell himself to work wickedness in the sight of the LORD, whom Jezebel his wife stirred up. And he did very abominably in following idols, according to all things as did the Amorites, whom the LORD cast out before the children of Israel. And it came to pass, when Ahab heard those words, that he rent his clothes, and put sackcloth upon his flesh, and fasted, and lay in sackcloth, and went softly. And the word of the LORD came to Elijah the Tishbite, saying, Seest thou how Ahab humbleth himself before me? because he humbleth himself before me, I will not bring the evil in his days: but in his son's days will I bring the evil upon his house” (1 Kings 21:24-29).

2) God was willing to let Ahab alone since he humbled himself and went softly—for a while. But three years later, he arranged for the king of Judah to join him in a war with Syria. Ahab would not listen to the words of the prophet Micaiah, and persisted in the conflict. In the process of the battle, a Syrian archer launched an arrow into the air; it hit the right person (Ahab), in the right place (in a vulnerable place on his armor), and rendered him a mortal injury. His body was still in his chariot when it returned home; a servant washed the blood from this old-fashioned tank, and the dogs licked it up—exactly as God had warned [1 Kings 22].

2. Verse 30: “The king spake, and said, Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty?”
 - a. The king’s haughty statement reminds the Bible student of the foolish farmer the Lord described. “And he spake a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully: And he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits? And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods. And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry. But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?” (Luke 12:16-20). Notice the number of times this man referred to himself using personal pronouns.
 - b. “The accuracy of this statement has been remarkably confirmed. For early historical references to the great buildings of Nebuchadnezzar in Babylon see the statements of Berossus as reported by Josephus (*Antiq.* 10:11 and *CA*, 1:19 and of Abydenus as reported by Eusebius (*Pr. E.* 9:41, *Chronicon* 1). The discovery of the cuneiform inscriptions has remarkably confirmed the accuracy of this verse. From these we learn that Nebuchadnezzar was primarily, not a warrior, but a builder. In the famous East India House Inscription, for example, Nebuchadnezzar relates how he renovated the two temples of Marduk in Babylon, and of Nebo in Borsippa. He then declares how he restored fifteen other temples in Babylon and completed the two great walls of the city, adding a large rampart. Then he rebuilt the palace of Nabopolassar and in only fifteen days constructed a palace, with which was connected the famous hanging-gardens” (Young, pp.109f).
 - c. Coffman says: “Babylon was indeed the wonder of the ancient world; and something of the elaborate and expensive nature of the buildings there may be seen in the fact reported by Josephus, that in order to please his wife who had formerly lived in a mountainous country, he erected for her a mountain in Babylon, composed of magnificent stone terraces with trees, flowers, waterfalls, and many other wonders called 'The Hanging Gardens of Babylon.' Human pride, however, is terribly sinful; and no man should boast of anything. Whatever a man is, whatever he may be able to do, however magnificent his achievements, or whatever honors men may be willing to confer upon him, nevertheless no man is or has anything that is not a gift of God.”
 - d. The Bible shows the sinful nature of human pride, in precept and example.
 - 1) Proverbs 16:18: “Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall.”
 - 2) Isaiah 25:11: “And he shall spread forth his hands in the midst of them, as he that swimmeth spreadeth forth his hands to swim: and he shall bring down their pride together with the spoils of their hands.”
 - 3) Isaiah 28:1: “Woe to the crown of pride, to the drunkards of Ephraim, whose glorious beauty is a fading flower, which are on the head of the fat valleys of them that are overcome with wine!”
 - 4) Saul was very humble as a young man (1 Sam. 10:22), but after reigning as king in Israel, he let his pride overcome him: “And Samuel said, When thou wast little in thine own sight, wast thou not made the head of the tribes of Israel, and the LORD anointed thee king over Israel?” (1 Sam. 15:17).
 - e. The inventors of Catholicism declared that there were seven mortal sins—evil acts that were sufficiently wicked to cause the condemnation of a soul. One of these so-called *mortal sins* is pride, which is violated by every one of their so-called *clerics* who wear self-exalting titles. Not only is a direct violation of their own rules, but more importantly, it violates Christ’s clear law against wearing such titles!
 - 1) Matthew 23:1-12: “Then spake Jesus to the multitude, and to his disciples, Saying, The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat: All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe

- and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not. For they bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers. But all their works they do for to be seen of men: they make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments, And love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues, And greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi. But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren. And call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven. Neither be ye called masters: for one is your Master, even Christ. But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant. And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted.”
- 2) Although *reverend* is not specifically stated in the above passage, it is obviously forbidden for it does the same as the other titles named. To be called *reverend* implies that the wearer of the title is worthy of being revered; to be revered is receive praise or worship. Is there any human being on earth that deserves to be worshiped?
 - 3) Revelation 22:8-9: “And I John saw these things, and heard them. And when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which shewed me these things. Then saith he unto me, See thou do it not: for I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God.”
 - 4) John 4:23-24: “But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.”
3. Verses 31-32: “While the word was in the king's mouth, there fell a voice from heaven, saying, O king Nebuchadnezzar, to thee it is spoken; The kingdom is departed from thee. And they shall drive thee from men, and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field: they shall make thee to eat grass as oxen, and seven times shall pass over thee, until thou know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will.”
 - a. The voice that the king heard originated from Heaven; the speaker was likely an angel. What must have been the immediate effect on Nebuchadnezzar upon hearing this obviously supernatural oral announcement? We are reminded of the outward effect Belshazzar experienced when he beheld the miraculous writing on the wall (Dan. 5:5-6).
 - b. The pronouncement affirmed that the kingdom is departed from the proud king. It would be stated as having already occurred since God had decreed that such would take place. It was a certain matter.
 - c. Nebuchadnezzar would be driven from his association with all men; he would be forced to live among the beasts of the field, and find his sustenance as they find theirs. This dreaded condition would be upon him “until seven times shall pass.” As noted earlier, this is period of time such as seven months or seven years; the exact amount of time is uncertain to us, but would have been known to the king.
 - d. The purpose of this punishment was to cause the king to be fully aware of the fact that “the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will.” Nebuchadnezzar had lifted himself up with great pride over what he perceived as his own marvelous accomplishments. He did not give God credit! In Jehovah’s wisdom, he knew that the king needed to learn a lesson. Without this corrective measure God here took, Nebuchadnezzar could not have become the powerful influence that was needed as God worked out his great plan of the ages.
 - e. Christ related a story about a certain foolish rich farmer who had not learned the danger of pride or the necessity of giving thanks to the Almighty: “And he spake a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully: And he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits? And he said, This will I do: I will pull
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down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods. And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry. But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided? So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God” (Luke 12:16-21).

4. Verses 33-35: “The same hour was the thing fulfilled upon Nebuchadnezzar: and he was driven from men, and did eat grass as oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven, till his hairs were grown like eagles' feathers, and his nails like birds' claws. And at the end of the days I Nebuchadnezzar lifted up mine eyes unto heaven, and mine understanding returned unto me, and I blessed the most High, and I praised and honoured him that liveth for ever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom is from generation to generation.”
 - a. Before that very hour was over, what God had promised was fulfilled. The king was driven from the society of men, and was forced out into the uninhabited regions, and did eat grass as do oxen. We know that some vegetation is poisonous to humans. Our digestive systems are not designed to process grass; bovines are admirably designed to do so, having multiple stomachs by which grass is digested and nourishment is provided.
 - 1) Some vegetation can be eaten by men [cf. onions, radishes, cabbage, lettuce]. Perhaps this is the kind of “grass” which the king “grazed.”
 - 2) He was forced to live in the open, without proper shelter, and thus his body was moistened by the dews of heaven. If a dew formed, he would be wet; if it rained, he would be exposed; if the weather was hot or cold, he suffered from these extremes in temperature. In desert areas, when the sun sets, the temperature can fall drastically. American troops, which invaded North Africa during the Second World War, had to deal with the heat of daytime and freezing temperatures during the night.
 - b. The once-mighty monarch was relegated to these harsh circumstances until his hair had grown long and his nails were like the claws of birds. His hair would have become long and matted together, forming a solid covering for his head, as the feathers of a bird of prey; as feathers protect a bird from the rain and cold, so Nebuchadnezzar’s hair would be a protection to him. His nails would be long and sharp, and doubtless they would also be strong. This would require at least several months. The number “seven” is often used figuratively in the Bible to designate perfection or fulness. If it is so-used here, a literal period of time is not intended, but the full time it took for the king do learn the lesson God meant for him to learn, and thus come back to his senses. “This state of Nebuchadnezzar continued until he knew and acknowledged that the Most High ruled in the kingdom of men, and gave it to whomsoever he would. This explains the ‘seven times’....The phrase does not designate a specific period of time, but a sufficient length of time to accomplish a specific purpose of God” (Hailey, p.101).
 - c. At the end of this period of time, the king’s senses returned to him; he blessed the name of the most High, and praised and honored him henceforth. He had learned his lesson! He could now be a great asset in the working out of God’s eternal plan.
 - d. Nebuchadnezzar learned the lesson the hard way, that God is the Supreme Sovereign. The great majority of our generation have yet to learn this wondrous truth!
 5. Verses 36-37: “And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou? At the same time my reason returned unto me; and for the glory of my kingdom, mine honour and brightness returned unto me; and my counsellors and my lords sought unto me; and I was established in my kingdom, and excellent majesty was added unto me. Now I Nebuchadnezzar praise
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and extol and honour the King of heaven, all whose works are truth, and his ways judgment: and those that walk in pride he is able to abase.”

- a. His repentance was forthcoming after the fulfillment of the dream.
 - 1) “The magnificent change wrought in Nebuchadnezzar as a result of his experiences as recorded in Daniel constituted God's bulwark against any attempted annihilation of the Chosen Race during their Babylonian captivity. It is the relationship that Nebuchadnezzar sustained toward Israel during the fateful years of their captivity that accounts for all of the wonders recorded in Babylon. One may very well believe that without the genuine historical occurrences of just such things as are recorded in Daniel, the Israel of God might have been lost forever. There was no way that God would have tolerated such a disaster. Daniel records the Divine action by which God prevented it” (Coffman).
 - 2) The great lessons for the soul are usually learned only through difficult experiences. The centuries Israel spent in Egyptian slavery and the forty harsh years of the wilderness, welded the people together with a bond that has already survived thirty-five hundred years!
 - a) Jeremiah 30:11: “For I am with thee, saith the LORD, to save thee: though I make a full end of all nations whither I have scattered thee, yet will I not make a full end of thee: but I will correct thee in measure, and will not leave thee altogether unpunished.”
 - b) How many other ancient nations are still recognizable and unchanged? Do you say the Chinese? But they were conquered many times through the ages, and their blood was mingled with that of their various invaders who were absorbed by the people of China. Where are the Hittites? The Jebusites? The Canaanites? The Philistines? Those ancient kingdoms lost their identity by being absorbed by the other nations around them and others which invaded their territories.
 - c) Until the temple and its records were destroyed by the Romans in 70 A.D., the Jews could trace their lineage back through the generations to Abraham. Although this source of information is no longer available to them, the Jewish people remain a distinct race. One strong proof that the Bible is what it claims to be may be found in the case of the Jews.
- b. Regarding Nebuchadnezzar’s illness, we find the following in Pulpit Commentary:
 - 1) The disease under which Nebuchadnezzar suffered. Dr. Pusey says (p. 428), "It is now conceded that the madness of Nebuchadnezzar agrees with the description of a rare sort of disease called lycanthropy, of which our earliest notice is a Greek medical writer of the fourth century after our Lord, in which the sufferer retains his consciousness in other respects, but imagines himself to be changed into some animal, and acts up to a certain point in conformity with that persuasion. Those who imagined themselves changed into wolves, howled like wolves, and (there is reason to believe, falsely) accused themselves of bloodshed." Archdeacon Rose, in the 'Speaker's Commentary,' says, "There is now no question that the disease under which Nebuchadnezzar is said to have suffered, is one of a well-known class of diseases known by such names as lycanthropy, kyanthrop, etc., according to the animal whose habits are simulated by the subject of this disease." There is no question that there was a disease that was so called: Dr. Pusey has collected proof of that. It is to be noted that all the instances he quotes are from ancient writers. It occurred also in Mediaeval times.
 - 2) Lycanthropy has a distinct and definite meaning in mental pathology. Those suffering from it "abandon their homes and make for the forests, that they may consort with those they imagine to be their kind; they allow their hair and nails to grow; they carry their imitation so far as to become ferocious, and mutilate and even to kill and devour children." Here we must observe that the neglect of the person, with the result of hair and nails growing, is not peculiar to that form of

- madness, but is really common to many varieties of mental disease.
- c. Young provides this interesting material (pp.110f):
- 1) “Eusebius presents a quotation from Abydenus, which reads as follows, ‘And afterwards, the Chaldeans say, he went up to his palace, and being possessed by some god or other uttered the following speech: *O men of Babylon, I Nebuchadnezzar here foretell to you the coming calamity, which neither Belus my ancestor, nor Queen Beltis are able to persuade the Fates to avert. There will come a Persian mule (i.e., Cyrus), aided by the alliance of this will be a Mede, in whom the Assyrians glory. O would that before he gave up my citizens some Charybdis or sea might swallow him up utterly out of sight; or that, turning in other directions, he might be carried across the desert, where there are neither cities nor foot of man, but where wild beasts have pasture and birds their haunts, that he might wander alone among rocks and ravines; and that, before he took such thoughts into his mind, I myself had found a better end.*’ “He after uttering this prediction had immediately disappeared” (Gifford’s translation).
 - 2) “The last portion of this account seems to have reference to the king’s madness and is covered up under the form of a prediction.”
- d. The king relates that after his reason returned, his counselors and lords sought him out and he was restored to his kingdom. Having finally, and evidently, fully learned the sovereign nature of the God of Heaven, he determined that he would praise, extol, and honor the King of Heaven. He declared that Jehovah’s works are in accord with truth, his judgments are just, and those who walk in pride he will be able to abase.
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Daniel 5

A. Daniel 5:1-4: The Drunken Idolatrous Feast at Babylon.

1. Skeptics and unbelievers can always find objections to virtually any part of the Bible, whether there is any problem at all.
 - a. Some object to the miracle of the handwriting on the wall because they cannot discern any purpose it served. If we state that it showed Belshazzar that he would be violently removed from the throne and his empire was to fall, they reply by arguing that this warning would be fulfilled in a few hours, so why was a miracle necessary? If we should say the warning would show Belshazzar his irreverent misuse of the holy vessels from God's Temple, they allege that the king would find that out in a short time anyhow, so a miracle was superfluous.
 - b. Such complaints are commonly levied against other supernatural actions. The real problem is the rejection of miraculous works by those who reject the inspiration of the Bible. Since they have never witnessed a miracle, and they will believe only what they can personally see, they will not accept the biblical reports of such. These Bible critics have never seen electricity or love, but they know these are real—they can see their manifestations. The many internal and external evidences for the Bible's inspiration are more than sufficient to establish it as God's inerrant revelation. The Bible is thus *proved* to be inspired. Its message is firmly established as utterly reliable, which means, among other things, the record of miracles is inescapably certain!
 - c. We can determine the miracle's purpose [s] by seeing its effects.
 - 1) God had foretold the end of Babylon's great empire. The events of this very night marked the exact occasion when he pulled down this mighty power.
 - 2) God had foretold that Babylon would be replaced by a second world power, which is here identified as that of the Medes and Persians.
 - 3) Belshazzar was powerfully taught by this miracle that there was a much greater power than he or his empire. When he saw the writing on the wall, his knees began to knock together uncontrollably. While this shows the king's terror, it does not prove that he repented. The Roman governor Felix trembled when Paul presented the gospel to him, but there was no penitence: "And after certain days, when Felix came with his wife Drusilla, which was a Jewess, he sent for Paul, and heard him concerning the faith in Christ. And as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled, and answered, Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee" (Acts 24:24-25).
 - 4) Nebuchadnezzar's conquest of Judah, the desolation of Jerusalem and the destruction of the holy temple, could not escape punishment. God had said on earlier occasions that he would punish his rebellious people, but in his own time and way, he would likewise punish those who afflicted his people. Jehovah used the willing aid of the pagan Babylonians as his tool of retribution upon the impenitent Jews.
 - a) Jeremiah 13:19-22: "The cities of the south shall be shut up, and none shall open them: Judah shall be carried away captive all of it, it shall be wholly carried away captive. Lift up your eyes, and behold them that come from the north: where is the flock that was given thee, thy beautiful flock? What wilt thou say when he shall punish thee? for thou hast taught them to be captains, and as chief over thee: shall not sorrows take thee, as a woman in travail? And if thou say in thine heart, Wherefore come these things upon me? For the greatness of thine iniquity are thy skirts discovered, and thy heels made bare."
 - b) Jeremiah 25:8-14: "Therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts; Because ye have not heard my words, Behold, I will send and take all the families of the north, saith the LORD, and

Nebuchadrezzar the king of Babylon, my servant, and will bring them against this land, and against the inhabitants thereof, and against all these nations round about, and will utterly destroy them, and make them an astonishment, and an hissing, and perpetual desolations. Moreover I will take from them the voice of mirth, and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride, the sound of the millstones, and the light of the candle. And this whole land shall be a desolation, and an astonishment; and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years. And it shall come to pass, when seventy years are accomplished, that I will punish the king of Babylon, and that nation, saith the LORD, for their iniquity, and the land of the Chaldeans, and will make it perpetual desolations. And I will bring upon that land all my words which I have pronounced against it, even all that is written in this book, which Jeremiah hath prophesied against all the nations. For many nations and great kings shall serve themselves of them also: and I will recompense them according to their deeds, and according to the works of their own hands.”

- 5) Belshazzar’s pollution of the temple vessels, which were appointed to be used in worship and service to the Living God, had been used by this evil ruler to honor false gods and as utensils in a drunken feast. Such wicked acts demanded a notable retribution. The handwriting on the wall revealed to the king that he did not measure up to God’s standards, thus that very night his kingdom would be wrenched from him and that he himself would be slain.
 - 6) This great episode brought Daniel to the forefront, for only he could interpret the message written on the wall. This would further diminish the reputation of the so-called wise men of Babylon. It would also bring Israel’s plight into focus, and within three years the first group of Jews would be allowed to return to their homeland.
 - a) Daniel 6:1-3, 28: “It pleased Darius to set over the kingdom an hundred and twenty princes, which should be over the whole kingdom; And over these three presidents; of whom Daniel was first: that the princes might give accounts unto them, and the king should have no damage. Then this Daniel was preferred above the presidents and princes, because an excellent spirit was in him; and the king thought to set him over the whole realm....So this Daniel prospered in the reign of Darius, and in the reign of Cyrus the Persian.”
 - b) 2 Chronicles 36:22-23: “Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the LORD spoken by the mouth of Jeremiah might be accomplished, the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing, saying, Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, All the kingdoms of the earth hath the LORD God of heaven given me; and he hath charged me to build him an house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Who is there among you of all his people? The LORD his God be with him, and let him go up.”
 - 7) Note: Babylon was not destroyed at the time of the Persian conquest; it was taken intact, but its eventual fate was decided at the time of the present chapter. Isaiah, many years earlier, had intoned the final overthrow of Babylon: *And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation: neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there; neither shall the shepherds make their fold there* (13:19-20).
2. Verse 1: “Belshazzar the king made a great feast to a thousand of his lords, and drank wine before the thousand.”
 - a. “Nearly seventy years have elapsed since chapter one (Driver). One note has been rung throughout each chapter since chapter two: the world power will fall or be overthrown and is, therefore, not to be feared. The same thought appears here, with this difference: in chapter four it was the *pride* of the world power, here it is its *insolence* that is to be overthrown. The advance from pride to insolence

suggests an increase in degeneracy. There is evidence, therefore, of the successive deterioration of the powers that are hostile to the Lord and to His kingdom” (Leupold).

- b. “This chapter relates the events of the last night of the Babylonian empire. The first thing that the Christian student confronts in the study of this chapter is a barrage of assertions by critical commentators that the events here recorded are ‘unhistorical.’ This should produce no uneasiness whatever upon the part of believers. The events here reported are unassailable; and this may be viewed as the only accurate report of that final fatal night of the power of Babylon” (Coffman).
- c. “The great King Nebuchadnezzar died in 562 B.C., and was succeeded by his son Evil-Merodach, who reigned for only two years. His brother-in-law Neriglissar murdered him in 560, usurped the throne, and ruled for four years. Then a weak puppet ruler (Labashi-Marduk) held the throne for two months, and finally Nabonidus became king and reigned from 556 to 539. Historians believe Nabonidus was married to a daughter of Nebuchadnezzar and was the father of Belshazzar. Nabonidus ruled the Babylonian Empire but Belshazzar, his son, was coregent and ruled the city of Babylon” [The Bible Exposition Commentary: Old Testament © 2001-2004 by Warren W. Wiersbe].
- d. Belshazzar:
 - 1) Rawlinson, from the Assyrian inscriptions, has explained the seeming discrepancy between Daniel and the pagan historians of Babylon, Berosus and Abydenus, who say the last king (Nabonnedus) surrendered in Borsippa, after Babylon was taken, and had an honourable abode in Caramania assigned to him. Belshazzar was joint-king with his father (called Minus in the inscriptions), but subordinate to him: hence, the Babylonian account suppresses the fact, which cast discredit on Babylon—namely, that Belshazzar shut himself up in that city, and fell at its capture; while it records the surrender of the principal king in Borsippa (see my Introduction to Daniel). The pagan Xenophon's description of Belshazzar accords with Daniel's: he calls him 'impious,' and illustrates his cruelty by mentioning that he killed one of his nobles, merely because in hunting the noble struck down the game before him; and unmanned a courtier, Gadates, at a banquet, because one of the king's concubines praised him as handsome. Daniel shows none of the sympathy for him which he had for Nebuchadnezzar. Xenophon confirms Daniel as to Belshazzar's end. Winer explains the "shazzar" in the name as meaning fire. [Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown Commentary, by Biblesoft].
 - 2) “In the Old Testament, Babylonian prince mentioned in Daniel 5 as the last Chaldean king of Babylon. He was slain when Babylon was captured by the Medes and the Persians. Although no ancient historian mentions his name as one of the successors of the second Chaldean king, Nebuchadnezzar II, the Babylonian cuneiform inscriptions gave the name Belsaruzar as that of the son of Nabonidus, the last king of Babylon. A later inscription suggested that Belshazzar was associated with his father on the throne” [Encarta © 1993-2003 Microsoft Corporation].
 - 3) McClintock—Strong offer this:
 - a) The only circumstances recorded of him in Scripture are his impious feast and violent death (Daniel 5). During the period that the Jews were in captivity at Babylon, a variety of singular events concurred to prove that the sins which brought desolation on their country, and subjected them for a while to the Babylonish yoke, had not dissolved that covenant relation which, as the God of Abraham, Jehovah had entered into with them; and that any act of indignity perpetrated against this afflicted people, or any insult cast upon the service of their temple, would be regarded as an affront to the Majesty of Heaven, and not suffered to pass with impunity. The fate of Belshazzar affords a remarkable instance of this. He had had an opportunity of seeing in the case of his ancestors how hateful pride is, even in royalty itself; how instantly God can blast the dignity of the brightest crown, and consequently, how much the prosperity of kings and the stability of their thrones depend upon acknowledging that "the

Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will." But this solemn lesson was lost upon Belshazzar. According to the views of some, Isaiah, in representing the Babylonian dynasty as the scourge, of Palestine, styles Nebuchadnezzar a "serpent," Evil-Merodach a "cockatrice," and Belshazzar a "fiery flying serpent," the worst of all (Isa 14:4-29); but there is no reason for supposing the prophet in this passage to allude to any other event than the overthrow of the Philistines in the time of Hezekiah....

- b) The Scriptural narrative states that Belshazzar was warned of his coming doom by the handwriting on the wall that was interpreted by Daniel, and was slain during a splendid feast in his palace. Similarly Xenophon (*Cyrop.* 7, 5, 3) tells us that Babylon was taken by Cyrus in the night, while the inhabitants were engaged in feasting and revelry, and that the king was killed. On the other hand, the narratives of Berosus in Josephus (*Apion*, 1, 20) and of Herodotus (1, 184 sq.) differ from the above account in some important particulars. Berosus calls the last king of Babylon Nabonnedus or Nabonadius (*Nabu-nit* or *Nabo-nahit*, i.e. *Nebo blesses* or *makes prosperous*), and says that in the 17th year of his reign Cyrus took Babylon, the king having retired to the neighboring city of Borsippus or Borsippa (Birs-i-Nimrud), called by Niebuhr (*Lect. on Anc. Hist.* 12) "the Chaldaean Benares, the city in which the Chaldaeans had their most revered objects of religion, and where they cultivated their science." Being blockaded in that city, Nabonnedus surrendered, his life was spared, and a principality or estate given to him in Carmania, where he died. According to Herodotus, the last king was called Labynetus, a name easy to reconcile with the Nabonnedus of Berosus, and the Nabannidochus of Megasthenes (Euseb. *Praep. Evang.* 9, 41). Cyrus, after defeating Labynetus in the open field, appeared before Babylon, within which the besieged defied attack and even blockade, as they had walls 300 feet high and 75 feet thick, forming a square of 15 miles to a side, and had stored up previously several years' provision. But he took the city by drawing off for a time the waters of the Euphrates, and then marching in with his whole army along its bed, during a great Babylonian festival, while the people, feeling perfectly secure, were scattered over the whole city in reckless amusement.
- c) These discrepancies have lately been cleared up by the discoveries of Sir Henry Rawlinson; and the histories of profane writers, far from contradicting the scriptural narrative, are shown to explain and confirm it. In 1854 he deciphered the inscriptions on some cylinders found in the ruins of Um-Kir (the ancient Ur of the Chaldees), containing memorials of the works executed by Nabonnedus (*Jour. Sac. Lit.* 1854, p. 252; Jan. 1862). From these inscriptions it appears that the eldest son of Nabonnedus was called *Bel-shar-azar*, and admitted by his father to a share in the government. This name is compounded of *Bel* (the Babylonian god), *Shar* (*a king*), and the same termination as in *Nabopolassar*, *Nebuchadnezzar*, etc., and is contracted into Belshazzar, just as Neriglissar (again with the same termination) is formed from Nergal-sharezar. In a communication to the *Athenaeum*, No. 1377, Sir Henry Rawlinson says, "We can now understand how Belshazzar, as joint king with his father, may have been governor of Babylon when the city was attacked by the combined forces of the Medes and Persians, and may have perished in the assault which followed while Nabonnedus leading a force to the relief of the place was defeated, and obliged to take refuge in Borsippa, capitulating after a short resistance, and being subsequently assigned, according to Berosus, an honorable retirement in Carmania."
- d) In accordance with this view, we arrange the last Chaldaean kings as follows: Nebuchadnezzar, his son Evilmerodach, Neriglissar, Labrosoarchad (his son, a boy, killed in a conspiracy), Nabonnedus or Labynetus, and Belshazzar. Herodotus says that Labynetus was the son of Queen Nitocris; and Megasthenes (Euseb. *Chr. Arm.* p. 60) tells us that he succeeded Labrosoarchad, but was not of his family. In *Daniel* 5:2, Nebuchadnezzar is called the father

of Belshazzar. This, of course, need only mean grandfather or ancestor. Now Neriglissar usurped the throne on the murder of Evilmerodach (Beros. ap. Joseph. *Apion*,1): we may therefore well suppose that on the death of his son Labrosoarchad, Nebuchadnezzar's family was restored in the person of Nabonnedus or Labynetus, possibly the son of that king and Nitocris, and father of Belshazzar....”

- e. Regal rulers of ancient times commonly had great celebrations in which an abundance of food and drink were made available. Sexual immorality doubtless was also a prominent feature of such events.
 - 1) Some years later (about 473 B.C.), King Ahasuerus of Persia, held such a feast: “In the third year of his reign, he made a feast unto all his princes and his servants; the power of Persia and Media, the nobles and princes of the provinces, being before him: When he shewed the riches of his glorious kingdom and the honour of his excellent majesty many days, even an hundred and fourscore days. And when these days were expired, the king made a feast unto all the people that were present in Shushan the palace, both unto great and small, seven days, in the court of the garden of the king's palace; Where were white, green, and blue, hangings, fastened with cords of fine linen and purple to silver rings and pillars of marble: the beds were of gold and silver, upon a pavement of red, and blue, and white, and black, marble. And they gave them drink in vessels of gold, (the vessels being diverse one from another,) and royal wine in abundance, according to the state of the king. And the drinking was according to the law; none did compel: for so the king had appointed to all the officers of his house, that they should do according to every man's pleasure. Also Vashti the queen made a feast for the women in the royal house which belonged to king Ahasuerus. On the seventh day, when the heart of the king was merry with wine, he commanded Mehuman, Biztha, Harbona, Bigtha, and Abagtha, Zethar, and Carcas, the seven chamberlains that served in the presence of Ahasuerus the king, To bring Vashti the queen before the king with the crown royal, to shew the people and the princes her beauty: for she was fair to look on. But the queen Vashti refused to come at the king's commandment by his chamberlains: therefore was the king very wroth, and his anger burned in him” (Esther 1:3-12).
 - 2) The Israelites had put on a great feast while Moses was on Mount Sinai receiving God's Law: “And Aaron said unto them, Break off the golden earrings, which are in the ears of your wives, of your sons, and of your daughters, and bring them unto me. And all the people brake off the golden earrings which were in their ears, and brought them unto Aaron. And he received them at their hand, and fashioned it with a graving tool, after he had made it a molten calf: and they said, These be thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt. And when Aaron saw it, he built an altar before it; and Aaron made proclamation, and said, To morrow is a feast to the LORD. And they rose up early on the morrow, and offered burnt offerings, and brought peace offerings; and the people sat down to eat and to drink, and rose up to play” (Exod. 32:2-6). Verse 19 reveals the kind of feast this was: “And it came to pass, as soon as he came nigh unto the camp, that he saw the calf, and the dancing: and Moses' anger waxed hot, and he cast the tables out of his hands, and brake them beneath the mount.” This was a licentious party!
- f. Belshazzar is called “king,” which skeptics deny. But as previously shown, his father (Nabonidus), the official king, was away on business, and had left his son in charge at Babylon, serving as co-regent with his father. “Although, technically, Belshazzar occupied a position of authority subordinate to that of Nabonidus, actually, he seems to have had nearly all the prerogatives of monarch. As the extant evidence shows, his word was regarded with utmost deference. He actually was entrusted with the kingship, and managed it like a king” (Young, pp.117f). The Bible is always correct.
- g. Belshazzar gave a great feast for one thousand of his lords, who served the empire in lesser offices. In the process of these festivities, the king drank wine in the presence of his guests. Consider the vast size of the place where this huge assembly was feted. Verse five reveals that this was conducted in

the king's palace.

3. Verse 2: "Belshazzar, while he tasted the wine, commanded to bring the golden and silver vessels which his father Nebuchadnezzar had taken out of the temple which was in Jerusalem; that the king, and his princes, his wives, and his concubines, might drink therein."
 - a. It may be that it was only after he had dipped deeply into the wine that he then demanded that the sacred vessels from Jerusalem be brought forth to be used in the ribald and idolatrous merrymaking. These holy vessels had been made and dedicated to the worship of the Almighty, but now they were to be used in a sensual celebration and, as we are about to be informed, to praise the false gods of these pagan people. The first effects of alcohol are on the higher faculties of the mind, confusing judgment and loosening inhibitions. Things that one would never consider doing when sober, he might gladly do under the influence of intoxicants.
 - b. Present along with the king and the one thousand lords of the empire, were the king's wives and concubines. Does any sound mind seriously think that these ladies were present merely to lend beauty to the scene? "Stuart adduces considerable evidence from classical writers to show the lasciviousness of such feasts. 'What sort of a banquet Belshazzar was engaged in, seems to be sufficiently evident from such testimonies. Hence the aggravation of the insult to the God of heaven'" (Young, p.119).
 - c. The easiest thing to find is "fault." If someone is looking for a "booger" under a rock, he will find one even if there is no "booger" there! Bible skeptics can find fault with nearly anything in the Sacred Volume. Daniel described Nebuchadnezzar as the father of Belshazzar. The obvious meaning is to state that this great king was Belshazzar's ancestor. Our Lord is said to be the son of Abraham and the son of David. Jesus entered the human family in the lineage of these two Old Testament worthies.
 - d. Nebuchadnezzar's army had afflicted Jerusalem three times (606, 597, and 586 B.C.). In the last instance, the temple had been destroyed, much of the city and its great walls. The sacred items and precious metals and jewels decorating this beautiful building were carted off to Babylon, where they were used or stored. After Belshazzar had been softened by intoxicants, he had the foolish notion of using the golden and silver vessels in the pagan celebrations of this special occasion.
4. Verse 3: "Then they brought the golden vessels that were taken out of the temple of the house of God which was at Jerusalem; and the king, and his princes, his wives, and his concubines, drank in them."
 - a. These special vessels were defiled by being used as instruments of drunkenness. All of those taking part in this riotous celebration drank their devil's delight from them—perverting these holy items to a sinful purpose.
 - b. We have already alleged that sensual conduct of all sorts was likely taking place during this party. This certainly occurred in the case of Exodus 32, and with the orgies for which the Romans were known.
 - c. Romans 13:13: "Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying."
 - 1) Christians are to be honest in their lives; they are to live decently. We are to live straight lives, as one who walks in daylight can travel a straight line. There is no need for stumbling since the path is well-illuminated. We have the light of the full gospel to illuminate our way; we can not claim ignorance.
 - 2) Our lives are not to be characterized by rioting (revelling) and drunkenness. This kind of conduct is called *partying* by our worldly generation. Bumper-stickers and tee-shirt signs call for those who read them to "join in the fun." Such a life-style offers a fool's reward. What is not shown are the wrecked lives, the destroyed health, the wasted opportunities, and the sin-stained souls of those who participate.

- 3) Our lives are not to be characterized by chambering and wantonness. Paul forbids unchaste conduct with those of the opposite sex; and we are not to be guilty of lewdness. A generation ago, Americans were generally opposed to the kind of conduct that today is commonly portrayed in movies and on television, but chaste conduct is now seen as the exception, and not the rule.
- d. Colossians 3:5-6: "Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry: For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience."
- 1) "The word '*members*' here refers to the different members of the body, as the seat of evil desires and passions..." (*Commentary on Colossians*, Barnes, p.276). The point is parallel to the Lord's statement in Matthew 5:29-30: "And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast *it* from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not *that* thy whole body should be cast into hell. And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast *it* from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not *that* thy whole body should be cast into hell."
- a) Fornication [*porneia*]: "Illicit sexual intercourse." This is the general classification of all sexual sins; it includes adultery and homosexuality. "Prop. of illicit sexual intercourse in general" (Thayer, p.532).
- b) Uncleanness [*akatharsia*]: Moral filthiness; depraved passion. "In a moral sense, the impurity of lustful, luxurious, profligate living: Rom. 1:24; 6:19; 2 Cor. 12:21; Gal. 5:19; Eph. 4:19; 5:3; Col. 3:5; 1 Th. 4:7; used of impure motives in 1 Th. 2:3" (Thayer, p.21; cf. Thayer, p.472).
- c) Inordinate affection [*pathos*]: "From *pascho*, to suffer, primarily denotes whatever one suffers or experiences in any way; hence, an affection of the mind, a passionate desire. Used by the Greeks of either good or bad desires, it is always used in the N.T. of the latter..." (Vine, Vol. 1, p.36).
- (1) Romans 1:26: "For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature."
- (2) 1 Thessalonians 4:5: "Not in the lust of concupiscence, even as the Gentiles which know not God."
- d) Evil concupiscence [*epithumia*]: "A desire, craving, longing, mostly of evil desires, frequently translated 'lust'..." (Vine, Vol. 1, p.296).
- 2) Those who are guilty of those things as are described by Daniel (and discussed by Paul) in this passage are sure to receive the just recompense of their evil-doing.
- a) Ephesians 5:6: "Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience."
- b) A consideration of the wrath of God is almost non-existent in our time when the love of God is the all-consuming concern of many religious people. The same revelation which affirms the love of God, also proclaims the wrath of God. We would be just as wrong to affirm that God is only a God of love, as we would be wrong to teach that he is only a God of wrath.
- c) Our generation is in great need of strong lessons on the reality of God's wrath, for there seems to be far too little respect for his authority, and reverence for his holy being. God's wrath is judicial wrath.
- d) Hebrews 2:1-4: "Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let *them* slip. For if the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward; How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and
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was confirmed unto us by them that heard *him*; God also bearing *them* witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will?"

- e) Hebrews 6:4-6: "For *it is* impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put *him* to an open shame."
 - f) Hebrews 10:23-31: "Let us hold fast the profession of *our* faith without wavering; (for he *is* faithful that promised;) And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some *is*; but exhorting *one another*: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching. For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace? For we know him that hath said, Vengeance *belongeth* unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people. *It is* a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."
 - g) Hebrews 12:28-29: "Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: For our God *is* a consuming fire."
- 3) These revelers of Daniel five were blissfully unaware of what was to befall them and their empire before the dawn of the next day! Their impregnable bastion of power, wealth and evil was about to be penetrated by a mighty enemy who was operating under the providential guidance of God.
5. Verse 4: "They drank wine, and praised the gods of gold, and of silver, of brass, of iron, of wood, and of stone."
- a. These foolish celebrants not only defiled the holy vessels from God's house by drinking intoxicants from them, but they desecrated them by using them in their pagan worship. The ancient idolaters constructed their icons from all the various materials listed in this verse. We read of the absolute folly of idolatry by God's description given in Isaiah 44:9-20: "They that make a graven image are all of them vanity; and their delectable things shall not profit; and they are their own witnesses; they see not, nor know; that they may be ashamed. Who hath formed a god, or molten a graven image that is profitable for nothing? Behold, all his fellows shall be ashamed: and the workmen, they are of men: let them all be gathered together, let them stand up; yet they shall fear, and they shall be ashamed together. The smith with the tongs both worketh in the coals, and fashioneth it with hammers, and worketh it with the strength of his arms: yea, he is hungry, and his strength faileth: he drinketh no water, and is faint. The carpenter stretcheth out his rule; he marketh it out with a line; he fitteth it with planes, and he marketh it out with the compass, and maketh it after the figure of a man, according to the beauty of a man; that it may remain in the house. He heweth him down cedars, and taketh the cypress and the oak, which he strengtheneth for himself among the trees of the forest: he planteth an ash, and the rain doth nourish it. Then shall it be for a man to burn: for he will take thereof, and warm himself; yea, he kindleth it, and baketh bread; yea, he maketh a god, and worshippeth it; he maketh it a graven image, and falleth down thereto. He burneth part thereof in the fire; with part thereof he eateth flesh; he roasteth roast, and is satisfied: yea, he warmeth himself, and saith, Aha, I am warm,
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I have seen the fire: And the residue thereof he maketh a god, even his graven image: he falleth down unto it, and worshippeth it, and prayeth unto it, and saith, Deliver me; for thou art my god. They have not known nor understood: for he hath shut their eyes, that they cannot see; and their hearts, that they cannot understand. And none considereth in his heart, neither is there knowledge nor understanding to say, I have burned part of it in the fire; yea, also I have baked bread upon the coals thereof; I have roasted flesh, and eaten it: and shall I make the residue thereof an abomination? shall I fall down to the stock of a tree? He feedeth on ashes: a deceived heart hath turned him aside, that he cannot deliver his soul, nor say, Is there not a lie in my right hand?"

- b. It has been asserted that this feast was a special "religious festival, but more likely it was merely a drinking bout at which songs in celebration of the idols were sung" (Young, p.120).
 - 1) "In the disregard of these revelations consisted, as Daniel represents to Belshazzar (cf. v. 18), the dishonour done to the Lord of heaven, although these vessels of the sanctuary might have been profaned merely by using them as common drinking vessels, or they might have been used also in religious libations as vessels consecrated to the gods, of which the text makes no mention, although the singing of songs to the praise of the gods along with the drinking makes the offering of libations very probable" (Keil).
 - 2) "The word praised here means that they spake in praise of these gods; of their history, of their attributes, of what they had done. Nothing can well be conceived more senseless and stupid than what it is said they did at this feast, and yet it is a fair illustration of what occurs in all the festivals of idolatry. And is what occurs in more civilized Christian lands, in the scenes of carousal and festivity, more rational than this? It was not much worse to lavish praises on idol gods in a scene of revelry than it is to lavish praises on idol men now; not much less rational to 'toast' gods than it is to 'toast' men" (Barnes).
- c. Compare this with the strong statement in Revelation 9:20: "And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood: which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk."

B. Daniel 5:5-9: The Message on the Wall.

1. Verse 5: "In the same hour came forth fingers of a man's hand, and wrote over against the candlestick upon the plaister of the wall of the king's palace: and the king saw the part of the hand that wrote."
 - a. The celebrants had imbibed deeply of their wine, but they were well able to comprehend what now they beheld! They clearly saw the hand that wrote something on the wall, but at this point they did not know what was written. It was indeed a terrifying experience, especially for the king. The fingers of a man's hand appeared near the candlestick and began writing upon the plaster of the palace wall. We are told only that fingers appeared, but likely they were attached to a hand; it is difficult to visualize individual, separated fingers writing. We are not told what the writing instrument was—perhaps a common pen currently used.
 - b. Leupold offers this: The banquet has proceeded far enough to allow the king to reveal plainly what was in his mind and to offer insult to God Most High. "At that very time"—for so the Aramaic "in that hour" is meant—the terrible prodigy appeared: "there came forth" within the range of the king's vision, perhaps at the very point upon which his eyes rested, "the fingers of a man's hand." No more needed to be seen. The fingers suggested the presence of the rest of the body of the one who was writing, and that what was being written was not an optical illusion but was caused by an intelligent agent.
 - 1) To see the fingers and no more may have served a double purpose. On the one hand, seeing only the fingers may have served to terrify still more because the imagination would have free scope

- to think of all manner of beings. Again, had, let us say, an angelic agent appeared, his very presence might have drawn attention away from the thing he was delegated to write. It seems very likely that this event was held at night. It is for this reason that attention is drawn to the fact that the writing appeared over against “the candlestick,” *nebhrashta*’—probably a foreign word and so hardly a reference to the seven-branched candlestick from the Temple at Jerusalem.
- 2) An interesting sidelight is thrown on this episode by the discoveries of the archæologist. The chief royal audience chamber which was more than 50 feet wide and more than 160 feet long has apparently been identified. There is a niche in the center of one of the long sides, and it would seem that the throne must have stood there. Perhaps, if this was the scene of the banquet, the niche might have been the place where the royal table stood. Here “the walls were covered with white plaster,” which is recognizable to this day as surfacing a coarser material that was used as a base and thus coincides with the expression used in our text, “upon the plaster (*gîra*) of the wall” (*kethal*).¹
 - c. The location of the wall is said to be near the place the candlestick (lampstand) was situated. “The word translated ‘lamp’ (*nebhrashta*) became in Talmudic times the equivalent of *menoorah*, ‘the golden candlestick.’ From this it has been supposed that ‘the candlestick’ was the golden candlestick which later proved the crowning glory of Titus's triumph, and is still to be seen carved on his arch. When the other vessels of the house of the Lord were brought to deck the table of the monarch, it would not be unnatural that the golden candlestick should also be brought. In the great hall in which a thousand guests were accommodated, more lamps than one would be required....The walls were built and plastered....In the case of Belshazzar, the palace walls might well be fresh....As he looks to the white plaster, the fingers of a hand come out of the darkness, and write opposite him. ‘The king,’ thus it is in the Massoretic text, saw the ‘part’ of the hand that wrote. *Pas* is the word. Furst renders it ‘wrist’; Gesenius, ‘the extremity’The balance of meanings seems to be in favour of ‘hollow of the hand,’ only it is difficult to understand the position of the hand relatively to the king when he saw the hollow of the hand. The smoke from the numerous lamps would obscure the roof of the hall of the palace; however numerous the lamps, their light would be unable to pierce the darkness, so out of the darkness came the hand.” [Pulpit Commentary].
 - d. Evidence has surfaced that the palace walls were covered with white plaster. A dark object, such as a hand, could be clearly seen as it moved across the white wall. The hand would most likely be from the wrist to the fingertips.
 - e. The lamp-stand may have been on the table being used by the king and his immediate party. If that was the case, he would have been able to clearly observe this supernatural demonstration.
 2. Verse 6: “Then the king's countenance was changed, and his thoughts troubled him, so that the joints of his loins were loosed, and his knees smote one against another.”
 - a. The effect on the king was immediate. His countenance changed. In the midst of his revelry his face was doubtless bright and cheerful, but what he saw instantly changed it (in color and expression). It appears that he was shocked out of his drunken state into quick awareness of something awful. Several years ago, a man had committed an especially heinous double murder and was fleeing from the police. A report was received that a vehicle matching that of the assailant had run off the road and into a patch of woods. Arriving at the scene, the deputies saw that the man behind the wheel looked very much like the suspect. He had passed out drunk, his window was rolled down, his head was hanging outside the door, and his mouth was wide open in his drunken stupor. A deputy put his pistol into the man’s mouth and shouted “freeze!” So great was this shock, the man woke up immediately

¹ Leupold, H. C. (1949). *Exposition of Daniel* (pp. 218–219). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House.

and was instantly sober! He was not the man they were seeking. This shocking experience should have caused this drunken fellow to give up drinking altogether!

- b. Belshazzar's thoughts, we are told, troubled him. This we can well imagine! The shock was such that the joints of his loins were loosed and his knees began to knock against each other. Such a reaction can literally happen. Perhaps the reader can remember some fearful experience he has had which made his knees to be like rubber. The king's shock at seeing the supernatural display of the hand writing on the wall would have had a sobering effect on his mind, despite the shattering of his nervous system.
 - c. We are told that his countenance changed, doubtless a reference to the fact that his face turned deathly white; a great shock and sudden fear can drive the blood from our upper regions! Nebuchadnezzar's visage changed into a sudden awful anger when Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego refused to worship the great golden image: "Then was Nebuchadnezzar full of fury, and the form of his visage was changed against Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego: therefore he spake, and commanded that they should heat the furnace one seven times more than it was wont to be heated" (Dan. 3:19). A severe anger can cause one's face to turn to a deep burning red. We can imagine that Belshazzar's mouth dropped open, his eyes bulged, and that he was shocked into rigid immobility—until his knees began to play their macabre tune!
 - d. Daniel reports the extraordinary change in Belshazzar. One moment he was defying Almighty God by his impious use of the holy vessels from the great temple at Jerusalem; the next he was a "basket-case!" This reveals a tragic picture of the awful change that will be wrought in those who lived their earthly lives in disobedience to God, who are to instantly see immediately after their death the awful consequences of their rebellion! Their situation could have been vastly different, but now they are lost without possibility of redemption.
 - 1) Matthew 25:46: "And these shall go away into eternal punishment: but the righteous into eternal life."
 - 2) 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9: "And to you that are afflicted rest with us, at the revelation of the Lord Jesus from heaven with the angels of his power in flaming fire, rendering vengeance to them that know not God, and to them that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus: who shall suffer punishment, even eternal destruction from the face of the Lord and from the glory of his might."
 - 3) Compare the case of the wicked rich man who suddenly found himself in the fiery part of Hades: "There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day: And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores, And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried; And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame" (Luke 16:19-24).
 - e. Other cases of fright:
 - 1) Isaiah 21:3: "Therefore are my loins filled with pain: pangs have taken hold upon me, as the pangs of a woman that travaileth: I was bowed down at the hearing of it; I was dismayed at the seeing of it."
 - 2) Nahum 2:10: "She is empty, and void, and waste: and the heart melteth, and the knees smite together, and much pain is in all loins, and the faces of them all gather blackness."
 - 3) Ezekiel 21:12: "Cry and howl, son of man: for it shall be upon my people, it shall be upon all the princes of Israel: terrors by reason of the sword shall be upon my people: smite therefore upon thy thigh."
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- 4) Psalms 69:23: "Let their eyes be darkened, that they see not; and make their loins continually to shake."
 - 5) Matthew 28:1-4: "In the end of the sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre. And, behold, there was a great earthquake: for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it. His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow: And for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead men."
 - 6) Acts 24:24-26: "And after certain days, when Felix came with his wife Drusilla, which was a Jewess, he sent for Paul, and heard him concerning the faith in Christ. And as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled, and answered, Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee. He hoped also that money should have been given him of Paul, that he might loose him: wherefore he sent for him the oftener, and communed with him."
3. Verse 7: "The king cried aloud to bring in the astrologers, the Chaldeans, and the soothsayers. And the king spake, and said to the wise men of Babylon, Whosoever shall read this writing, and shew me the interpretation thereof, shall be clothed with scarlet, and have a chain of gold about his neck, and shall be the third ruler in the kingdom." "The king cried aloud to bring in the enchanters, the Chaldeans, and the soothsayers. The king spake and said to the wise men of Babylon, Whosoever shall read this writing, and show me the interpretation thereof, shall be clothed with purple, and have a chain of gold about his neck, and shall be the third ruler in the kingdom" (ASV).
- a. Belshazzar got over his fright and pride enough to loudly cry for the astrologers [the *enchanters*], the Chaldeans and soothsayers to be brought. He should have already learned from other episodes that these so-called "wise men" were nothing more than charlatans!
 - b. The king promised that whoever could read and interpret the writing on the wall would be greatly rewarded.
 - 1) The purple (scarlet, KJV) was the color worn by royalty in ancient times; the wicked rich man in Luke 16 is described as being clothed in "purple and fine linen" (Luke 16:19). Lydia's business was to sell *purple* (a dye made from certain shellfish) to be used in such garments (Acts 16:14). Compare: "And Mordecai went forth from the presence of the king in royal apparel of blue and white, and with a great crown of gold, and with a robe of fine linen and purple: and the city of Shushan shouted and was glad" (Esther 8:15, ASV).
 - 2) The second reward was to be given a golden necklace to wear. The value of the chain itself would be significant, but the honor that attended the owner would most likely surpass its monetary worth. Young reports that this kind of necklace was worn by Persians of rank, and notes a particular instance in which one was given by one king to another king.
 - 3) The third award was to be exalted to the third highest throne in the empire. As we have earlier seen, Nabonidus was the king and Belshazzar was a co-regent with his father, while Nabonidus was away on an extended mission. The highest position to which Belshazzar could promote another was this third throne. Daniel was lifted up to this position: "Then commanded Belshazzar, and they clothed Daniel with scarlet, and put a chain of gold about his neck, and made a proclamation concerning him, that he should be the third ruler in the kingdom" (Dan. 5:29).
4. Verse 8: "Then came in all the king's wise men: but they could not read the writing, nor make known to the king the interpretation thereof."
- a. Evidently the first three classes of Babylonian "wise men" came at Belshazzar's order, but it seems that other "wise men" arrived on the scene at this point. The entire group of "wise men" are now present, but they could not read the message written on the wall. Since they could not read it,
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- obviously they could not interpret it!
- b. One would think that their history of failure would have ruined their reputation as “wise.” At least they confessed their inability to comprehend the words on the wall. The text does not give us any insight into the language used in the miraculous message. It is sufficient to the believer in the Bible to know that Daniel was given the meaning of the words and revealed the message accurately.
 - c. When the Persians mastered the Babylonians, these wise men also perished, according to the prophecy of Isaiah 47:12-14: “Stand now with thine enchantments, and with the multitude of thy sorceries, wherein thou hast laboured from thy youth; if so be thou shalt be able to profit, if so be thou mayest prevail. Thou art wearied in the multitude of thy counsels. Let now the astrologers, the stargazers, the monthly prognosticators, stand up, and save thee from these things that shall come upon thee. Behold, they shall be as stubble; the fire shall burn them; they shall not deliver themselves from the power of the flame: there shall not be a coal to warm at, nor fire to sit before it.”
 - d. We remember that when Isaiah did his work in Judah, the new Babylon Empire had not yet risen to power. But the prophet was able to predict the rise of Babylon to power and its ultimate dissolution: “And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation: neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there; neither shall the shepherds make their fold there” (Isa. 13:19-20).
 - e. “The very natural sequence of occurrences as reported at this point elicits the attacks of criticism. It is claimed that the preceding verse had already introduced the wise men and had them hear the king’s demand. Now the wise men are said to be pictured as entering in v. 8. An obvious matter is overlooked by such criticism, namely, as pointed out above, that the king would lay his request before any larger group as soon as it was assembled. All that is required is to translate the participle (‘*allilîn*’) used in v. 8 as a progressive—they “kept coming in.” Finally, when they were all assembled, it was found that not one could offer the least bit of help” (Leupold).
5. Verse 9: “Then was king Belshazzar greatly troubled, and his countenance was changed in him, and his lords were astonished.” “Then was king Belshazzar greatly troubled, and his countenance was changed in him, and his lords were perplexed” (ASV).
- a. When it became apparent that from this quarter help could no longer be expected, the king’s confusion increased, and he again paled visibly as he did in verse 6. “The expression differs but slightly in this repetition of verse 6 in that here the suffix is attached to a preposition rather than to the verb. The perplexity of the lords is mentioned separately because the king was now apparently about to appeal to them for aid, and they were as much at a loss as was the king. We cannot but remark how utterly human wisdom collapses when the Lord sets about to display its shallowness. “He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh; the Lord shall have them in derision (Ps. 2:4)”¹
 - b. “The failure of the wise men threw the whole company into confusion. The king was deeply disturbed, and the magnates were upset and tumultuous” (Young, p.122).
 - c. We wonder how fearful and bewildered our great world leaders would be if they should be in a venerable assembly and such an incident were to occur! Our great nation was thrown into panic when the terrorists struck us on September 11, 2001. Although about three thousands people were slain during the attacks, this was nevertheless a relatively small wound—it did not destroy our country.
 - d. The security of any country is found in its standing with Almighty God.
 - 1) Psalm 127:1: “Except the LORD build the house, they labour in vain that build it: except the

¹ Leupold, H. C. (1949). *Exposition of Daniel* (p. 224). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House.

LORD keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain.”

- 2) Psalms 33:12: “Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD; and the people whom he hath chosen for his own inheritance.”

C. Daniel 5:10-16: Daniel is Identified as Being Able to Do Marvelous Things.

1. Verse 10: “Now the queen, by reason of the words of the king and his lords, came into the banquet house: and the queen spake and said, O king, live for ever: let not thy thoughts trouble thee, nor let thy countenance be changed.”
 - a. Verse two of this chapter reports that the wives and concubines of Belshazzar were present in the place where the banquet was being held. The queen of this passage, therefore, must not have been the wife of Belshazzar.
 - b. The queen made her entrance into the banquet hall on her own, having heard the words of the king and of the lords. The noise of a great banquet most likely was quite loud, but evidently the voice of the king was raised even above the common din. His call for the soothsayers, *et al*, to come to the hall obviously could be heard for a considerable distance. The queen had heard his voice and even understood what he was saying.
 - c. “Their words of amazement and astonishment. These would doubtless be conveyed to her, as there was so much alarm in the palace, and as there was a summons to bring in the wise men of Babylon. if her residence was in some part of the palace itself, nothing would be more natural than that she should be made acquainted with the unusual occurrence; or if her residence was, as Taylor supposes, detached from the palace, it is every way probable that she would be made acquainted with the consternation that prevailed, and that, recollecting the case of Nebuchadnezzar, and the forgotten services of Daniel, she would feel that the information which was sought respecting the mysterious writing could be obtained from him” (Barnes).
 - d. Her statement to the king gave clear evidence that she was well aware of Daniel and his great feats in former years, while Nebuchadnezzar was on the throne.
2. Verse 11: “There is a man in thy kingdom, in whom is the spirit of the holy gods; and in the days of thy father light and understanding and wisdom, like the wisdom of the gods, was found in him; whom the king Nebuchadnezzar thy father, the king, I say, thy father, made master of the magicians, astrologers, Chaldeans, and soothsayers.”
 - a. “There is a man in your kingdom in whom *is* the Spirit of the Holy God. And in the days of your father, light and understanding and wisdom, like the wisdom of the gods, were found in him; and King Nebuchadnezzar your father—your father the king—made him chief of the magicians, astrologers, Chaldeans, *and* soothsayers” (NKJ).
 - b. Compare: “I Nebuchadnezzar was at rest in mine house, and flourishing in my palace: I saw a dream which made me afraid, and the thoughts upon my bed and the visions of my head troubled me. Therefore made I a decree to bring in all the wise men of Babylon before me, that they might make known unto me the interpretation of the dream. Then came in the magicians, the astrologers, the Chaldeans, and the soothsayers: and I told the dream before them; but they did not make known unto me the interpretation thereof. But at the last Daniel came in before me, whose name was Belteshazzar, according to the name of my god, and in whom is the spirit of the holy gods: and before him I told the dream” (Dan. 4:4-8).
 - c. Nebuchadnezzar, the queen, and others at Babylon had come to perceive the supernatural wisdom and knowledge possessed by Daniel. The knew that only God could have given him information about the forgotten vision the king had seen, as well as its interpretation. With the passage of time and the changing of regal authority, a present awareness of Daniel had faded away. At least, Belshazzar had

no knowledge of the matter or it had slipped from his memory. Belshazzar had just experienced a very upsetting sight: the miraculous hand writing a strange message on the wall! Such a shock could have shaken his memory considerably! Most of us have had our memory beclouded by some frightful sight or experience.

- d. The man [Daniel] had been made master of all the so-called wise men—the magicians, astrologers, Chaldeans, and soothsayers. Nebuchadnezzar had thus exalted Daniel.
- e. Nebuchadnezzar is denoted here to be the “father” of Belshazzar. The margin correctly gives the alternate rendering of “grandfather.” Barnes offers these clear insights:
 - 1) “According to the best account which we have of Belshazzar, he was the son of Evil-Merodach, who was the son of Nebuchadnezzar (see the Introduction to the chapter, Section II.), and therefore the word is used here, as in the margin, to denote grandfather. Compare Jer 27:7. See the note at Isa 14:22. The word father is often used in a large signification....
 - 2) There is no improbability in supposing that this word would be used to denote a grandfather, when applied to one of the family or dynasty of Nebuchadnezzar. The fact that Belshazzar is here called "the son" of Nebuchadnezzar has been made a ground of objection to the credibility of the book of Daniel, by Lengerke, p. 204. The objection is, that the "last king of Babylon was "not" the son of Nebuchadnezzar." But, in reply to this, in addition to the remarks above made, it may be observed that it is not necessary, in vindicating the assertion in the text, to suppose that he was the "immediate" descendant of Nebuchadnezzar, in the first degree.
 - 3) The Semitic use of the word in question goes far beyond the first degree of descent, and extends the appellation of "son" to the designation "grandson," and even of the most remote posterity. In Ezra 6:14, the prophet Zechariah is called "the son of Iddo;" in Zech 1:1,7, the same person is called "the son of Berechiah, the son of Iddo." So Isaiah threatens Hezekiah (Isa 39:7) that the sons whom he shall beget shall be conducted as exiles to Babylon; in which case, however, four generations intervened before this happened. So in Matt 1:1, 'Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.' And so we speak every day: 'The sons of Adam, the sons of Abraham, the sons of Israel, the sons of the Pilgrims,' and the like."—Prof. Stuart, "Com. on Dan." p. 144.
3. Verse 12: “Forasmuch as an excellent spirit, and knowledge, and understanding, interpreting of dreams, and shewing of hard sentences, and dissolving of doubts, were found in the same Daniel, whom the king named Belshazzar: now let Daniel be called, and he will shew the interpretation.”
 - a. New King James rendering: “Inasmuch as an excellent spirit, knowledge, understanding, interpreting dreams, solving riddles, and explaining enigmas were found in this Daniel, whom the king named Belshazzar, now let Daniel be called, and he will give the interpretation.”
 - b. The queen further paints a well-deserved, glowing report of Daniel’s qualifications to solve the present problem.
 - 1) He had an excellent spirit: he is noted for his wisdom and knowledge. We might also add that, morally and religiously, he was good and honest.
 - 2) He had the God-given power to interpret dreams, something that the Babylonian “wise men” did not possess.
 - 3) He could unravel hard statements, thus show their accurate meaning. Again, this would be one of God’s supernatural gifts to Daniel. Compare: "To understand a proverb, and the interpretation; the words of the wise, and their dark sayings" (Prov. 1:6).
 - 4) He had the ability to dissolve doubts. The margin renderings say, a dissolver of knots.
 - a) In Daniel’s case, being a prophet of God, his ability in this vein would be miraculous. Human wisdom can explain some things to a certain point, but infallible interpretations came only

from Heaven.

- b) Barnes adds:
- (1) This language is still common in the East, to denote one who has skill in explaining difficult subjects.
 - (2) "In the copy of a patent given to Sir John Chardin in Persia, we find it is addressed 'to the Lords of lords, who have the presence of a lion, the aspect of Deston; the princes who have the stature of Tahementen, who seem to be in the time of Ardevon, the regents who carry the majesty of Ferribours. The conquerors of kingdoms. Superintendents that unloose all manner of knots, and who are under the ascendant of Mercury,'" etc. -Taylor's "Fragments to Calmet's Dict.," No. 174. The language used here would be applicable to the explanation of any difficult and perplexing subject.
- c. This information was happy news to Belshazzar. His shock had been intense and his inability to grasp the significance of what he had seen, coupled with the utter confusion of the "wise men" to shed any light on the matter, would have left him in a highly agitated and disordered state of mind.
- d. The queen advised that Daniel, named Beltshazzar by Nebuchadnezzar, be called forthwith, and that he would show the meaning of the handwriting on the wall. Of this, she had no doubt.
- e. Homer Hailey wisely brought to our attention the basic kinds of women in our world:
- 1) We have the Eves who, being deceived, have led their husbands into sin (1 Tim. 2:12-14; Gen. 3:1-6). We have had Delilahs who beguiled their lovers into dangerous folly (Judges 16). We have had women who turned the hearts of kings to idolatry (Solomon—1 Kings 11:1-6). We have had women like Jezebel who influenced her husband (Ahab) into ultimate ruin (1 Kings 16:30-34).
 - 2) But we have had godly women such as Jochebed, who gave Moses to the world (Ex. 6:20), and Deborah, who guided an army to victory over invading infidels (Judg. 4); and women like Huldah who served God as a prophetess (2 Kings 22:14-22; cf. Acts 21:8-9). The list of godly ladies in the Bible is extensive, including Mary the mother of Jesus, Joanna and Susanna who aided our Lord (Luke 8:30), Mary Magdalene (John 20:1-2), and Euodias and Syntyche who helped Paul (Phil. 4:2-3, and Lois and Eunice who implanted God's will into young Timothy (2 Tim. 1:5).
4. Verses 13-14: "Then was Daniel brought in before the king. And the king spake and said unto Daniel, Art thou that Daniel, which art of the children of the captivity of Judah, whom the king my father brought out of Jewry? I have even heard of thee, that the spirit of the gods is in thee, and that light and understanding and excellent wisdom is found in thee."
- a. Without delay, Daniel was brought before the king. Notice that he did not address the prophet by his Babylonian name, Beltshazzar, which is similar to his own name.
 - b. Belshazzar says he was aware that Daniel was in the number of the Jews which Nebuchadnezzar had brought captive to Babylonia. He repeats part of what the queen had said in description of Daniel, that the spirit of the holy gods was in him, and that he possessed light, understanding and wisdom. We are not advised whether he knew much of the prophet before he heard what the queen had said.
5. Verse 15: "And now the wise men, the astrologers, have been brought in before me, that they should read this writing, and make known unto me the interpretation thereof: but they could not shew the interpretation of the thing."
- a. Belshazzar admits that his wise men had not been able to interpret the writing on the wall. Without Daniel's inspired revelation of the words, we still would not know their meaning.
 - b. Why could not these Babylonian scholars read and interpret the writing? "Some of the rabbis have suggested that the characters were written vertically instead of horizontally [See chart below].... (The writing would have consisted only of consonants.) It has been suggested that some unfamiliar form

of Aramaic character was used. However, as Charles remarks, ‘The writing may have consisted of ideograms; for according to the text even expert Babylonian scholars could not decipher it.’ Whatever the case, it was necessary that the text be both read and interpreted” (Young, p.126).

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- c. “The bankruptcy of the human family concerning any reliable knowledge of the future, or of the supernatural, is pitifully apparent in such a passage as this. Babylon was the head of the ancient world at the time of this episode; and yet its king, calling for the wisest men on earth, as they were alleged to be, found them absolutely ignorant of any information that could have been valuable to the king. But, is it any different now? The answer is NO! All that men know of the future, or of the will of Almighty God, is found in the Bible. Only within its sacred pages may one learn how the lost fellowship with our Creator may be restored and how a mortal may be rescued from the certain destruction that is coming upon all of Adam's rebellious race. As regards such verities as life and death, time and eternity, heaven and hell, life after death, the resurrection of the dead, the eternal Judgment, the eternal destiny of men, or any other of those most important problems confronting the human mind, our brilliant educators, philosophers, and intellectuals are on an absolute parity with the magicians, the astrologers, the Chaldeans, and the soothsayers of ancient Babylon. Only in the Word of God may one find the "Words of Life." Despite this, the world rushes on in the gathering shadows neglecting its only true source of that knowledge which is able to save the soul” (Coffman).
6. Verse 16: “And I have heard of thee, that thou canst make interpretations, and dissolve doubts: now if thou canst read the writing, and make known to me the interpretation thereof, thou shalt be clothed with scarlet, and have a chain of gold about thy neck, and shalt be the third ruler in the kingdom.”
- a. It may be possible that the king’s first statement is a question as most of the versions render it, although there is no interrogative word in the original that indicates this. Even if it is a question, the king apparently did not expect an answer, for he proceeds with his request at once. The result is almost the same if the words are rendered as a statement of surprise: “So thou art Daniel” or even, “So thou art that Daniel,” the man about whom he had heard but whom, in his profligate and frivolous life, he had never taken the trouble to consult. The aged Daniel, no doubt, presented a venerable appearance and had a countenance that elicited the king’s admiration. It is significant that, by contrast, Belshazzar seems to remember much better the record of his father’s conquests, and that this Daniel belonged to those captives who were brought up from Judah. The expression we rendered “number of the captives” has a truly Semitic flavor in the original, namely, “children of the captivity.” “Daniel” he calls him, perhaps with the intent of not displeasing the God whose name he bears. The rest of the words of the king are quoted mostly from what the queen mother had said, except that Belshazzar, having a bad conscience, prefers to say “spirit of the gods” rather than “of the holy gods” as his mother had said (v. 11). In v. 16 the king displays the only bit of authority that he ventures to assert over against Daniel when he begins, “I for my part,” as much as to say, “I for one know you can interpret.” The “knotty questions” are called merely “knots,” *qitrîn*, in the original. This word, of course, has no reference to enchanters’ knots, so-called. For the current Aramaic form *tikkul*, “thou art able,” the text offers a Hebrew equivalent *tukhal*, which, after the fashion of the Masorettes, is

pointed as the form should be read (*keri*) and not as it is printed (*kethibh*).¹

- b. Belshazzar has been assured by the queen that Daniel was able to solve the problem at hand. He states directly that he also knows this to be so. With these assurances on sound footing, the king again declares his willingness to give to Daniel, a Jew, the reward that had earlier been offered to his own wise men, if he could interpret the handwriting on the wall.

D. Daniel 5:17-24: Belshazzar is Strongly Addressed by Daniel the Prophet.

1. Verse 17: “Then Daniel answered and said before the king, Let thy gifts be to thyself, and give thy rewards to another; yet I will read the writing unto the king, and make known to him the interpretation.”
 - a. Daniel had no interest in the rewards he was offered. As far as the prophet was concerned, Belshazzar could keep the gifts for his own use, and give his favors to someone else. He is not being impertinent in turning down these rich rewards. He is plainly stating to the king that he has no greed for material wealth, which could not be said about the king’s advisors to whom the same rich gifts were offered at the first.
 - b. While the so-called wise men who were earlier consulted could not interpret the mysterious message, Daniel declares that he is able to do so. Of course, as he had said to Nebuchadnezzar, that power was a gift the God of Heaven has given him: “...The secret which the king hath demanded cannot the wise men, the astrologers, the magicians, the soothsayers, shew unto the king; But there is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets, and maketh known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days. Thy dream, and the visions of thy head upon thy bed, are these” (Dan. 2:27-28).
2. Verses 18-19: “O thou king, the most high God gave Nebuchadnezzar thy father a kingdom, and majesty, and glory, and honour: And for the majesty that he gave him, all people, nations, and languages, trembled and feared before him: whom he would he slew; and whom he would he kept alive; and whom he would he set up; and whom he would he put down. But when his heart was lifted up, and his mind hardened in pride, he was deposed from his kingly throne, and they took his glory from him.”
 - a. Daniel gives Belshazzar a brief recount of Nebuchadnezzar’s experiences. The God of Heaven, the Most High God, gave that man his regal power. Along with the kingdom, he received majesty, glory and honor—far above his contemporaries.
 - b. Nebuchadnezzar had control over many peoples, nations and languages—they trembled and feared before him. He possessed power to execute or keep alive; he could exalt those he wished to exalt, or pull down those who did not have his favor. The implication of Daniel’s comments would clearly show Belshazzar that Nebuchadnezzar had fallen victim to his pride, and that he had also had made this same error. The great king was humbled and brought back to the throne; this lesser king was to lose his life that very night (as the text subsequently relates).
 - c. Few people are prepared to be exalted to such power and wealth without becoming contaminated. Power tends to corrupt. One who has it may become cruel; he may want to extend his control to conquer other nations; he may seek to obtain more and more wealth, power, and territory. His pride can become an all-consuming passion.
 - d. Another corrupting influence of power is pride. When Nebuchadnezzar reflected on the greatness he possessed, his heart was lifted up in him with expanding pride.
 - 1) Daniel 4:28-33: “All this came upon the king Nebuchadnezzar. At the end of twelve months he walked in the palace of the kingdom of Babylon. The king spake, and said, Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty? While the word was in the king's mouth, there fell a voice from heaven,

¹ Leupold, H. C. (1949). *Exposition of Daniel* (pp. 228–229). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House.

- saying, O king Nebuchadnezzar, to thee it is spoken; The kingdom is departed from thee. And they shall drive thee from men, and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field: they shall make thee to eat grass as oxen, and seven times shall pass over thee, until thou know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will. The same hour was the thing fulfilled upon Nebuchadnezzar: and he was driven from men, and did eat grass as oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven, till his hairs were grown like eagles' feathers, and his nails like birds' claws.”
- 2) It was not Jehovah’s intention to utterly destroy Nebuchadnezzar, but to humble him for future uses. The great king came back to his senses and evidently became a believer in the God of Israel.
 - 3) We read in the Bible of another king who was lifted up in pride, but who did not humble himself: “And Herod was highly displeased with them of Tyre and Sidon: but they came with one accord to him, and, having made Blastus the king's chamberlain their friend, desired peace; because their country was nourished by the king's country. And upon a set day Herod, arrayed in royal apparel, sat upon his throne, and made an oration unto them. And the people gave a shout, saying, It is the voice of a god, and not of a man. And immediately the angel of the Lord smote him, because he gave not God the glory: and he was eaten of worms, and gave up the ghost” (Acts 12:20-23). Josephus gives us an uninspired, but knowledgeable, report of the occasion:
 - a) "Now, when Agrippa had reigned three years over all Judea, he came to the city of Caesarea, which was formerly called Strato's Tower; and there he exhibited shows in honour of Caesar, upon his being informed that there was a certain festival celebrated to make vows for his safety. At which festival, a great multitude was gotten together of the principal persons, and such as were of dignity through his province. On the second day of which shows he put on a garment made wholly of silver, and of a contexture truly wonderful, and came into the theatre early in the morning; at which time the silver of his garment being illuminated by the fresh reflection of the sun's rays upon it, shone out after a surprising manner, and was so resplendent as to spread a horror over those that looked intently upon him: and presently his flatterers cried out, one from one place, and another from another, (though not for his good,) that he was a god: and they added,—'Be thou merciful to us; for although we have hitherto revered thee only as a man, yet shall we henceforth own thee as superior to mortal nature.'
 - b) “Upon this the king did neither rebuke them, nor reject their impious flattery. But, as he presently afterwards looked up, he saw an owl sitting on a certain rope over his head, and immediately understood that this bird was the messenger of ill tidings, as it had once been the messenger of good tidings to him; and fell into the deepest sorrow. A severe pain also arose in his belly, and began in a most violent manner. He therefore looked upon his friends, and said,—'I, whom you call a god, am commanded presently to depart this life; while Providence thus reproves the lying words you just now said to me; and I who was by you called immortal, am immediately to be hurried away by death. But I am bound to accept of what Providence allots, as it pleases God; for we have by no means lived ill, but in a splendid and happy manner.'
 - c) “When he had said this, his pain was become violent. Accordingly he was carried into the palace; and the rumour went abroad everywhere, that he would certainly die in a little time. But the multitude presently sat in sackcloth, with their wives and children, after the law of their country, and besought God for the king's recovery. All places were also full of mourning and lamentation. Now the king rested in a high chamber, and as he saw them below lying prostrate on the ground, he could not himself forbear weeping.
 - d) “And when he had been quite worn out by the pain in his belly for five days, he departed this life, being in the fifty-fourth year of his age, and the seventh year of his reign; for he reigned
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four years under Caius Caesar, three of them were over Philip's tetrarchy only, and on the fourth he had that of Herod added to it; and he reigned besides those, three years under the reign of Claudius Caesar; in which time he reigned over the fore-mentioned countries, and also had Judea added to them, as also Samaria and Cesarea. The revenues that he received out of them were very great, no less than twelve millions of drachmae. Yet did he borrow great sums from others; for he was so very liberal, that his expenses exceeded his income; and his generosity was boundless" (*Antiquities of the Jews*, Book 19, Chapter 8, Section 2, pp.412f).

3. Verses 20-21: "And he was driven from the sons of men; and his heart was made like the beasts, and his dwelling was with the wild asses: they fed him with grass like oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven; till he knew that the most high God ruled in the kingdom of men, and that he appointeth over it whomsoever he will" (KJV). "But when his heart was lifted up, and his spirit was hardened so that he dealt proudly, he was deposed from his kingly throne, and they took his glory from him: and he was driven from the sons of men, and his heart was made like the beasts', and his dwelling was with the wild asses; he was fed with grass like oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven; until he knew that the Most High God ruleth in the kingdom of men, and that he setteth up over it whomsoever he will" (ASV).
 - a. Daniel reminds this lesser king of the harsh experiences to which God subjected the great king. This man undoubtedly knew of Nebuchadnezzar's downfall and restoration. We are given the words of Nebuchadnezzar in Daniel 4:34-37: "And at the end of the days I Nebuchadnezzar lifted up mine eyes unto heaven, and mine understanding returned unto me, and I blessed the most High, and I praised and honoured him that liveth for ever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom is from generation to generation: And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou? At the same time my reason returned unto me; and for the glory of my kingdom, mine honour and brightness returned unto me; and my counsellors and my lords sought unto me; and I was established in my kingdom, and excellent majesty was added unto me. Now I Nebuchadnezzar praise and extol and honour the King of heaven, all whose works are truth, and his ways judgment: and those that walk in pride he is able to abase."
 - b. The debasement of Nebuchadnezzar continued for an unspecified amount of time—till he learned the lesson God demonstrated to him by his having to live amid the wild beasts of the field and to endure the harshness of the weather. "This state of Nebuchadnezzar continued until he knew and acknowledged that the Most High ruled in the kingdom of men, and gave it to whomsoever he would. This explains the 'seven times' mentioned before. The phrase does not designate a specific period of time, but a sufficient length of time to accomplish a specific purpose of God" (Hailey, p.101).
 - c. Nebuchadnezzar was given his kingly authority by Jehovah; what God gave, he could also remove. Earthly rulers frequently over-reach their God-given power; when they do, they can expect to reap the proper penalty for their misuse of authority.
 - d. This was the lesson Belshazzar needed to learn, although in his case, it was too late to do him any good. His death on that very occasion brought to an end of the Babylonian Empire.
 4. Verses 22-23: "And thou his son, O Belshazzar, hast not humbled thine heart, though thou knewest all this; But hast lifted up thyself against the Lord of heaven; and they have brought the vessels of his house before thee, and thou, and thy lords, thy wives, and thy concubines, have drunk wine in them; and thou hast praised the gods of silver, and gold, of brass, iron, wood, and stone, which see not, nor hear, nor know: and the God in whose hand thy breath is, and whose are all thy ways, hast thou not glorified."
 - a. Daniel brings the point of his comments into focus. Although this young king had known what had happened to the great king, he had not humbled his own heart. He should have long before learned this highly-important lesson.
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- b. This is a plain-spoken indictment, which is uttered with a forthrightness that had, no doubt, never before been experienced by the king. “His son” need not be understood in the most literal sense though we believe that this meaning is entirely allowable here....The record of such an experience as Nebuchadnezzar’s was could not have perished so soon. Belshazzar is not to be excused on any score. He is now told exactly what his deed amounts to in the matter of fetching and using the Jerusalem vessels. Despite the plain-spoken bluntness of these words there is nothing unseemly or insolent on Daniel’s part. He states his charges in a purely objective way: the king became arrogant; he sinned against God; he led others to do the same; he defiantly extolled his dead and dumb idols. This charge against the idols is particularly effective; and it must have required remarkable courage to deliver it (cf. Ps. 115:5ff; 135:15ff; Deut. 4:28; Rev. 9:20) Belshazzar’s sin is evaluated as failure to do what so obviously ought to have been done, and for the doing of which the king had ample knowledge and incentive. This part of the king’s guilt is a sin of omission. This explains why God sent agents to transmit a message to the king. This preliminary explanation was, in a sense, more necessary for Belshazzar than was the interpretation of the handwriting. Or, to be more exact, this was the initial part of the explanation; this explained the broader purpose. The handwriting was the climax of the divine message.¹
- c. In Belshazzar’s particular case, God saw the necessity of taking quick and decisive action against the king’s insolence toward the Almighty. What an insult it was for the holy vessels from the holy temple at Jerusalem to be so scandalously and irreverently used, to praise the man-made “gods” of Babylon!
- d. Compare: “And when he was come nigh, even now at the descent of the mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works that they had seen; Saying, Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord: peace in heaven, and glory in the highest. And some of the Pharisees from among the multitude said unto him, Master, rebuke thy disciples. And he answered and said unto them, I tell you that, if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out” (Luke 19:37-40). The grand occasion of the Lord’s triumphant entry into Jerusalem was such that this kind of glorious welcome was demanded! If the people had not spontaneously sang out this greeting, the inanimate stones would have been given voice to salute the Lord.

5. Verse 24: “Then was the part of the hand sent from him; and this writing was written.”

- a. When Belshazzar exalted himself as he had done on this highly significant occasion, then God sent forth fingers of a hand to inscribe the mysterious message on the wall! The one action occasioned the other.
- b. The stage was now fully set for the prophet to reveal the meaning of the miraculous message.

E. Daniel 5:25-29: The Message on the Wall Interpreted to Belshazzar.

1. Verse 25: “And this is the writing that was written, MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN.”

- a. Evidently the writing was still visible. Daniel was given the ability to translate the meaning of the words that had appeared. No one present (except Daniel, with his supernatural gift) could understand the message.
- b. Barnes observed: The Babylonians, it would seem, were unacquainted with the "characters" that were used, and of course unable to understand the meaning. See Dan 5:8. The first thing, therefore, for Daniel to do was to read the writing, and this he was able to do without difficulty, probably, as already remarked, because it was in the ancient Hebrew character—a character quite familiar to him, though not known to the Babylonians, whom Belshazzar consulted.

¹ Leupold, H. C. (1949). *Exposition of Daniel* (pp. 232–233). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House.

- c. In the interpretation, it should be noticed that Daniel read the last word as Peres, instead of U-Pharsin. The reason for this was that, "The `U' in Aramaic is a simple connective such as `and.' The `Ph' is an aspiration of `P' to accommodate the preceding vowel sound....The words could be pointed in two different directions, thus making two different meanings of the passage possible. The two meanings are (1) "a mina, a mina, a half shekel (Tekel = shekel), and half minas.... (2) The other meaning is that given in the passage above. Keil noted, however that "divided" in the meaning of PERES does not mean merely, cut in two. "The word means to divide into pieces or to dissolve the kingdom....We would say that it was to be shattered or smashed [Coffman].
- d. There is something designedly striking about the handwriting. This is the so-called lapidary style in its perfection. The words, strange though they seem, are no sooner heard than they are remembered. Equally clear-cut and just as readily remembered is the interpretation. The brevity of the message plus the terseness of the interpretation at the same time have a note of unquestioned authority. Furthermore, this is the verdict on all human pride and achievement apart from God. This sentence contains an irrevocable doom that is ringing to eternity. As to form *mene* ' is the passive participle of *menah*, "to number." There is a kind of double meaning in the verb "to number." It means not only, "to count" but "to fix the limit of" as is also the case in our common expression that a man's days are "numbered." Here it is the kingdom that is numbered: a count of it, so to say, has been made, and it has been found to equal its total assignment, and so God "hath determined its destruction," *hashlemah*, a Haphel, literally = "caused to be completed." The "kingdom" signifies the Chaldean Empire, which, like all empires, was a conglomerate of many smaller kingdoms, principalities, or states. This human handiwork was destined to destruction. Others will come along and will reassemble the parts after a different pattern.¹
2. Verse 26: "This is the interpretation of the thing: MENE; God hath numbered thy kingdom, and finished it."
- a. The final period had been placed on the Chaldean Empire. If we measure its beginning at the point that Nineveh was destroyed (612 B.C.), with its end fixed at 539 B.C., it lasted less than seventy-five years.
- b. In association with the Medes, the Persians conquered Babylon the very night this chapter details, and assembled the various nations and kingdoms which had been brought under the hard rule of the Babylonians. The Medo-Persian Empire now replaced Nebuchadnezzar, who was depicted in the great dream of Daniel Two as the "head of gold."
- c. Acts 17:26: "And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation."
- 1) God determined the times and bounds of the nations. God is not so distant, unconcerned, and uninvolved with mankind as the philosophers thought. He has worked behind the scenes in various ways to direct the different nations into the places in which they were to dwell, and has set limits to the times of their existence as nations and the influence they will exert. Some have continued to our day and some have lost their identity as distinct nations. "The Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will" (Dan. 4:32).
- 2) God had already determined and revealed that Nebuchadnezzar's Babylonian Empire would be superseded by another kingdom, great but inferior to that of Babylon. The Grecian and Roman Empires followed in keeping with the interpretation God revealed through Daniel, in chapter two. The empire of Rome (the western part of it) came to an end in 476 A.D. A thousand years of darkness and confusion followed the collapse of Rome.

¹ Leupold, H. C. (1949). *Exposition of Daniel* (pp. 233–236). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House.

- 3) Countless other empires, nations, kingdoms and societies have come and gone from the earth. Even our great American nation will some day lose its power. We do not know the future, but it is likely that our country will eventually be divided into many partitions, losing not only our cohesiveness, but also our power. Let us pray that such a calamity may not come upon us.
3. Verse 27: “TEKEL; Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting.”
- a. *Tekel* is a passive participle form that is built after the analogy of or is fashioned to conform to the vowels of *mene*’.... Since it means to “weigh,” the thought is that the king has been weighed in the balances to test, as it were, whether he is of full weight, or whether he fully conforms to the standard. A double meaning quite naturally suggests itself here, for weighing may result in detecting inadequacy, which is the verdict pronounced with reference to the king: “Thou hast been found wanting.” The king does not measure up to the divine specifications for a man who is to fill this responsible position. On God’s weighing compare 1 Sam. 2:3; Job 31:6; Ps. 62:9; Prov. 16:2, etc. ¹
- 1) 1 Samuel 2:3: “Talk no more so exceeding proudly; let not arrogancy come out of your mouth: for the LORD is a God of knowledge, and by him actions are weighed.”
- 2) Job 31:6: “Let me be weighed in an even balance, that God may know mine integrity.”
- 3) Psalms 62:9: “Surely men of low degree are vanity, and men of high degree are a lie: to be laid in the balance, they are altogether lighter than vanity.”
- 4) Proverbs 16:2: “All the ways of a man are clean in his own eyes; but the LORD weigheth the spirits.”
4. Verse 28: “PERES; Thy kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians.”
- a. *Peres* is used as the third word although *upharsin* had been used in the first reading. The *u* of the original form is the customary conjunction “and.” *Pharsin* is merely the plural form of *peres*, which again, as to vowels, is patterned after *mene*. The two forms used here suggest a double meaning. The verb *peras* as such means “break or divide.” If we then render *peres* “divided” (*A. V.*), that means, of course, “broken up” into its constituent parts; and so we have translated “broken.” But *paras* as such also means the “Persian”; *parsin* or *pharsin* is merely a plural, “Persians.” It is given to Daniel to discern that this means that the kingdom is to be “given to the Medes and Persians” after it has been broken up. This sequence: “Medes” first, then “Persians,” indicates a point of historical accuracy that fits in beautifully with the idea of Daniel’s authorship of the book. The supremacy in this dual kingdom remained but a short time with the Medes and that while Daniel was still on the scene, and then passed permanently to the Persians, a fine point that a writer who lived in the Maccabean age would hardly have thought of recording. Yet the form *upharsin*, “Persians,” gives the emphasis to the much longer Persian supremacy. Though this interpretation is convincing, and though no man apparently doubted it when Daniel spoke it, yet it is like divine revelation generally in this respect, that no man can discern it by himself, but after it is given it is found to be simple and clear. [*ibid.*].
- b. “The meaning of those three mysterious words of this passage may be reduced to only three words in English, as follows: NUMBERED; WEIGHED, and DIVIDED, or NUMBERED; WEIGHED; AND SMASHED” (Coffman).
5. Verse 29: “Then commanded Belshazzar, and they clothed Daniel with scarlet, and put a chain of gold about his neck, and made a proclamation concerning him, that he should be the third ruler in the kingdom.”
- a. Daniel had already stated that he did not want the rewards and favors the king had vowed to give him, but these awards were thrust upon him anyway. Nabonidus was the real ruler over the empire, but he

¹ Leupold, H. C. (1949). *Exposition of Daniel* (pp. 233–236). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House.

was not present. Belshazzar was under his father Nabonidus and Daniel was elevated to the number three authority figure. We are not told why the prophet changed his mind and accepted the gifts. Perhaps this new position would put him in better standing with the new empire which was set to appear.

- b. As the next passage will report, Belshazzar was slain that very night. Nabonidus was not present when the invaders entered the city and took over.

F. Daniel 5:30-31: Belshazzar Was Slain and Darius Took Over the Kingdom.

1. Verse 30: "In that night was Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans slain."

- a. Herodotus, the Greek historian who wrote about 450 B.C., gave this report of the capture of Babylon:

- 1) Cyrus, with the first approach of the ensuing spring, marched forward against Babylon. The Babylonians, encamped without their walls, awaited his coming. A battle was fought at a short distance from the city, in which the Babylonians were defeated by the Persian king, whereupon they withdrew within their defences. Here they shut themselves up, and made light of his siege, having laid in a store of provisions for many years in preparation against this attack; for when they saw Cyrus conquering nation after nation, they were convinced that he would never stop, and that their turn would come at last.

- 2) Cyrus was now reduced to great perplexity, as time went on and he made no progress against the place. In this distress either some one made the suggestion to him, or he bethought himself of a plan, which he proceeded to put in execution. He placed a portion of his army at the point where the river enters the city, and another body at the back of the place where it issues forth, with orders to march into the town by the bed of the stream, as soon as the water became shallow enough: he then himself drew off with the unwarlike portion of his host, and made for the place where Nitocris dug the basin for the river, where he did exactly what she had done formerly: he turned the Euphrates by a canal into the basin, which was then a marsh, on which the river sank to such an extent that the natural bed of the stream became fordable.

- 3) Hereupon the Persians who had been left for the purpose at Babylon by the, river-side, entered the stream, which had now sunk so as to reach about midway up a man's thigh, and thus got into the town. Had the Babylonians been apprised of what Cyrus was about, or had they noticed their danger, they would never have allowed the Persians to enter the city, but would have destroyed them utterly; for they would have made fast all the street-gates which gave upon the river, and mounting upon the walls along both sides of the stream, would so have caught the enemy, as it were, in a trap. But, as it was, the Persians came upon them by surprise and so took the city. Owing to the vast size of the place, the inhabitants of the central parts (as the residents at Babylon declare) long after the outer portions of the town were taken, knew nothing of what had chanced, but as they were engaged in a festival, continued dancing and revelling until they learnt the capture but too certainly. Such, then, were the circumstances of the first taking of Babylon.

- b. The Medo-Persian army captured city, but without destroying it.

- 1) The destruction of Babylon was gradual. It had not become an utter desert in the time of the apostles. In the first century of the Christian era a part of it was inhabited, though the greater portion of its former site was a waste (Barnes). Peter reports that he was at Babylon when he wrote his first epistle: "The church that is at Babylon, elected together with you, saluteth you; and so doth Marcus my son" (1 Pet. 5:13). There is not reason given in the context to understand the reference to *Babylon* other than to the Old Testament city which bore that name. One of the most basic rules of Biblical interpretation is to understand a word or statement as literal, unless there is a clear indication in the context that demands it to be understood as figurative. Even though Babylon may have been reduced to a small town in size by the first century, there could still have

- been a sufficient number of citizens from which a congregation of Christians could be formed.
- 2) The "second" capture of Babylon by Darius Hystaspes. Cyrus was not the destroyer of the city, but he rather sought to preserve its magnificence, and to perpetuate its pre-eminence among the nations. He left it to his successor in all its strength and magnificence. But, after his death, it rebelled against Darius, and bade defiance to the power of the whole Persian empire. Fully resolved not to yield, they adopted the resolution of putting every woman in the city to death, with the exception of their mothers and one female, the best beloved in every family, to bake their bread. All the rest, says Herodotus (iii. 150), were assembled together and strangled.
 - a) The city was taken at that time by Darius, by the aid of Zopyrus, son of Megabyzus, who, in order to do it, mutilated himself beyond the power of recovery. He cut off his nose and ears, and having scourged himself severely, presented himself before Darius. He proposed to Darius to enter the city, apparently as a deserter who had been cruelly treated by Darius, and to deliver the city into his hands. He was one of the chief nobles of Persia; was admitted in this manner within the walls; represented himself as having been punished because he advised Darius to raise the siege; was admitted to the confidence of the Babylonians; and was finally entrusted with an important military command. After several successful conflicts with the Persians, and when it was supposed his fidelity had been fully tried, he was raised to the chief command of the army; and was appointed to the responsible office of [*teichofulax*], or guardian of the walls.
 - b) Having obtained this object, he opened the gates of Babylon to the Persian army, as he had designed, and the city was taken without difficulty (Herod. iii. 153-160). As soon as Darius had taken the city, he 'leveled the walls, and took away the gates, neither of which things had Cyrus done before. Three thousand of the most distinguished of the nobility he ordered to be crucified; the rest he suffered to remain.' — (Herod. iii. 159.) [Barnes' Notes, Electronic Database Copyright © 1997, 2003, 2005, 2006 by Biblesoft].
 - c. The Old Testament predicted the downfall of the Babylonian Empire:
 - 1) Jeremiah 51:31: "One post shall run to meet another, and one messenger to meet another, to shew the king of Babylon that his city is taken at one end." As cited above, when the army of Cyrus got into Babylon, they conquered the defenders near their riverbed entrances first, before those attending Belshazzar's great festivities even knew of the danger. Does it not appear likely that Jeremiah suggested such in this very prophecy?
 - 2) Isaiah 13:19-20: "And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation: neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there; neither shall the shepherds make their fold there."
 - 3) Isaiah 14:3-6: "And it shall come to pass in the day that the LORD shall give thee rest from thy sorrow, and from thy fear, and from the hard bondage wherein thou wast made to serve, That thou shalt take up this proverb against the king of Babylon, and say, How hath the oppressor ceased! the golden city ceased! The LORD hath broken the staff of the wicked, and the sceptre of the rulers. He who smote the people in wrath with a continual stroke, he that ruled the nations in anger, is persecuted, and none hindereth."
 - 4) Jeremiah 50:1-3: "The word that the LORD spake against Babylon and against the land of the Chaldeans by Jeremiah the prophet. Declare ye among the nations, and publish, and set up a standard; publish, and conceal not: say, Babylon is taken, Bel is confounded, Merodach is broken in pieces; her idols are confounded, her images are broken in pieces. For out of the north there cometh up a nation against her, which shall make her land desolate, and none shall dwell therein: they shall remove, they shall depart, both man and beast."
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2. Verse 31: "And Darius the Median took the kingdom, being about threescore and two years old."
 - a. "Darius did not take the Median kingdom; Darius the Mede took the kingdom for the Medo-Persians. No 'Median kingdom' is in the passage. It was just like saying that Eisenhower the Texan took the presidency! or that William the Frenchman took the kingdom of England in 1066" (Coffman).
 - b. Who was this Darius the Mede?
 - 1) Hailey offers these comments about John C. Whitcomb's *Darius the Mede*: "The most convincing book that I have read....Whitcomb began by quoting every passage in the Bible that pertained to Darius the Mede. He followed by quoting the letters and monument inscriptions in which a governor, Gubaru was named. Whitcomb paralleled likeness between Darius and what is said about Gubaru. The writer proceeded by meeting objections to his view that Gubaru was the most likely historical character for the Biblical Darius the Mede of Biblical fame" (p106).
 - 2) According to historical records a man named Gubaru, a Mede, was appointed by King Cyrus to be ruler in Babylon at this time. Gubaru was born in 601 B.C. which would make him 62 years old when he invaded Babylon. Exactly the age found in Daniel 5:31. The Babylonian record of Darius the Mede's conquest of Babylon is given below: "In the month of Tashritu, at the time when Cyrus battled the forces of Akkad in Opis on the Tigris river, the citizens of Akkad revolted against him, but Nabonidus scattered his opposition with a great slaughter. On the 14th day, Sippar was taken without a fight. Nabonidus then fled for his life. On the 16th day, Gubaru (Darius the Mede) the leader of Gutium along with the army of Cyrus entered Babylon without any opposition. Later they arrested Nabonidus when he returned to Babylon. On the third day of the month of Arahshamnu, Cyrus marched into Babylon, and they laid down green branches in front of him. The city was no longer at war, Peace being restored. Cyrus then sent his best wishes to the residents living there. His governor, Gubaru, then installed leaders to govern over all Babylon." BM35382. This account says that Darius the Mede installed sub-governors in Babylon. The Bible says the same thing, and the prophet Daniel was one of them: "It pleased Darius to set over the kingdom one hundred and twenty satraps, to be over the whole kingdom; and over these, three governors, of whom Daniel was one, that the satraps might give account to them, so that the king would suffer no loss. Then this Daniel distinguished himself above the governors and satraps, because an excellent spirit was in him; and the king gave thought to setting him over the whole realm. So the governors and satraps sought to find some charge against Daniel concerning the kingdom; but they could find no charge or fault, because he was faithful; nor was there any error or fault found in him" (Daniel 6:1-4). [This internet quotation is from a chapter of "Bible Believer's Archaeology"].
 - c. Leupold provides the excellent remarks regarding Darius the Mede:
 - 1) At this point another major problem crowds into the forefront: "Who was Darius the Mede?" The monuments do not happen to know him by that name, at least the monuments discovered thus far. Over against that fact the other well-established fact should be remembered, viz., that in those days men often went under more than one name. We believe that the evidence points convincingly to the person of Gobryas of Gutium, the man who was appointed by Cyrus to rule Babylon after he himself (Cyrus) had entered the city. *Wilson* has given the most exhaustive and satisfactory treatment of the subject that we have. From him we cull the following major items that remove the bulk of the difficulties. Though Darius is called the Mede, that need not conflict with the fact that the "Chronicle" calls him "governor of the land of Gutium," for Gutium and Media were adjacent to one another, and he who ruled the one land may well have come from the other. Furthermore, when 6:1 tells us that he received "the kingdom," this is defined in 9:1 as "the realm of the Chaldeans." This Chaldean realm is, however, in no sense identical with the Medo-Persian Empire but merely a segment of it, over which Gobryas (Darius) ruled under the supreme ruler,

Cyrus.

- 2) It is surely significant that it is not asserted of Darius the Mede that he secured this kingdom in his own right. He merely “received” it (*German: ueberkam*), and that at the hands of Cyrus as we read elsewhere. This verb *qabbel* does not eliminate Cyrus but rather makes room for him....Our claim still stands that the expression used is not out of harmony with the idea that Cyrus appointed Gobryas king over Chaldæa.
 - 3) It should be pointed out also that we are not dealing with a writer who does not know his history and so is perhaps guilty of confusing Darius the Mede with the later Darius I called Hystaspis, who, as is well known, came to the throne in 521 B. C. and reigned till about 485, and not from 538 on, when Babylon was captured by Cyrus.
 - 4) Most of the difficulties have arisen from attempts to impute to Daniel’s book certain thoughts that are surely not contained in the words used, and so do not deal fairly with the evidence submitted. One reason Daniel may have preferred to use the designation “Darius the *Mede*” seems to have been the fact that that name most strikingly confirmed what he had predicted, viz., that the kingdom would pass into the hands of the “Medes and Persians” (v. 28). This would have been all the more fitting if Belshazzar is regarded as king only over Babylon and not over the whole realm....
 - 5) From all this we see quite readily why it is very proper to append this verse [6:1] to the conclusion of chapter 5. It is only when one acts on the supposition that a later Darius like Darius Hystaspis, who came to the throne some twenty years later is meant, that one feels any need of setting this verse apart from what precedes. But if the truth of the matter is, as we very strongly contend, that on the night when Belshazzar was slain, Cyrus actually took the city and then very naturally as a direct sequence of this gave the rule of the Chaldean kingdom (9:1) to this subordinate of his, Darius the Mede, then, we say, chapter 5 should close with the report concerning this adjustment. The Hebrew chapter arrangement, as well as the German, is therefore not the happiest....
 - 6) At the same time we see the reason for the insertion of the age of Darius. Since he was sixty-two at the time, we realize at once that he cannot have continued in office very long. Yet as the favorite of the conqueror Cyrus he deserved this recognition, to be given a distinctive position of honor in the new imperial setup. Incidentally, the original does not say “*about* sixty-two” but just “sixty-two.” So v. 30 and 6:1 furnish a striking conclusion of the whole episode: the insolence of a king, who very aptly represents the degenerate world power, is effectively overthrown.¹
- d. If the modernists are right, and the Darius of this passage is Darius Hystaspis, who ruled until 438 B.C., there is a significant problem for them. The Bible specifically says Darius was 62 years old when he became king; that means he would have been 115 when he died—a very advanced age for one to live at that period of history.

¹ Leupold, H. C. (1949). *Exposition of Daniel* (pp. 237–242). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House.

Daniel 6

A. Daniel 6:1-9: Daniel Becomes Head of a Group of Three Presidents to Serve the King.

1. Verse 1: "It pleased Darius to set over the kingdom an hundred and twenty princes, which should be over the whole kingdom."
 - a. With the thoughts presented at the end of chapter five in the background, Darius had been given the rule over Babylon. By whom was it given? Evidently by Cyrus, the supreme ruler over the newly-founded Medo-Persian Empire.
 - b. Secular historians of ancient times listed widely-differing numbers of princes [*satraps*], conflicting with the number here stated by Daniel. Bible critics are quick to denounce the inspired record as being in error. "We only mention this here to suggest that before the critics can criticize the number of satraps mentioned here, they should first straighten out all the profane historians on the same subject. The big point in this passage is the ability and consequent popularity of Daniel with the new king Darius. Darius was even considering the appointment of Daniel as prime minister over the whole of his realm. When Daniel's peers learned of this, they were filled with envy and jealousy and immediately laid a trap which they hoped would lead to his destruction" (Coffman).
 - c. Cyrus II, The Great. The founder of the mighty Persian Empire ascended the throne of Anshan c. 559 BC. Astyages, the Mede, was conquered by Cyrus who took Ecbatana. Henceforth Cyrus grew greater and greater with Parsa taking the lead, Media coming second, and Elam third. The supremacy of the Persians was hereafter established, although the Medes continued to be held in high esteem. Reference is made in Scripture to "Persia and Media" (Est 1:19), as well as "the Medes and Persians" (Dan 5:28). With lightning-like rapidity Cyrus extended his conquests, defeating Croesus of Lydia (c. 546 BC) and Babylon (539 BC), thus establishing the mighty Persian Empire. Cyrus was a remarkably humane leader (cf. Isa 45:1-4). It was he who issued the decree restoring the Jews to their homeland (2 Chron 36:22-23; Ezra 1:2-4). Archaeology has demonstrated that Cyrus's concession to the exiles was not an isolated account of generosity but a general policy of a remarkably beneficent leader of winning the favor of his new subjects by showing consideration for their religious beliefs. Cyrus's capital was Pasargadae in the land of Parsa. On his ruined palace can still be read the repeated words, "I, Cyrus the king, the Achaemenid." Cyrus was killed in battle in 530 BC His body was returned to Pasargadae and buried in a tomb that is still extant. Plutarch (c. A.D. 46-120) says the inscription on the tomb ran thus: "O man, whosoever thou art and whensoever thou comest, for I know that thou wilt come, I am Cyrus and I won for the Persians their empire. Do not, therefore, begrudge me this little earth which covers my body." [WebSite].
 - d. Compare: "'Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled, the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing, saying, Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, The LORD God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth; and he hath charged me to build him an house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah" (Ezra 1:1-2).
 - 1) The background for the book of Ezra is 2 Chronicles 36:14-23, which gives the overall details of Judah's fall from God's grace, their subsequent capture by the Babylonians, and deportation to the land of their captivity. "Moreover all the chief of the priests, and the people, transgressed very much after all the abominations of the heathen; and polluted the house of the LORD which he had hallowed in Jerusalem. And the LORD God of their fathers sent to them by his messengers, rising up betimes, and sending; because he had compassion on his people, and on his dwelling place: But they mocked the messengers of God, and despised his words, and misused his prophets, until the wrath of the LORD arose against his people, till there was no remedy. Therefore he brought upon them the king of the Chaldees, who slew their young men with the sword in the house of

- their sanctuary, and had no compassion upon young man or maiden, old man, or him that stooped for age: he gave them all into his hand. And all the vessels of the house of God, great and small, and the treasures of the house of the LORD, and the treasures of the king, and of his princes; all these he brought to Babylon. And they burnt the house of God, and brake down the wall of Jerusalem, and burnt all the palaces thereof with fire, and destroyed all the goodly vessels thereof. And them that had escaped from the sword carried he away to Babylon; where they were servants to him and his sons until the reign of the kingdom of Persia: To fulfil the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed her sabbaths: for as long as she lay desolate she kept sabbath, to fulfil threescore and ten years. Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the LORD spoken by the mouth of Jeremiah might be accomplished, the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing, saying, Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, All the kingdoms of the earth hath the LORD God of heaven given me; and he hath charged me to build him an house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Who is there among you of all his people? The LORD his God be with him, and let him go up” (2 Chron. 36:14-23).
- e. Cyrus "had been king of Persia for many years before the issuing of his remarkable edict concerning the emancipation and restoration of the Jews; and therefore the words 'in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia,' must, in accordance with ch. 5.13, be interpreted as meaning, not the beginning of his reign, but the first year of his acquisition of Babylon" (JFB, Vol. I, p.581).
- f. In keeping with the prophetic proclamation made by Jeremiah, God stirred up the spirit of Cyrus so that he issued the decree giving the Jews permission and means to return to their land (Jer. 25:12; 29:10). Jeremiah had predicted that the captivity would come and would last seventy years.
- 1) Jeremiah 25:12: “And it shall come to pass, when seventy years are accomplished, that I will punish the king of Babylon, and that nation, saith the LORD, for their iniquity, and the land of the Chaldeans, and will make it perpetual desolations.”
 - 2) Jeremiah 29:10: “For thus saith the LORD, That after seventy years be accomplished at Babylon I will visit you, and perform my good word toward you, in causing you to return to this place.”
 - 3) Figuring the beginning of the captivity to in 606 B.C. when the Babylonians first conquered Jerusalem, to the actual return of the first captives in 536 B.C., the seventy years are clearly identified.
- g. How did God stir up Cyrus? The text does not give a direct answer, but Josephus described the most likely means. Isaiah 44:28 and 45:1ff, spoken nearly two centuries earlier, called Cyrus by name, and spoke of his releasing the Jews from their captivity; even the captivity had not occurred at the time of Isaiah.
- 1) Isaiah 44:28: “That saith of Cyrus, He is my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure: even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built; and to the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid.”
 - 2) Isaiah 45:1-4: “Thus saith the LORD to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him; and I will loose the loins of kings, to open before him the two leaved gates; and the gates shall not be shut; I will go before thee, and make the crooked places straight: I will break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron: And I will give thee the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of secret places, that thou mayest know that I, the LORD, which call thee by thy name, am the God of Israel. For Jacob my servant's sake, and Israel mine elect, I have even called thee by thy name: I have surnamed thee, though thou hast not known me.”
 - 3) Josephus gives some information that sheds light on the matter. He quotes a statement that Cyrus had made in issuing the decree: "Thus saith Cyrus the king: Since God Almighty has appointed
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- me to be king of the habitable earth, I believe that he is the God which the nation of the Israelites worship; for indeed he foretold my name by the prophets, and that I should build him a house at Jerusalem, in the country of Judea" (Antiquities 11:1.1). Josephus adds: "This was known to Cyrus by his reading the book which Isaiah left behind him of his prophecies..."(11.1.2).
- 4) Someone, perhaps Daniel who lived until the first year of Cyrus (Dan. 1:21), showed Isaiah's prophecy to the king. Undoubtedly, this would have made a profound impression on him, and could have stirred him up to give the Jews their freedom to return to Palestine.
 - h. Speaking of Jehovah, Cyrus proclaimed that God had given him all the kingdoms of the earth, and had charged him with the responsibility of building him a house at Jerusalem. The kingdom of the Medo-Persian Empire stretched from Ethiopia to India.
2. Verses 2-3: "And over these three presidents; of whom Daniel was first: that the princes might give accounts unto them, and the king should have no damage. Then this Daniel was preferred above the presidents and princes, because an excellent spirit was in him; and the king thought to set him over the whole realm."
- a. Using good political wisdom, Darius divided his realm into one hundred and twenty sections, and set over these divisions [princes; satraps] three presidents so that the king should receive his due. Darius was ruler over the Chaldeans, with Cyrus as supreme over the entire empire. Both Darius and Cyrus would receive whatever was due them in terms of taxes, tributes, honor, authority, etc.
 - b. Darius set three presidents over these one hundred and twenty satraps. Responsibility and authority descended from Cyrus, through Darius, through the three presidents and on down the chain of command to the satraps. It was a well-organized empire.
 - c. Daniel was placed in charge of the other two presidents, with Darius having the intention of setting this great man of God over his whole realm. Daniel's excellent spirit had exalted him in Darius' eyes. This expression has already been used in the book with reference to Daniel. He had an excellent spirit: he is noted for his wisdom and knowledge. We might also add that, morally and religiously, he was good and honest.
 - 1) He had the God-given power to interpret dreams, something that the Babylonian "wise men" did not possess. He could unravel hard statements, thus show their accurate meaning. Again, this would be one of God's supernatural gifts to Daniel. Compare: "To understand a proverb, and the interpretation; the words of the wise, and their dark sayings" (Prov. 1:6).
 - 2) He had the ability to dissolve doubts. The margin renderings say, a dissolver of knots. In Daniel's case, being a prophet of God, his ability in this vein would be miraculous. Human wisdom can explain some things to a certain point, but infallible interpretations came only from Heaven
 - d. Much time had passed since Daniel had been removed from Jerusalem—about sixty-eight years. He must have been well into his eighties by this time. It is usually assumed that he and his three friends were teenagers when they were taken to Babylon.
3. Verses 4-5: "Then the presidents and princes sought to find occasion against Daniel concerning the kingdom; but they could find none occasion nor fault; forasmuch as he was faithful, neither was there any error or fault found in him. Then said these men, We shall not find any occasion against this Daniel, except we find it against him concerning the law of his God."
- a. Righteous people are frequently attacked by those who perceive that they are less well-situated than the holy person. Our Lord was thus hated and opposed. So were Paul, the other apostles, and those others who sought to follow God. We live in such a villainous time as this today, when not only are faithful saints vilified for their holy conduct, but God's word, his Person, and his whole Cause is despised.
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- b. Often it is jealousy that causes the friction—someone has a position or honor that another craves for himself. “For he knew that for envy they had delivered him” (Matt. 27:18). Jesus was hated by the Jewish leaders in part because of his fame and influence with the people.
 - c. Those his enemies searched his life, record, words, demeanor, etc., Daniel’s enemies could find no fault in him. We may be sure that their examination was minute and thorough. “An honest man of conviction in the midst of government or ecclesiastical politicians stands out like a fair flower in a barren wilderness” (see Young, p.135).
 - d. They decided that the only vulnerability he had was through the law of his God. The Babylonians and their Persian masters were idolaters. While Nebuchadnezzar had finally learned the truth about the living God of Daniel, this current generation had yet to learn it.
4. Verse 6-7: “Then these presidents and princes assembled together to the king, and said thus unto him, King Darius, live for ever. All the presidents of the kingdom, the governors, and the princes, the counsellors, and the captains, have consulted together to establish a royal statute, and to make a firm decree, that whosoever shall ask a petition of any God or man for thirty days, save of thee, O king, he shall be cast into the den of lions.”
- a. The scheme his foes developed was to convince Darius to enact a law forbidding any citizen ask a petition of any “God” or man for the next thirty days; the penalty violation of this edict was that the culprit was to be cast into the den of lions. There was one feature of the rule which would appeal to Darius—any citizen could make a petition to the king.
 - b. This plan meant in effect that for the specified time Darius was to be seen as the only representative of Deity in that locality. This would certainly appeal to a worldly-minded individual who wanted all the adulation he could acquire from his subjects.
 - c. The fact that Darius fell for their ruse shows that he was a vain and weak man. Power corrupts. He already held great authority over Chaldea, with only Cyrus being his superior. With this new temporary status, he would have much about which to be proud! But it worked out to his own dismay.
 - d. The lions may have been kept in a secure place to have them handy for a regal hunt. We are not told the exact nature of the “den” in which the lions were held.
 - e. “The Sacred Scriptures make reference to the den of lions in the Book of Nahum; and the garden walls, as well as the avenues of approach to the palace in ancient Babylon were all beautifully decorated with magnificent bas-relief lions done in turquoise, gold, and yellow colors. The basis of the critical assault on this part of Daniel is their mistranslation of the lions' den, reading it as ‘cistern’ or ‘pit.’ The translators of all acceptable versions of God's Word reject such renditions. We do not have any detailed description of just exactly how ancient lions' dens were constructed; and the total ignorance of the critical community on the same subject is grounds enough for rejecting their ridiculous criticisms” (Coffman).
5. Verses 8-9: “Now, O king, establish the decree, and sign the writing, that it be not changed, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which altereth not. Wherefore king Darius signed the writing and the decree.”
- a. These evil men asked the king establish this decree and sign it into effect. There is no indication that he was given any significant amount of time to consider the implications and effects this law would have. He was pushed and even rushed into establishing the edict.
 - b. “The plotters make it appear that they are motivated by a solicitude for the king’s honor and position and so use persuasion upon him. All that seems to be needed to “establish the interdict” seems to be that the king ‘sign the document.’ This somewhat unusual attitude that what the king has made to be a law “may not be changed” seems to be an entirely logical deduction from the high position that the
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Persians were wont to attribute to their kings. If they were the earthly representatives of the deities and themselves divine, then their decrees ought to be irrevocable. The Bible makes further reference to this Persian conviction in Esther 1:19 and 8:8. A historical parallel is found in a case reported by Diodorus Siculus (see *Montgomery*) where King Darius III passes a sentence of death upon a certain Charidemus but immediately regrets having rendered the verdict but is unable to revoke his own decree. Of course, they who were scheming and plotting against Daniel had taken this feature into account and were banking on it to help them to achieve their purpose when the king should later discover their treachery.¹

- c. The Medes and Persians had an underlying law that no decree, once put into place, could ever be repealed. Much later, during the time of Esther, the king was led to issue an edict that all the Jews in his world empire should be slaughtered on a specific day. The solution to the problem was that the Jews were permitted to defend themselves.
 - 1) Esther 8:11-13: "Wherein the king granted the Jews which were in every city to gather themselves together, and to stand for their life, to destroy, to slay, and to cause to perish, all the power of the people and province that would assault them, both little ones and women, and to take the spoil of them for a prey, Upon one day in all the provinces of king Ahasuerus, namely, upon the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, which is the month Adar. The copy of the writing for a commandment to be given in every province was published unto all people, and that the Jews should be ready against that day to avenge themselves on their enemies."
 - a) The solution offered in the letters was very simple; it did not reverse the original edict, but it made it possible for the Jews to be delivered. The plan permitted the Jews to take up arms to defend themselves on the fateful day in which there were intended to be slain. Instead of standing by as docile sheep before the slaughter, they were vigorously to oppose the attackers.
 - b) Haman had created the original law about two months previously; the present law was processed about nine months before the first was to be executed. The fateful day was the 13th day of the 12th month.
 - 2) Esther 9:1-2: "Now in the twelfth month, that is, the month Adar, on the thirteenth day of the same, when the king's commandment and his decree drew near to be put in execution, in the day that the enemies of the Jews hoped to have power over them, (though it was turned to the contrary, that the Jews had rule over them that hated them;) The Jews gathered themselves together in their cities throughout all the provinces of the king Ahasuerus, to lay hand on such as sought their hurt: and no man could withstand them; for the fear of them fell upon all people."
 - a) The portentous day finally arrived! It was perhaps about March 24th, according to our reckoning. There were many in the kingdom who hated the Jews, even as there are many today who harbor malice toward them.
 - b) Because of the influence of Mordecai which backed the Jews, and partly because of the Jews themselves, the people of the land feared the Jews. "The tenor of the second decree made it perfectly clear to Persian officials that the king, to say nothing of Mordecai, his prime minister, now favored the Jews. To have joined in the attack against the Jews now would surely have brought wrath upon them. Perhaps they remembered the fate of those rulers who had opposed the true wishes of Darius the Mede in a somewhat similar situation (Dan 6:24)" [The Wycliffe Bible Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright ©) 1962 by Moody Press].
- d. Bible students, young and old, know how God circumvented the present evil edict. The law was not changed, but heavenly protection preserved Daniel.

¹ Leupold, H. C. (1949). *Exposition of Daniel* (pp. 259–260). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House.

B. Daniel 6:10-17: Daniel is Condemned to the Den of Lions.

1. Verses 10-11: “Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house; and his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime. Then these men assembled, and found Daniel praying and making supplication before his God.”
 - a. Daniel knew all about the dangerous decree forbidding anyone in the king’s realm to pray to another deity. This did not deter him from his regular periods of prayer to Jehovah. The Talmud instructed that the Jews in foreign lands pray toward Jerusalem, and that persons in Jerusalem should pray toward the temple (see Coffman).
 - 1) He entered his house and went into his chamber and kneeled to pray unto God. He did this three time daily, as he had been doing all along. The window was open toward Jerusalem, and there he prayed, oblivious to any who might see and hear him. He was neither ashamed nor afraid. Under the Mosaic Law, a morning sacrifice was offered, incense was burned at mid-afternoon, and another religious period was at sunset. Doubtless, these were the times at which Daniel prayed.
 - 2) Perhaps he could have sought out a private place to pray in his house, out of sight and hearing of his enemies. This they might have suspected. But Daniel followed his established pattern. Likely they knew of the prophet’s prayer practice because he made no secret of his daily devotions.
 - 3) Such a devout man as Daniel would not have put his religion on display, to be seen by men. This is prohibited. “And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward” (Matt. 6:5).
 - b. The chamber may have been on the flat roof, perhaps having latticed windows in its sides, allowing cooling breezes to circulate through this special place of meditation. If there was lattice-work in the window openings, the spies could still see and hear Daniel as he prayed. Compare: “And he said unto her, Give me thy son. And he took him out of her bosom, and carried him up into a loft, where he abode, and laid him upon his own bed” (1 Kings 17:19).
 - c. “Daniel's constant adherence to this practice, even when it was made by the law a capital crime. When he knew that the writing was signed he continued to do as he did aforetime, and altered not one circumstance of the performance. Many a man, yea, and many a good man, would have thought it prudence to omit it for these thirty days, when he could not do it without hazard of his life; he might have prayed so much oftener when those days had expired and the danger was over, or he might have performed the duty at another time, and in another place, so secretly that it should not be possible for his enemies to discover it; and so he might both satisfy his conscience and keep up his communion with God, and yet avoid the law, and continue in his usefulness.
 - 1) “But, if he had done so, it would have been thought, both by his friends and by his enemies, that he had thrown up the duty for this time, through cowardice and base fear, which would have tended very much to the dishonour of God and the discouragement of his friends. Others who moved in a lower sphere might well enough act with caution; but Daniel, who had so many eyes upon him, must act with courage; and the rather because he knew that the law, when it was made, was particularly levelled against him.
 - 2) “Note, We must not omit duty for fear of suffering, so, nor so much as seems to come short of it. In trying times great stress is laid upon our confessing Christ before men (Matt 10:32), and we must take heed lest, under pretence of discretion, we be found guilty of cowardice in the cause of God. If we do not think that this example of Daniel obliges us to do likewise, yet I am sure it forbids us to censure those that do, for God owned him in it.
 - 3) “By his constancy to his duty it now appears that he had never been used to admit any excuse for

- the omission of it; for, if ever any excuse would serve to put it by, this would have served now, (1.) That it was forbidden by the king his master, and in honour of the king too; but it is an undoubted maxim, in answer to that, We are to obey God rather than men. (2.) That it would be the loss of his life, but it is an undoubted maxim, in answer to that, Those who throw away their souls (as those certainly do that live without prayer) to save their lives make but a bad bargain for themselves; and though herein they make themselves, like the king of Tyre, wiser than Daniel, at their end they will be fools” (Matthew Henry).
- d. We are told that the prophet gave thanks to God, as he had previously done. His homeland had been devastated by the Babylonians, who had slain great numbers of his fellow Hebrews, who had deported a large portion of the remaining population, along with Daniel and other young people deemed to be potentially useful to the Empire. For what could he be thankful? Many things.
- 1) He had been exalted to great authority among the Chaldeans, thus could have powerful influence to the Cause of Jehovah.
 - 2) His position would enable him to be of help to his captivated people.
 - 3) He was in a situation to influence some of the Babylonians in serving God. This he did with king Nebuchadnezzar.
- e. Daniel’s enemies came together and discovered him making supplication before God. It appears from this that they could both see and hear him in his devotions. “When Daniel’s enemies had secretly observed him prayer, they rushed into the house while he was offering his supplications, that they might apprehend him in the very act and be able to bring him to punishment. That the act of watching him is not particularly mentioned, since it is to be gathered from the context....” (Keil). There is some doubt whether they merely “assembled” or “rushed” into the house. Verse seven renders the word “consulted together” [*i.e.*, “acted in harmony and concert”].
2. Verses 12-13: “Then they came near, and spake before the king concerning the king’s decree; Hast thou not signed a decree, that every man that shall ask a petition of any God or man within thirty days, save of thee, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions? The king answered and said, The thing is true, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which altereth not. Then answered they and said before the king, That Daniel, which is of the children of the captivity of Judah, regardeth not thee, O king, nor the decree that thou hast signed, but maketh his petition three times a day.”
- a. Having obtained the necessary evidence, these enemies of truth wasted no time in bring their charge against Daniel before the king. They first asked him whether he had signed a decree prohibiting any man to ask a petition of any God or man for thirty days [except of the king himself]. By this approach, they got the king to put himself on record as having issued the edict.
 - b. The king admitted that the decree had been made official and that anyone violating it was to be cast into the den of lions. Clearly, this would result in the death of the culprit. And a law of the Medes and Persians could not be altered!
 - c. Then they sprung the trap on Daniel. “That Daniel” who was part of the captives taken from Judah by Nebuchadnezzar has violated your great edict! Daniel had been wisely exalted to great office in Babylon, but these scornful men depicted him as merely an exile, from an insignificant land. They appear to insinuate that this man cannot be trusted to fill a high office. If he would violate the king’s latest decree, thus insult his regal standing, he certainly needs to be punished. They allege that Daniel did not esteem either the king or his law. “The matter is thus presented in as bad a light as possible, a common trick of corrupt politicians” (Young, p.136).
 - d. This Daniel, they charge, has disregarded the law, and prays three times daily. This was an obvious breach of the law, and requires the specified penalty. They were supremely confident that their scheme and succeeded and that Daniel would be removed from his authoritative position. We remember that
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he was in charge of the other two men who had been exalted to the presidency (Dan. 6:1-4).

3. Verse 14: “Then the king, when he heard these words, was sore displeased with himself, and set his heart on Daniel to deliver him: and he laboured till the going down of the sun to deliver him.” “Then the king, when he heard these words, was sore displeased, and set his heart on Daniel to deliver him; and he labored till the going down of the sun to rescue him” (ASV).
 - a. The king was sorely displeased when he heard the charges against Daniel. The KJV says that he was displeased with himself; the ASV says he was sore displeased (without indicating toward whom the displeasure was directed).
 - 1) That he was not displeased with Daniel is clear from his efforts to acquit the prophet from the charges.
 - 2) That he was displeased with himself is apparent when we consider the fact that he enacted the foolish law (proposed by Daniel’s enemies). He could see now that he had acted prematurely. It is more fallacious to keep a foolish vow than to repudiate that vow; such commitments are often made without a full comprehension of its consequences. This writer knew a man who promised his mother on her deathbed that he would never leave his mother’s church. Later when he learned the truth, he would not repudiate his ill-considered promise.
 - 3) That he was displeased with these men who were hostile to Daniel is also obvious when we see how diligently resisted their efforts to execute the prophet. “The king’s reaction is not at all what they had hoped for. For when these words of theirs were spoken, it immediately became apparent to the king what the recent petition had involved, and what its ultimate purpose had been. To have the life of his favorite minister imperiled, and to see himself made a dupe of his other ministers, is surely enough to displease any man exceedingly” (Leopold).
 - b. “Darius was enough of a man and an independent monarch to attempt at once to extricate Daniel out of the danger into which his own lack of alertness had cast him. Since Oriental justice moves swiftly, the king had only till sundown to attempt this delivery. How he ‘strove’ to achieve his objective we can hardly say” (Leopold).
 - c. “In what way he sought to deliver him is not said. It would seem probable from the representation in the following verse, that it was by an inquiry whether the statute might not properly be changed or cancelled, or whether the penalty might not be commuted—for it is said that his counselors urged as a reason for the strict infliction of the punishment the absolute unchangeableness of the statute. Perhaps he inquired whether a precedent might not be found for the abrogation of a law enacted by a king by the same authority that enacted it; or whether it did not come within the king’s prerogative to change it; or whether the punishment might not be commuted without injury; or whether the evidence of the guilt was perfectly clear; or whether he might not be pardoned without anything being done to maintain the honor of the law. This is one of the most remarkable instances on record of the case of a monarch seeking to deliver a subject from punishment when the monarch had absolute power, and is a striking illustration of the difficulties which often arise in the administration of justice, where the law is absolute, and where justice seems to demand the infliction of the penalty, and yet where there are strong reasons why the penalty should not be inflicted...” (Barnes).
4. Verse 15: “Then these men assembled unto the king, and said unto the king, Know, O king, that the law of the Medes and Persians is, That no decree nor statute which the king establisheth may be changed.”
 - a. The prophet’s enemies kept harping on the fact that the law of the Medes and Persians cannot be changed after it has been established. The king himself had enacted the law in question, after he had been manipulated by these conniving leaders. He was caught in his own bear trap!
 - b. “We have sought to catch this thought by the use of the verb ‘belabor.’ One feature of the connotation of the verb remains the same: the importunity, the crudeness of their approach. This is further

indicated by the double use of the word 'king.' It was the *king* whom they unceremoniously took in hand. Of course, that inviolability of the Median and Persian law is their one stronghold from which they can never be driven" (Leupold).

- c. The king was very well aware of the extraordinary service that Daniel had rendered the kingdom, both while serving the Babylonian Empire and under the reign of Darius. There would be a great loss to everyone (but these wicked men) if the prophet was executed.
5. Verses 16-17: "Then the king commanded, and they brought Daniel, and cast him into the den of lions. Now the king spake and said unto Daniel, Thy God whom thou servest continually, he will deliver thee. And a stone was brought, and laid upon the mouth of the den; and the king sealed it with his own signet, and with the signet of his lords; that the purpose might not be changed concerning Daniel."
- a. Despite his many sincere efforts to spare the prophet, the king was still confronted by the unchangeable nature of the law he had been beguiled into enacting. He lived up to his obligations before the law. Daniel was cast into the den of lions.
 - b. The king knew of Daniel's devout service to Jehovah, perhaps having learned of the miraculous works done in behalf of the three companions (Dan. 3), and doubtless the various interpretations of dreams which the prophet had revealed. Darius placed his hope that Daniel's God would deliver him from the lions.
 - c. "And a stone was brought, and laid upon the mouth of the den. Probably a large flat stone sufficient to cover the mouth of the cave, and so heavy that Daniel could not remove it from within and escape. It was usual then, as it is now, to close up the entrance to sepulchres with a large stone. See John 11:38; Matt 27:60. It would be natural to endeavor to secure this vault or den in the same way-on the one hand so that Daniel could not escape from within, and on the other so that none of his friends could come and rescue him from without" (Barnes).
 - 1) John 11:38: "Jesus therefore again groaning in himself cometh to the grave. It was a cave, and a stone lay upon it."
 - 2) Matthew 27:60: "And laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn out in the rock: and he rolled a great stone to the door of the sepulchre, and departed."
 - 3) Jewish sepulchers were hewn out of solid rock; a groove was cut at the entrance so that a large, coin-shaped rock could be rolled into place to seal the tomb.
 - d. The design and dimensions of the den are not given. Perhaps it was a cave; maybe it was some sort of underground room. We are not told how many lions were present. They are commonly depicted as being large, male lions. It would be necessary to feed them from time to time, by throwing in pieces of animal flesh, or whole animals, or even people who were condemned to die. This would be a heinous and terrifying way to be executed!
 - e. The critical picture which is imported into the text here, alleging that this "den" was a little tiny cistern with a bottle top entrance that could be easily covered up with a single stone is ridiculous. The lions were kept in commodious quarters and were fed at regular intervals and occasionally released to provide quarry in a hunt in which the king participated. No one knows exactly the dimensions, or the arrangements of those "dens." The word "cistern" is a critical perversion of the text for the purpose of rendering it ridiculous. No reputable version of the Bible thus translates the word. (Coffman).
 - f. Whatever the configuration of the den, it was so fashioned that it could be sealed by a stone covering to prevent the lions from escaping and to prevent the release either of the lions or the criminal. Of course the stone could be removed, but not without legal authority. The stone was sealed officially by the signets of the king and the presidents. Daniel's fate was also sealed, unless Jehovah took action to protect him.
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C. Daniel 6:18-24: Daniel Was Delivered From the Lions and Removed From the Den.

1. Verses 18-19: “Then the king went to his palace, and passed the night fasting: neither were instruments of musick brought before him: and his sleep went from him. Then the king arose very early in the morning, and went in haste unto the den of lions.”
 - a. This passage shows the deep concern Darius had for Daniel. He fasted throughout the night; and though he could not sleep, the soothing tones of music were not brought into help him fall into a restful slumber. He spent a restless and sleepless night. Could it be that the king had mental pictures of what the lions were doing to his friend?
 - b. He arose very early in the morning and rushed to the den of lions. He wanted very much to find out about the prophet’s fate.
 - c. Compare: “In the end of the sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre” (Matt. 28:1).
 2. Verse 20: “And when he came to the den, he cried with a lamentable voice unto Daniel: and the king spake and said to Daniel, O Daniel, servant of the living God, is thy God, whom thou servest continually, able to deliver thee from the lions?”
 - a. The king’s one concern was whether the one hope in ten thousand was realized. He was religious enough to believe in the possibility of a miracle. He is still approaching the den when he begins to cry out. The distress of his heart is touchingly reflected in his voice; that is what “with a pitiable voice” means. Some interpreters have suggested the translation, “With a voice full of anxiety.” Instead of asking a very brief question such as one might have expected under the circumstances, the king makes a fuller statement which at the same time expresses the ground for hope that the king has in mind—Daniel’s faithful service of his God [Leupold].
 - b. Can anyone doubt the high esteem with which Darius held the prophet? He cried out as he neared the den, asking whether God had delivered him from the beasts. The king knew that the only power by which Daniel could have been spared was that of the Living God. It was clear to the king that Daniel served Jehovah continually.
 3. Verses 21-22: “Then said Daniel unto the king, O king, live for ever. My God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lions' mouths, that they have not hurt me: forasmuch as before him innocency was found in me; and also before thee, O king, have I done no hurt.”
 - a. Daniel did not keep the king in suspense; he reported that God had sent his angel to close the mouths of the lions, and that he had not been harmed by these ferocious beasts. We can imagine the happy effect the sound of Daniel’s voice had on Darius! Compare:
 - 1) Hebrews 11:33: “Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions.”
 - 2) Psalms 34:7: “The angel of the LORD encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them.”
 - 3) Psalms 91:11-13: “For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways. They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone. Thou shalt tread upon the lion and adder: the young lion and the dragon shalt thou trample under feet.” (Cf. Matt. 4:5-7).
 4. Verse 23: “Then was the king exceeding glad for him, and commanded that they should take Daniel up out of the den. So Daniel was taken up out of the den, and no manner of hurt was found upon him, because he believed in his God.”
 - a. What relief and gladness this news brought to the king! His friend and faithful supporter was safe! The evil scheme of Daniel’s adversaries had been defeated.
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- b. Daniel was removed from the lions' den; he had suffered no harm whatsoever. We remember that his three friends were removed from the burning fiery furnace without so much as a scorched spot or even the smell of smoke upon them (Dan. 3:27).
 - c. "The discharge of Daniel from his confinement. His prosecutors cannot but own that the law is satisfied, though they are not, or, if it be altered, it is by a power superior to that of the Medes and Persians; and therefore no cause can be shown why Daniel should not be fetched out of the den (v. 23): The king was exceedingly glad to find him alive, and gave orders immediately that they should take him out of the den, as Jeremiah out of the dungeon; and, when they searched, no manner of hurt was found upon him; he was nowhere crushed nor scarred, but was kept perfectly well, because he believed in his God" (Henry).
5. Verse 24: "And the king commanded, and they brought those men which had accused Daniel, and they cast them into the den of lions, them, their children, and their wives; and the lions had the mastery of them, and brake all their bones in pieces or ever they came at the bottom of the den." "And the king commanded, and they brought those men that had accused Daniel, and they cast them into the den of lions, them, their children, and their wives; and the lions had the mastery of them, and brake all their bones in pieces, before they came to the bottom of the den" (ASV).
- a. We remember that Darius and his subjects were pagans in their religion. Their standard of conduct was not on the level of faithful Jews who followed the Mosaic Law then, nor of faithful Christians who follow the gospel of Christ today. We, therefore, are not shocked at the harsh treatment the king pronounced upon those who had tried to kill Daniel.
 - b. These wicked men were cast into the den with the lions; not only this, but their wives and children were likewise executed.
 - c. We are not told how many people were included in this operation, nor is the number of lions given. The inspired historian reports to us that all these people were quickly slain, crushed, and eaten by the hungry beasts.
 - d. Coffman offers these wise observations: "We have already noted that in all probability, only the two presidential colleagues of Daniel were the actual accusers of the prophet and that, accordingly, only those two with their wives and children were executed. It is extremely interesting that Josephus has supplemented the information here with a number of observations which sound much like the truth, although of course Josephus' words never carry the authority of Scripture. 'Now when his enemies saw that Daniel suffered nothing, they would not allow that he was saved by God's providence; but they said the lions had been well fed before Daniel was cast in, and that the lions were not hungry. Therefore the king commanded that the lions should be fed a great deal of flesh; and when they had filled themselves, the king ordered Daniel's enemies to be cast in, to learn if they would touch them or not. The lions spared them not but tore them in pieces, so the king knew that it was God who had spared Daniel.'"
 - e. When Daniel records how ferociously the lions pounced on these persons, that is told only to corroborate the fact that the lions had certainly not spared Daniel because they had been fed but recently. Their ferocity was so great that it led them to assault each new victim as he came within reach, not even allowing him to reach the ground first (Leupold).
 - f. "The king's severity, in ordering their wives and children to be thrown to the lions with them. How righteous are God's statutes above those of the nations! for God commanded that the children should not die for the fathers' crimes, Deut 24:16. Yet they were put to death in extraordinary cases, as those of Achan, and Saul, and Haman" (Henry).
 - 1) Deuteronomy 24:16: "The fathers shall not be put to death for the children, neither shall the children be put to death for the fathers: every man shall be put to death for his own sin."
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- 2) Joshua 7:24-26: “And Joshua, and all Israel with him, took Achan the son of Zerah, and the silver, and the garment, and the wedge of gold, and his sons, and his daughters, and his oxen, and his asses, and his sheep, and his tent, and all that he had: and they brought them unto the valley of Achor. And Joshua said, Why hast thou troubled us? the LORD shall trouble thee this day. And all Israel stoned him with stones, and burned them with fire, after they had stoned them with stones. And they raised over him a great heap of stones unto this day. So the LORD turned from the fierceness of his anger. Wherefore the name of that place was called, The valley of Achor, unto this day.” [The case of Achan was used as an object lesson for all Israel, for generations to come. The great heap of stones spoke volumes about the danger of rebellion, and the need for faithful obedience to God].

D. Daniel 6:25-28: Darius Writes to His Subject People in Daniel’s Behalf.

1. Verse 25: “Then king Darius wrote unto all people, nations, and languages, that dwell in all the earth; Peace be multiplied unto you.”
 - a. Because of Daniel’s honorable and faithful standing with Jehovah, the status of the children of Israel was enhanced in the Persian Empire. The astounding influence of Daniel cannot be overstated. His trust in God aided Darius in his rule, and likewise the overall rule of Emperor Cyrus, who reigned over the entire empire. All the Jews were later given the privilege to return to their native land, and live safely under God’s providence, following his law, and also have the benevolent supervision and protection of the Emperor.
 - b. Darius wrote to all those people in his realm, sending his desire that peace might be multiplied unto them. What an excellent way this was to express his cordial best wishes upon them.
 - c. “If there is a probability that Nebuchadnezzar would make such a proclamation as he did, there is no less probability that the same thing would be done by Darius. Indeed, it is manifest on the face of the whole narrative that one great design of all that occurred was to proclaim the knowledge of the true God, and to secure his recognition. That object was worthy of the Divine interposition, and the facts in the case show that God has power to induce princes and rulers to recognize his existence and perfections, and his government over the earth” (Barnes).
 - 1) Daniel 2:47: “The king answered unto Daniel, and said, Of a truth it is, that your God is a God of gods, and a Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets, seeing thou couldest reveal this secret.”
 - 2) Daniel 3:29: “Therefore I make a decree, That every people, nation, and language, which speak any thing amiss against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, shall be cut in pieces, and their houses shall be made a dunghill: because there is no other God that can deliver after this sort.”
 - 3) Daniel 4:1: “Nebuchadnezzar the king, unto all people, nations, and languages, that dwell in all the earth; Peace be multiplied unto you.”
2. Verse 26: “I make a decree, That in every dominion of my kingdom men tremble and fear before the God of Daniel: for he is the living God, and stedfast for ever, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed, and his dominion shall be even unto the end.”
 - a. It will be noted that the decree asks no more of Darius’ subjects than that they show due respect—“tremble and fear”—to the God of Daniel, whom they had perhaps heretofore regarded as only a second-rate deity. It asserts further that He is a “living God”—not the only living God—that His kingdom endures unto the end; and that He is capable of working mighty signs and wonders and has even now delivered Daniel. All heathen would be perfectly ready at any time to admit the deity of one who had wrought signs and wonders. All this is said to safeguard against reading into this decree what it certainly did not intend to say. Darius no more experienced a conversion to the true faith than did Nebuchadnezzar despite the fine tone of his edicts [Leupold].

- b. Notice the similarities between Darius' statement here and Daniel's prophecy in Daniel 2:44: "And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever." It appears that the king was acquainted with this prophecy, a good many years earlier. Perhaps Nebuchadnezzar's scribes recorded Daniel's revelation as they were being spoken; it is certain that the prophecy was inscribed by inspiration as part of the Book of Daniel.
 - c. Undoubtedly Daniel's revelations, actions, courage and wisdom were well-known by the leading Chaldeans. He was indeed the most prominent personage in the kingdom at the time.
 - d. Henry writes:
 - 1) And well might this decree he prefaced, as it is, with Peace be multiplied unto you, for the only foundation of true and abundant peace is laid in the fear of God, for that is true wisdom. If we live in the fear of God, and walk according to that rule, peace shall be upon us, peace shall be multiplied to us. But, though this decree goes far, it does not go far enough; had he done right, and come up to his present convictions, he would have commanded all men not only to tremble and fear before this God, but to love him and trust in him, to forsake the service of their idols, and to worship him only, and call upon him as Daniel did. But idolatry had been so long and so deeply rooted that it was not to be extirpated by the edicts of princes, nor by any power less than that which went along with the glorious gospel of Christ.
 - 2) What are the causes and considerations moving him to make this decree. They are sufficient to have justified a decree for the total suppression of idolatry, much more will they serve to support this. There is good reason why all men should fear before this God, for, (1.) His being is transcendent. "He is the living God, lives as a God, whereas the gods we worship are dead things, have not so much as an animal life." (2.) His government is incontestable. He has a kingdom, and a dominion; he not only lives, but reigns as an absolute sovereign. (3.) Both his being and his government are unchangeable. He is himself stedfast for ever, and with him is no shadow of turning. And his kingdom too is that which shall not be destroyed by any external force, nor has his dominion any thing in itself that threatens a decay or tends towards it, and therefore it shall be even to the end. (4.) He has an ability sufficient to support such an authority, v. 27. He delivers his faithful servants from trouble and rescues them out of trouble; he works signs and wonders, quite above the utmost power of nature to effect, both in heaven and on earth, by which it appears that he is sovereign Lord of both. (5.) He has given a fresh proof of all this in delivering his servant Daniel from the power of the lions.
 - 3) This miracle, and that of the delivering of the three children, were wrought in the eyes of the world, were seen, published, and attested by two of the greatest monarchs that ever were, and were illustrious confirmations of the first principles of religion, abstracted from the narrow scheme of Judaism, effectual confutations of all the errors of heathenism, and very proper preparations for pure [non-denominational] Christianity.
 3. Verse 27: "He delivereth and rescueth, and he worketh signs and wonders in heaven and in earth, who hath delivered Daniel from the power of the lions."
 - a. The report of Daniel's deliverance from the ferocious lions would have been spread widely, for such a momentous event could not have been kept secret. Daniel's condemnation to death in the den of lions would have been known; his supernatural salvation would be even more widely-known. The execution of the prophet's enemies, along with their families, could not be kept under wraps.
 - b. Darius and his court knew about how Daniel avoided death; they would have no reason to keep this fact secret—indeed, it would have been impossible to do so!
 - c. The source of the rescue, the signs and wonders that had been in evidence, Darius correctly attributed
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to Jehovah. This law behind the present decree being sent throughout the realm.

4. Verse 28: “So this Daniel prospered in the reign of Darius, and in the reign of Cyrus the Persian.”
 - a. If it pleased God to extend the limit of the usefulness of His servant so that he served even under the great Cyrus, who, no doubt, after the death of his appointed ruler of Chaldea took over the reins himself, then it is surely a thing that is worthy of record. And since Daniel states it with such brevity and becoming modesty, no one should find fault. Daniel is telling what God allowed him to do. We need to know this fact in order to be able to judge rightly the remainder of the activity of Daniel. With his deliverance from the lions’ den his work was not yet finished. That is all Daniel seeks to indicate. Even the great Cyrus was to have the blessing of having Daniel serve under him and direct his attention to the true God and His purposes [Leupold].
 - b. As noted earlier in these comments, Cyrus was the supreme ruler of the Medo-Persian Empire; Darius had been appointed king over Babylon and its environs. We are told here that Daniel prospered through the rest of the reign of Darius, and then continued to prosper under the rule of Cyrus.
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Daniel 7

A. Daniel 7:1-8: Daniel's Dream During the First Year of Belshazzar's Reign.

1. Verse 1: "In the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon Daniel had a dream and visions of his head upon his bed: then he wrote the dream, and told the sum of the matters."
 - a. "Keil stated that the true understanding of Daniel prevailed until about the end of the last century; but when faith in the supernatural origin and character of Biblical prophecy was shaken by Deism and Rationalism, the prophecy of the Roman Empire under the figure of the fourth beast was denied. On what grounds? Here is the logic (?). Since there is no such thing as predictive prophecy, the author of Daniel could not have prophesied anything that he had not seen and witnessed; and, since the very earliest that they dared to allege the date of Daniel had to be placed subsequent to what is prophesied, they misinterpreted clear and undeniable references to the Roman Empire as being references to the empire of Alexander! Then they arbitrarily, and against all evidence and all reason, moved the date of Daniel to the times of the Maccabees (about 165 B.C.). This meant, of course, that Daniel could not have written the book" (Coffman). [In this strong statement, brother Coffman exposes the error of the modernists who deny inspiration and authority of the Bible].
 - b. Inspiration did not present the events in Daniel in chronological order, but arranged them by subject matter. In this chapter, the prophet goes back in time to the first year of Belshazzar's reign to tell of the vision he (Daniel) received at that time. The nature of this vision fits well with the other reports which are to follow.
 - c. The visions of the book are not haphazardly reported; while they are unique to themselves, yet they tell one great story. This chapter reveals information that follows the same pattern used in chapter two. The great parts of the visionary image described there were manifestly used to depict four great kingdoms; the head of gold represented Nebuchadnezzar (head of the Babylonian Empire); the other parts of the image denoted the Medo-Persian Empire (which mastered the Babylonian entity); this second empire was replaced by the Grecian Empire (under Alexander the Great); the Grecians were later conquered and replaced by the Great Roman Empire.
 - d. Josephus reports: Now as to what I have said before about the temple at Jerusalem, that it was fought against by the Babylonians, and burnt by them, but was opened again when Cyrus had taken the kingdom of Asia, shall now be demonstrated from what Berosus adds further upon that head; for thus he says in his third book: "Nabuchodonosor [Nebuchadnezzar], after he had begun to build the forementioned wall, fell sick, and departed this life, when he had reigned forty-three years; whereupon his son Evilmerodach obtained the kingdom. He governed public affairs after an illegal and impure manner, and had a plot laid against him by Neriglissor, his sister's husband, and was slain by him when he had reigned but two years. After he was slain, Neriglissor, the person who plotted against him, succeeded him in the kingdom, and reigned four years; his son Laborosoarchod obtained the kingdom, though he was but a child, and kept it nine mouths; but by reason of the very ill temper and ill practices he exhibited to the world, a plot was laid against him also by his friends, and he was tormented to death. After his death, the conspirators got together, and by common consent put the crown upon the head of Nabonnedus, a man of Babylon, and one who belonged to that insurrection. In his reign it was that the walls of the city of Babylon were curiously built with burnt brick and bitumen; but when he was come to the seventeenth year of his reign, Cyrus came out of Persia with a great army; and having already conquered all the rest of Asia, he came hastily to Babylonia. When Nabonnedus perceived he was coming to attack him, he met him with his forces, and joining battle with him was beaten, and fled away with a few of his troops with him, and was shut up within the city Borsippus. Hereupon Cyrus took Babylon, and gave order that the outer walls of the city should be demolished, because the city had proved very troublesome to him, and cost him a great deal of pains to take it. He then marched away to Borsippus, to besiege Nabonnedus; but as Nabonnedus did not

sustain the siege, but delivered himself into his hands, he was at first kindly used by Cyrus, who gave him Carmania, as a place for him to inhabit in, but sent him out of Babylonia. Accordingly Nabonnedus spent the rest of his time in that country, and there died." [Josephus, *Against Apion and Discourse to the Greeks*, Biblesoft].

- e. Belshazzar is called "king," which title is denied by the skeptics. His father (Nabonidus), the official king, was away conducting other important affairs, and had left his son in charge at Babylon, serving as co-regent with his father. "Although, technically, Belshazzar occupied a position of authority subordinate to that of Nabonidus, actually, he seems to have had nearly all the prerogatives of monarch. As the extant evidence shows, his word was regarded with utmost deference. He actually was entrusted with the kingship, and managed it like a king" (Young, pp.117f). The Bible is always correct.
 - f. We agree with those commentators who find in this very specific remark of the date of the vision more than a mere date. This fourth and last year of his was most probably also the last year of Babylonian dominion. When Belshazzar fell, the hour of the doom of that ancient empire as well as of that ancient kingdom had sounded, and a new order of things began to prevail. The statement of our verse therefore implies that this significant year was the year when God gave this signal revelation of the doom of the world powers or empires in general. It is for this reason that the apposition "king of Babylon" is added to "Belshazzar." Heretofore others had had dreams. It is now none other than the author himself who has them, and he has them at a time when he was far advanced in years, in other words, at a time of life when men are not wont to have such things as significant dreams and revelations....The statement about the writing, being attached to what precedes by a "thereupon," must mean that at once, after having had this significant dream, while the whole matter was still fresh in his mind, the prophet committed it to writing....What he wrote, Daniel describes as being "the sum of the matters." The Aramaic term *re'sh* must here mean "sum" in the sense of "essential content" (*BDB*), for "beginning" (*K. W.*), though a possible meaning, is a rather pointless expression in this connection. Why only the "beginning"? Why not tell the whole experience? By this term "sum" the author appears to say that the essential features were culled out of the great variety of details that a long dream presented so as not to present a bewildering array of detail. For even the prophet needed angelic assistance before he was able to construe aright the multitude of things that he had seen. This word contains a significant reminder that every word is carefully chosen and to the point; unessential items are passed by....May not a conscientious author, after having received a revelation, first sit down to write what he received before he tells it to others? ¹
2. Verses 2-3: "Daniel spake and said, I saw in my vision by night, and, behold, the four winds of the heaven strove upon the great sea. And four great beasts came up from the sea, diverse one from another."
 - a. In the visions of the night, the prophet saw a great sea upon which the four winds of heaven exerted their force. The four winds are a reference to the four cardinal points of the compass, north, east, south and west. But the message is not about the physical forces of the earth acting upon a literal sea.
 - b. The sea is a representation of the vast populations of humanity, spread out over the habitable earth, and extending from generation to generation. Great oceans of mankind have lived on God's footstool through the ages.
 - c. The forces of the four winds denote the ubiquitous power of Heaven, acting on the course of human history. In Daniel chapter two, God showed how he would use the influences of the four great kingdoms to prepare the background and develop the conditions upon which he could establish his eternal kingdom (cf. 2:44). Those kingdoms were those of Babylon, Persia, Greece and Rome.
 - d. In this vision, Daniel beheld four great beasts arising out of the sea, with each one being different

¹ Leupold, H. C. (1949). *Exposition of Daniel* (pp. 281–282). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House.

from the others. The next verse will reveal these differences. “Daniel is represented as standing near the sea, and a violent wind rages upon the sea, tossing the waves in wild commotion. Suddenly he sees four monsters emerge from the agitated waves, each one apparently remaining for a little time, and then disappearing” (Barnes).

- e. Notice the similarity between this vision and the one John the apostle had in Revelation 13:1: “And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy.”
 - 1) Commenting on this last passage, Homer Hailey states: “Daniel 7 is probably the most helpful passage in interpreting John’s use of ‘the sea,’ and the one upon which the vision rests...In his vision, Daniel saw the four winds of heaven as they broke forth ‘upon the great sea. And the four great beasts came up from the sea, diverse one from another’ (7:2f). From the prophet’s use of the word, it seems clear that the sea symbolizes the human societies or nations with their stormy upheavals, out of which the empires of earth arise. These four beasts were four great kingdoms which emerged from such upheavals. In Revelation, John refers to the sea: (1) literally, as a part of creation (5:13; 10:6; 14:7); (2) to describe the limits of the angel’s voice (7:1-3); (3) symbolically, indicating God’s transcendence (4:6; 15:2); and (4) to signify the whole of society known at that time (8:8f; 10:2, 8; 12:12; 13:1; 21:1)” (Hailey, *Commentary on Revelation*, p.283).
 - 2) "The four winds of heaven here ..." are cosmic forces of the greatest extent. Involved are the rise of populations and human systems and developments pertaining to all the people of the earth. The ‘great sea’ here is not the Mediterranean sea, but the oceans of population upon earth. Just as we have in Revelation 13, where either the apostle John, or perhaps even Satan himself (depending upon the translation) ‘stood upon the seashore’ to behold the great scarlet beast with seven heads and ten horns that came up out of the sea, the sea of earth’s peoples, just as in the case here. The kinship between Revelation and Daniel is evident in many such particulars” (Coffman).
3. Verse 4: “The first was like a lion, and had eagle’s wings: I beheld till the wings thereof were plucked, and it was lifted up from the earth, and made stand upon the feet as a man, and a man’s heart was given to it.”
 - a. The first of the four beasts had the form of a lion which wore the wings of an eagle. There is no case in nature of a lion having wings. Undoubtedly, this savage animal represents a kingdom, one of the four earlier presented in chapter two.
 - b. This kingdom would be the first in the line of four great empires, Babylonia. The head of gold in the vision of the earlier chapter was specifically identified as Nebuchadnezzar, the king of the Babylonian Empire. He was the greatest of Babylon’s kings. He had the strength and prowess of a lion and the swiftness of an eagle in attacking its prey.
 - c. Nebuchadnezzar is called “king of kings (Dan. 2:37; Ezek. 26:7), showing that he ruled over other kingdoms and was exalted above the other kings of his time. Indeed, he was unmatched by any other king of the Babylonian Empire.
 - 1) God’s power brought him to the throne and sustained him there. “And I will strengthen the arms of the king of Babylon, and put my sword in his hand: but I will break Pharaoh’s arms, and he shall groan before him with the groanings of a deadly wounded man. But I will strengthen the arms of the king of Babylon, and the arms of Pharaoh shall fall down; and they shall know that I am the LORD, when I shall put my sword into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he shall stretch it out upon the land of Egypt” (Ezek. 30:24-25).
 - a) This prophecy of Ezekiel is dated at the eleventh year, the seventh day of the first month. This was the fateful year in which Jerusalem was to fall on the ninth day of the fourth month: "And in the eleventh year of Zedekiah, in the fourth month, the ninth *day* of the month, the city was

broken up" (Jer. 39:2). Verse 21 refers "to the defeat which Pharaoh-hophra sustained from the Chaldeans, when trying to raise the siege of Jerusalem (Jer. 37:5,7); and previously, in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, the defeat which Pharaoh-necho sustained from Nebuchadnezzar at Carchemish by the Euphrates, and the deprivation of all his conquests from the river of Egypt to the Euphrates (2 Ki. 24:7; Jer. 46:2); also to the Egyptian disaster in Cyrene" (JFB, p.319).

(1) 2 Kings 24:7: "And the king of Egypt came not again any more out of his land: for the king of Babylon had taken from the river of Egypt unto the river Euphrates all that pertained to the king of Egypt."

(2) Jeremiah 46:2: "Against Egypt, against the army of Pharaohnecho king of Egypt, which was by the river Euphrates in Carchemish, which Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon smote in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah."

- b) God promised to strengthen the arms of the king of Babylon, and put his sword in his hand. God would be with Nebuchadnezzar, but was opposed to Egypt. Using the armed forces of the Chaldeans, God would break both of Pharaoh's arms, causing him to emit the groanings of a mortally wounded man. Surviving Egyptians would be scattered among the nations. These events would give the Egyptians good reason to know that God is the Lord.
- 2) Compare: "And now have I given all these lands into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, my servant; and the beasts of the field have I given him also to serve him. And all nations shall serve him, and his son, and his son's son, until the very time of his land come: and then many nations and great kings shall serve themselves of him. And it shall come to pass, that the nation and kingdom which will not serve the same Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, and that will not put their neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon, that nation will I punish, saith the LORD, with the sword, and with the famine, and with the pestilence, until I have consumed them by his hand" (Jer. 27:6-8).
- d. "The proper notion here, so far as the emblem of a lion is concerned, is that of a king or kingdom that would be distinguished for power, conquest, dominion; that would be in relation to other kings and kingdoms as the lion is among the beasts of the forest—keeping them in awe, and maintaining dominion over them—marching where he pleases, with none to cope with him or to resist him" (Barnes). A lion is a land creature; his range is somewhat limited as he lives out his life, fearful of none and feared by all. An eagle is able to travel many miles, seeming to glide without effort far above the earth, and possessing great eyesight, with which he is able to see his prey. The Babylonian Empire would have (symbolically) these characteristics.
- e. By the time of the events described in Daniel seven, Nebuchadnezzar has passed from earthly life. Others had followed him on the throne, until Belshazzar, reigning as co-regent with his father, was serving as king of the empire. Nebuchadnezzar's feathers had been plucked; his successors on the throne were mere men, serving without the special heavenly power the *king of kings* had been granted. No other Babylonian king possessed the power, influence, and divine aid as Nebuchadnezzar had.
- f. The feathers were plucked from the wings of the fabulous beast; it would no longer possess the power those wings gave it. It would be made to stand on its own feet on the earth, and would operate only by the natural strength of a mortal mind and power. It would lose its ferocity, strength, swiftness, and perception. "The obvious and proper meaning of this symbol is, that there was some check put to the progress of the conqueror—as there would be to an eagle by plucking off the feathers from his wings; that is, the rapidity of his conquests would cease. The prophet says, that he looked on until this was done, implying that it was not accomplished at once, but leaving the impression that these conquests were extended far. They were, however, checked, and we see the lion again without the wings; the sovereign who has ceased to spread his triumphs over the earth" (Barnes).

- g. Thus, without the special aid of Heaven, the kings of Babylonia would be reduced in time to the ordinary strength and success of mere mortal monarchs. Such is the case of any nation or society which deprives themselves of Providential assistance by ignoring or repudiating the moral laws of God. "Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people" (Prov. 14:34).
4. Verse 5: "And behold another beast, a second, like to a bear, and it raised up itself on one side, and it had three ribs in the mouth of it between the teeth of it: and they said thus unto it, Arise, devour much flesh."
- a. The second beast, compared to a bear, next appears. This animal doubtless represents the second of the four major empires—the Medes and Persians.
 - b. Modernists who repudiate fulfilled prophecy allege that this is the Median empire, thus separating them from the Persians; in their view, the Persians were the third kingdom, with the fourth being that of Greece. They think this cancels out any prophecy of God's kingdom being established during the Roman time. But the Medes had no world empire of their own. Only as a junior partner with the more powerful Persians did they possess significant sway over the world.
 - c. Bears are characterized by cunning, strength, ferocity, and loud growlings. The name for bear in Hebrew is derived from his grumbling or growling. The bear is especially ferocious when it is hungry or deprived of its cubs. Compare:
 - 1) Hosea 13:8: "I will meet them as a bear that is bereaved of her whelps, and will rend the caul of their heart, and there will I devour them like a lion: the wild beast shall tear them."
 - 2) 2 Samuel 17:8: "For, said Hushai, thou knowest thy father and his men, that they be mighty men, and they be chafed in their minds, as a bear robbed of her whelps in the field: and thy father is a man of war, and will not lodge with the people."
 - 3) Proverbs 17:12: "Let a bear robbed of her whelps meet a man, rather than a fool in his folly."
 - d. "The device of an animal raised on one side is not distinctive of any one nation, but is here chosen, probably to indicate the double sided nature of a kingdom ready to march forward in conquest....The animal itself, the bear, represents the Medo-Persian empire, and the double sided nature of this empire is symbolized by the beast lifting itself up on one side" (Young, pp.144f). Chapter eight describes the same empire as having two horns, with one horn being higher than the other, thus denoting that the Persians were more powerful than the Medes, a fact born out by historical information.
 - e. The three ribs in the mouth of the bear suggests that he was finishing-up a meal. He was now told to arise and devour much flesh, which figuratively represents the Medo-Persian power rising up to begin its role of conquering the Babylonians and other current political entities.
 - f. These four world-empires were to serve important purposes in God's great plan to bring his Anointed One into the world and the establishment of his world-wide spiritual kingdom.
5. Verse 6: "After this I beheld, and lo another, like a leopard, which had upon the back of it four wings of a fowl; the beast had also four heads; and dominion was given to it."
- a. The third kingdom is depicted as a leopard, which had four wings on its back and possessed four heads. To this beast was given dominion, that is, it would overpower the preceding world empire of the Medes and Persians. History gives much information about the struggles between the Greeks and the Persians.
 - b. The leopard is a powerful, stealthy and swift beast of prey. It is also known for its spots which aid it in hiding from its victim until ready to pounce.
 - c. Greece came to its powerful condition quickly. The four wings in the vision indicate the swift rise to power by the Greeks. The various Greek city-states had long struggled with each other, developing the strength of their warriors through the generations, as well as their weapons and strategies. Though fewer in number than the populous Persians, they were generally united in their fight against these
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eastern foes, and prevailed against them.

- d. Will Durant, (*The Life of Greece*) reports the historical battle the Greeks had with Persia at Marathon:
- 1) A year later (August, 479), the liberation of Greece was completed by almost simultaneous engagements on land and sea. Mardonius' army, living leisurely on the country, had pitched its camp near Plataea on the Boeotian plain. There, after two weeks of waiting for propitious omens, a Greek force of 110,000 men, led by the Spartan king Pausanias, joined issue with them in the greatest land battle of the war. The non-Persians in the invading force had no heart for the conflict, and took to flight as soon as the Persian contingent, which bore the point of the attack, began to waver. The Greeks won so overwhelming a victory that (according to their historians) they lost but 159 men, while of the Persian force 260,000 were slain. On the same day, the Greeks aver, a Greek squadron met a Persian flotilla off the coast of Alyeale, the central meeting place of all Ionia. The Persian fleet was destroyed, the Ionian cities were freed from Persian rule, and control of the Hellespont and the Bosphorus was won by the Greeks as they had won it from Troy seven hundred years before.
 - 2) The Greco-Persian War was the most momentous conflict in European history, for it made Europe possible. It won for Western civilization the opportunity to develop its own economic life—unburdened with alien tribute or taxation—and its own political institutions, free from the dictation of Oriental kings. It won for Greece a clear road for the first great experiment in liberty; it preserved the Greek mind for three centuries from the enervating mysticism of the East, and secured for Greek enterprise full freedom of the sea. The Athenian fleet that remained after Salamis now opened every port in the Mediterranean to Greek trade, and the commercial expansion that ensued provided the wealth that financed the leisure and culture of Periclean Athens. The victory of little Hellas against such odds stimulated the pride and lifted up the spirit of its people; out of very gratitude they felt called upon to do unprecedented things. After centuries of preparation and sacrifice Greece entered upon its Golden Age (p.242).
- e. The various Greek city-states, which had long contended with each other for dominance, finally overcame their differences, and were united during the reign of Philip II, the father of Alexander the Great. The swift rise to world power by the Grecian Empire is well-depicted by the words of our text.
- 1) In modern times, the Hitlerite Empire arose with swiftness. Within a few years after gaining complete power in Germany, he built up his military to become the most powerful in human history to that point. With quick strokes, against unprepared enemies, he conquered France to the west and central Europe to the east, and penetrated to a great distance into vast Russia. In 1943, his fortunes began to change and his united enemies pushed his armies back into Germany, where his regime was crushed in 1945. His ascendancy lasted only twelve years. When political leaders in Britain and Europe sought to compromise with Hitler, Churchill issued warnings which went unheeded: “Virtuous motives, trammelled by inertia and timidity, are no match for armed and resolute wickedness” (Winston Church, on the eve of World War Two).
 - 2) The Grecian Empire, portrayed as a leopard with four wings, arose to world power with swiftness. Its military tactics and ferocious fighters quickly defeated the armies of the east, bringing the Medo-Persian Empire to an end. The general of this great Grecian army was Alexander the Great, who is considered by some historians and military leaders as the greatest martial genius of all time.
- f. While the Grecian army gained swift success over vast areas of territory, conquering many different peoples which had been held by the Persians, Alexander died at the young age of thirty-three. Our text
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pictures this beast (the leopard which represented the Grecian Empire) as having four heads. After the untimely death of Alexander, his empire was divided among his four great generals. The beast would have dominion; while Alexander lived, under his single control; after his death, that dominion would be exercised by the four generals which are identified by history.

- 1) This great power was described in Daniel 2:39 as bearing rule over all the earth: “And after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee, and another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth.”
 - 2) “Another factor that make it mandatory to apply this to the Macedonian-Grecian empire is the mention of four heads. This simply cannot be applied to Persia. It is obviously a prophetic reference to the four generals of Alexander the Great who founded four different empires upon the territory conquered by Alexander. This particular alone makes it impossible intellectually to identify this third beast with any other except the empire of Alexander” (Coffman).
- g. The four generals who divided and ruled the territory conquered by Alexander were as follow:
- 1) Seleucus I, called Nicator (Greek, “the conqueror”) (358?-281 bc), king of Syria (301-281 bc). The founder of the Seleucid dynasty, he was a Macedonian general serving under Alexander the Great, and in the second partition of Alexander's empire in 321 bc he was made satrap of Babylon, becoming king of Babylonia in 312 bc. In 302 bc he joined the confederacy against Macedonia and in 301, upon the defeat and death of King Antigonus I of Macedonia, obtained the largest share of the spoils, including the whole of Syria and a great part of Asia Minor. He built numerous cities, including Antioch and several named for him as Seleucia. Toward the end of his reign, he proclaimed himself king of Macedonia but was subsequently assassinated. [Encarta].
 - 2) Cassander ruled over Macedon and Greece. Cassander (358?-297 bc), king of Macedonia from 305 to 297 bc and son of Macedonian general Antipater. In 321, after the death of Alexander the Great (king of Macedonia from 336 to 323), Antipater was appointed supreme regent of Macedonia. Upon his death in 319, he handed the regency over to his colleague Polyperchon, leaving a subordinate position for his son Cassander. Cassander waged war against Polyperchon, successfully gaining control of Athens in 317. He governed Athens for a decade through the statesman and orator Demetrius of Phaleron. In 316 Cassander persuaded Olympias, Alexander's mother, to return from Epirus to Macedonia, where he killed her. That same year, Cassander married Alexander's half-sister, Thessalonica. Not long after, Cassander slew Roxana, Alexander's Persian wife, and their son, Alexander IV, thus ending Alexander's dynasty. [Encarta].
 - 3) Lysimachus controlled Thrace and Bithynia: Lysimachus (360?-281 bc), king of Thrace who was briefly king of all Macedonia in the 3rd century bc. [Encarta].
 - 4) Ptolemy ruled over Egypt: Ptolemy I (367?-283? bc), called Ptolemy Soter (“preserver”), ruler of Egypt (323-285 bc), founder of the Ptolemaic dynasty. The son of Lagus, a Macedonian of common birth, Ptolemy was a general in the army of Alexander the Great and took a leading part in Alexander's later campaigns in Asia. On the death of Alexander in 323 bc, his empire was divided among the Diadochi (successors) by the imperial regent Perdikkas and Ptolemy was appointed satrap of Egypt and Libya. He was from the first an independent ruler, engaging in long wars with other Macedonian chiefs in order to secure and extend his rule. Ptolemy was prevented from holding Cyprus and parts of Greece, but he resisted invasions of Egypt and Rhodes and occupied Palestine and Cyrenaica. In 305 bc he assumed the title of king. Alexandria was his capital, and he founded the famous Alexandrian library (see Alexandria, Library of). He was the author of a lost history of the campaigns of Alexander. In 285 bc Ptolemy I abdicated in favor of one of his younger sons. (Encarta).
- h. Daniel will later speak further about the same entity, relating that it would be divided into four
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kingdoms: “Now that being broken, whereas four stood up for it, four kingdoms shall stand up out of the nation, but not in his power” (Dan. 8:22). The great empire of Alexander would be split into four parts, each becoming autonomous.

6. Verse 7: “After this I saw in the night visions, and behold a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth: it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it: and it was diverse from all the beasts that were before it; and it had ten horns.”
 - a. This fourth beast was distinctive from the preceding symbolic animals. He was dreadful, terrible and exceedingly strong; it had iron teeth with which to devour any adversary. Whatever residue remained after the harsh work of the great teeth, the beast would stamp with its feet. It also had ten horns.
 - b. In chapter two, Daniel described four world empires which were to come. Clearly, the first was that of Babylon, the second was that of the Medes and Persians, the third the powerful empire of Greece, and the fourth could only be that of Rome. In this context, the prophet has further illustrated the nature of these four kingdoms. The four would follow in succession.
 - c. Young gives this well-worded depiction of the fourth beast: “This beast is nondescript, because in the entire world of nature, no proper similitude could be found. The conquering ability is indicated by mention of its massive iron teeth. Thus, it used these teeth to devour and crush, and what could not be destroyed in this way was stamped upon with its feet. Its particular characteristic is in its rage for destruction. Wherein the precise diversity of this beast from its three predecessors consists, is not indicated in the symbolism. Perhaps it is to be found in the intensity of its destructive power” (pp.146f).
 - d. Leupold: The familiar categories of wild beasts fail to yield a suitable specimen for comparison, for something is to be typified which is “terrible and frightful and exceedingly strong.” There is apparently no beast sufficiently fierce and terrible to portray so abnormal a type of nation. Everything points to the Roman world power as being the empire typified by this beast For it should be noted that among the characteristics that are enumerated is “exceedingly strong.” That must signify greater strength than the preceding beasts possessed, otherwise this characteristic would not have been deserving of mention. That, as well as the “terrible and frightful,” fits admirably in the case of the Roman Empire and is inapplicable in the case of Syria
 - 1) The features of the vision that are calculated to meet the eye in describing the beast as to its character are three: “great teeth of iron,” the fact that it “devoured and broke in pieces” in the sense which we have included in our translation: it “broke things in pieces”; and thirdly, “it stamped upon what was left with its feet.” That must surely signify a singularly voracious, cruel, and even vindictive world power. Rome could never get enough of conquest. Rivals like Carthage just had to be broken: *Carthago delenda est*. Rome had no interest in raising the conquered nations to any high level of development. All her designs were imperial; let the nations be crushed and stamped under foot. And the adequate means for achieving such results were the well-trained Roman legions.
 - 2) It is surely correct to say of such a power that “it is quite different from all the beasts that were before it,” and the differences were mainly those which have been enumerated. An added difference is yet to be worked into the picture: “it had ten horns.” This, as we already had occasion to indicate on the basis of v. 24, refers to ten kings. But, as we must also keep reiterating because it is being consistently overlooked, it matters little whether we say the ten horns signify ten *kings* or ten *kingdoms*, for 2:37 makes allowance for both points of view. Since we shall have ample opportunity to interpret this part of the visions when it becomes an issue in v. 24 we shall reserve our detailed investigation for that time, merely noting the sequence of events in the vision as they

- are given in v. 8.¹
- e. A brief history of Rome:
- 1) By the time the Greeks had begun their Golden Age, the city of Rome had already gained ascendancy over the Italian peninsula. Its beginning has been traced to about 750 B.C. Through the ensuing centuries, the Romans increased in power and influence until they had brought the civilized world of that time under subjection. Italy's fertile soil, moderate climate, low-lying coastlines, and passes through the Alps, invited people from other localities, not all of them peace-seeking. The Romans of necessity developed a strong military power.
 - 2) The principal founders of the nation were the Greeks and Etruscans. Where these latter people originated is still shrouded in mystery; likely they were from Asia Minor.
 - 3) The Romans had an interest in a strong, authoritative type of government, with less individual freedom. Among the common people, the leaders of the clans were much like the overall government, which was monarchal in nature with an assembly and a senate. Near the end of the sixth century B.C., the monarchy was replaced by an oligarchic republic.
 - 4) For two hundred years after its establishment, the republic was enmeshed with continuing war. The aggressive nature of the Romans moved them to enlarge their territory in conquering neighboring peoples and cities. There were also many revolts among the subjected citizens. By about 265 B.C., the entire peninsula was controlled by the Romans; the exception to this was the Po valley.
 - 5) "Not long after the establishment of the Republic a struggle began by the common citizens for a larger share of political power. Before the end of the monarchy the Roman population had come to be divided into two great classes—the patricians and the plebeians. The former were the aristocracy, wealthy landowners, who were apparently the descendants of the old clan leaders. They monopolized the seats and the offices of magistracy. The plebeians were the common people—small farmers, craftsmen, and tradesmen. Many were clients or dependents of the patricians, obliged to fight for them, to render them political support, and to cultivate their estates in return for protection. The grievances of the plebeians were numerous" (*Western Civilization*), p.212).
 - 6) After 264 B.C., Rome began a series of wars with other powerful nations, primarily with Carthage. "Carthage had originally been founded about 800 B.C. as a Phoenician colony. In the sixth century it severed its ties with the homeland and gradually developed into a rich and powerful nation. The prosperity of its upper classes was founded upon commerce and upon exploitation of the silver and tin resources of Spain and Britain and the tropical products of north central Africa....Twenty-three years of fighting finally brought victory to the Roman generals" (*ibid.*, pp.216).
 - 7) Three prominent leaders arose during the dying days of the Roman Republic: Pompey, Julius Caesar and Crassus. Together they formed what is called the *First Triumvirate*, in 60 B.C.
 - a) Pompey had just returned from the East after a succession of military and diplomatic achievements. By clearing the sea of pirates he had restored security to Mediterranean trade, and prosperity to the cities it served. He had pleased the capitalists of Rome by conquering Bithynia, Pontus, and Syria; he had deposed and set up kings and had lent them money from his spoils at lush rates of interest; he had accepted a huge bribe from the king of Egypt to come and quell a revolt there, and then had refrained from carrying out the compact on the ground that it was illegal; he had pacified Palestine and made it a client state of Rome; he had founded thirty-nine cities and had established law, order, and peace; all in all he had behaved with judgment, statesmanship, and profit. Now he had brought back to Rome such wealth in

¹ Leupold, H. C. (1949). *Exposition of Daniel* (pp. 296–298). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House.

taxes and tribute, goods captured and slaves ransomed or sold, that he was able to contribute 200,000,000 sesterces to the Treasury, add 350,000,000 to its annual revenues, distribute 384,000,000 among his soldiers, and yet keep enough for himself to rival Crassus as one of the two richest men in Rome.

- (1) The Senate was more frightened than pleased at these accomplishments. It trembled when it heard that Pompey had landed at Brundisium (62) with an army personally devoted to him and capable at his word of making him dictator. He magnanimously relieved its fears by disbanding his troops and entering Rome with no other retinue than his personal staff. His triumph lasted two days, but even that time proved insufficient for all the floats that pictured his victories and displayed his garnerings.
 - (2) The ungrateful Senate rejected his request that state lands be given his soldiers, refused to ratify his agreements with conquered kings, and restored those arrangements that Lucullus had made in the East and which Pompey had ignored. The effect of these actions was to break down Cicero's *concordia ordinum*, or alliance of the higher classes, and throw Pompey and the capitalists into a flirtation with the populares.
- b) Taking full advantage of the situation, Caesar formed with Pompey and Crassus the First Triumvirate (60), by which each pledged himself to oppose legislation unsatisfactory to any one of them. Pompey agreed to support Caesar for the consulate, and Caesar promised, if elected, to carry through the measures in which Pompey had been rebuffed by the Senate.
- 8) The most famous of these three were Pompey (106-48 B.C. and Julius Caesar (100-44 B.C.). For a time they pooled their energies and resources, but later they became rivals and sought to outdo each other in bids for popular support. Pompey won fame as the conqueror of Syria and Palestine, while Caesar devoted his talents to a series of brilliant forays against the Gauls, adding to the Roman state the territory of modern Belgium and France. In 52 B.C., after a series of mob disorders in Rome, the senate turned to Pompey and caused his election as sole consul. Caesar was eventually branded an enemy of the state, and Pompey conspired with the senate faction to deprive him of political power. The result was a deadly war between the two men. In 49 B.C., Caesar began a march on Rome. Pompey fled to the East in the hope of gathering a large enough army to regain control of Italy. In 48 B.C., the forces of the two rivals met at Pharsalus in Thessaly. Pompey was defeated and soon afterward was murdered by agents of the king of Egypt (*Western Civilization*, pp.220f).
 - 9) In 46 B.C., Caesar became dictator for ten years. A little later, his dictatorship was extended for life. He assumed all power in virtually every area of activity. Some saw him as having been exalted above the law itself. With this overreach of power, a band of conspirators under the leadership of Brutus and Cassius assassinated him in 44 B.C. One of Caesar's accomplishments was to revise the official calendar to bring it into harmony with Egypt's solar calendar of 365 days, with an extra day being added every four years.
- f. Eleven Roman Emperors and Dictators:
- 1) Pompey—63 B.C.
 - 2) Julius Caesar—47-44 B.C.
 - 3) Augustus Caesar—27 B.C. to 14 A.D.
 - 4) Tiberius Caesar—14 to 37 A.D.
 - 5) Caligula Caesar—37 to 41 A.D.
 - 6) Claudius Caesar—41-54 A.D.
 - 7) Nero Caesar—54-68 A.D.
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- 8) Three short-term Rulers:
 - a) Galba—68-69 A.D.
 - b) Otho—69 A.D.
 - c) Vitellius—69 A.D.
 - 9) Vespasian—69-79 A.D.
 - g. There are four prominent views of the ten horns and the one little horn of this verse (Dan. 7:7):
 - 1) One that is obviously in error is that held by premillennialists, who allege that this prophecy of Daniel has not been fulfilled at all, but that it will be realized at the coming of Christ. Their fanciful theory asserts that the Lord will at that time set up an earthly kingdom, one that will last one thousand years, and He will reign over it from David's literal throne at the city of Jerusalem. It is not necessary here to present a lengthy repudiation of the premillennial views [See my book on *Premillennialism*]. It is sufficient to point out that the Kingdom of Christ was established on earth on the Pentecost Day of Acts two, and His rule is over the hearts and lives of men, and He is not overly concerned with the vast sections of the material surface of the planet Earth.
 - a) Colossians 1:13-14: "Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins."
 - b) Hebrews 12:18-24: "For ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest, And the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words; which voice they that heard intreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more: (For they could not endure that which was commanded, And if so much as a beast touch the mountain, it shall be stoned, or thrust through with a dart: And so terrible was the sight, that Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake:) But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel."
 - 2) Another view (held by Young and Leupold) maintains that the ten kings (ten horns) reigned at the same time, which can only have a figurative interpretation. "Although, in order to indicate the essential unity of the fourth kingdom, the horns appear upon the head of the beast, it is obvious that these horns represent a later phase of the beast's existence....Although these horns need not be exact contemporaries, or with another, nevertheless, they all belong within this second period of the beast's history" (Young, pp.148f). Young adds, "To seek to identify these kingdoms, when Scripture furnishes no clue as to their identity, is very precarious and probably unwarranted" (pp.149f). This view makes the interpretation of the prophecy nebulous at best. The little horn is ultimately seen as the Roman Church which persecuted Christians through many centuries.
 - 3) A third view holds that these ten horns were ten rulers in the Roman Empire, and that the little horn was Domitian (81-96 A.D.). But the three kings overthrown by this little horn find no historical figures to fit the prophecy. Daniel predicted that the little horn would make war against the saints (see Dan. 7:21). Domitian did indeed persecute Christians (saints). Nero also persecuted the Christians. But neither Nero nor Domitian put down three other kings. As likeable as this view is, this argument casts doubt on either being the little horn.
 - 4) A fourth view maintains that Emperor Vespasian is the little horn. In its favor is the fact that he replaced three other kings who preceded him in Rome: Galba, Otho, and Vitellius. Perhaps the following lists of great Roman rulers will supply some guiding information:
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a) Pompey–63 B.C.

- (1) In 67-66 bc, Pompey cleared the Mediterranean Sea of pirates and was subsequently given control of the provinces in the east and put in charge of the war against Mithridates VI of Pontus. Between 65 and 62 bc, Pompey conquered not only Mithridates but also Tigranes the Great, king of Armenia, and Antiochus XIII of Syria, annexing the territory of the latter to the Roman dominions. He also subdued the Jews and captured Jerusalem. On his return to Italy he disbanded his army and in 61 bc entered Rome in triumph for the third time. (*Encarta*).
- (2) “He had achieved a triumph [in war] almost before a beard....He was sensitive and shy, and blushed when he had to address a public gathering, but in battle he was in these days impetuously brave; in later life timidity and corpulence burdened his generalship, and he hesitated till lost” (Will Durant, *Caesar and Christ*, pp.138f).
- (3) Although Julius Caesar carries the greatest renown and repute, the greatness of Pompey must not overlooked. His accomplishments were great and their effects were long-lasting.
 - (a) Piracy was a grave problem to the Republic in 67 B.C. Pompey was given the charge to rid the nation of this danger and establish Roman power in the Mediterranean Sea. His brilliant plan and effective use of his military forces cleared the pirates from that part of the world – in a campaign that lasted only about two months.
 - (b) The following year he was given the supreme command to fight against another dangerous foe. By the next year (65 B.C.), he had defeated Mithridates and was give great authority over Asia Minor and the seas of the region.
 - (c) In the same year, he led his army into Armenia and gained control over Mesopotamia, Syria and Cilicia. He advanced to Artaxata and Azerbaijan, where he spent the winter. This was about one thousand miles farther from Rome than any Roman general had ever progressed.
 - (d) When he returned to Asia Minor, fear of his power and prowess was so great that many other nations declared their submission to him.
 - (e) The following year he traveled to the Red Sea, the first Roman military leader who had reached that point.
 - (f) There was fighting in Judea. The forces of Aristobulus fell to Pompey, Jerusalem was taken, and all that the Maccabees had built up was destroyed. He appointed Hyrcanus as high priest. When Pompey entered the temple, the Jews were horrified.

b) Julius Caesar–47-44 B.C. [Gaius Julius Caesar]. *Encarta* reports the following:

- (1) Birth July 12 or 13, 100 bc Death March 15, 44 bc. Place of Birth Rome, Italy.
 - (2) Known for Conquering Celtic Gaul and invading Britain.
 - (3) Beginning Rome's transition from republic to empire.
 - (4) Milestones 65 bc:
 - (a) Won election to the office of *curule aedile*, a director of public works; went into debt by sponsoring elaborate gladiatorial games to advance his political career.
 - (b) 63 bc Was named *Pontifex Maximus*, head of the state religion.
 - (c) 60 bc Allied himself with consuls Pompey and Crassus to form the First Triumvirate, in which the three men took power over different parts of the Roman world.
 - (d) 59 bc Served as consul, one of two chief officials in the Roman Republic.
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- (e) 58 bc Was appointed proconsul (governor) of Roman Gaul.
 - (f) 55, 54 bc. Twice invaded Britain, in what was the first extension of Roman influence to that island.
 - (g) 51 bc Suppressed a revolt in Gaul led by Vercingetorix, king of a powerful Gallic people known as the Arverni.
 - (h) 49 bc Defied orders from Pompey and the Senate, and with his army crossed the Rubicon, a stream separating Gaul from Italy; conquered Italy, Spain, and then was named dictator of Rome.
 - (i) 48 bc Defeated Pompey at Pharsalus in Greece.
 - (j) 44 bc Was assassinated by a group of jealous senators including his onetime allies, Brutus and Cassius.
- (5) Quote: "I came, I saw, I conquered." 47 bc, on the occasion of a quick military victory against the king of Pontus in Asia Minor.
- (6) No previous Roman leader had held so many powerful offices simultaneously. In addition to his military prowess, Caesar was a gifted writer, poet, and scholar. He was one of the only orators of his time who could rival the Roman statesman Cicero.
- (7) Caesar was the first Roman leader to issue coinage bearing his own likeness.
- (8) Caesar decided to use a solar measure of time that became known as the Julian calendar; his system is the basis of the modern calendar. He changed the name of the month Quintilis to Julius (July), after himself.
- c) Augustus Caesar—27 B.C. to 14 A.D.
- (1) Augustus (63 bc- ad 14), emperor of Rome (27 bc-ad 14), who restored unity and orderly government to the realm after nearly a century of civil wars. He presided over an era of peace, prosperity, and cultural achievement known as the Augustan Age. Originally named Gaius Octavius, Augustus was born in Rome on September 23, 63 bc; he was the grandnephew of Julius Caesar, whom he succeeded as ruler of the Roman state. Caesar was fond of the youth and had him raised to the College of Pontifices—a major Roman priesthood—at the age of 16. When Caesar was assassinated in 44 bc, Octavius was in Illyria, where he had been sent to serve; returning to Italy, he learned that he was Caesar's adopted heir. He consequently took the name Gaius Julius Caesar, to which historians have added Octavianus; in English, the name is usually shortened to Octavian. Caesar's assassination plunged Rome into turmoil. Octavian, determined to avenge his adoptive father and secure his own place, vied with Mark Antony, Caesar's ambitious colleague, for power and honor. After some preliminary skirmishes, both political and military, during which Antony was driven across the Alps while Octavian was made senator and then consul, Octavian recognized the necessity of making peace with his rival. In late 43 bc, therefore, the two—joined by Antony's ally, the general Marcus Aemilius Lepidus—met and formed the Second Triumvirate to rule the Roman domains. The alliance was sealed by a massive proscription, in which 300 senators and 200 knights—the triumvirs' enemies—were slain. Among those killed was the aging orator Cicero. [Encarta © 1993-2003 Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved].
- (2) From the following dissertation by Durant, a wise mind can perceive parallels between modern societies and this ancient time in Rome:
- (a) Octavian combined them all in a "principate" that mingled the theories of Cicero, the precedents of Pompey, and the policies of Caesar. The people accepted his solution
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philosophically. They were no longer enamored of freedom, but wearily wished for security and order; any man might rule them who guaranteed them games and bread. ...Out of the collapse of freedom into individualism and chaos a new government had to be created to forge a new order for a widened realm. All the Mediterranean world lay in disorder at Octavian's feet, waiting for statesmanship. He succeeded where Caesar had failed, because he was more patient and devious, because he understood the strategy of words and forms As soon as Octavian made it clear that property rights were again sacred, that he was through with proscriptions and confiscations, money came out of hiding, investment took courage, trade expanded, wealth resumed its accumulation, and some of it trickled down to the workers and the slaves.

- (b) As the sons of freedmen automatically became citizens, the emancipation of slaves and the fertility of aliens combined with the low birth rate of the native stocks to change the ethnic character of Rome. Augustus wondered what stability there could be in so heterogeneous a population, and what loyalty to the Empire might be expected of men in whose veins ran the blood of subject peoples.
 - (c) One might wish that Augustus had limited slavery instead of freedom. But antiquity took slavery for granted, and would have contemplated with horror the economic and social effects of a wholesale emancipation, just as the employers of our time fear the sloth that might come from security. Augustus was thinking in terms of race and class; he could not conceive a strong Rome without the character, courage, and political ability that had marked the old Roman; above all, the old aristocracy. The decay of the ancient faith among the upper classes had washed away the supernatural supports of marriage, fidelity, and parentage; the passage from farm to city had made children less of an asset, more of a liability and a toy; women wished to be sexually rather than maternally beautiful; in general the desire for individual freedom seemed to be running counter to the needs of the race.
 - (d) It was not good, he felt, for the present to break too sharply with the past; a nation must have a continuity of traditions to be sane, as a man must have memory. He read with aging seriousness the historians of Rome, and envied the virtues they ascribed to the ancients. He relished the speech of Quintus Metellus on marriage, read it to the Senate, and recommended it to the people by imperial proclamation. A large part of the older generation agreed with him; it formed a kind of puritan party eager to reform morals by law; and probably Livia lent them her influence. By his powers as censor and tribune Augustus promulgated- or passed through the Assembly- a series of laws of now uncertain date and sequence, aimed at restoring morals, marriage, fidelity, parentage, and a simpler life. They forbade adolescents to attend public entertainments except in the company of an adult relative; excluded women from athletic exhibitions, and restricted them to the upper seats at gladiatorial games; limited expenditure on homes, servants, banquets, weddings, jewels, and dress.
 - (e) The most important of these "Julian laws" (18 B.C.) — "The Julian law of chastity and repressing adultery." Here for the first time in Roman history marriage was brought under the protection of the state The father retained the right to kill an adulterous daughter and her accomplice as soon as he discovered them; the husband was allowed to kill his wife's paramour if caught in the husband's house, but he might kill his wife only if he found her sinning in his own home. Within sixty days of detecting a wife's adultery, the husband was required to bring her before the court; if he failed to do this, the woman's father was required to indict her; if he too failed, any citizen might accuse her. The adulterous woman was to be banished for life, was to lose a third of her
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fortune and half her dowry, and must not marry again. Like penalties were decreed for a husband conniving at his wife's adultery. A wife, however, could not accuse her husband of adultery, and he might with legal impunity have relations with registered prostitutes. The law applied only to Roman citizens.

- (3) [Another law had a threefold purpose]: to encourage and yet restrict marriage, to retard the dilution of Roman with alien blood, and to restore the old conception of marriage as a union for parentage. Marriage was to be obligatory upon all marriageable males under sixty and women under fifty.
- (4) Tacitus, a century later, pronounced the laws a failure; "marriages and the rearing of children did not become frequent, so powerful are the attractions of a childless state." Immorality continued, but was more polite than before; in Ovid we see it becoming a fine art, the subject of careful instructions from experts to apprentices. Augustus himself doubted the efficacy of his laws, and agreed with Horace that laws are vain when hearts are unchanged.

d) Tiberius Caesar—14 to 37 A.D.

- (1) The time was ripe for the coming of the Gospel of Christ. The ancient world had tried all kinds of lifestyles and found no lasting happiness. The vanity of idolatry was on the verge of being demonstrated for all to see. Sexual laxity and perversion were fraught with depravity, and all sorts of diseases. Drunkenness and raucous parties were rampant—and without any value.

(a) The cause of the Fall of Rome (Gibbon).

- Rapid increase of divorce—this undermined the home, the basis of society.
- Higher and higher taxes—this wasted public money on the welfare and entertainment of the foolish.
- Mad craze for pleasure.
- Gigantic armaments, but the real enemy was within—the decadence of people.
- Decay of religion—nothing was there to guide and restrain the base lusts of the citizens.

(b) The cause of the fall of Rome (Durant).

- The importation of foreigners who later gained the majority.
- Pestilence, revolution, and war.
- Moral decay—sex ran riot in freedom while real liberty decayed.
- Christianity undermined and exposed the weak underpinnings of the corrupt empire.
- There were economic causes—farms were abandoned.
- The Roman army was manned by foreigners who were not committed to the Empire's best interests.

(c) When a nation reaches a certain level of wickedness, God will overthrow it.

- Genesis 6—the entire generation of men then living on earth [except Noah and his family].
 - Genesis 19—the wicked cities of Sodom and its neighbors.
 - Babylon.
 - Israel.
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- The Aztec and Inca Civilizations of Central and South America.
 - Hitler's Germany, Hirohito's Japan, and Communist Russia.
 - What about pagan America?
- (2) Although Rome provided a vast network of roads and established a system of law that is imitated even today, yet in the final analysis, she brought suffering and trouble and sin upon many, and did not purify or elevate morality. She had crossed the line, and must be destroyed.
- e) Caligula Caesar—54 to 68 A.D.
- (1) The populace celebrated the old Emperor's passing with cries of "Tiberius to the Tiber!" and hailed the Senate's ratification of Gaius Caesar Germanicus as his successor. Born to Agrippina as she was accompanying Germanicus on his northern campaigns, Gaius had been brought up among soldiers, had imitated their dress, and had been affectionately named Caligula, or Little Boot, from the half boot (caliga) worn in the army. He now announced that he would follow the principles of Augustus in his policy and would cooperate respectfully with the Senate in everything.
- (2) They had forgotten his lineage. His father's mother was the daughter of Antony, his mother's mother was the daughter of Augustus; in his blood the war between Antony and Octavian was renewed, and Antony won. Caligula was proud of his skill as a dueler, a gladiator, and a charioteer; but he was "troubled with the falling sickness," and at times was "hardly able to walk or collect his thoughts." He hid under the bed when it thundered, and fled in terror from the sight of Aetna's flames. He found it hard to sleep and would wander through his enormous palace at night crying for the dawn. He was tall, huge, hairy, except for a bald crown; his hollow eyes and temples made him look forbidding, to his delight; he "practiced all kinds of fearsome expressions before a mirror." He had received a good schooling, was an eloquent orator, had a keen wit, and a sense of humor that knew no scruple and no law.
- (3) Suetonius describes him as living in "habitual incest with all his sisters"; it seemed to him an excellent Egyptian custom. Ill, he made his sister Drusilla heir to his throne; when she married he made her divorce her husband, and "treated her as his lawful wife." To other desired women he sent letters of divorce in their husbands' names, and invited them to his embraces; there was scarcely one woman of rank whom he did not approach. Amid these and some homosexual amours he found time for four marriages. Attending the wedding of Livia Orestilla and Gaius Piso, he took the bride to his own house, married her, and in a few days divorced her. Hearing that Lollia Paulina was very beautiful, he sent for her, divorced her from her husband, married her, divorced her, and forbade her to have relations with any man thereafter. His fourth wife, Caesonia, was pregnant by her husband when he married her. She was neither young nor fair, but he loved her faithfully.
- (4) A quiet life of responsible labor might have steadied him, but the poison of power made him mad. Sanity, like government, needs checks and balances; no mortal can be omnipotent and sane.
- (5) Suetonius recounts that when meat ran short for feeding the beasts kept for gladiatorial games, Caligula ordered "all bald-headed" prisoners to be fed to the animals for the public good; that he had men of high rank branded with irons, condemned to mines, thrown to beasts, or shut up in cages and then sawn in two.
- (6) At twenty-nine this god was an old man, worn out by excesses, probably venereally diseased, with a small and half-bald head upon a fat body, with a livid complexion, hollow
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eyes, and a sinister glance. His fate came suddenly, and from that Praetorian Guard whose support he had long purchased with gifts. A tribune of the Guard, Cassius Chaerea, insulted by the obscenities that Caligula gave him as passwords day after day, killed him in a secret passage of the palace (41). When the news went out, the city hesitated to believe it; men feared that this was a trick of the imperial prankster to find out who would rejoice at his death. To clarify the issue the assassins killed Caligula's final wife and dashed out his daughter's brains against a wall. On that day, says Dio, Caligula learned that he was not a god.

f) Claudius Caesar—41-54 A.D.

- (1) Caligula had left the Empire in a dangerous condition: the Treasury empty, the Senate decimated, the people alienated, Mauretania in rebellion, Judea in arms at his insistence on placing his cult statue in the Temple of Jerusalem. No one knew where to find a ruler fit to face these problems. The Praetorians, coming upon the apparently imbecile Claudius hiding in a corner, proclaimed him emperor. The Senate, in terror of the army, and perhaps relieved by the prospect of dealing with a harmless pedant instead of a reckless lunatic, confirmed the choice of the Guard; and Tiberius Claudius Caesar Augustus Germanicus hesitantly mounted the throne.
 - (2) He was the son of Antonia and Drusus, the brother of Germanicus and Livilla, the grandson of Octavia and Antony, of Livia and Tiberius Claudius Nero. He had been born at Lugdunum (Lyons) in the year 10 B.C. and was now fifty years old. He was tall and stout, with white hair and an amiable face; but infantile paralysis and other diseases had weakened his frame. His legs were precariously thin and gave him a shambling gait; his head wobbled as he walked. He loved good wines and rich food and suffered from gout. He stuttered a bit, and his laughter seemed too boisterous for an emperor. In anger, says the merciless gossip, "he would foam at the mouth and trickle at the nose." He had been brought up by women and freedmen, had developed a timidity and sensitivity hardly advantageous to a ruler, and had had few opportunities to practice government. His relatives had looked upon him as a feeble-minded invalid; his mother, who had inherited Octavia's gentleness, called him "an unfinished monster," and when she wished to stress a man's dullness she would term him "a bigger fool than my Claudius." Scorned by all, he lived in safe obscurity, absorbed in gambling, books, and drink.
 - (3) Scientists and savants corresponded with him and dedicated their tomes to him; Pliny the Elder cites him four times as an authority. As Emperor he told his people how to cure snakebite, and forestalled superstitious fears by predicting a solar eclipse on his birthday and explaining its cause. He spoke Greek well, and wrote several of his works in that language. He had a good mind; perhaps he was sincere when he told the Senate that he had pretended stupidity in order to save his head. His first act as Emperor was to reward with a donative of 15,000 sesterces every soldier of that Guard which had raised him to the throne.... Claudius acknowledged the sovereignty of the army, while canceling again the power of the Assembly to choose the magistrates. With wiser generosity he ended accusations de maiestate, released persons imprisoned on such charges, recalled all exiles, restored confiscated property, returned to Greece the statues that Gaius had stolen, and abolished the taxes that Gaius had introduced. But he put to death Caligula's assassins, on the theory that it was unsafe to condone the murder of an emperor. He ended the practice of prostration, and announced simply that he was not to be worshiped as a god.
 - (4) Observing that the lands of the Marsians were periodically swamped by the overflow of Lake Fucinus, he provided state funds for the labor of 30,000 men during eleven years,
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digging a three-mile tunnel from the lake through a mountain to the river Ciris. Before releasing the waters of the lake he staged on it a sham naval battle between two fleets manned by 19,000 condemned criminals, before spectators gathered from all Italy upon the slopes of the surrounding hills. The combatants saluted the Emperor with a historic phrase: Ave Caesar! morituri salutamus te - "Hail Caesar! we who are about to die salute you."

- (5) The provinces prospered under him as in Augustan days. He punished decisively the malfeasance of officials, except in the case of Felix, procurator of Judea, whose misrule was concealed from him by Pallas, brother of Saint Paul's inquisitor. He busied himself with every phase of provincial affairs; his edicts and inscriptions, found throughout the Empire, are marked by his characteristic fussiness and prolixity, but they show a mind and will intelligently devoted to the public good. He labored to improve communication and transport, to protect travelers from brigandage, and to reduce the cost of the official post to the communities it served. Like Caesar he wished to raise the provinces to the level of Italy in a Roman commonwealth.
 - (6) A bronze tablet unearthed at Lyons in 1524 has preserved for us part of the rambling speech in which he persuaded the Senate to admit to its membership and to imperial office those Gauls who held the Roman franchise. Meanwhile he did not allow the army to deteriorate or the frontiers to be infringed; his legions were kept busy and fit, and great generals like Corbulo, Vespasian, and Paulinus developed under his choice and encouragement. Again deciding to complete Caesar's plans, he invaded Britain in 43, conquered it, and was back in Rome within six months of setting out. In the triumph accorded him he violated precedent by pardoning the captured British king, Caractacus. The people of Rome laughed at their strange Emperor, but loved him; and when, on one of his absences from the capital, a false rumor spread that he had been killed, so great a turmoil of sorrow swept the city that the Senate had to issue official assurances that Claudius was safe and would soon be in Rome.
 - (7) From that great height he fell because he had built a government too complex for his personal supervision, and because his amiable spirit was too easily deceived by his freedmen and his family.
 - (8) Agrippina was the daughter of the elder Agrippina and Germanicus; she too, had in her the unreconciled blood of Octavian and Antony, and had succeeded to the beauty, ability, resolution, and unscrupulous vindictiveness of her mother. She was already twice a widow. By her first husband, Cnaeus Domitius Ahenobarbus, she had a son Nero, whose enthronement became the ruling passion of her life; and from her second husband Caius Crispus, whom rumor accused her of poisoning, she inherited the wealth that sinewed her aims. Her problem was to become the wife of Claudius, to get rid of his son Britannicus, and make Nero, by adoption, heir to the Empire. The fact that she was Claudius' niece did not deter her, but gave her opportunities for fond intimacies that stirred the aging ruler in no avuncular way.
 - (a) Suddenly he appeared before the Senate and asked it to bid him marry again for the good of the state. The Senate complied, the Praetorians laughed, and Agrippina reached the throne (48). She was thirty-two, Claudius fifty-seven. His energies were failing; hers were at their height. Playing upon him with all her charms, she persuaded him to adopt Nero as his son, and to give his thirteen-year-old daughter Octavia to the sixteen-year-old youth in marriage (53). She assumed more and more political power with each year, and finally sat beside him on the imperial dais.
 - (b) Her ascendancy might have been a boon to Rome had she not indulged her avarice and
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her revenge. She had Lollia Paulina put to death because Claudius, in a careless moment which no wife forgives, remarked on the elegance of Lollia's figure. She had Marcus Silanus poisoned because she feared that Claudius might name him his heir. She conspired with Pallas to overthrow Narcissus, and this moneyed potentate, as faithful as he was corrupt, ended his career in a dungeon.

- (c) The Emperor, weakened by ill-health, many labors, and sexual enterprise, allowed Pallas and Agrippina to establish another reign of terror. Men were accused, exiled, or killed because the Treasury was exhausted by public works and games and needed replenishment by confiscated wealth. Thirty-five senators and 300 knights were condemned to death in the thirteen years of Claudius' reign. Some of these executions may have been justified by actual conspiracy or crime; we do not know. Nero later claimed that he had examined all the papers of Claudius, and that from these it appeared that not one prosecution had been set on foot by the Emperor's order.
- (9) After five years of his fifth marriage Claudius awakened to what Agrippina was doing. He resolved to put an end to her power, and circumvent her plans for Nero, by naming Britannicus his heir. But Agrippina had more determination and less scruple. Perceiving the Emperor's intentions she risked everything: she fed Claudius poisonous mushrooms, and he died after twelve hours of agony, without being able to utter a word (54). When the Senate deified him, Nero, already enthroned, remarked that mushrooms must be the food of the gods, since by eating them Claudius had become divine.
- g) Nero Caesar–54-68 A.D.
- (1) In March, 68, the Gallic governor of Lyons, Julius Vindex, announced the independence of Gaul; and when Nero offered 2,500,000 sesterces for his head, Vindex retorted, "He who brings me Nero's head may have mine in return." Preparing to take the field against this virile antagonist, Nero's first care was to choose wagons to carry along with him his musical instruments and theatrical effects. But in April word came that Galba, commander of the Roman army in Spain, had joined fortunes with Vindex and was marching toward Rome. Hearing that the Praetorian Guard was ready to abandon Nero for proper remuneration, the Senate proclaimed Galba emperor. Nero put some poison into a small box and, so armed, fled from his Golden House to the Servilian Gardens on the road to Osda. He asked such officers of the Guard as were in the palace to accompany him; all refused, and one quoted to him a line of Virgil: "Is it, then, so hard to die?"
- (2) He could not believe that the omnipotence which had ruined him had suddenly ceased. He sent appeals for help to various friends, but none replied. He went down to the Tiber to drown himself, but his courage failed him. Phaon, one of his freedmen, offered to conceal him in his villa on the Via Salaria; Nero grasped at the proposal, and rode through the dark four miles out from the center of Rome. He spent that night in Phaon's cellar, clad in a soiled tunic, sleepless and hungry, and trembling at every sound. Phaon's courier brought word that the Senate had declared Nero a public enemy, had ordered his arrest, and had decreed that he should be punished "after the ancient manner." Nero asked what this was. "The condemned man," he was told, "is stripped, is fastened to a post by a fork passing through his neck, and is then beaten to death." Terrified, he tried to stab himself; but he made the mistake of testing the poniard's point first and found it disconcertingly sharp....
- (3) As a new day dawned he heard the clatter of horses: the Senate's soldiers had tracked him down....he drove a dagger into his throat; his hand faltered, and his freedman Epaphroditus helped him to press the blade home. He had begged his companions to keep his corpse from being mutilated, and Galba's agents granted the wish. His old nurses, and Acte his
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former mistress, buried him in the vaults of the Domitii (68).

- (4) Many of the populace rejoiced at his death and ran about Rome with liberty caps on their heads. But many more mourned him, for he had been as generous to the poor as he had been recklessly cruel to the great. They lent eager hearing to the rumor that he was not really dead but was fighting his way back to Rome.

h) Galba–68-69 A.D.

- (1) Servius Sulpicius Galba reached Rome in June of 68. He was of noble birth, for he traced his lineage on his father's side to Jupiter, and on his mother's to Pasiphae, wife of Minos and the bull. In this year of his exaltation he was already bald, and his hands and feet were so crooked with gout that he could not wear a shoe or hold a book.
- (2) He had the usual vices, normal and abnormal, but it was not these that made his reign so brief. What shocked army and populace were his economy of the public funds and his strict administration of justice. When he ruled that those who had received gifts or pensions from Nero must return nine tenths to the Treasury, a thousand new enemies arose, and Galba's days ran out.

i) Otho–69 A.D.

- (1) A bankrupt senator, Marcus Otho, announced that he could pay his debts only by becoming emperor. The Guards declared for him, marched into the Forum, and met Galba riding in a litter. Galba offered his neck unresisting to their swords; they cut off his head, his arms, his lips; one of them carried the head to Otho, but as he could not hold it well by the sparse and blood-wet hair, he thrust his thumb into the mouth.
- (2) The Senate hastened to accept Otho, just as Roman armies in Germany and Egypt were hailing as emperors their respective generals- Aulus Vitellius and Titus Flavius Vespasianus.
- (3) Vitellius invaded Italy with his hardy legions, and swept away the weak resistance of the northern garrisons and the Praetorian Guard. Otho killed himself after a reign of ninety-five days, and Vitellius mounted the throne.

j) Vitellius–69 A.D.

- (1) It does not speak well for the Roman military system that so senile a man as Galba should have commanded in Spain, or so slothful an epicurean as Vitellius in Germany. He was a gourmand who thought of the Principate chiefly as a feast, and made a banquet of every meal.
 - (2) He governed in the intervals; and as these grew shorter he left state affairs to his freedman Asiaticus, who in four months became one of the richest men in Rome. When Vitellius learned that Vespasian's general Antonius was leading an army into Italy to dethrone him, he delegated his defense to subordinates and continued to feast.
 - (3) In October of 69 the troops of Antonius defeated the defenders of Vitellius at Cremona in one of the bloodiest battles of ancient times. They marched into Rome, where the remnants of Vitellius' legions fought bravely for him while he took refuge in his palace. The populace, says Tacitus, "flocked in crowds to behold the conflict, as if a scene of carnage were no more than a public spectacle exhibited for their amusement"; while the battle raged some of them plundered shops and homes, and prostitutes plied their trade.
 - (4) The soldiers of Antonius triumphed, killed without quarter, and pillaged without stint; and the mob, as ready as history to applaud the victors, helped them to ferret out their enemies. Vitellius, dragged from his concealment, was led half naked through the city with a noose
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around his neck, was pelted with dung, was tortured without haste, and at last, in a moment of mercy, was slain (December, 69). The corpse was drawn through the streets with a hook and flung into the Tiber.

- 5) With the foregoing ten rulers following in sequence, the eleventh would be Vespasian—70-79 A.D. If this formula is sound, the identity of the person represented by the little horn is found.
- h. The following data is gleaned from the pungent pen of Will Durant, *Caesar and Christ*, pp. 286-288:
- 1) What a relief to meet a man of sense, ability, and honor! Vespasian, busy directing the war against Judea, took his time in coming to occupy the dangerous eminence that his soldiers had won for him, and which the Senate hurriedly confirmed. When he arrived (October, 70), he set himself with inspiring energy to restore order to a society disturbed in every aspect of its life. Perceiving that he would have to repeat the labors of Augustus, he modeled his behavior and policy upon those of that prince....
 - 2) He was sixty, but in the unimpaired vigor of his powerful frame. He was built foursquare in body and character, with a broad, bald, and massive head, coarse but commanding features, and small sharp eyes that pierced every sham. He had none of the stigmata of genius; he was merely a man of firm will and practical intelligence. He had been born in a Sabine village near Reate, of purely plebeian stock. His accession was a fourfold revolution: a commoner had reached the throne, a provincial army had overcome the Praetorians and crowned its candidate, the Flavians had succeeded the Julio-Claudians, and the simple habits and virtues of the Italian bourgeois replaced, at the court of the emperor, the epicurean wastefulness of the city-bred descendants of Augustus and Livia. Vespasian never forgot, or sought to conceal, his modest ancestry. When expectant genealogists traced his family back to a companion of Hercules he laughed them into silence. Periodically he returned to the home of his birth to enjoy its rustic ways and fare, and he would not allow anything there to be changed. He scorned luxury and laziness, ate the food of peasants, fasted one day in each month, and declared war upon extravagance. When a Roman whom he had nominated for office came to him smelling of perfume, he said, "I would rather you smelled of garlic," and withdrew the nomination. He made himself easily accessible, talked and lived on a footing of equality with the people, enjoyed jokes at his own expense, and allowed everyone great freedom in criticizing his conduct and his character. Having discovered a conspiracy against him he forgave the plotters, saying that they were fools not to realize what a burden of cares a ruler wore. He lost his good temper in one case only. Helvidius Priscus, restored to the Senate from the exile into which Nero had sent him, demanded the restoration of the Republic, and reviled Vespasian without concealment or restraint. Vespasian asked him not to attend the Senate if he proposed to continue such abuse; Helvidius refused. Vespasian banished him and tarnished an excellent reign by ordering him put to death. He regretted the action later, and for the rest, says Suetonius, showed "the greatest patience under the frank language of his friends... and the impudence of philosophers." These latter were not so much Stoics as Cynics, philosophical anarchists who felt that all government was an imposition and attacked every emperor.
 - 3) To get fresh blood into a Senate depleted by family limitation and civil war, Vespasian secured appointment as censor, brought to Rome a thousand distinguished families from Italy and the western provinces, enrolled them in the patrician or equestrian orders, and over many bitter protests filled out the Senate from their ranks. The new aristocracy, under the stimulus of his example, improved Roman morals and society. It was not spoiled yet by idle wealth, nor yet so removed from labor and the soil as to disdain the routine tasks of life and administration; and it had something of the Emperor's order and decency of life. Out of it came those rulers who, after Domitian, gave Rome good government for a century. Conscious of the evils that had flowed from the use of freedmen as imperial executives, Vespasian replaced most of them with men from this
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- provincial infiltration and from Rome's expanding business class. With their help he accomplished in nine years a miracle of rehabilitation....
- 4) It remained for this blunt soldier to establish the first system of state education in classical antiquity. He ordered that certain qualified teachers of Latin and Greek literature and rhetoric should thereafter be paid out of public funds and should receive a pension after twenty years of service. Perhaps the old skeptic felt that teachers had some share in forming public opinion and would speak better of a government that paid their way....He roused the people to an energetic campaign for clearing away the debris left by the recent war, and he himself carried the first load. When an inventor showed him plans for a hoisting machine that would greatly reduce the need for human labor in these enterprises of removal and construction, he refused to use it, saying, "I must feed my poor."
 - 5) The provinces prospered as never before. Their wealth was now twice as great- at least in monetary terms- as under Augustus, and they bore the increased tribute without injury. Vespasian sent the able Agricola to govern Britain, and delegated to Titus the task of ending the revolt of the Jews. Titus captured Jerusalem and returned to Rome with all the honors that usually crown superior killing. A spectacular triumph led a long procession of captives and spoils through the streets, and a famous arch was raised to commemorate the victory. Vespasian was proud of his son's success but disturbed by the fact that Titus had brought home a pretty Jewish princess, Berenice, as his mistress, and wished to marry her....The Emperor could not see why one should marry a mistress; he himself, after the death of his wife, lived with a freedwoman without troubling to wed her; and when this Caenis died he distributed his love among several concubines....He was convinced that the succession to his power must be settled before his death, as the alternative to anarchy. The Senate agreed, but demanded that he should name and adopt "the best of the best"....Vespasian answered that he reckoned that Titus was the best. To ease the situation the young conqueror dismissed Berenice, and sought consolation in promiscuity. The Emperor thereupon associated Titus with himself on the throne and delegated to him an increasing share in the government.
 - 6) In 79 Vespasian again visited Reate. While in the Sabine country he drank copiously the purgative waters of Lake Cutilia and was seized with severe diarrhea. Though confined to his bed he continued to receive embassies and perform the other duties of his office. Feeling the hand of death upon him he nevertheless kept his bluff humor. *Vae! puto deus fio*, he remarked- "Alas, I think I am becoming a god." Almost fainting, he struggled to his feet with the help of attendants, saying, "An emperor should die standing." With these words he concluded a full life of sixty-nine years and a beneficent reign of ten.
- i. The history of Vespasian fits the prophetic depiction of him.
- 1) Being one of Rome's greatest warriors, and having a mighty army behind him, when Vespasian was recommended to be the next emperor, the senate quickly acceded. He would become very effective and beneficent ruler.
 - 2) When the Jews rebelled against the authority of Rome, Vespasian ordered Titus to bring them into subjection and to destroy Jerusalem. The desolation visited upon the Jews was even more severe and longer-lasting than that of the Babylonians.
 - 3) Our Lord had warned his disciples just prior to his crucifixion that an invading army would come against the city.
 - a) Luke 19:41-44: "And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it, Saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes. For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies
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shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, And shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation.”

- b) Matthew 24:15-22: “When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:) Then let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains: Let him which is on the housetop not come down to take any thing out of his house: Neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes. And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days! But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day: For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened.” The *abomination of desolation* is a reference to the Roman army.
- 4) The Jews were divided into warring factions among themselves. The Sadducees tended to compromise with the Roman overlords; the Pharisees were at odds with the Romans; the Zealots actively opposed their pagan masters. History tells us of the Essenes, an ascetic sect which sought to withdraw from society; they lived in caves near the Dead Sea. Fighting broke out in Palestine, when the Jews attacked the Romans. Much blood was shed.
- a) Vespasian had been given a large army with which to quell the Jewish rebellion (67 A.D.) by Nero, the current emperor. The next year, Nero was forced to commit suicide. As the general was about to assault Jerusalem, news of Nero's death arrived. The army pushed for Vespasian to replace Nero as emperor. Vespasian's army, as noted by Durant above, defeated the other Roman generals who sought the high office.
- b) The Jews received a respite of nearly a year, while the situation in Rome was being settled. The new emperor (Vespasian) sent Titus with an army against Jerusalem, to put down their rebellion with the greatest of force. Their city was destroyed, the temple demolished, the people scattered, and the rites and ceremonies of the Mosaic Law ceased to be observed for all time. They lost their unified nation, they were deprived of their homeland, and they have been forever scattered.
- c) The three emperors who followed Nero to the Roman throne, were each overthrown. Vespasian and his army, returning to Rome, overcame those others who vied for the throne, and he became emperor. The Jews subsequently were defeated at the order of Vespasian. He made war against the saints (the Jews), and overcame them.
- d) Josephus: When Josephus heard him give those orders, he said that he had somewhat in his mind that he would willingly say to himself alone. When therefore they were all ordered to withdraw, excepting Titus and two of their friends, he said, "Thou, O Vespasian, thinkest no more than that thou hast taken Josephus himself captive; but I come to thee as a messenger of greater tidings; for had not I been sent by God to thee, I knew what was the law of the Jews in this case? and how it becomes generals to die. Dost thou send me to Nero? For why? Are Nero's successors till they come to thee still alive? Thou, O Vespasian, art Caesar and emperor, thou, and this thy son. Bind me now still faster, and keep me for thyself, for thou, O Caesar, are not only lord over me, but over the land and the sea, and all mankind; and certainly I deserve to be kept in closer custody than I now am in, in order to be punished, if I rashly affirm any thing of God."
- (1) When he had said this, Vespasian at present did not believe him, but supposed that Josephus said this as a cunning trick, in order to his own preservation; but in a little time he was convinced, and believed what he said to be true, God himself erecting his
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expectations, so as to think of obtaining the empire, and by other signs fore-showing his advancement. He also found Josephus to have spoken truth on other occasions; for one of those friends that were present at that secret conference said to Josephus, "I cannot but wonder how thou couldst not foretell to the people of Jotapata that they should be taken, nor couldst foretell this captivity which hath happened to thyself, unless what thou now sayest be a vain thing, in order to avoid the rage that is risen against thyself." To which Josephus replied, "I did foretell to the people of Jotapata that they would be taken on the forty-seventh day, and that I should be caught alive by the Romans."

(2) Now when Vespasian had inquired of the captives privately about these predictions, he found them to be true, and then he began to believe those that concerned himself. Yet did he not set Josephus at liberty from his hands, but bestowed on him suits of clothes, and other precious gifts; he treated him also in a very obliging manner, and continued so to do, Titus still joining his interest with the honors that were done him. [from Josephus: Wars of the Jews, PC Study Bible formatted electronic database Copyright © 2003, 2006 by Biblesoft, Inc. All rights reserved].

7. Verse 8: "I considered the horns, and, behold, there came up among them another little horn, before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots: and, behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of man, and a mouth speaking great things."
- a. The prophet gave close notice to the horns in the vision, and as he did so, a little horn grew up in the midst of the other ten; in the process of growth, it pulled up three of the other horns. We are not told anything more here about the rest of the ten horns. This new horn had human eyes and a mouth that spoke great things. We may easily grasp the picture being presented, but the fulfillment of these signs is highly disputed.
 - b. The Pulpit Commentary presents this view:
 - 1) As Daniel is gazing, his attention is directed to the horns; he sees their appearance changing. An eleventh horn springs up, much less than any of the former ten; quickly, however, it grows, and before its growth three of the former horns are rooted up. This horn now drew his gaze from all the others: it had human eyes, it had a mouth speaking great things. In the changes of the dream the horn now seems separated from the animal on which it is; it becomes an oppressor, and makes war upon the saints. It is usual to identify this horn with that in ch. 8:7. When carefully looked at, the alleged resemblance is reduced to the fact that in both cases "a horn" is used as a symbol of an oppressor of the saints.
 - 2) We must remember that, according to the figure, these ten horns are contemporary. If we take the typology of the next chapter as our guide, these horns are kingdoms or dynasties. Unlike the Greek Empire, which split up into four, this fourth empire splits up into ten. Another dynasty rises up and sweeps away three of these earlier dynasties. Nothing like this occurred in regard to the empire of the Diadochi. Of course, it is true the number ought not to be pressed, save as a designative symbol. There must, however, be more than five or six, as in such a case four would be a more natural general number. It may, however, be twelve or fifteen.
 - 3) Several events in the history of the kingdoms that have followed the Roman Empire might satisfy one part of this picture - the replacing of three kingdoms by one. It is a possible enough view that provinces may be referred to, as Jephth-ibn. Ali maintains. As, however, the primary significance of the "horn" is power, the most probable solution seems to us to be to take the "ten" horns as the magistracies of Republican Rome. If we reckon the magistracies, there were fewer, if we take the distinctive individuals occupying the magistracies, more, than ten. The imperial form of government replaced several of these magistracies, which may roughly be reckoned at three.

- 4) Certainly of the imperial power it might be said that it had a mouth "speaking great things;" for the claim to deification made openly was certainly a new claim. Other monarchs had claimed to be the sons of their god; only the Roman emperors were addressed as *divus* during their lifetime. Certainly the empire made war against the saints - against the people of God. It was Nero, a Roman emperor, who decreed war against the Jews; it was Vespasian, another Roman emperor, that began the conquest of Palestine; it was Titus, a third Roman emperor, that captured Jerusalem. Some support may be found for the Jewish idea that it is Titus personally. If we are permitted to take the ten horns as successive emperors, he was the eleventh emperor, and three emperors were swept away before the Flavian dynasty. We must reserve fuller discussion of this subject to a special excursus. (Pulpit Commentary).
- c. Jameison offers this view:
- 1) "I considered the horns, and, behold, there came up among them another little horn - little at first, but afterward waxing greater than all others. He must be sought "among them" - namely, the ten horns. The Roman empire did not represent itself as a continuation of Alexander's; but the Germanic empire calls itself 'the holy Roman empire.' Napoleon's attempted universal monarchy was avowedly Roman: his son was called King of Rome. The czar (Caesar) also professes to represent the eastern half of the Roman empire. The Roman civilization, church, language, and law, are the chief elements in Germanic civilization. But the Romanic element seeks universal empire, while the Germanic seeks individualization. Hence, the universal monarchies attempted by the Papacy, Charlemagne, Charles V, and Napoleon, have failed, the iron not amalgamating with the clay. In the king symbolized by 'the little horn,' the God-opposing, haughty spirit of the world, represented by the fourth monarchy, finds its intensest development. 'The man of sin,' 'the son of perdition,' (2 Thess 2.) 'Antichrist that denieth the Father and the Son, and confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh' (1 John 2:18,22; 4:3)....
 - 2) "Before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots. The three horns plucked up are, *the exarchate* of Ravenna, the kingdom of the Lombards, and the state of Rome, which constituted the pope's dominions at the first; obtained by Pope Zachary and Stephen II in return for acknowledging the usurper Pepin lawful king of France (Newton). See Tregelles' objections, Dan 7:7, 'ten horns,' note."
- d. Coffman gives the following in support of this interpretation:
- 1) In the mid-19th century, Alexander Campbell debated Bishop Purcell of the Roman Catholic Church, affirming that, "The Scriptures teach that the hierarchical Papacy of the Roman Church is 'The great Harlot' of John's apocalypse, 'The Man of Sin' of Paul, and 'the Little Horn' of Daniel." It is the resistance of this interpretation that leads to the false allegations seeking to deny this. This interpretation is still true, no matter how men may resent it.
 - 2) Sir Isaac Newton, one of the greatest intellectual giants of an entire millennium, unequivocally interpreted this 'little horn' as follows: "The little horn is a little kingdom. It was a horn of the fourth beast, and rooted up three of the first horns; and therefore we are to look for it among the nations of the Latin Empire. But it was a kingdom of a different kind from the other ten kingdoms, having a life and soul peculiar to itself, with eyes and a mouth. By its eyes it was a Seer; and by its mouth speaking great things and changing times and laws, it was a Prophet as well as a King. And such a Seer, Prophet, and King, is the Church of Rome."
8. The view of this writer is that the ten horns represent the first ten emperors of the Roman Empire. These rulers did not reign at the same time, but clearly followed one another in sequence. As the four beasts appeared in Daniel's vision one at a time, these ten great rulers likewise would not have appeared instantly, but one after the other.
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- a. Three of these ten rulers were uprooted by the appearance of the eleventh horn (the little horn with human eyes and a mouth that spoke great things). The eighth, ninth and tenth emperors came to power and lost their positions in quick succession, within a period of about a year. These were Galba, Otho and Vitellius.
- b. Before Nero was forced to commit suicide, he had sent Vespasian with a great army to Palestine to put down a rebellion the Jews had raised. This was in 67 A.D. As he was getting set to attack Jerusalem, word came to him of the death of Nero in 68 A.D. His troops declared Vespasian as emperor; he led his army back to Rome. In the meantime, Galba's soldiers set him forth as emperor. Otho's troops did the same for their general. Vitellius and his army were operating in Germany. When they learned of Nero's death, they put forth their general as emperor. In the struggles and fighting that ensued, the three other emperors and their armies suffered defeat, with Vespasian alone standing as the next emperor.

B. Daniel 7:9-14: A Heavenly Scene Described.

1. Verse 9: "I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire" (KJV). "I watched till thrones were put in place, And the Ancient of Days was seated; His garment *was* white as snow, And the hair of His head *was* like pure wool. His throne *was* a fiery flame, Its wheels a burning fire" (NKJV).
 - a. The expression "I beheld" denotes continuous action, indicating that the prophet's full attention was focused on the majestic and awesome scene. The vision of the beasts had faded; the new scene was one of Heavenly nature. This new vision was clearly intended to give Daniel and his auditors a grand depiction of God on the throne, exercising absolute authority over all other entities, heavenly or mortal.
 - b. The thrones of the present vision are put in place. The KJV suggests by its past tense rendering that the thrones of the preceding vision had been thrown aside. It is certainly the case that God's plan called for his eternal kingdom to overcome and destroy the power of the Roman Empire—its thrones [*i.e.*, its authority] would be removed. "And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever" (Dan. 2:44). But the thrones were set in place in order that the rest of the vision could be completed.
 - c. The Ancient of Days sat upon the principal throne. Even in English, "ancient of days" clearly denotes one who is of great age. This could only have reference to the Eternal God, the ever-existing One. The Almighty is also part of the scene in verses thirteen and fourteen below. The Son of Man (7:13) is obviously Christ; to whom did the Son of Man approach after his ascension?
 - 1) Mark 16:19: "So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God."
 - 2) Acts 2:32-33: "This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear."
 - 3) Using the verbal picture of *Ancient of Days*, the prophet brings to our mind an impression of one who has great majesty, wisdom, power, and infinite purity.
 - d. The Ancient of Days wore garments which were as white as snow.
 - 1) This reminds us of how Jesus is described in the Transfiguration: "And his raiment became shining, exceeding white as snow; so as no fuller on earth can white them" (Mark 9:3). Luke 9:29 says his clothing was "white and glistening."

- 2) After the Lord's resurrection, two angelic beings were seen at the tomb wearing "shining garments" (Luke 24:4). Matthew 28:3 says (in describing one of the angels), "His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow."
 - 3) Heavenly Beings are presented in the Scriptures as bright and white. Notice 1 Timothy 6:13-16: "I give thee charge in the sight of God, who quickeneth all things, and before Christ Jesus, who before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession; That thou keep this commandment without spot, unrebukeable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ: Which in his times he shall shew, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen."
 - a) God dwells in light unto which no man can approach. "The light where he dwells is so brilliant and dazzling that mortal eyes could not endure it. This is a very common representation of the dwelling place of God...Heaven is constantly represented as a place of the most pure and brilliant light, needing not the light of the sun, or the moon, or the stars (Rev. 21:23,24; 22:5), and God is represented as dwelling in that light, surrounded by amazing and inapproachable glory..." (Barnes, p.202).
 - b) "The truly venerable appearance of the Judge is heightened by the further fact that 'His garment was white as snow and the hair of His head pure as wool.' It seems to be less age and more purity that is indicated by the snow-white garment and the white hair. For it is eminently fitting that the Judge of all mankind be Himself free from every taint of the sin for which He must condemn the sinful among mankind, especially the aggregate total of their sins" (Leupold, discussing Daniel 7:9).
 - 4) No man has seen God and no man can see God. God is a spiritual being; he cannot be seen by the mortal eyes of man. This is good reason to know that the individual being spoken of in this passage is God the Father, for many people saw Christ when he lived on earth, and a sizeable number saw him after his resurrection. But no man has seen God at any time.
 - a) Moses saw only a manifestation of God: "And the LORD said unto Moses, I will do this thing also that thou hast spoken: for thou hast found grace in my sight, and I know thee by name. And he said, I beseech thee, shew me thy glory. And he said, I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the LORD before thee; and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will shew mercy on whom I will shew mercy. And he said, Thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see me, and live. And the LORD said, Behold, there is a place by me, and thou shalt stand upon a rock: And it shall come to pass, while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a cliff of the rock, and will cover thee with my hand while I pass by: And I will take away mine hand, and thou shalt see my back parts: but my face shall not be seen" (Ex. 33:17-23).
 - b) John 5:37: "And the Father himself, which hath sent me, hath borne witness of me. Ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape."
 - c) 1 John 4:12: "No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us."
 - 5) Being God, possessing the wonderful characteristics of deity, the Father is worthy of all the honor and power attributed to him. The praise we direct to him is not misplaced; the power ascribed to him in the Bible is not misstated; the glory and honor and eternal power we impute to him is proper and true.
 - e. The hair on the head of the Ancient of Days is said to be as pure wool. There was no stain in it; and we may be sure that it was not garbled with tangles! Christ is described by John in Revelation 1:13-14
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using similar words: "And in the midst of the seven candlesticks *one* like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle. His head and *his* hairs *were* white like wool, as white as snow; and his eyes *were* as a flame of fire."

- 1) Christ is pictured as being in the midst of the candlesticks, perhaps indicating that they were arranged in a circle. Being in their midst shows his closeness with them; he knows their struggles, problems, strong points, sins, and needs. He is their controlling force and sustaining power.
 - a) Hebrews 1:3: "Who being the brightness of *his* glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high."
 - b) He is spoken of as the Son of man. Daniel spoke of him under the same description. "I saw in the night visions, and, behold, *one* like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him" (Dan. 7:13).
- 2) The clothing with which he was dressed are signs of high rank in ancient oriental custom. His head and his hair were as white as wool and snow. The description emphasizes his purity. "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool" (Isa. 1:18).
- 3) His eyes were as a flame of fire, which denotes his penetrating, all-seeing knowledge. He knows us all (2 Tim. 2:19); all of our affairs, thoughts, motives, words, and deeds are open to him (Heb. 4:13). His eyes can show various emotions (Mk. 3:5; 10:21; Lk. 22:61).
 - a) Mark 3:5: "And when he had looked round about on them with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts, he saith unto the man, Stretch forth thine hand. And he stretched *it* out: and his hand was restored whole as the other."
 - b) Hebrews 4:13: "Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things *are* naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do."
- f. Daniel describes the throne upon which the Ancient of Days sat as "like the fiery flame." These descriptions are said to be "like" certain earthly things. As a fiery flame is bright, so the throne of the Almighty is said to be so.
 - 1) Again, notice John's depiction of what he saw in his heavenly vision: "And immediately I was in the spirit: and, behold, a throne was set in heaven, and one sat on the throne. And he that sat was to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone: and there was a rainbow round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald" (Rev. 4:2-3).
 - 2) Compare: Isaiah 6:1-5: "In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, *is* the LORD of hosts: the whole earth *is* full of his glory. And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke. Then said I, Woe *is* me! for I am undone; because I *am* a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts."
 - 3) God's people need to be reminded of the fact that God is on his throne in heaven, thus everything will turn out all right eventually.
 - 4) God's enemies ought to take notice that the Almighty will have the final say regarding their sins and rebellions against him. Fire was sometimes used in his punishment of past mutinies, and warnings against future violations.
 - a) Exodus 19:18: "And mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the LORD descended

- upon it in fire: and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly.”
- b) Exodus 20:18: “And all the people saw the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the noise of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking: and when the people saw it, they removed, and stood afar off.”
 - c) Deuteronomy 4:24: “For the LORD thy God is a consuming fire, even a jealous God.”
 - d) Deuteronomy 9:3: “Understand therefore this day, that the LORD thy God is he which goeth over before thee; as a consuming fire he shall destroy them, and he shall bring them down before thy face: so shalt thou drive them out, and destroy them quickly, as the LORD hath said unto thee.”
 - e) Psalms 18:8: “There went up a smoke out of his nostrils, and fire out of his mouth devoured: coals were kindled by it.”
 - f) Psalms 50:3: “Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence: a fire shall devour before him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about him.”
 - g) Ezekiel 1:13: “As for the likeness of the living creatures, their appearance was like burning coals of fire, and like the appearance of lamps: it went up and down among the living creatures; and the fire was bright, and out of the fire went forth lightning.”
 - h) Hebrews 12:25-29: “See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven: Whose voice then shook the earth: but now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven. And this word, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: For our God is a consuming fire.”
 - i) 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9: “And to you that are afflicted rest with us, at the revelation of the Lord Jesus from heaven with the angels of his power in flaming fire, rendering vengeance to them that know not God, and to them that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus: who shall suffer punishment, even eternal destruction from the face of the Lord and from the glory of his might.”
 - j) Revelation 20:12-15: “And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.”
- g. Daniel speaks of his “wheels” being “as burning fire.” Evidently the throne is set atop a chariot, and is able to move wherever the Ancient of Days wishes.
- 1) “And the throne being movable upon wheels, or at least the chariot in which he rode the circuit, the wheels thereof are as burning fire, to devour the adversaries; for our God is a consuming fire, and with him are everlasting burnings, Isa 33:14” (Matthew Henry).
 - 2) “The seat on which he sat seemed to be fire. That is, it was brilliant and splendid, as if it were a mass of flame. The wheels of his throne – for, as in Ezek 1; 10, the throne on which Jehovah sat appeared to be on wheels. In Ezekiel (Ezek 1:16; 10:9), the wheels of the throne appeared to be
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- of the color of beryl; that is, they were like precious stones. Here, perhaps, they had only the appearance of a flame – as such wheels would seem to flash flames” (Barnes).
- a) Ezekiel 1:16: “The appearance of the wheels and their work was like unto the colour of a beryl: and they four had one likeness: and their appearance and their work was as it were a wheel in the middle of a wheel.”
 - b) Ezekiel 10:9: “And when I looked, behold the four wheels by the cherubims, one wheel by one cherub, and another wheel by another cherub: and the appearance of the wheels was as the colour of a beryl stone.”
- 3) It is interesting that Elijah’s departure from earth into eternity has a similar picture: “And it came to pass, as they still went on, and talked, that, behold, there appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven. And Elisha saw it, and he cried, My father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof. And he saw him no more: and he took hold of his own clothes, and rent them in two pieces” (2 Kings 2:11-12).
- h. Leupold offers these cogent remarks:
- 1) The remaining features that are added to this brief but marvelous description further enhance the picture of glory. The throne itself, though it is at a glance recognizable as a throne, is, nevertheless, composed of that ethereal substance, “flames of fire,” as being the only matter that is worthy to constitute such a throne. Whereas that might seem to represent a more substantial type of fire, though, of course, only in the vision, the “burning fire” that constitutes the wheels would seem to represent a more active type of flame that is in harmony with the more mobile character of the wheels, though these wheels of the throne do not seem to be in motion as were those in Ezekiel’s vision (Ezek. 1). Ancient royal thrones were sometimes represented as having wheels; and so God’s throne has them, which is to convey the impression of its not being a throne that is bound to one place. For God’s judgment, as is He Himself, is omnipresent. On fire and the Almighty see Exod. 3:2; Deut. 4:24; 1 Tim. 6:16; Heb. 12:29.....
 - 2) Thus far we have only One sitting on a throne, yet “thrones” were set. For whom were the remaining thrones intended? As far as Daniel’s account of the proceeding is concerned, he does not venture to place anyone on these thrones. It seems best to let it go at that. It is true enough that Ps. 89:7, 8 indicates that angels help to constitute a heavenly council. Though that fact is true, the inference is unwarranted that the heavenly hosts play their part every time judgment is pronounced. We are not sufficiently informed to make such a claim. It seems that a number of judgment seats appear in the vision because courts are usually represented thus. It serves no good purpose to seat certain ones on thrones that Daniel himself has left vacant.¹
2. Verse 10: “A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened.”
- a. First, notice the fiery stream that issued forth from his throne in Daniel’s vision. This is likely akin to a great stream of lava which flows from a gigantic volcano. Nothing can stand in the way of such a flood of liquid fire. Nothing can stop it; it can carry along with it virtually everything that stands in its way; it can also flow over, around and even under any obstruction. But an earthly lava flow is puny compared to God’s punishing, destroying power.
 - b. Not only does he have irresistible power, but he has an innumerable host of servants to carry forward his will. A thousand of thousands, speaks of a thousand times a thousand. Beyond that number, we are told of ten thousand times ten thousands who stood before him. God knows the number of these

¹ Leupold, H. C. (1949). *Exposition of Daniel* (pp. 300–303). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House.

angelic beings, but we are not told. The stars of the universe are without number to us, and so is the number of angelic servants who stand ready to do his bidding. Remember the power vested in only one angel: “Then the angel of the LORD went forth, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians a hundred and fourscore and five thousand: and when they arose early in the morning, behold, they were all dead corpses” (Isa. 37:36).

- c. An unnumbered army of angels will accompany Christ when he returns to earth at the end of time.
 - 1) Jude 1:14: “And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, Jude, writing by inspiration, relates to us that Enoch was a prophet of God, and that he had predicted the coming of the Lord with ten thousands of his saints [*holy ones*]. The purpose of the Lord’s coming was specifically said to bring judgment upon all the ungodly ones of earth. Jude properly applied this impending punishment to the false teachers of his day. Of course, Enoch’s warning was intended for all men of every generation.
 - 2) Matthew 25:31-32: “When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats.”
 - 3) 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10: “And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day.”
 - d. In the vision Daniel saw and recorded, he writes that the judgment is set. The books which contain the standard of judgment were opened. The villains to be judged would be legally condemned. They would receive the punishment they had earned. But who are these to be judged? What are the books that were used in the judgment?
 - 1) There have been various judgments God has brought against evil people through the generations. The entire population of the earth was destroyed by the flood of Noah’s time—except the eight people who were aboard the ark.
 - 2) The people of Sodom and the other cities of the plain were destroyed—except Lot and his two daughters.
 - 3) Many thousands were slain when the people of Israel conquered Palestine, which was occupied by the pagan Canaanites.
 - 4) Besides these, there are the cases of the Assyrians, Babylonians, the rebellious Israelites who were punished when Jerusalem was destroyed by the Chaldeans. When Rome assaulted Jerusalem in 70 A.D., we are told that more than a million people died in a short time. These are merely a smattering of many times punishment has been brought upon mankind.
 - e. There will be a final Judgment at the end of time in which all accountable people must give account of themselves before God.
 - 1) Acts 17:30-31: “And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent: Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.”
 - 2) 2 Corinthians 5:10-11: “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad. Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men....”
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3. Verse 11: "I beheld then because of the voice of the great words which the horn spake: I beheld even till the beast was slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame."
 - a. "This judgment (in the vision) falls first upon the fourth beast. By mention of the *body* being destroyed, the *utter* destruction of the beast is intended. It will exercise no further power in any sense, since it is to be completely done away. This, it seems to me, is a serious objection to finding the primary reference of the little horn to Antiochus, for after Antiochus' time, there were other Syrian kings who afflicted the Jews. But with the destruction of the little horn [representing the Roman Empire—bw], the power of the fourth beast disappears *entirely*....Since it is the destruction of empires and not of individuals as such which is described, it is probable that the primary reference is not to the fire of hell. Rather, it is the majestic and full triumph of Divine judgment which is pictured" (Young, p.153).
 - b. When Rome fell in 476 A.D., this was its final end. When Mussolini came to power in Italy in the 1920s, and began to spread his influence, the premillennial movement rejoiced, thinking that the Roman Empire was on the verge of being re-established! In their faulty view, the Roman Empire's resurrection is an important cog in their end-time prognostications. But the pagan empire of Rome is gone forever.
 4. Verse 12: "As concerning the rest of the beasts, they had their dominion taken away: yet their lives were prolonged for a season and time."
 - a. The four ferocious beasts who had arisen from the sea in the early part of this chapter, had now lost their dominion. The Babylonians had fallen to the Persians; the Persians had fallen to the Greeks; the Greeks had fallen to the Romans.
 - b. Now the Empire of Rome had fallen due to their opposition to God. Daniel 2:44-45 had predicted early in the career of Daniel that this fourth kingdom would receive a death blow by the rock cut out of the mountain.
 - 1) "And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever. Forasmuch as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold; the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter: and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure" (Dan. 2:44-45).
 - 2) The time between the prediction and the final fall of Rome was about one thousand years. The promise and its fulfillment were certain!
 - c. The four beasts of Daniel seven had each fallen in turn. In the words of verse twelve, "their lives were prolonged for a season and a time." The demise of the fourth beast was denoted in verse eleven. The other three beast fell in their proper order in the ancient times. But each of these three continued to have an influence. In one case, the Greeks produced a language which was used in recording the New Testament. This was well-nigh a universal language in first century of Christ.
 - d. The destruction of the fourth beast is discussed in prophetic detail. Rome [depicted by the fourth beast] had blatantly opposed God. It had severely punished the Israelites in 70 A.D. in the destruction of Jerusalem. It had also turned its fury against faithful Christians, afflicting and slaying an untold number of them. Rome opposed God and his people more than the other three empires.
 - e. "The fate of the first three beasts is not as terrible as is that of the fourth. They lose their power to rule, but they are permitted to continue alive until the time, determined in the counsel of God, should come" (Young, p.155).
 5. Verses 13-14: "I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him
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dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.”

a. Other translations:

- 1) Daniel 7:13-14: “I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed” (ASV).
- 2) Daniel 7:13-14: "I was watching in the night visions, And behold, *One* like the Son of Man, Coming with the clouds of heaven! He came to the Ancient of Days, And they brought Him near before Him. Then to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, That all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him. His dominion *is* an everlasting dominion, Which shall not pass away, And His kingdom *the one* Which shall not be destroyed” (NKJV).

b. In earthly relationships, there is a sense in which a man is called a “son of man.” God denied that he was a son of man: “God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?” (Num. 23:19). He did not originate from some man; he is not weak and sinful as mortal men are.

- 1) “It is remarkable that Daniel does not attempt to represent this by any symbol. The representation by symbols ceases with the fourth beast; and now the description assumes a literal form - the setting up of the kingdom of the Messiah and of the saints. Why this change of form occurs is not stated or known, but the sacred writers seem carefully to have avoided any representation of the Messiah by symbols” (Barnes).
- 2) Our Lord frequently referred to himself by the phrase, *Son of man*. Coffman offers this:
 - a) The title "Son of man" was used at least forty times by Jesus, twelve times in this Gospel; and, with the exception of Stephen's use of it (Acts 7:56), it is found only in our Lord's reference to himself. There are two questions of the deepest significance that arise from Jesus' use of this title: (1) did he use it in such a manner as to diminish his claim of absolute divinity? and (2) why did he favor this title as distinguished from "Son of God," which was more popularly associated generally with the coming Messiah?
 - b) The answer to the first question is an emphatic negative. Jesus meant by the title "Son of man" to affirm his deity and Godhead just as dogmatically as the title "Son of God" could have done it, but with the additional advantage of stressing his unique relationship to the human race as well. It is evident that **THE** Son of man cannot be any mortal being....
 - c) Why did Jesus prefer this title? "Son of God" was a title that carried with it, in the popular mind, the meaning King of Israel, a fact proved by Nathaniel's usage of the two together just a moment before; and it would have been disastrous for the Lord to have allowed the multitudes to crown him "king," a thing many of them were eager to do. It was clearly for the purpose of preventing such a thing that Jesus so often used the other title, "Son of man," a title which was not generally known and understood by the people and which was thus free of the connotation of an earthly kingship of Israel. It was absolutely imperative for our Lord to have avoided any semblance of claiming the literal Solomonic throne of Israel; for, if he had been unsuccessful in such avoidance, the Pharisees might have been able to get him crucified for sedition. It will be remembered that that is exactly what they tried to do anyway; but so completely had Jesus thwarted them, that they finally admitted to Pilate that they desired his condemnation for claiming to be the Son of God (John 19:7)....

- d) That Jesus did positively intend that "Son of man" should be understood in a unique and supernatural sense is proved by his own use of the title, as follows:
- (1) He used the title: (1) in connection with his power to forgive sins (Matthew 9:6); (2) of his lordship over the sabbath (Matthew 12:8); (3) of his second advent in glory (Matthew 19:28); (4) of his resurrection (Matthew 17:23); (5) of his seeking and saving that which is lost (Luke 19:10); (6) and of his coming in the final judgment (Matthew 26:64).
 - (2) The frustrated hatred and enmity of the Pharisees at his trial before Caiaphas reached a point of frenzy over this very title. The Pharisees knew perfectly that "Son of man" was fully as adequate a title of the Messiah as was "Son of God"; but they were trying to trick Jesus into using the latter title, because of its popular but mistaken identification with an earthly kingship of Israel. At the climax of the trial, Caiaphas placed Jesus under oath, saying, "Tell us, art thou the Christ, the Son of God?" (Matthew 26:63). In his reply, Jesus used the other terms: "Thou shalt see the Son of man sitting at the right hand of power and coming on the clouds of heaven" (Matthew 26:64). The Sanhedrin accepted Son of man as equivalent to Son of God on that occasion and certified to Pilate that he had "made himself the Son of God" (John 19:7). From these and many other considerations, therefore, it must be concluded that the answer to the second question raised at the first of this analysis is that Jesus preferred "Son of man" because of that title's being free of any possible misrepresentation. The very learned, such as the Pharisees, well knew it as a valid and proper designation of the divine Messiah; but it is clear that the multitudes did not so recognize it (John 12:34). [*Commentary on John*, 1:51].
- c. In the vision, Daniel saw one who was like the Son of Man [*i.e.*, Christ], come with the clouds of heaven. The identity of this Great Personage is beyond doubt!
- 1) Luke described our Lord's departure from earth from the human witnesses' point of view: "And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven" (Acts 1:9-11).
 - 2) David prophetically pictured our Lord's near approach to Heavenly Jerusalem: "Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory? The LORD strong and mighty, the LORD mighty in battle. Lift up your heads, O ye gates; even lift them up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory? The LORD of hosts, he is the King of glory" (Psa. 24:7-10).
 - a) This psalm may have initially have been sung in reference to the reception of the Ark of the Covenant, which had been captured from Israel during the days of Eli, and which later was brought into Jerusalem.
 - b) But like other Old Testament matters, this Psalm beautifully pictures the return of Christ from his earthly mission, coming back into the presence of the Almighty and the heavenly host. Only Heaven could be said to have *everlasting* doors. The King could be none other than the Son of God, who on that glorious occasion received the eternal kingdom.
 - c) In the twenty-fourth Psalm, we have an account of the actual entrance of Christ into heaven. When the King of England wishes to enter the city of London, through the Temple Bar, the gate being closed against him, the herald demands entrance. "Open the gate." From within a voice is heard, "Who is there?" The herald answers, "The King of England!" The gate is at once opened, and the king passes, amidst the joyful acclamations of his people. This is an
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ancient custom, and the allusion is to it in this Psalm. “The Lord ascended with a shout;” he approached the heavenly portal—the herald in his escort demanded an entrance, “*Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in.*” The celestial watchers within ask, “*Who is the King of glory?*” The heralds answer, “*The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle.*” The question and answer being repeated once more, the gates lift up their heads, and the everlasting doors are lifted up. The Prince enters his Father’s palace, greeted with the acclamations of heaven, all whose inhabitants unite in one shout of joy ineffable: “*The Lord of Hosts, he is the King of glory!*”—Christmas Evans.

- 3) Here in Daniel’s vision, our Lord’s entrance into Heaven is visually presented: “I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him” (Dan. 7:13).
 - a) Millennial theories twist this passage to have it describe Christ’s return to earth. That is just the opposite of what is presented in the vision. Christ returns from earth to Heaven. It is in Heaven that he received his kingdom.
 - b) The heart of millennialism is their allegation that Christ will set up a materialist, literal kingdom on earth and rule for one thousand years on David’s throne from Jerusalem.
 - 4) They deny that this kingdom is in existence today, despite many Bible declaration that it is now in existence.
 - a) The kingdom was to come with power: “And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That there be some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power” (Mark 9:1).
 - b) The power came when the Holy Spirit came upon the apostles: “But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth” (Acts 1:8; cf. Acts 2).
 - c) The Colossians were in the kingdom: “Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins” (Col. 1:13-14).
 - d) John the apostle was in the kingdom: “I John, who also am your brother, and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ” (Rev. 1:9).
 - 5) Peter announced that our Lord had completed his journey from earth to heaven, and was now sitting on the throne of authority at the right hand of the Father.
 - a) Acts 2:22-24: “Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it.”
 - b) Acts 2:32-33: “This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear.”
 - c) Acts 2:36-39: “Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ. Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and
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brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.”

- d) 1 Peter 3:22: “Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him.”
 - 6) Paul declared the present kingship of Christ in unmistakable terms:
 - a) “But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom. Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows. And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands: They shall perish; but thou remainest; and they all shall wax old as doth a garment; And as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed: but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail. But to which of the angels said he at any time, Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool?” (Heb. 1:8-13).
 - b) 1 Corinthians 15:24-28: “Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith, all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him. And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.”
 - d. In Daniel’s vision, he saw the Son of God return to Heaven, where he was brought before the Ancient of Days. The “Ancient of Days” is an awesome and graphic way to denote the Almighty God. There has never been a instant when God did not exist. He is omnipotent, omnipresent, omniscience, self existing. He is entirely immortal.
 - e. To the Son of God was given **dominion**.
 - 1) This word has reference to the authority with which the Messiah would rule over his spiritual kingdom. His rule of authority is his gospel—the New Testament.
 - 2) His rule is not over some geographical land area, but in the hearts and minds of his followers. They are not part of his kingdom by virtue of where they were born or their ancestry, but by the fact that they had been translated into his kingdom by the New Birth. “Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently: Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever” (1 Pet. 1:22-23; cf. Col. 1:13-14).
 - 3) Colossians 1:15-19: “Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist. And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence. For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell.”
 - f. To the Son of God was given **glory**.
 - 1) John 17:1-5: “These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee: As thou hast given him power over
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- all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.”
- 2) John 17:22-26: “And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me. Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world. O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee: but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me. And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them.”
- g. To the Son of God was given **a kingdom**.
- 1) The kingdom is, of course, the same kingdom as the one promised in Daniel 2:44: “And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever.”
- 2) The Kingdom was at hand during the days of John the Baptizer and Jesus.
- a) John’s message prominently featured a promise of the nearness of the kingdom. "In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea, And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matt. 3:1-2).
- b) The events of this chapter are separated from the events with which chapter two closed by almost thirty years; Matthew began this chapter with these words: *in those days*. Daniel 2:44 had predicted: “And in the days of these kings...”
- (1) Luke 3:1-3: "Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judaea, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip tetrarch of Iturea and of the region of Trachonitis, and Lysanias the tetrarch of Abilene, Annas and Caiaphas being the high priests, the word of God came unto John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness. And he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins."
- (2) Daniel had predicted that the kingdom would be established during the time when the Roman kings were in power; Luke identified the Roman king then on the throne, and named several of the other great men who were also in power at the time.
- c) Jesus began his ministry with the same message as did John. "From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matt. 4:17).
- d) Jesus instructed the twelve to preach the same message when he sent them on the limited commission. "And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matt. 10:7).
- e) Christ gave this same message to the seventy disciples when he sent them forth to preach. "And heal the sick that are therein, and say unto them, The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you" (Luke 10:9).
- f) These eighty-four preachers had the same message: the kingdom was about ready to be established. How can anyone who respects the integrity of God’s word think that all of these were wrong?
- 3) Premillennialism teaches that Christ planned to establish an earthly kingdom and reign over it
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- from a literal throne in Jerusalem, but that the Jews rejected his efforts.
- a) The truth is, a powerful group of Jews tried to enthrone Christ on a literal throne, which the Lord refused. "When Jesus therefore perceived that they would come and take him by force, to make him a king, he departed again into a mountain himself alone" (John 6:15).
 - b) His kingdom was never intended to be a worldly kingdom. "Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence" (John 18:36).
- h. The Dominion, the Glory and the Kingdom were given him so that all people, nations and languages should serve him. His rule is one of beneficence and love; it is for the eternal good of his followers.
- 1) Acts 4:11-12: "This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."
 - 2) John 8:21-24: "Then said Jesus again unto them, I go my way, and ye shall seek me, and shall die in your sins: whither I go, ye cannot come. Then said the Jews, Will he kill himself? because he saith, Whither I go, ye cannot come. And he said unto them, Ye are from beneath; I am from above: ye are of this world; I am not of this world. I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins."
 - 3) Revelation 19:16: "And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS."
 - 4) Philippians 2:9-11: "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."
 - 5) Acts 17:30-31: "And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent: Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead."
- i. His dominion is everlasting—it shall never pass away. His kingdom shall never be destroyed. The great empires of Babylonia, Persia, Greece and Rome all came to a destructive end, but the great spiritual kingdom of Christ will have no end.
- 1) 2 Peter 3:10-14: "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless."
 - 2) 1 Corinthians 15:24-28: "Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith, all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him. And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all."
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C. Daniel 6:15-28: The Prophet is Giving an Interpretation of What He Has Seen.

1. Verses 15-16: "I Daniel was grieved in my spirit in the midst of my body, and the visions of my head troubled me. I came near unto one of them that stood by, and asked him the truth of all this. So he told me, and made me know the interpretation of the things."
 - a. Regarding the human spirit:
 - 1) The spirit makes us different from the animals. Our having a spirit marks the difference between man and beast. No animal possesses an eternal spirit, but human beings do. "But *there is* a spirit in man: and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding" (Job 32:8). Verse 15 of our text affirms the presence of a spirit in Daniel, and all other humans.
 - 2) The spirit (soul) has no material properties. Whether living or dead, the physical body has the same weight. A doctor, knowing that his patient was on the verge of death, weighed him before and after death; there was no change in the weight.
 - 3) A dead body cannot see, cannot touch, cannot smell, cannot hear, and cannot taste. All of the senses it used in life are no longer available; that which animates the body is the spirit—and it departs from the body at death. In fact, the very absence of the spirit from the body **is** death: "For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also" (Jas. 2:26).
 - 4) Biblical statements:
 - a) Genesis 5:21-24: "And Enoch lived sixty and five years, and begat Methuselah: And Enoch walked with God after he begat Methuselah three hundred years, and begat sons and daughters: And all the days of Enoch were three hundred sixty and five years: And Enoch walked with God: and he *was* not; for God took him."
 - b) Hebrews 11:5: "By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God."
 - c) 2 Kings 2:1-11: "And it came to pass, when the LORD would take up Elijah into heaven by a whirlwind, that Elijah went with Elisha from Gilgal. And Elijah said unto Elisha, Tarry here, I pray thee; for the LORD hath sent me to Bethel. And Elisha said *unto him*, As the LORD liveth, and *as* thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. So they went down to Bethel. And the sons of the prophets that *were* at Bethel came forth to Elisha, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the LORD will take away thy master from thy head to day? And he said, Yea, I know *it*; hold ye your peace. And Elijah said unto him, Elisha, tarry here, I pray thee; for the LORD hath sent me to Jericho. And he said, *As* the LORD liveth, and *as* thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. So they came to Jericho. And the sons of the prophets that *were* at Jericho came to Elisha, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the LORD will take away thy master from thy head to day? And he answered, Yea, I know *it*; hold ye your peace. And Elijah said unto him, Tarry, I pray thee, here; for the LORD hath sent me to Jordan. And he said, *As* the LORD liveth, and *as* thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. And they two went on. And fifty men of the sons of the prophets went, and stood to view afar off: and they two stood by Jordan. And Elijah took his mantle, and wrapped *it* together, and smote the waters, and they were divided hither and thither, so that they two went over on dry ground. And it came to pass, when they were gone over, that Elijah said unto Elisha, Ask what I shall do for thee, before I be taken away from thee. And Elisha said, I pray thee, let a double portion of thy spirit be upon me. And he said, Thou hast asked a hard thing: *nevertheless*, if thou see me *when I am* taken from thee, it shall be so unto thee; but if not, it shall not be *so*. And it came to pass, as they still went on, and talked, that, behold, *there appeared* a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven."

- d) 1 Corinthians 15:50: "Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption."
- e) Moses survived death: "And after six days Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into an high mountain apart, And was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light. And, behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elias talking with him. Then answered Peter, and said unto Jesus, Lord, it is good for us to be here: if thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias. While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him" (Matt. 17:1-5).
- f) Paul's experience demonstrates conscious survival beyond death. For the argument Paul makes in this passage, the individual has to be Paul. "It is not expedient for me doubtless to glory. I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord. I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) such an one caught up to the third heaven. And I knew such a man, (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) How that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter" (2 Cor. 12:1-4. [It is certainly possible that the apostle *could* have been dead during this episode; it is certain in either case, that consciousness continues in the *Hadean* realm.
- g) The resurrections reported in the Scriptures show that death does not destroy the identity of the dead individual. Lazarus remained Lazarus; the widow's son was still her son; so also with Jairus' daughter. There is an "inner man" that is eternal: "For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward *man* is renewed day by day" (2 Cor. 4:16).
- h) The spirit (the soul) is the *knowing* part of man: "For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God" (1 Cor. 2:11).
- i) Knowledge and consciousness are not properties of body—these pertain to the soul (spirit): "For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also" (Jas. 2:26). There is neither knowledge nor consciousness in a dead body. The heart (used in reference to the spirit or soul) lives forever.
- (1) Psalms 22:26: "The meek shall eat and be satisfied: they shall praise the LORD that seek him: your heart shall live for ever."
- (2) Proverbs 23:7: "For as he thinketh in his heart, so *is* he: Eat and drink, saith he to thee; but his heart *is* not with thee."
- (3) Matthew 13:15: "For this people's heart is waxed gross, and *their* ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with *their* eyes and hear with *their* ears, and should understand with *their* heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them."
- (4) Romans 10:8-9: "But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, *even* in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach; That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved."
- j) Soul is incorruptible—immortal.
- (1) 1 Timothy 1:17: "Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, *be* honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen."
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- (2) 1 Peter 3:3-4: "Whose adorning let it not be that outward *adorning* of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; But *let it be* the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, *even the ornament* of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price." Note: We are made in God's image.
- k) Angels have no physical bodies, but those angels who sinned are preserved for punishment.
- (1) 2 Peter 2:4: "For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast *them* down to hell, and delivered *them* into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment."
- (2) 2 Peter 2:9: "The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished."
- (3) Jude 6: "And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day."
- 5) Relation of the soul to God the Father.
- a) Our spirit was given by Jehovah: "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it" (Eccl 12:7).
- b) The Lord formed the spirit within our physical body: "The burden of the word of the LORD for Israel, saith the LORD, which stretcheth forth the heavens, and layeth the foundation of the earth, and formeth the spirit of man within him" (Zech. 12:1).
- c) Our spirit was formed by the Lord (Zech 12:1). The Lord forms the spirit of man within him.
- d) The formation of the heavens and the laying of the earth's foundation were one-time acts, but the forming of the spirits of men is an on-going work.
- 6) There is more to a man than the physical body.
- a) Genesis 35:16-19: "And they journeyed from Bethel; and there was but a little way to come to Ephrath: and Rachel travailed, and she had hard labour. And it came to pass, when she was in hard labour, that the midwife said unto her, Fear not; thou shalt have this son also. And it came to pass, as her soul was in departing, (for she died) that she called his name Benoni: but his father called him Benjamin. And Rachel died, and was buried in the way to Ephrath, which *is* Bethlehem."
- b) Job 32:8: "But *there is* a spirit in man..."
- c) Romans 7:22: "For I delight in the law of God after the inward man."
- d) 2 Corinthians 4:16: "For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward *man* is renewed day by day."
- e) 1 Thessalonians 5:23: "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and *I pray God* your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."
- 7) God is the father of our spirits. "Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live?" (Heb. 12:9: cf. Num. 16:22).
- a) When does God form the spirit within us? The only logical time is the moment of conception; it is then that the body begins to form and life begins. When the spirit leaves the physical body, death results (Jas. 2:26); consequently, it is when the spirit joins the human body that life begins.
- b) We are made in God's image, but God has no physical image.
- (1) Genesis 1:26-27: "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let
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them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in his *own* image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them."

- (2) Luke 24:36-39: "And as they thus spake, Jesus himself stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, Peace *be* unto you. But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit. And he said unto them, Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have."
- (3) John 4:24: "God *is* a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship *him* in spirit and in truth."

c) We are the offspring of God.

- (1) Genesis 1:11: "And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, *and* the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed *is* in itself, upon the earth: and it was so."
- (2) Acts 17:28: "For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring."
- (3) Eve's body came from Adam; Adam's body was created from the elements of the earth.
- (4) Our bodies are derived from earthly elements; our spirit came from God—made in his image.
- (5) God is the Father of our **spirits**: "Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live?" (Heb 12:9).
- (6) All souls belong to God: "Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine: the soul that sinneth, it shall die" (Ezek. 18:4).

d) We have a spiritual relation to Christ now, as the children of God: "For ye are all sons of God, through faith, in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ. There can be neither Jew nor Greek, there can be neither bond nor free, there can be no male and female; for ye all are one *man* in Christ Jesus. And if ye are Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, heirs according to promise" (Gal 3:26-29, ASV).

8) The value of the spirit [soul]:

- a) It gives life to the physical body.
 - b) The spirit provides us with understanding, judgment, affections, will, intellect, and consciousness.
 - c) The spirit furnishes us with memory and reason.
 - d) The body without the spirit is dead—it has none of these qualities.
- b. The visions he had seen produced a deep, unsettling grief in his spirit. He could not comprehend the meaning of the fearful presentations he had beheld. The scene that had just passed before his mind was that of the appointment of the eternal kingdom to the one like the Son of man, by the Ancient of Days. What an awesome sight that must have been!
- c. Daniel, still in the vision, approached someone who was present. Manifestly, this being was not some man, but some heavenly personage. The prophet recognized this being as one who would be able to answer his questions and perhaps soothe his troubled spirit. Daniel reports that this person revealed the interpretation of the things which he had seen.
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2. Verses 17-18: “These great beasts, which are four, are four kings, which shall arise out of the earth. But the saints of the most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever.”
 - a. The great beasts which Daniel had seen in the first part of this chapter were kings. Obviously, they were each in turn a ruler of their own great kingdoms. These kings and their kingdoms were distinct from each other and were earthly in nature.
 - b. From secular history and from what is said about these kingdoms in the text, these were first that of Babylonia, the second that of the Medes and Persians, the third that of Greece, and the fourth that of Rome. These conclusions are settled truths.
 - c. We are told in Daniel 2:44 that during the days of the kings of the fourth kingdom (the Roman Empire), God would establish a spiritual kingdom. It is the same kingdom that was denoted in Daniel 7:13-14. This occurred after our Lord’s ascension to Heaven; on earth, Tiberius Caesar was on the throne in Rome. Messiah’s kingdom was set up on the Pentecost Day described in the second chapter of Acts. Of these conclusions there can be no successful contradiction.
 - d. Since each person who obeys the gospel is translated [conveyed] into the kingdom, and is thus made a citizen of this priceless entity, he enjoys all the benefits [and difficulties] that citizenship offers.
 - 1) Colossians 1:13-14: “Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins.”
 - 2) Revelation 1:9: “I John, who also am your brother, and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.”
 - 3) Those in the kingdom [the church of our Lord] are greatly blessed, but their faithfulness may put them into severe persecution: “Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God. And when they had ordained them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed” (Acts 14:22-23). Steadfastness here is necessary before we are invited into the eternal phase of the kingdom, in Heaven.
 - e. The saints are made part of this kingdom, sharing all of its present blessings, and happily anticipating the eternal status they will all have in Heaven.
 - 1) 2 Peter 1:3-11 According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.”
 - 2) 2 Peter 3:9-14: “The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the

- works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless.”
3. Verses 19-20: “Then I would know the truth of the fourth beast, which was diverse from all the others, exceeding dreadful, whose teeth were of iron, and his nails of brass; which devoured, brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with his feet; And of the ten horns that were in his head, and of the other which came up, and before whom three fell; even of that horn that had eyes, and a mouth that spake very great things, whose look was more stout than his fellows.”
- a. Liberal “scholars” deny that the fourth beast [kingdom] is the Roman Empire; they are unwilling to admit the reality of fulfilled prophecy. They divide the Medes and Persians into separate kingdoms (the second and third), and make the Grecian Empire to be the fourth. They allege that the little horn with the big mouth was Antiochus IV Epiphanes; this wicked man did afflict the Jews when his Syrian rule was the secular power in Palestine. He offered a swine on the altar at Jerusalem. One major effect of this false view is that the Roman Empire is completely removed from Daniel’s prophecy.
 - b. The Biblical information and secular history demands that the fourth kingdom be that of Rome. Of this there can be no doubt. All the parts fit!
 - c. As we discovered in the examination of the vision at the beginning of the chapter, the little horn could only have reference to Vespasian. He was the only Roman Emperor who put down three preceding emperors. The war that he fought personally (through his own battles in Palestine) and by his son Titus (who besieged and conquered Jerusalem in 70 A.D.), he subjected great harm and injury to the people of Israel. Both the Israelites of the Old Testament era and the Christians of the Gospel Age are called *saints*”
 - 1) Psalms 97:10: “Ye that love the LORD, hate evil: he preserveth the souls of his saints; he delivereth them out of the hand of the wicked.”
 - 2) Romans 1:1-7: “Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God, (Which he had promised afore by his prophets in the holy scriptures,) Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh; And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead: By whom we have received grace and apostleship, for obedience to the faith among all nations, for his name: Among whom are ye also the called of Jesus Christ: To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.”
 - 3) The word “saint” means “holy.” It describes one who has been set apart for God’s special service. God had a special purpose for the Old Testament Israelites; he has special purposes for Christians today.
 - a) Ephesians 2:5-10: “Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.”
 - b) Titus 2:11-14: “For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men,

Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works."

d. The awful tribulations brought upon rebellious Israel by the Romans is graphically described by the Jewish historian Josephus, who was on the scene to witness it himself. What this uninspired historian reported meshes very well indeed with what our Lord had predicted: "For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened" (Matt. 24:21-22).

1) Parallel passages:

a) Mark 13:19: "For *in* those days shall be affliction, such as was not from the beginning of the creation which God created unto this time, neither shall be."

b) Luke 21:23-24: "But woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck, in those days! for there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people. And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled."

2) Notice that the time when this great tribulation was to be is the same as when the abomination of desolation came and when the saints [in this case, Christians] were to flee from Judea and Jerusalem. We know that this great tribulation is not something that is to occur at the end of time because of the information preceding its mention and by the limiting statement of verse 34. There is no reason for taking the statement of verse 21 as a figure of speech. Jesus said plainly that the suffering of that period of time was unparalleled in history. It had greater suffering than that which was experienced during Noah's flood (those people died quickly, in a relatively painless way); it was greater than when God destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah (their death was not preceded with any long period of agony); it was greater than the suffering felt by those who died in either of the Atomic explosions in Japan (for those mostly died instantly).

a) Matthew 24:34: "...This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled."

b) Matthew 24:21: "For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be."

3) In fact, when Josephus' record is consulted, we have much reason to understand it literally. Josephus gave the following reports:

a) 1,100,000 Jews died at Jerusalem during the siege and fighting, and another 97,000 were captured and placed in slavery. How foolish the Jewish bravado of Matthew 27:25: "His blood be on us, and on our children."

b) Women ate their own babies, men broke into houses and stole food from children's mouths, and neighbor robbed neighbor for the food they had.

c) Rich Jews swallowed gold, deserted to the Romans, hoping to get away with some of their wealth. When the soldiers discovered the scheme, they began killing those who surrendered, ripping open their bodies in search of the coins. Thousands died in this fashion, two thousand in only one night.

d) Many were beaten and tortured by the Roman soldiers; thousands were crucified in various bodily positions as jests. This was done until all of the wood had been used as crosses, and even places to erect crosses were filled!

e) By actual count, 115,880 bodies were carried through one gate in three months; there were

600,000 in all thus disposed of. When the bodies could no longer be thrown outside the city, they were stored in large houses within the city.

- f) Thousands of the captives were later forced to fight beasts and each other in arenas; this for the enjoyment of spectators.
 - g) Jerusalem was overthrown and the temple was utterly destroyed; Matthew 24:2 was literally fulfilled. When the Romans broke into the city, Josephus said, "...They slew whomsoever they found, without distinction, and burned the houses and all the people who had fled into them; and when they entered for the sake of plunder, they found whole families of dead persons, and houses full of carcasses destroyed by famine, then they came out with their hands empty. And though they thus pitied the dead, they had not the same emotion for the living, but killed all they met, whereby they filled the lanes with dead bodies. The whole city ran with blood, insomuch that many things which were burning were extinguished by the blood" (Wars, Book VI, chap. 8,5; chap. 9,3). He also reports that the city fell to the Romans on the same calendar day that it had fallen to Nebuchadnezzar in 606 B.C.
- 4) God mercifully shortened the tribulation.
- a) 1 Peter 4:15-19: "But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or *as* a thief, or *as* an evildoer, or as a busybody in other men's matters. Yet if *any man suffer* as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf. For the time *is come* that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if *it first begin* at us, what shall the end *be* of them that obey not the gospel of God? And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear? Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls *to him* in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator."
 - b) "History records that Titus determined to reduce Jerusalem by famine, a long and destructive mode of conquest, and for this purpose he surrounded it with a wall and ditch. After completing his preparation for this attack on the city, he received news from Rome which urged him to hasten to Rome. He changed his plan and pressed the city by assault, that he might return to Rome, where his presence was greatly needed; hence, 'those days had been shortened.' The overruling providence of God shortened these days 'for the elect's sake.' 'The elect' has reference to the Christians who were among the Jews at that time. This elect group were to be preserved in order that the gospel might be handed down to future ages" (Boles, pp.466f).
 - c) Titus, the Roman general, acknowledged that the speedy overthrow of Jerusalem was to be attributed to the power of God: "We have certainly had God for our assistant in this war and it was no other than God who ejected the Jews out of these fortifications, for what could the hands of men, or any machines, do toward over-throwing these towers?" (Quoted by Kik, p.120).
 - d) "As it is Jewish flesh alone whose sufferings are the subject of discourse, this passage means that but for the shortening of those days no Jewish flesh would be saved; and it follows that the elect, for whose sake those days were to be shortened were the elect Jews, or Jewish Christians. The Romans made no distinction between believing and unbelieving Jews, but slaughtered all alike. The only safety for Christian Jews, then, was in flight, and even this might not have saved them but for the providence by which those days were 'shortened'" (McGarvey, p.208).
 - e. The little horn spoke great things and was more stout than the other horns. At the first it was little, but through its strong words and hard deeds it demonstrated its greater strength. Although there were very powerful emperors who preceded Vespasian, yet he and his son (Titus) brought more suffering, death,
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hardship and destruction upon Israel than their nation had ever endured during their fifteen hundred year history! Their descendants are still scattered, living in various societies where their presence has been resented. Indeed, during the rule of Hitler in Europe, the Jews received extremely harsh treatment from the Nazi regime.

- f. As we have seen, Vespasian and his son Titus brought severe hardship upon Israel, the people of God. The destruction and death that came upon them was due to their own rebellion against the Almighty. Their punishment was foretold by Christ (Matt. 23-24). Nevertheless, they were God's people (saints) from the time they were delivered from Egypt, given the Mosaic Law, and settled in the promised land of Palestine. These saints of God were afflicted by the little, but stout, horn; the enemy would "wear out" [persecute] the saints of the most High (Dan. 7:25).
- g. Another factor needs to be addressed. Three Roman emperors comprise the Flavian Dynasty; these three are Vespasian and his two sons [Titus and Domitian]. Vespasian and Titus assaulted Israel; Domitian brought severe persecution against Christians. Vespasian and his two sons "wore out" the saints of God—including both the Jews of first century Palestine and the Christians who were spread throughout the empire of Rome. There were several persecutions against the church by Rome.
 - 1) Nero—67 A.D.
 - 2) Domitian—81 A.D.
 - 3) Trajan—108 A.D.
 - 4) Marcus Aurelius —162 A.D.
 - 5) Severius—192 A.D.
 - 6) Maximus—235 A.D.
 - 7) Decius—249 A.D.
 - 8) Valerian—257 A.D.
 - 9) Diocletian—303 A.D.
- h. Emperor worship was characteristic of the first century. Roman rulers were deified.
 - 1) Domitian strictly enforced this evil practice. Each year the people were to show their loyalty by sacrificing to the emperor. Certificates were issued to worshipers of the Emperor which they were required to show when questioned. Avid worshipers wore marks on their arms and foreheads.
 - 2) There was an organized group in each city [*Oraefactus Urbi*] which was empowered to enforce worship of the emperor.
 - 3) "Domitian delighted in being looked upon as divine and in being so worshiped. To the Christian such homage was idolatry and an utter denial of faith in Christ. To the Romans the refusal to worship the emperor was a sign of disloyalty to the State and an act of treason. Emperor worship was forced upon the Christians as a test of their loyalty to the State. At first Christians were called upon to perform the ceremonies of loyal service and worship to the emperor—the placing of a pinch of incense upon the altar. To refuse was disloyal; to agree was to prove that one was not a Christian....As the demand for emperor worship grew, Christians were outlawed as a body as soon as their adherence to the sect became known. Detailed methods were worked out to enforce the State religion and to punish the Christians. There was appointed an official body known as the '*praefectus urbi*' for the enforcing of worship in each town. These were responsible for punishing people in the various cities over a province. The group with the greatest authority was the *concilia* composed of deputies sent from the various towns or divisions of a province. Their duty was to build images of the emperor, altars for his worship, and in every way sponsor the state religion and make it effective. They forced the people to worship the emperor, identified all who did, and

punished in various ways all who refused. Many Christians were beheaded, some were exiled, and others had all their property confiscated and were reduced to poverty. All of this is perhaps reflected in Revelation 13:5. The purpose of Revelation is in the background of all that has been said as to the Christians, their condition, and their need. It is to show that so great a power as Rome was doomed to overthrow, that in the end the kingdom of God would triumph and Christ would reign supreme. It is to present a ringing call to maintain loyalty to the faith at all costs, even in the face of martyrdom” (Summers, pp.92f).

- i. Regarding Domitian, the following is taken from the internet:
 - 1) Titus Flavius Domitianus was the younger son of Vespasian and Flavia Domitilla, born in AD 51 at Rome. He was the younger and the clearly less favoured son of Vespasian who cared much more for his heir Titus. During his father’s uprising against Vitellius in AD 69, Domitian was in fact in Rome. Though he remained unharmed. When the city prefect of Rome and elder brother of Vespasian, Titus Flavius Sabinus attempted to seize power, during the confusion about Vitellius' alleged abdication, on 18 December AD 69, Domitian was with his uncle Sabinus. He hence went through the fighting on the Capitol, though, unlike Sabinus, he managed to escape.
 - a) For a short time after arrival of his father's troops, Domitian enjoyed the privilege of acting as regent. Mucianus (the governor of Syria and ally of Vespasian who had led an army of 20,000 to Rome) acted as Domitian's colleague in this regency and carefully kept Domitian in check. For example with there being rebels against the new regime in Germany and Gaul, Domitian was eager to seek glory in suppressing the revolt, trying to equal his brother Titus' military exploits. But he was prevented from doing this by Mucianus. When alas Vespasian arrived in Rome to rule it was made evidently clear to everyone that Titus was to be the imperial heir.
 - b) Titus had no son. Hence if he failed to still produce or adopt an heir, the throne would eventually fall to Domitian. Domitian, however, was never granted any position of authority nor allowed to win any military glory for himself. If Titus was meticulously groomed to be emperor, Domitian received no such attention at all. Evidently he was not deemed fit by his father to hold power. Domitian instead dedicated himself to poetry and the arts, though it is thought he harboured much resentment at his treatment.
 - c) When Titus eventually acceded to the throne in AD 79 nothing changed for Domitian. He was granted honours, but nothing else. Relations between the two brothers were markedly cool and it is largely believed that Titus shared his deceased father's opinion that Domitian was not fit for office. In fact Domitian later claimed that Titus had denied him what should had rightfully been his rightful place as imperial colleague. Titus died in AD 81 amongst rumours that Domitian had poisoned him. But more likely he died from illness. But Domitian was not even to wait for his brother to die. While Titus lay dying, he hurried to the praetorian camp and had himself proclaimed emperor by the soldiers. The following day, 14 September AD 81, with Titus dead, he was confirmed emperor by the senate. His first act was, no doubt reluctantly, to enact Titus' deification. He may have held a grudge, but his own interests were best served by further celebrating the Flavian house.
 - 2) But now Domitian was determined to equal the military achievements of his predecessors. He wanted to be known as a conqueror. In AD 83 he completed the conquest of the *Agri Decumates*, the lands beyond the upper Rhine and upper Danube, which his father Vespasian had begun. He moved against tribes like the Chatti and drove the empire's frontier to the rivers Lahn and Main. After such victorious campaigns against the Germans, he would often wear the costume of a victorious general in public, at times also when he visited the senate.
 - a) Shortly after he raised the pay of the army from 300 to 400 sesterces, a fact which should naturally make him popular with the soldiery. Although by that time a pay rise had perhaps

become well necessary, as over time inflation had reduced the soldiers' income.

- b) By all accounts Domitian appears to have been a thoroughly nasty person, rarely polite, insolent, arrogant and cruel. He was a tall man, with large eyes, though weak sight. And showing all the signs of someone drunk with power, he preferred to be addressed as '*dominus et deus*' ('master and god'). In AD 83 Domitian displayed that terrifying adherence to the very letter of the law, which should make him so feared by the people of Rome. Three Vestal Virgins, convicted of immoral behaviour, were put to death. It is true that these stringent rules and punishments had once been observed by Roman society. But times had changed and the public now tended to see these punishments of the Vestals as mere acts of cruelty.
 - c) Meanwhile the governor of Britain, Cnaeus Julius Agricola, was successfully campaigning against the Picts. He had already won some victories in various parts of Britain and now advanced into northern Scotland where at Mons Graupius he gained a significant victory over the Picts in battle.
 - d) Then in AD 85 Agricola was suddenly recalled from Britain. If he was at the brink of achieving the final conquest of Britain, has been the subject of much speculation. One will never know. It appears that Domitian, so eager to prove himself a great conqueror, was in fact jealous of Agricola's success. Agricola's death in AD 93 is rumoured to have been the work of Domitian by having him poisoned.
- 3) In a move to increase his power over the senate, Domitian proclaimed himself 'perpetual censor' in AD 85, which granted him near unlimited power over the assembly. Domitian was more and more being understood as a tyrant, who didn't even refrain from having senators who opposed his policies assassinated. But his strict enforcement of the law also brought its benefits. Corruption amongst city officials and within the law courts was reduced. Seeking to impose his morals, he prohibited the castration of males and penalized homosexual senators.
- a) Domitian's administration is judged to have been sound and efficient, though at times pedantic - he insisted on spectators at public games being properly dressed in togas. Always worried about state finances, he at times displayed near neurotic meanness. But the finances of the empire were further organised, to the point that imperial expenditure could at last be reasonably forecast. And under his rule Rome itself became yet more cosmopolitan.
 - b) But Domitian was especially rigorous in exacting taxes from the Jews, taxes which were imposed by emperor (since Vespasian) for allowing them to practice their own faith (*fiscus iudaicus*). Many Christians were also tracked down and forced to pay the tax, based on the widespread Roman belief that they were Jews pretending to be something else.
 - c) The circumstances surrounding the recall of Agricola and the suspicions that this had been done only for purposes of jealousy, only further fueled Domitian's hunger for military glory. This time his attention turned to the kingdom of Dacia. In AD 85 the Dacians under their king Decebalus had crossed the Danube in raids which even saw the death of the governor of Moesia, Oppius Sabinus.
 - d) Domitian led his troops to the Danube region but returned soon after, leaving his armies to fight. At first these armies suffered another defeat at the hands of the Dacians. However, the Dacians were eventually driven back and in AD 89 Tettius Julianus defeated them at Tapae.
- 4) But in the same year, AD 89, Lucius Antonius Saturninus was proclaimed emperor by two legions in Upper Germany. One believes that much of Saturninus' cause for rebellion was the increasing oppression of homosexuals by the emperor. Saturninus being a homosexual himself, he rebelled against the oppressor.
- a) But Lappius Maximus, the commander of Lower Germany remained loyal. At the following
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battle of Castellum, Saturninus was killed and this brief rebellion was at an end. Lappius on purpose destroyed Saturninus' files in the hope of preventing a massacre. But Domitian wanted vengeance. On the emperor's arrival Saturninus' officers were mercilessly punished.

- b) Domitian suspected, most likely with good reason, that Saturninus had hardly acted on his own. Powerful allies in the senate of Rome more than likely had been his secret supporters. And so in Rome now the vicious treason trials returned, seeking to purge the senate of conspirators.
 - 5) Though after this interlude on the Rhine, Domitian's attention was soon drawn back to the Danube. The Germanic Marcomanni and Quadi and the Sarmatian Jazyges were causing trouble. A treaty was agreed with the Dacians who were all too happy to accept peace. Then Domitian moved against the troublesome barbarians and defeated them. The time he spent with the soldiers on the Danube only further increased his popularity with the army.
 - 6) In Rome however, things were different. In AD 90 Cornelia, the head of the Vestal Virgins was walled up alive in an underground cell, after being convicted of 'immoral behaviour', while her alleged lovers were beaten to death.
 - a) And in Judaea Domitian stepped up the policy introduced by his father to track down and execute Jews claiming descent from their ancient king David. But if this policy under Vespasian had been introduced to eliminate any potential leaders of rebellions, then with Domitian it was pure religious oppression. Even among leading Romans in Rome itself this religious tyranny found victims. The consul Flavius Clemens was killed and his wife Flavia Domitilla banished, for being convicted of 'godlessness'. Most likely they were sympathisers with Jews.
 - b) Domitian's ever greater religious zealotry was a sign of the emperor's increasing tyranny. The senate by then was treated with open contempt by him.
 - c) Meanwhile the treason trials had so far cost the lives of twelve former consuls. Ever more senators were falling victim to allegations of treason. Members of Domitian's own family were not safe from accusation by the emperor.
 - d) Also Domitian's own praetorian prefects weren't safe. The emperor dismissed both prefects and brought charges against them.
 - 7) But the two new praetorian commanders, Petronius Secundus and Norbanus, soon learned that allegations had been made against them, too. They realised they needed to act quickly in order to save their lives. It was summer AD 96 when the plot was hatched, involving the two praetorian prefects, the German legions, leading men from the provinces and the leading figures of Domitian's administration, - even the emperor's own wife Domitia Longina. By now, it appears, everyone wanted to rid Rome of this menace.
 - a) Stephanus, an ex-slave of Flavius Clemens' banished widow, was recruited for the assassination. Together with an accomplice Stephanus duly murdered the emperor. Though it involved a violent hand-to-hand struggle in which Stephanus himself also lost his life. (18 September AD 96)
 - b) The senate, relieved that the dangerous and tyrannical emperor was no more, was at last in a position to make its own choice of ruler. It nominated a respected lawyer, Marcus Cocceius Nerva (AD 32-98), to take over government. It was a inspired choice of great significance, which laid out the destiny of the Roman empire for some time to come. Domitian meanwhile was denied a state funeral, and his name was obliterated from all public buildings.
 4. Verses 21-22: "I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them; Until the Ancient of days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the most High; and the time came that
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the saints possessed the kingdom.”

- a. “...Does the prophet have one individual ruler in mind? Or, is he using the number symbolically of a small number of rulers who led the persecution of the saints? It should be remembered that not all rulers, but only a small number of Roman rulers led in intensive efforts to destroy the kingdom of God, although all were anti-God and opposed ‘the faith’” (Hailey, p.145).
 - b. Allowing for the “little horn” which became “more stout” than the other horns to include the evil work of more than one Roman emperor, then allowing our earlier allegation that all three of the Flavian emperors [Vespasian, Titus and Domitian] were included, the saints of the Mosaic Age and the saints of the Christian Age received the persecution predicted.
 - c. From outward indications, the Jews had reached the end of their history in 70 A.D. when Jerusalem, the temple, their civil and religious systems, were all brought down. The Jewish people were spread abroad through the Roman empire; they continued their religious activities in their synagogues. The priesthood was destroyed, the place of worship was gone, they lost their tribal identities after the extensive records at the temple were obliterated; the whole sacrificial system ceased. But God had decreed that the Jewish people would retain their special identity through the ages:
 - 1) Jeremiah 30:11: “For I am with thee, saith the LORD, to save thee: though I make a full end of all nations whither I have scattered thee, yet will I not make a full end of thee: but I will correct thee in measure, and will not leave thee altogether unpunished.”
 - 2) Amos 9:8: “Behold, the eyes of the Lord GOD are upon the sinful kingdom, and I will destroy it from off the face of the earth; saving that I will not utterly destroy the house of Jacob, saith the LORD.”
 - d. During the persecutions, first by Nero, and later by Domitian, our brethren were sorely afflicted. With the might of pagan Rome assailing the church, it would appear to human sight that the Cause of our Lord would scarcely survive. But the kingdom continued, just as God had promised. With the passing of time, and the spread of the gospel, the church gained strength and popularity among many; in this process, the evil tenets of the empire were weakened.
 - 1) 1 Peter 1:3-9: “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ: Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory: Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls.”
 - 2) The unbelieving Jews were the first great enemies of the church. When Jerusalem and the temple were destroyed by Titus, and the Jews scattered, the brethren gained a respite. The enemy had been defeated.
 - 3) But the Romans took up a war against the kingdom of Christ, first under Nero, and then under Domitian; still later, other emperors brought Rome’s evil power against our brethren. But this adversary was likewise brought down, just as Daniel had predicted: “And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever. Forasmuch as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold; the
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- great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter: and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure” (Dan. 2:44-45).
- e. The Ancient of Days [Almighty God] would make the final decision as to which entity would win: the Roman Empire or the Kingdom of God’s Dear Son. The judgment was rendered in favor of the followers of Christ. They possessed the spiritual kingdom—enjoying all its benefits and blessings.
 - f. Rome’s empire would continue to dwindle and weaken until it came to its final end in 476 A.D. The eastern end of the empire continued for a while until it was taken over by the Moslem hordes.
5. Verses 23-24: “Thus he said, The fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom upon earth, which shall be diverse from all kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, and shall tread it down, and break it in pieces. And the ten horns out of this kingdom are ten kings that shall arise: and another shall rise after them; and he shall be diverse from the first, and he shall subdue three kings.”
- a. We are again given a description of the fourth beast, which we have learned to be the Empire of Rome. The first three great world kingdoms [Babylonian; Persian; Grecian] were great, but this one would be much greater and stronger. Its power would extend eastward and westward; northward and southward. The civilized world was held under its sway.
 - b. Rome was different from the other preceding empires; it spread farther and did more damage to those conquered. Many millions of slaves were brought back to Rome and Italy.
 - c. At the first, Rome enjoyed the benefits of a Republican form of government. It finally fell to being ruled by emperors who frequently seized too much power. Some of them deified themselves and required their subject to worship them. This led inexorably to a tremendous conflict with the followers of Christ, who were devoted only to the God of Heaven. The Romans made no distinction between the Jewish people and Christians at the first. That distinction was finally made after 70 A.D.
 - d. Inasmuch as we have already considered carefully the ten horns, the little horn, and the three horns which were uprooted by the appearance of the little horn, perhaps that foregoing information will be sufficient for this passage also.
6. Verses 25-26: “And he shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time. But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end.”
- a. We listed earlier some details from Josephus about the horrific afflictions suffered by the Jews during the attack, siege and destruction at Jerusalem. See **Appendix 5** for a detailed report by Josephus of the Roman attack. Truly, the Romans wore out the rebellious people of God in the war of 66–70 A.D.
 - b. Those who led the assault against the Jews [and later directed severe persecutions against the saints of the New Testament era] tried to set themselves up in God’s place. They spoke evil against the most High, by their words and actions. These enemies of God [who were being used to punish rebellious Israel] delighted in their vicious attacks. Jerusalem and the temple, where God had centered his dealings with Israel, were destroyed. They joyfully vented their hatred against the city, the temple and the people. The stiff-necked people received a just penalty, but God would bring a righteous penalty upon these ungodly invaders, in his own time and way.
 - c. Those Romans changed “the times and the laws.” [Some scholars think the word *laws* should be understood as *law*]. The special seasons and laws given to Israel under the Mosaic Law were disrupted. The temple and the altar being gone, along with the special priesthood, the Jews were unable to offer the ordained oblations and sacrifices, which they had followed through the generations. A very great number of their nation were slain or enslaved; survivors were driven from the land. The temple services ceased to be practiced after the Romans destroyed their city and nation; most of the Jews live in foreign lands even today, although a few million of them occupy part of Palestine now.
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- d. Daniel predicted in verse twenty-five also that the enemy would be in control for a time, times, and half a time. In Biblical parlance, this would be three and a half times. This span of time could be in reference to days, months, years, or centuries. This same idea appears in the book of Revelation.
- 1) The time of the Roman occupation of Palestine in the prophetic setting Daniel describes, would amount to about three and a half years—from early in 67 A.D. until September of 70 A.D. This is one method of interpreting the prophet's statement.
 - 2) Pulpit Commentary says:
 - a) Certainly it does approximate to the time during which the temple was polluted with heathen offerings; but it also coincides with equal accuracy to the campaigns of Vespasian and Titus against the Jews. Vespasian landed in Galilee in the beginning of A.D. 67 A.D., and Jerusalem fell on September 5, A.D. 70. There was thus, approximately, three years and a half occupied by this war.
 - b) But "centuries" might also be meant. From the birth of our Lord, on whom the oppression was first exercised, till the accession of Constantine, was three centuries and a portion of a century. The judgment shall sit. Not necessarily the last judgment, but the evil that is being done comes before God for judgment. The taking away of the kingdom and dominion is immediately at the end of the period indicated by "a time and times and a dividing of time." The dominion was not taken away from Epiphanes then, nor from Vespasian; it did, however, pass from the heathenish empire when Constantine ascended the throne. [Biblesoft].
 - 3) In 311 A.D., the *Edict of Toleration* was issued by the Roman Emperor. By this time, estimations place the number of Christians as comprising about ten percent of the population of the empire [there were about 120 million people in the empire]. The church had grown despite persecution. The level of persecution lessened after Diocletian left office in 305 A.D. Constantine issued the *Edict of Milan* in 313 A.D. which removed official persecution. "We therefore, announce that, notwithstanding any provisions concerning the Christians in our former instructions, all who choose that religion are to be permitted to continue therein, without any let or hindrance, and are not to be in any way troubled or molested" (*The Eternal Kingdom*, p.99).
- e. There were several persecutions against the church by Rome.
- 1) Nero—67 A.D.
 - 2) Domitian—81 A.D.
 - 3) Trajan—108 A.D.
 - 4) Marcus Aurelius —162 A.D.
 - 5) Severius—192 A.D.
 - 6) Maximus—235 A.D.
 - 7) Decius—249 A.D.
 - 8) Valerian—257 A.D.
 - 9) Diocletian—303 A.D.
 - a) This persecution was extended throughout the vast reaches of the empire.
 - b) Christians lost all civil rights.
 - c) Our brethren were required to sacrifice to the Roman *gods*, and if they refused, death was the penalty. Of course, if they agreed to the worship act, they were in violation to the law of God.
 - d) All copies of the Scriptures were to be found and destroyed.
 - e) The meeting houses where the brethren met were burned, in some cases, while the building
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was inhabited.

- f) “Christians could no longer hold meetings, all church buildings were to be destroyed, leaders were to be imprisoned and all Christians were to turn in their copies of Scripture to be burnedEusebius described the terrible torture that followed: Christians were caused to suffer in every conceivable way. The prisons ran over, and slave labor camps were set up in which Christians were worked to death in the mines....Additional efforts were made against Christians, but this was the last organized attempt to eliminate Christianity from the empire. Galerius had been associated with Diocletian in persecuting the Christians. After seeing that the persecution accomplished nothing, he issued a toleration edict in 311 that gave security to Christians so long as they did not oppose the peace of the empire. All persecution, however, did no cease until Constantine issued the Edict of Milan in 313, which granted toleration to all religions in the empire” (*The Eternal Kingdom*, pp.97f).
- f. The persecuting powers of the empire gave up their efforts to destroy Christianity. The great stone of Daniel’s vision had smashed the feet of the huge statue; the principles of the gospel had eaten away at the foundation of pagan Rome; it was nearing the time of its collapse. God’s judgment was taking effect against this fourth kingdom (Dan. 2), also described as the fourth beast (Dan. 7).
7. Verse 27: “And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him.”
 - a. The four great earthly kingdoms had afflicted God’s people and opposed his purposes in various ways.
 - 1) Babylon had destroyed Jerusalem and the temple, killed many Israelites, and carried a large number of them into captivity, a slave situation that would last a total of seventy years [606 to 536 B.C.].
 - 2) The Empire of the Medes and Persians conquered Babylon, and allowed as many of the Jews as desired to do so, to return to their land of promise. Many of their number remained in that foreign territory, including such great people as Mordecai and Esther. The Jews who returned to Palestine suffered at the hands of the people who now occupied the land (cf. Ezra and Nehemiah).
 - 3) The Empire of Greece defeated the Persian Empire and took over their territory. The Jews who now dwelled in a rebuilt Jerusalem were spared destruction by Alexander, although their pagan neighbors suffered greatly [cf. Tyre]. The generals and their descendants who ruled that part of the empire which included Palestine after Alexander’s demise, sorely mistreated the Jews [cf. The four hundred years that covered the end of the Old Testament and the coming of John, the fore-runner of the Messiah].
 - 4) The Roman Empire disliked the Jews after Pompey brought their land under subjugation in 63 B.C. They allowed them a degree of self-rule and freedom of religion. But the Jews regularly caused problems for their masters in Rome.
 - a) When the Jews raised an insurrection against Roman authority in 66 A.D, a great army was sent to quell the rebellion. About three and a half years later, after much bloodshed and suffering, Jerusalem was destroyed and the Jews scattered.
 - b) Nero burned a large portion of Rome and blamed the Christians for this great conflagration. Vespasian and Titus assaulted the Jews beyond measure (66-70 A.D.). Domitian, the son Vespasian and brother of Titus raised a wide-spread persecution against Christians.
 - c) God had promised punishment on those who brought affliction to his people. In the process of time and events, the Almighty brought hardship upon the Empire of Rome, and finally “settled their hash” in 476 A.D.

- b. Our Lord was born during the reign of Caesar Augustus. The eternal kingdom was established during the reign of Caesar Tiberius (33 A.D, Acts chapter two). The kingdom (the church) spread rapidly and broadly, to the Jews, the Jewish proselytes and to the Gentiles.
- 1) Acts 8:1: “And Saul was consenting unto his death. And at that time there was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judaea and Samaria, except the apostles....Therefore they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word.”
 - 2) Colossians 1:6, 23: “Which is come unto you, as it is in all the world; and bringeth forth fruit, as it doth also in you, since the day ye heard of it, and knew the grace of God in truth....If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister.”
- c. Christians, by virtue of having obeyed the gospel of Christ, were made citizens of this kingdom, and enjoyed all the benefits it offered.
- 1) Colossians 1:13-14: “Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins.”
 - 2) Ephesians 1:3: “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ.”
 - 3) 1 Peter 1:3-9: “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ: Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory: Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls.”
8. Verse 28: “Hitherto is the end of the matter. As for me Daniel, my cogitations much troubled me, and my countenance changed in me: but I kept the matter in my heart.”
- a. Daniel might have concluded his account of the vision with v. 27 and gone on to speak of the troubled state of his thoughts. The addition, “Here is the end of the matter,” says with emphasis that nothing more, absolutely nothing more was divulged to him at this time. If anyone should, therefore, desire further information in regard to what was seen in the vision, he for his part has no more to give.... Whereas he recorded in v. 15 that he was grieved, the effect produced upon him personally is now greater in that his thoughts still trouble him, and that to the extent of making “the brightness of his countenance to be changed.” We might say that the color of his face was changed, or that he lost his healthy color as a result of the disturbance caused in him by this revelation of the future. All this goes to show how deeply such revelation affects man, who is happiest if the future is not disclosed to him. Here even the revelation from on high, given by the wisdom of God with an abundance of comfort, creates great disturbance of a man’s peace of mind. But Daniel did not try to forget. He kept all these sayings and moved them in his heart as being both terrible and precious.¹
 - b. We can well understand Daniel’s state of mind after seeing the imposing scenes that have passed before him. He was told that the kingdom of God would be established (Dan. 2:44); he has seen that

¹ Leupold, H. C. (1949). *Exposition of Daniel* (pp. 328–329). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House.

various world powers would assault the people of God, but that the kingdom would not be overcome by them. In the verses immediately preceding this statement, the prophet was assured the people of God would possess the kingdom, obviously meaning that they would receive all of its intended benefits and blessings. Daniel did not know when all of these things would come to pass, although he knew that the first kingdom was that of Babylon, and was a witness to the ascendancy of the Persian empire. He did not live to see the coming of the third and fourth kingdoms, nor did he witness their ends.

- c. Knowing that in the future God's people would be severely punished, he doubtless wished to know more of the details. It was not given unto him to know, as we are not told the details of our future. But the faithful child of God may rest in a great measure of hope, knowing that though we may have some difficulties in the short-run, some of them perhaps severe, we know all will be well with our souls in the eternity awaiting us.
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Daniel 8

A. Daniel 8:1-12: Daniel's Vision During the Third Year of Belshazzar's Reign.

1. Verses 1-2: "In the third year of the reign of king Belshazzar a vision appeared unto me, even unto me Daniel, after that which appeared unto me at the first. And I saw in a vision; and it came to pass, when I saw, that I was at Shushan in the palace, which is in the province of Elam; and I saw in a vision, and I was by the river of Ulai."
 - a. Other translations:
 - 1) ASV: "In the third year of the reign of king Belshazzar a vision appeared unto me, even unto me, Daniel, after that which appeared unto me at the first. And I saw in the vision; now it was so, that when I saw, I was in Shushan the palace, which is in the province of Elam; and I saw in the vision, and I was by the river Ulai."
 - 2) NKJV: "In the third year of the reign of King Belshazzar a vision appeared to me — to me, Daniel — after the one that appeared to me the first time. saw in the vision, and it so happened while I was looking, that I was in Shushan, the citadel, which is in the province of Elam; and I saw in the vision that I was by the River Ulai."
 - b. The third years of Belshazzar's reign is figured by some scholars as being 547 B.C. His end came in 539 B.C. when the Medo-Persians captured Babylon and its empire, and slew Belshazzar (Dan. 5).
 - c. The fact that a major division of the book begins with this chapter is apparent from the change in language, for at this point the Hebrew is again used for the first time since it was employed in chapter one. This change in language at the same time points to the specific needs of God's people. The first section, chapters two to seven, was written in Aramaic, the world language, and was designed for the world at large.
 - 1) The sacred Hebrew language is reserved for the people of God. By this observation we do not imply that by this change of language the one or the other group was eliminated from using a portion of this prophetic book. But there is certainly a fine propriety about having at least that part of the book which contains very particular revelations about the world empires and their character and their fate written in the language of these empires so that God's revelation to them might be seen to have actually been made available to them.
 - 2) On the other hand, the world empires would have cared little for the special fate of God's people, and therefore, in writing about such a subject, a different medium may be used To be more specific as far as the purpose of the second half of the book is concerned, it aims to prepare the saints of God for the time of suffering that shall presently be encountered. This period of suffering happens to be of a rather extreme sort; and to have Israel experience it without having anything to guide it would have meant to expose the totally unprepared nation to about the worst trial that the Old Testament saints ever had to undergo
 - 3) To look forward to that fourth empire as the time of glorious triumphs would in itself have meant reckoning with a fact that was true enough. But to be ignorant of the great tribulation that must intervene before that fourth empire becomes reality, is to be but poorly equipped for the trials in store. Chapter eight, therefore, fills a need by teaching men what to expect before the days of the Messiah can come [His first coming]. At the same time, to know that the persecutor of the church shall not prevail gives the church some much-needed reassurance.¹
 - d. Daniel described an earlier vision he had been given [recorded in Chapter Seven]. This vision had been revealed during the first year of the reign of Belshazzar at Babylon; the present chapter deals with another vision which occurred in the third year of Belshazzar's reign.

¹ Leupold, H. C. (1949). *Exposition of Daniel* (pp. 330–332). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House.

- e. This vision, and the first vision, seen by Daniel (ch. 7), depicted future events, not past history. The modernistic critics of the Bible imagine they can remove the prophetic element from biblical truth by placing the time of its composition to a period after the fulfillment of the prophecy.
- 1) “The only support for the critical proposition that this is ‘prophecy written after the fact,’ based on the absurd proposition that the Book of Daniel was written about 165 B.C. (in the times of the Maccabees), is their arrogant, imaginative assertion to that effect. We have referred to that assertion as ‘absurd.’ Why? Every line of the Book of Daniel is in the Septuagint (LXX) version of the Old Testament; and it was translated into the Greek language in the year 250 B.C. What better proof could there be that Daniel was written long, long before the times of the Maccabees which are so accurately described herein?” [Coffman].
 - 2) This chapter is not a continuation of chapter seven, for it deals with details that were not discussed there. The *little horn* noted in the previous vision would be a very much different personality from the one of this vision; and the time factors were separated by centuries.
- f. The prophet places himself at Shushan the palace, which he locates in the province of Elam, when this vision was revealed to him. The locality was by the river Ulai. But was the prophet physically at this site when he saw the vision or was he situated there only in the vision? This would not be of great importance to the truth that was supernaturally revealed. Some have thought that Daniel had been sent to Shusan [Susa] by Belshazzar on some government business when the vision was given to him.
- 1) But it is clear from statements made in chapter five, that the king had heard of Daniel, but did not know him: “Then was Daniel brought in before the king. And the king spake and said unto Daniel, Art thou that Daniel, which art of the children of the captivity of Judah, whom the king my father brought out of Jewry? I have even heard of thee, that the spirit of the gods is in thee, and that light and understanding and excellent wisdom is found in thee” (Dan. 5:13-14). This meeting between the king and Daniel took place several years after the vision of chapter eight. It seems unlikely that Belshazzar would have sent Daniel to this rather distant land.
 - 2) The uninspired Jewish historian, Josephus, thought that Daniel was on a regal mission, and that the prophet had even built a fortress at that place, and that that edifice was still standing when he wrote of this matter. Young states that this *Tomb of Daniel* is standing even in our time (p.166).
 - 3) Hailey offers some cogent information about whether Daniel was actually in Susa: “All commentators, except Barnes, thought Daniel was in Shushan (Susa) the palace only in the vision, not in person. Barnes thought he was there in person. Susa was between two hundred and three hundred miles east of Babylon, it is probable he was in Shushan in vision. Two instances are recorded of one being in a place named in a vision. Ezekiel was transported from Babylon to Jerusalem in such a vision (Ezek. 8:1-5); and John was transported into a wilderness (Rev. 17:3). Susa was the ancient capital of the Elamite empire, but was also the capital of Medo-Persia at the time of Daniel. The river Ulai, a wide man-made irrigation canal near Susa, is found only here and in verse 18), p.152).
 - 4) Wikipedia: The Book of Daniel mentions that Daniel lived in Babylon and may have visited the palace of Susa, Iran, but the place where he died is not specified; the tradition preserved among the Jews and Arabs is that he was buried in Susa. Today the Tomb of Daniel in Susa is a popular attraction among local Muslims and Iran's Jewish community alike The earliest mention of Daniel's Tomb published in Europe is given by Benjamin of Tudela who visited Asia between 1160 and 1163. In the façade of one of its many synagogues he was shown the tomb assigned by tradition to Daniel. Benjamin declares however, that the tomb does not hold Daniel's remains, which were said to have been discovered at Susa about 640 A.D. The remains were supposed to bring good fortune: and bitter quarrels arose because of them between the inhabitants of the two banks of the Choaspes River. All those living on the side on which Daniel's grave was situated
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were rich and happy, while those on the opposite side were poor and in want; the latter, therefore, wished the bier of Daniel transferred to their side of the river. They finally agreed that the bier should rest alternately one year on each side. This agreement was carried out for many years, until the Persian shah Sanjar, on visiting the city, stopped the practise, holding that the continual removal of the bier was disrespectful to the prophet. He ordered the bier to be fastened with chains to the bridge, directly in the middle of the structure; and he erected a chapel on the spot for both Jews and non-Jews. The king also forbade fishing in the river within a mile of Daniel's bier. *[Although a tomb had been built in memory for Daniel, that does not mean the the prophet had ever been to Susa or had build or caused to be built, this tomb. News reports in the fall of 2016 claim that ISIS had destroyed certain ancient tombs, including those associated with the names of Jonah and Daniel – Bob Winton].*

- 5) “Susa, famous Middle Eastern city and capital of the ancient kingdom of Elam. Susa, now the city of Shūsh in present-day Iran, is mentioned in Biblical narratives as Shushan, the city of lilies. A stele found there dating from late in the 3rd millennium bc records the victories of Naram-Sin, king of Sumer. The city was captured by Persian king Cyrus the Great in the 6th century bc, and Darius I, who ruled from 522 to 486 bc, made it the capital of Persia and built a great palace there. The Royal Road, 2400 km (1500 mi) long, ran from Susa to the town of Sardis in Lydia. Susa, along with the rest of Persia, fell to Alexander the Great in 331 bc. After Alexander’s empire was partitioned among his followers after his death in 323 bc, Susa came under the control of the Seleucid kingdom and was known as Seleucia-on-the-Eulaeus. Although later subject to control by Parthia (a 1st-century bc empire based in what is now Iran and Afghanistan), Susa long remained within the sphere of Greek culture. The ruins of the palace of Darius are most impressive, and a great number of inscriptions and friezes have been found there” *[Encarta © 1993-2003 Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved].*
2. Verses 3-4: “Then I lifted up mine eyes, and saw, and, behold, there stood before the river a ram which had two horns: and the two horns were high; but one was higher than the other, and the higher came up last. I saw the ram pushing westward, and northward, and southward; so that no beasts might stand before him, neither was there any that could deliver out of his hand; but he did according to his will, and became great.”
 - a. Other translations:
 - 1) NKJV: “Then I lifted my eyes and saw, and there, standing beside the river, was a ram which had two horns, and the two horns were high; but one was higher than the other, and the higher one came up last. I saw the ram pushing westward, northward, and southward, so that no animal could withstand him; nor was there any that could deliver from his hand, but he did according to his will and became great.”
 - 2) ASV: “Then I lifted up mine eyes, and saw, and, behold, there stood before the river a ram which had two horns: and the two horns were high; but one was higher than the other, and the higher came up last. I saw the ram pushing westward, and northward, and southward; and no beasts could stand before him, neither was there any that could deliver out of his hand; but he did according to his will, and magnified himself.”
 - b. Next in the vision the prophet beheld a ram, a male sheep, standing before the river. He was adorned with two horns, common to this animal; these horns were high [long; impressive by their size]. But one of the horns was higher than the other; the higher one came up after the first.
 - 1) Sheep have been domesticated from near the beginning, for we are told that Abel was a keeper of sheep (Gen. 4:2-4).
 - 2) Rams, known to farm boys of earlier times as “buck-sheep,” could be turned into dangerous

- animals. My father and his two younger brothers, trained a buck-sheep to go on the attack. Their mother was gathering eggs one afternoon, having collected about three dozen in her large apron. She was heading back to the house when the buck-sheep suddenly charged her, hitting the eggs with his hard head. Ma was not hurt, but the eggs were all broken! Her attention quickly turned to her three young boys!
- c. This ram of the vision was very aggressive. He pushed westward, northward and southward, implying of course that he came from the east. A literal male sheep does not go on a nation-conquering, war-making campaign. Clearly, this ram was representative of some great world power.
- 1) In chapter seven, Daniel saw four great beasts; he spoke at length of the fourth of these, which depicted the Roman Empire. The first of the four beasts denoted the Babylonian Empire, about which the prophet has given much information earlier in his revelation. But in chapter seven, the second and third beasts were not presented to our view with very many details.
 - 2) In the present chapter, the prophet will tell us more about the second and third beasts. These beasts represent the Medo-Persian and Grecian Empires.
- d. When the ram first appeared in Daniel's vision, there were two horns visible; one of these grew higher as he beheld this supernatural episode. What is shown perfectly fits the real nature of the kingdom of the Medes and Persians. Though separate political and military entities, they joined their total forces to form a power that could defeat the mighty Babylonian Empire.
- 1) The Persians comprised the much stronger part of the new nation; the Medes contributed much less strength. Young cites an ancient source who stated that the Persian King wore a the head of ram on his head as he led his armies into battle (Young, p.167).
 - 2) The chief weapon of an aggressive ram is his hard head which is topped with a set of strong horns. He is a formidable adversary, even in the case of a buck-sheep from the farm.
- e. God formed plans for Cyrus many years before his birth. It is he who is represented by the higher horn on the great ram of Daniel's vision. Note the following passages:
- 1) Isaiah 44:24-28: "Thus saith the LORD, thy redeemer, and he that formed thee from the womb, I am the LORD that maketh all things; that stretcheth forth the heavens alone; that spreadeth abroad the earth by myself; That frustrateth the tokens of the liars, and maketh diviners mad; that turneth wise men backward, and maketh their knowledge foolish; That confirmeth the word of his servant, and performeth the counsel of his messengers; that saith to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be inhabited; and to the cities of Judah, Ye shall be built, and I will raise up the decayed places thereof: That saith to the deep, Be dry, and I will dry up thy rivers. That saith of Cyrus, He is my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure: even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built; and to the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid." [This is anticipating the work of Cyrus who would allow all those Jews in captivity who wished, to return to Judea and began to restore their former status there].
 - 2) Isaiah 45:1-5: "Thus saith the LORD to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him; and I will loose the loins of kings, to open before him the two leaved gates; and the gates shall not be shut; I will go before thee, and make the crooked places straight: I will break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron: And I will give thee the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of secret places, that thou mayest know that I, the LORD, which call thee by thy name, am the God of Israel. For Jacob my servant's sake, and Israel mine elect, I have even called thee by thy name: I have surnamed thee, though thou hast not known me. I am the LORD, and there is none else, there is no God beside me: I girded thee, though thou hast not known me." [Isaiah gave this prophecy about one hundred and fifty years before the coming of Cyrus! Only Deity could reveal such a fact!].
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- 3) 2 Chronicles 36:22-23: "Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the LORD spoken by the mouth of Jeremiah might be accomplished, the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing, saying, Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, All the kingdoms of the earth hath the LORD God of heaven given me; and he hath charged me to build him an house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Who is there among you of all his people? The LORD his God be with him, and let him go up."
 - 4) Ezra 1:1-3: "Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled, the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing, saying, Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, The LORD God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth; and he hath charged me to build him an house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Who is there among you of all his people? his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem, which is in Judah, and build the house of the LORD God of Israel, (he is the God,) which is in Jerusalem."
 - 5) Jeremiah had made certain predictions that pertain to this case:
 - a) In keeping with the prophetic proclamation made by Jeremiah, God stirred up the spirit of Cyrus so that he issued the decree giving the Jews permission and means to return to their land (Jer. 25:12; 29:10). Jeremiah had predicted that the captivity would come and would last seventy years.
 - b) Jeremiah 25:12: "And it shall come to pass, when seventy years are accomplished, that I will punish the king of Babylon, and that nation, saith the LORD, for their iniquity, and the land of the Chaldeans, and will make it perpetual desolations."
 - c) Jeremiah 29:10: "For thus saith the LORD, That after seventy years be accomplished at Babylon I will visit you, and perform my good word toward you, in causing you to return to this place."
 - d) Figuring the beginning of the captivity to in 606 B.C. when the Babylonians first conquered Jerusalem, to the actual return of the first captives in 536 B.C., the seventy years are clearly identified.
 - 6) Josephus, the uninspired Jewish historian who lived at the time of the apostles, offers this information about Cyrus and his benefits to the Jews:
 - a) IN the first year of the reign of Cyrus which was the seventieth from the day that our people were removed out of their own land into Babylon, God commiserated the captivity and calamity of these poor people, according as he had foretold to them by Jeremiah the prophet, before the destruction of the city, that after they had served Nebuchadnezzar and his posterity, and after they had undergone that servitude seventy years, he would restore them again to the land of their fathers, and they should build their temple, and enjoy their ancient prosperity. And these things God did afford them; for he stirred up the mind of Cyrus, and made him write this throughout all Asia: "Thus saith Cyrus the king: Since God Almighty hath appointed me to be king of the habitable earth, I believe that he is that God which the nation of the Israelites worship; for indeed he foretold my name by the prophets, and that I should build him a house at Jerusalem, in the country of Judea."
 - b) This was known to Cyrus by his reading the book which Isaiah left behind him of his prophecies; for this prophet said that God had spoken thus to him in a secret vision: "My will is, that Cyrus, whom I have appointed to be king over many and great nations, send back my people to their own land, and build my temple." This was foretold by Isaiah one hundred and forty years before the temple was demolished. Accordingly, when Cyrus read this, and admired the Divine power, an earnest desire and ambition seized upon him to fulfill what was so
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written; so he called for the most eminent Jews that were in Babylon, and said to them, that he gave them leave to go back to their own country, and to rebuild their city Jerusalem, and the temple of God, for that he would be their assistant, and that he would write to the rulers and governors that were in the neighborhood of their country of Judea, that they should contribute to them gold and silver for the building of the temple, and besides that, beasts for their sacrifices.

- c) When Cyrus had said this to the Israelites, the rulers of the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin, with the Levites and priests, went in haste to Jerusalem; yet did many of them stay at Babylon, as not willing to leave their possessions; and when they were come thither, all the king's friends assisted them, and brought in, for the building of the temple, some gold, and some silver, and some a great many cattle and horses. So they performed their vows to God, and offered the sacrifices that had been accustomed of old time; I mean this upon the rebuilding of their city, and the revival of the ancient practices relating to their worship. Cyrus also sent back to them the vessels of God which king Nebuchadnezzar had pillaged out of the temple, and had carried to Babylon. So he committed these things to Mithridates, the treasurer, to be sent away, with an order to give them to Sanabassar, that he might keep them till the temple was built; and when it was finished, he might deliver them to the priests and rulers of the multitude, in order to their being restored to the temple. Cyrus also sent an epistle to the governors that were in Syria, the contents whereof here follow: [from Josephus: Antiquities of the Jews, PC Study Bible formatted electronic database Copyright © 2003, 2006 by Biblesoft, Inc. All rights reserved.]
- 7) Jeremiah had predicted that the captive Jews would spend seventy years in Babylonia; at the end of which time, God would see to it that they were given the privilege to return home. The first deportation was in 606, the second in 597, and the third in 586 B.C. The first contingent of Jews to return to Jerusalem was in 536 B.C.
- a) Jeremiah 25:12: "And it shall come to pass, when seventy years are accomplished, that I will punish the king of Babylon, and that nation, saith the LORD, for their iniquity, and the land of the Chaldeans, and will make it perpetual desolations."
- b) Jeremiah 29:10: "For thus saith the LORD, That after seventy years be accomplished at Babylon I will visit you, and perform my good word toward you, in causing you to return to this place."
- c) Zerubbabel led the first group back to their homeland in 536 B.C. The following passages shed some information on this great event:
- (1) Ezra 2:2: "Which came with Zerubbabel: Jeshua, Nehemiah, Seraiah, Reelaiah, Mordecai, Bilshan, Mispar, Bigvai, Rehum, Baanah. The number of the men of the people of Israel."
 - (2) Ezra 3:2: "Then stood up Jeshua the son of Jozadak, and his brethren the priests, and Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and his brethren, and builded the altar of the God of Israel, to offer burnt offerings thereon, as it is written in the law of Moses the man of God."
 - (3) Ezra 3:8: "Now in the second year of their coming unto the house of God at Jerusalem, in the second month, began Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and Jeshua the son of Jozadak, and the remnant of their brethren the priests and the Levites, and all they that were come out of the captivity unto Jerusalem; and appointed the Levites, from twenty years old and upward, to set forward the work of the house of the LORD."
 - (4) Ezra 5:2: "Then rose up Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and Jeshua the son of Jozadak, and began to build the house of God which is at Jerusalem: and with them were the prophets of God helping them."
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- (5) Haggai 1:1: “In the second year of Darius the king, in the sixth month, in the first day of the month, came the word of the LORD by Haggai the prophet unto Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua the son of Josedech, the high priest...”
 - (6) Haggai 1:12: “Then Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and Joshua the son of Josedech, the high priest, with all the remnant of the people, obeyed the voice of the LORD their God, and the words of Haggai the prophet, as the LORD their God had sent him, and the people did fear before the LORD.”
 - (7) Haggai 1:14: “And the LORD stirred up the spirit of Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and the spirit of Joshua the son of Josedech, the high priest, and the spirit of all the remnant of the people; and they came and did work in the house of the LORD of hosts, their God.”
 - (8) Haggai 2:2-4: “Speak now to Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua the son of Josedech, the high priest, and to the residue of the people.... Yet now be strong, O Zerubbabel, saith the LORD; and be strong, O Joshua, son of Josedech, the high priest; and be strong, all ye people of the land, saith the LORD, and work: for I am with you, saith the LORD of hosts.”
- f. This great ram, representing the Medo-Persian Empire, began to push [butt] against those nations lying to the north, to the south, and to the west. Everywhere he met with success. God was with him.
- 1) We remember that this second world empire was depicted in chapter seven as a great bear: “And behold another beast, a second, like to a bear, and it raised up itself on one side, and it had three ribs in the mouth of it between the teeth of it: and they said thus unto it, Arise, devour much flesh” (Dan. 7:5). A bear is known for its great strength and ferocious attitude.
 - 2) No earthly power could stand against Cyrus, for God had predicted his coming, even gave him his name generations before his birth, and aided him in his great work. Babylon must be punished; the pagan nations must be overcome; the people of Israel must be allowed to return home. Further, the stage must be prepared for the third great empire (Greece) and following it, the fourth great entity [Rome]. Persia conquered also the Egyptians.
 - 3) All of these things lay in the background of the spiritual, eternal kingdom which the God of Heaven would establish (Dan. 2:44).
 - 4) The events described in Ezra, Nehemiah, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi took place between the years 536 B.C. and 430 B.C. The following chart lists some of the major events for this period of time:
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DATE B.C.	EVENT
606	Babylonians conquer Jerusalem; some Jews are taken into captivity
597	Babylonians re-take Jerusalem; more Jews are taken into captivity
586	Babylonians destroy the temple and Jerusalem; other Jews are taken into captivity
536	Cyrus the Medo-Persian king releases Israel to return to Jerusalem
535	Work begins on rebuilding the temple
520	Haggai and Zechariah stirred up the people to complete the temple
516	The temple reconstruction is finally completed
483	Esther becomes queen in the Medo-Persian kingdom
474	Esther delivers Israel from the destruction Haman had devised
457	Ezra comes to Jerusalem
444	Nehemiah goes to Jerusalem to rebuild the walls of the city
432	The marriage problem is resolved

3. Verse 5: “And as I was considering, behold, an he goat came from the west on the face of the whole earth, and touched not the ground: and the goat had a notable horn between his eyes.” NKJV: “And as I was considering, suddenly a male goat came from the west, across the surface of the whole earth, without touching the ground; and the goat had a notable horn between his eyes.”
- a. The vision continued. The prophet now saw a male goal approaching from the west, with his feet scarcely touching the earth; perhaps, he came so swiftly that his feet appeared never to make contact with the surface of the earth – or appeared to do so.
 - b. This third kingdom, symbolized by the male goat in this vision, was the Grecian Empire. It was also described as being swift in Daniel 7:6: “After this I beheld, and lo another, like a leopard, which had upon the back of it four wings of a fowl; the beast had also four heads; and dominion was given to it.”
 - c. A significant feature about this goat was a horn between his eyes. It was very conspicuous; it was so notable that it could not be overlooked. The skull of a goat, like a buck-sheep, is thick and hard; this horn being as it were at the very center of the head, would obviously be formidable as a weapon.
 - d. Leupold: The most distinctive mark of all was perhaps the fact that the “he-goat had a prominent horn between its eyes.” The expression *qeren chazuth* might mean “horn of vision” as *Kliefoth* renders it, but *chazuth* can by metonymy also mean “conspicuousness” and so “horn of conspicuousness,” that is to say, “a prominent horn.” What made this phenomenon unusually outstanding was the fact that the horn grew out between the eyes, which is certainly not the usual position of a horn. Still, no particular significance attaches to this feature of the vision. It serves merely to make the horn unusual and distinctive.¹
 - e. Did this goat also have horns that normally are behind the eyes and near the ears? Nothing is said about any other horns, so we perceive him as having only the one highly unusual horn between his

¹ Leupold, H. C. (1949). *Exposition of Daniel* (pp. 339–340). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House.

eyes.

4. Verses 6-7: “And he came to the ram that had two horns, which I had seen standing before the river, and ran unto him in the fury of his power. And I saw him come close unto the ram, and he was moved with choler against him, and smote the ram, and brake his two horns: and there was no power in the ram to stand before him, but he cast him down to the ground, and stamped upon him: and there was none that could deliver the ram out of his hand.”
 - a. Other translations:
 - 1) NKJV: “Then he came to the ram that had two horns, which I had seen standing beside the river, and ran at him with furious power. And I saw him confronting the ram; he was moved with rage against him, attacked the ram, and broke his two horns. There was no power in the ram to withstand him, but he cast him down to the ground and trampled him; and there was no one that could deliver the ram from his hand.”
 - 2) ASV: “And as I was considering, behold, a he-goat came from the west over the face of the whole earth, and touched not the ground: and the goat had a notable horn between his eyes. And he came to the ram that had the two horns, which I saw standing before the river, and ran upon him in the fury of his power.”
 - b. Here Daniel describes in prophetic language the conflict between the Empire of Persia and the rising Empire of Greece. Persia had grown older and weaker; Greece had grown stronger, aggressive and had excellent warriors with new methods of fighting. It was similar to the vast armies of Peter the Great eventually wearing down and defeating their former great rival, Sweden [during the early years of the 18th century].
 - c. When Alexander came to power in Greece, he set out on a campaign of conquest. He invaded the territory of Persia, an empire that was ripe for harvest by a strong, aggressive nation; it was wealthy, weak, and had lost it once great strength. In the graphic words of Daniel’s vision, this young, strong he-goat [Greece, led by Alexander] crashed into the ram [Persia], dealing it a death blow. After this violent attack, the horns of the ram were broken, the ram fell to the ground and was trampled; there was no one to give it aid.
 - d. Leupold:
 - 1) The entirely new feature entering into the description is the fact that the he-goat “ran against it in his great anger.” The creature must have displayed a certain ferocity that reminded one of the attitude of anger on the part of human beings. The Hebrew expression “in the hot anger of his strength” means “in his great anger.” There is a certain significance in the fact, which is emphasized by repetition, that the ram was “standing in front of the river.” This pictures the historic clash of the Greeks and the Persians at the Granicus, for it was at a river that these two great foes first met in these Asiatic wars. The “great anger” that marked the he-goat points also to a historical reality. For after the several earlier assaults of the Persians upon the Greeks the Greeks were very angry at the attempted subjugation, and Alexander’s Greeks went about their task of conquest as though it were being done to avenge a great wrong.
 - 2) In fact, this anger grew to the point where it was nothing less than rage—“he was enraged against it.” This fury at the same time represents the nature of the separate attacks that were made upon the Persians in the course of the war. There was an irresistible impetuosity about them that created panic in the hearts of the more timid foe. The first result of the impact of the he-goat’s butting was that he “broke its two horns.” This cannot refer to the separate conquests of the Medians and the Persians but refers to the breaking up of the empire as a whole. For, since horns typify strength, this breaking of the horns refers to the crushing of the Persian strength. This is verified by the following statement, “There was not strength left in the ram to stand before him.”

- 3) The Persian ruler, Darius, put down a rebellion, saved the empire, and “recorded his victory over his enemies on the famous Rock of Behistun, visible from the old caravan road from Ecbatana to Babylon. This pivotal monument, with its trilingual inscriptions describing Darius's quelling of the insurrection, furnished the key to the decipherment of Akkad. cuneiform, just as the Rosetta Stone opened up the ancient language of the Nile River. Darius ruled a vast empire. The closing years of his reign saw the outbreak of the Graeco-Persian wars and the defeat of Persia at Marathon (490 BC), a precursor to the later defeat at Salamis (480 BC)” [Ungers]. The invasions of Greece by the Persians had aroused a bitter enmity between the two powers, but now Greece was in their ascendancy and Persia had lost their former powers. It was only a matter of time before Alexander’s army would conquer their Eastern adversary.
- 4) To make the idea of thorough conquest still more vivid the he-goat is represented as casting the ram down to the ground and trampling upon it His conquests put a new complexion on the whole Asiatic world and set in motion ideas and principles that were to dominate the conquered areas for centuries to come. If anything were needed to make this thought of most complete conquest still more emphatic, there is added the thought that “there was none that could deliver the ram from his power.” No matter what vast hordes were opposed to the young Macedonian in his conquests (though these numbers may have been exaggerated by some historians), nothing could bolster the decaying strength of the decrepit Persian Empire.¹
- 5) The following gives a sketch of the initial battle:
 - a) After the assassination of his father King Philip II in 336 BC, Alexander ascended to the throne of Macedon. He also inherited the loyalty of the professional army which his father had created at a time when Macedonia had just come to dominating most of Greece. After destroying the rebellious forces of Thrace and Thebes, Alexander had succeeded in crushing the last opposition to his kingship, effectively becoming sole ruler of Greece. Alexander now set his sights on fulfilling his father’s dream of conquering the vast and powerful Persian Empire to the east.
 - b) In 334 BC, Alexander crossed the Hellespont into Persia with 40,000 men. His first goal was to secure the Aegean coastline thus denying the Persian naval fleet bases with which they could sail against Greece in his absence. As the Macedonian - Greek army continued south, it came across Persian forces blocking their advance at the river Granicus. Jetting inland from the Aegean sea, the river was extremely shallow for that time of year and would later prove not much of a barrier for either side to cross.
 - c) The Persian forces were commanded not by one man, but lead by a coalition of more than forty high ranking Generals, Princes and other Persian aristocrats with little or no battle field experience. The one exception being Memnon, commander of the Greek mercenary forces. Memnon was a highly decorated and experienced battle field General who had fought with distinction in the Greek wars.
 - d) For the upcoming battle Alexander's army of 40,000 men (35,000 infantry and 5,000 cavalry), would face a Persian army numbering 33,000 men (15,000 cavalry, 10,000 infantry and 8,000 Greek mercenaries). The Persians deployed all their cavalry in line stretching the entire length of the battle field. The Persian infantry and Greek mercenaries were positioned in one line to the rear of the cavalry. Alexander positioned his Greek infantry phalanxes opposite the Persian cavalry along the bank of the river then splitting his cavalry force into two groups, placing 3,000 horsemen (which included the 1,000 strong elite companions) on his right wing and the remaining 2,000 on his left. Alexander's army was then divided into two independent forces,

¹ Leupold, H. C. (1949). *Exposition of Daniel* (pp. 341–342). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House.

the right wing under Alexander's direct command while the left, would be entrusted to Parmenion.

- e) Alexander began the battle himself, personally leading 1500 cavalry towards the Persian left flank. The Persian's responded by launching their left wing cavalry to meet the Macedonians head on. As the two forces collided, it became very apparent the Macedonian's had a telling advantage over their enemy. The European's were fitted with body armor and heavy weapons, whereas their Persian foe were lightly clad and armed.
 - f) After stubborn resistance the Persian horse slowly began to give ground and were pushed back towards their center. Alexander now gave the signal for the remaining Macedonian right wing cavalry including the elite companions, to cross the river and join the attack. Charging out towards the extreme right of the two cavalry forces already engaged, the Macedonian horseman easily outflanked the Persian left wing. The remaining Persian cavalry positioned along the river began to pull units back in an attempt to form a defensive line to halt the oncoming Macedonian cavalry.
 - g) This manoeuvre opened a large gap in the Persian lines just right of their center. Sensing the opportunity Parmenion ordered the entire Greek army to lower their pikes and advance across the river in a general advance. Alexander's horsemen easily smashed through the thin Persian defensive lines and were now bearing down on the Persian center. This along with the Greek infantry advancing on a wide front created complete panic amongst the Persian ranks, which quickly began to disintegrate and flee in all directions.
 - h) The Greek mercenaries watched in utter disbelief as the entire Persian army ran for their lives, abandoning them to fight on alone. Alexander now ordered the Greek mercenaries to be surrounded. Although they asked the great king for mercy, Alexander would not listen, he felt personally betrayed by these fellow countrymen who had taken up arms against him. He thus gave the order for their complete destruction. The Greek Phalanx's advanced on the mercenaries head on as the Macedonian cavalry attacked them from the rear. After a savage and bitter defence, only 1,000 of the 8,000 mercenaries were spared and sent back as slaves to work in the silver mines of Greece.
 - i) The battle of Granicus was now over, Persian losses also numbered 4,000 cavalry and 1,000 infantry. Alexander's casualties were non-existent, with losses of 200 cavalry and 100 infantry. Alexander's victory at Granicus shattered the myth of Persian invincibility and launched the persona of Alexander as one of history's great commanders.
5. Verses 8-10: "Therefore the he goat waxed very great: and when he was strong, the great horn was broken; and for it came up four notable ones toward the four winds of heaven. And out of one of them came forth a little horn, which waxed exceeding great, toward the south, and toward the east, and toward the pleasant land."
- a. Other translations:
 - 1) NKJV: "Therefore the male goat grew very great; but when he became strong, the large horn was broken, and in place of it four notable ones came up toward the four winds of heaven. And out of one of them came a little horn which grew exceedingly great toward the south, toward the east, and toward the Glorious Land. And it grew up to the host of heaven; and it cast down some of the host and some of the stars to the ground, and trampled them."
 - 2) ASV: "And the he-goat magnified himself exceedingly: and when he was strong, the great horn was broken; and instead of it there came up four notable horns toward the four winds of heaven. And out of one of them came forth a little horn, which waxed exceeding great, toward the south, and toward the east, and toward the glorious land. And it waxed great, even to the host of heaven;
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and some of the host and of the stars it cast down to the ground, and trampled upon them.”

- b. Greece (the goat) grew very great as it extended its conquest farther into the territory formerly held by Persia (the ram). The military might of Greece developed rapidly. Their history was one of conflict; they were tough people, especially the Spartans. The internal fighting among the Greek states had produced not only strong soldiers, but fine leaders, good equipment, and excellent tactics. They were outnumbered by the Persians, but were able to subdue them.
 - c. But the great horn with which the Grecian Empire overcame its enemies was broken. Daniel does not provide any details regarding when, where or how it was shattered. From secular history and from Daniel’s plain statement (vs. 21), we know that this great horn depicted Alexander the Great: “And the rough goat is the king of Grecia: and the great horn that is between his eyes is the first king.”
 - d. In his closing years, Alexander was exalted [some say he exalted himself] to divinity. This mighty general and conqueror suddenly died at the young age of thirty-three, at the outer extent of his conquest. “Back in Babylon, he abandoned himself more and more to drink Alexander drained a goblet containing six quarts of wine. On the next night he drank heavily again; the cold weather suddenly setting in, he caught a fever, and took to his bed. The fever raged for ten days, during which Alexander continued to give orders to his army and his fleet. On the eleventh day he died, being in the thirty-third year of his age (323 B.C.). When his generals asked him to whom he left his empire he answered, ‘To the strongest’” (Durant, *The Life of Greece*, p.551).
 - e. The great horn was replaced by four lesser horns, which still retained the great power of the Grecian Empire. However, these four generals divided the empire up into four parts, with each of them ruling a section. For many years, there was no other world power which could challenge them. The four generals who divided and ruled the territory conquered by Alexander were as follow:
 - 1) Seleucus I, called Nicator (Greek, “the conqueror”) (358?-281 bc), king of Syria (301-281 bc). The founder of the Seleucid dynasty, he was a Macedonian general serving under Alexander the Great, and in the second partition of Alexander's empire in 321 bc he was made satrap of Babylon, becoming king of Babylonia in 312 bc. In 302 bc he joined the confederacy against Macedonia and in 301, upon the defeat and death of King Antigonus I of Macedonia, obtained the largest share of the spoils, including the whole of Syria and a great part of Asia Minor. He built numerous cities, including Antioch and several named for him as Seleucia. Toward the end of his reign, he proclaimed himself king of Macedonia but was subsequently assassinated. [Encarta].
 - 2) Cassander ruled over Macedon and Greece. Cassander (358?-297 bc), king of Macedonia from 305 to 297 bc and son of Macedonian general Antipater. In 321, after the death of Alexander the Great (king of Macedonia from 336 to 323), Antipater was appointed supreme regent of Macedonia. Upon his death in 319, he handed the regency over to his colleague Polyperchon, leaving a subordinate position for his son Cassander. Cassander waged war against Polyperchon, successfully gaining control of Athens in 317. He governed Athens for a decade through the statesman and orator Demetrius of Phaleron. In 316 Cassander persuaded Olympias, Alexander's mother, to return from Epirus to Macedonia, where he killed her. That same year, Cassander married Alexander’s half-sister, Thessalonica. Not long after, Cassander slew Roxana, Alexander's Persian wife, and their son, Alexander IV, thus ending Alexander's dynasty. [Encarta].
 - 3) Lysimachus controlled Thrace and Bithynia: Lysimachus (360?-281 bc), king of Thrace who was briefly king of all Macedonia in the 3rd century bc. [Encarta].
 - 4) Ptolemy ruled over Egypt: Ptolemy I (367?-283? bc), called Ptolemy Soter (“preserver”), ruler of Egypt (323-285 bc), founder of the Ptolemaic dynasty. The son of Lagus, a Macedonian of common birth, Ptolemy was a general in the army of Alexander the Great and took a leading part in Alexander's later campaigns in Asia. On the death of Alexander in 323 bc, his empire was
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- divided among the Diadochi (successors) by the imperial regent Perdiccas and Ptolemy was appointed satrap of Egypt and Libya. He was from the first an independent ruler, engaging in long wars with other Macedonian chiefs in order to secure and extend his rule. Ptolemy was prevented from holding Cyprus and parts of Greece, but he resisted invasions of Egypt and Rhodes and occupied Palestine and Cyrenaica. In 305 bc he assumed the title of king. Alexandria was his capital, and he founded the famous Alexandrian library (see Alexandria, Library of). He was the author of a lost history of the campaigns of Alexander. In 285 bc Ptolemy I abdicated in favor of one of his younger sons. (Encarta).
- f. Daniel tells us that out of one of the four horns (one of the four sections into which the Great Empire had been divided), a little horn grew. Of course, this little horn is completely different from the little horn of Daniel 7:8 [this little horn arose much later during the time of the Roman Empire].
- 1) The little horn of our present text grew exceedingly great, exerting its power toward the south, east and “toward the glorious land” [Canaan]. Thus this little horn, issuing from one of the four great generals, would bring its harsh persecution upon the people of God (Israel).
 - 2) Leupold:
 - a) When this horn first appears, no one seems to sense that it has an unusual future; but “it grew exceedingly great.” Already at this point the figurative representation is made to bear almost more than the figure allows for, for the horn is said to grow “toward the south and toward the east and toward the glorious land.” It is difficult for us to visualize what the horn did, or how the vision conveyed the idea of its growth in these three directions. But almost all commentators regard it as a reference to that one of the Seleucidæ, a king of Syria, who in history has the name Antiochus Epiphanes, who happened to be the eighth king of his dynasty.
 - b) A brief summary of his development, as given by *Farrar*, may serve to supply the needed historical background. “But he was a man of ability, though with a taint of folly and madness in his veins. By allying himself with Eumenes, king of Pergamum, as we shall see hereafter, he suppressed Heliodorus, secured the kingdom, and ‘becoming very great,’ though only by fraud, cruelty, and stratagem, assumed the title of Epiphanes, ‘the Illustrious.’ He extended his power ‘to the South’ by intriguing and warring against Egypt and his young nephew, Ptolemy Philometor; and ‘towards the Sunrising’ by his successes in the direction of Persia and Media; and towards ‘the Glory’ or ‘Ornament’—i.e. the Holy Land. Inflated with insolence, he now set himself against the stars.”¹
 - 3) The cruel ruler identified as *the little horn*, because so self-exalted that he even set himself up against the God of Heaven [when one assaults God’s people, he assaults God]. Saul of Tarsus was charged with the crime of persecuting Christ, because he was assailing the followers of our Lord (Acts 9:1 ff).
 - 4) Abraham’s descendants were described as the stars of heaven to denote their great number:
 - a) Genesis 22:15-18: “And the angel of the LORD called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time, And said, By myself have I sworn, saith the LORD, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son: That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice.”
 - b) Deuteronomy 1:10: “The LORD your God hath multiplied you, and, behold, ye are this day as the stars of heaven for multitude.”

¹ Leupold, H. C. (1949). *Exposition of Daniel* (p. 345). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House.

- c) Daniel's reference to "the host of heaven" could easily be understood as the saints of God, the Israelites in Palestine during the rule of this evil ruler. They would be assaulted and trampled underfoot.
6. Verses 11-12: "Yea, he magnified himself even to the prince of the host, and by him the daily sacrifice was taken away, and the place of his sanctuary was cast down. And an host was given him against the daily sacrifice by reason of transgression, and it cast down the truth to the ground; and it practised, and prospered."
- a. Other translations:
- 1) NKJV: "He even exalted himself as high as the Prince of the host; and by him the daily sacrifices were taken away, and the place of His sanctuary was cast down. Because of transgression, an army was given over to the horn to oppose the daily sacrifices; and he cast truth down to the ground. He did all this and prospered."
 - 2) ASV: "Yea, it magnified itself, even to the prince of the host; and it took away from him the continual burnt-offering, and the place of his sanctuary was cast down. And the host was given over to it together with the continual burnt-offering through transgression; and it cast down truth to the ground, and it did its pleasure and prospered."
- b. It is obvious that no earthly ruler, no matter power and evil, could cast Almighty God down. The *prince of the host* would of necessity be a representative of God on earth. The High Priest would be, with little or not doubt, this prince of the host. The ruler [Antiochus IV] would be able, and did, remove the official high priest and replace him with someone else.
- 1) "ABOUT this time, upon the death of Onias the high priest, they gave the high priesthood to Jesus his brother; for that son which Onias left [or Onias IV.] was yet but an infant; and, in its proper place, we will inform the reader of all the circumstances that befell this child. But this Jesus, who was the brother of Onias, was deprived of the high priesthood by the king, who was angry with him, and gave it to his younger brother, whose name also was Onias; for Simon had these three sons, to each of which the priesthood came, as we have already informed the reader. This Jesus changed his name to Jason, but Onias was called Menelaus. Now as the former high priest, Jesus, raised a sedition against Menelaus, who was ordained after him, the multitude were divided between them both. And the sons of Tobias took the part of Menelaus, but the greater part of the people assisted Jason; and by that means Menelaus and the sons of Tobias were distressed, and retired to Antiochus, and informed him that they were desirous to leave the laws of their country, and the Jewish way of living according to them, and to follow the king's laws, and the Grecian way of living. Wherefore they desired his permission to build them a Gymnasium at Jerusalem. And when he had given them leave, they also hid the circumcision of their genitals, that even when they were naked they might appear to be Greeks. Accordingly, they left off all the customs that belonged to their own country, and imitated the practices of the other nations." (Josephus, 12, V, 1).
 - 2) "Now it came to pass, after two years, in the hundred forty and fifth year, on the twenty-fifth day of that month which is by us called Chasleu, and by the Macedonians Apelleus, in the hundred and fifty-third olympiad, that the king came up to Jerusalem, and, pretending peace, he got possession of the city by treachery; at which time he spared not so much as those that admitted him into it, on account of the riches that lay in the temple; but, led by his covetous inclination, (for he saw there was in it a great deal of gold, and many ornaments that had been dedicated to it of very great value,) and in order to plunder its wealth, he ventured to break the league he had made. So he left the temple bare, and took away the golden candlesticks, and the golden altar [of incense], and table [of shew-bread], and the altar [of burnt-offering]; and did not abstain from even the veils, which
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- were made of fine linen and scarlet. He also emptied it of its secret treasures, and left nothing at all remaining; and by this means cast the Jews into great lamentation, for he forbade them to offer those daily sacrifices which they used to offer to God, according to the law. And when he had pillaged the whole city, some of the inhabitants he slew, and some he carried captive, together with their wives and children, so that the multitude of those captives that were taken alive amounted to about ten thousand. He also burnt down the finest buildings; and when he had overthrown the city walls, he built a citadel in the lower part of the city, for the place was high, and overlooked the temple; on which account he fortified it with high walls and towers, and put into it a garrison of Macedonians. However, in that citadel dwelt the impious and wicked part of the [Jewish] multitude, from whom it proved that the citizens suffered many and sore calamities. And when the king had built an idol altar upon God's altar, he slew swine upon it, and so offered a sacrifice neither according to the law, nor the Jewish religious worship in that country. He also compelled them to forsake the worship which they paid their own God, and to adore those whom he took to be gods; and made them build temples, and raise idol altars in every city and village, and offer swine upon them every day. He also commanded them not to circumcise their sons, and threatened to punish any that should be found to have transgressed his injunction. He also appointed overseers, who should compel them to do what he commanded. And indeed many Jews there were who complied with the king's commands, either voluntarily, or out of fear of the penalty that was denounced. But the best men, and those of the noblest souls, did not regard him, but did pay a greater respect to the customs of their country than concern as to the punishment which he threatened to the disobedient; on which account they every day underwent great miseries and bitter torments; for they were whipped with rods, and their bodies were torn to pieces, and were crucified, while they were still alive, and breathed. They also strangled those women and their sons whom they had circumcised, as the king had appointed, hanging their sons about their necks as they were upon the crosses. And if there were any sacred book of the law found, it was destroyed, and those with whom they were found miserably perished also" (Josephus, Ant. XII, V, 4).
- 3) When the Samaritans saw the Jews under these sufferings, they no longer confessed that they were of their kindred, nor that the temple on Mount Gerizzim belonged to Almighty God. This was according to their nature, as we have already shown. And they now said that they were a colony of Medes and Persians; and indeed they were a colony of theirs. So they sent ambassadors to Antiochus, and an epistle, whose contents are these: "To king Antiochus the god, Epiphanes, a memorial from the Sidonians, who live at Shechem. Our forefathers, upon certain frequent plagues, and as following a certain ancient superstition, had a custom of observing that day which by the Jews is called the Sabbath. And when they had erected a temple at the mountain called Gerrizzim, though without a name, they offered upon it the proper sacrifices. Now, upon the just treatment of these wicked Jews, those that manage their affairs, supposing that we were of kin to them, and practiced as they do, make us liable to the same accusations, although we be originally Sidonians, as is evident from the public records. We therefore beseech thee, our benefactor and Savior, to give order to Apollonius, the governor of this part of the country, and to Nicanor, the procurator of thy affairs, to give us no disturbance, nor to lay to our charge what the Jews are accused for, since we are aliens from their nation, and from their customs; but let our temple, which at present hath no name at all be named the Temple of Jupiter Hellenius. If this were once done, we should be no longer disturbed, but should be more intent on our own occupation with quietness, and so bring in a greater revenue to thee." When the Samaritans had petitioned for this, the king sent them back the following answer, in an epistle: "King Antiochus to Nicanor. The Sidonians, who live at Shechem, have sent me the memorial enclosed. When therefore we were advising with our friends about it, the messengers sent by them represented to us that they are no
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- way concerned with accusations which belong to the Jews, but choose to live after the customs of the Greeks. Accordingly, we declare them free from such accusations, and order that, agreeable to their petition, their temple be named the Temple of Jupiter Hellenius." He also sent the like epistle to Apollonius, the governor of that part of the country, in the forty-sixth year, and the eighteenth day of the month Hecatorabeom (Josephus: Antiquities of the Jews, VII, v.5).
- c. The uninspired book of First Maccabees provides some historical information about the evil this *little horn* [Antiochus IV] perpetrated upon the Israelites. The following is from chapter one;
- 1) 16 When Antiochus had firmly established himself as king, he decided to conquer Egypt and rule that country as well as Syria. 17 He invaded Egypt with a large fleet of ships and a powerful army, including chariots, elephants, and cavalry. 18 When the attack came, King Ptolemy of Egypt turned and fled, and many of his soldiers were killed. 19 Antiochus was able to capture the fortified cities of Egypt and plunder the whole land.
 - 2) 20 In the year 143, after the conquest of Egypt, Antiochus marched with a great army against the land of Israel and the city of Jerusalem. 21 In his arrogance, he entered the Temple and took away the gold altar, the lampstand with all its equipment, 22 the table for the bread offered to the Lord, the cups and bowls, the gold fire pans, the curtain, and the crowns. He also stripped all the gold from the front of the Temple 23 and carried off the silver and gold and everything else of value, including all the treasures that he could find stored there. 24 Then he took it all to his own country. He had also murdered many people and boasted arrogantly about it. 25 There was great mourning everywhere in the land of Israel. 26 Rulers and leaders groaned in sorrow. Young men and young women grew weak. The beauty of our women faded. 27 Every bridegroom sang a funeral song, and every bride sat mourning in her room. 28 All our people were clothed with shame, and our land trembled for them. 29 Two years later Antiochus sent a large army from Mysia against the towns of Judea. When the soldiers entered Jerusalem, 30 their commander spoke to the people, offering them terms of peace and completely deceiving them. Then he suddenly launched a fierce attack on the city, dealing it a major blow and killing many of the people. 31 He plundered the city, set it on fire, and tore down its buildings and walls. 32 He and his army took the women and children as prisoners and seized the cattle. 33 Then Antiochus and his forces built high walls and strong towers in the area north of the Temple, turning it into a fort. 34 They brought in a group of traitorous Jews and installed them there. 35 They also brought in arms and supplies and stored in the fort all the loot that they had taken in Jerusalem. This fort became a great threat to the city. 36 The fort was a threat to the Temple, a constant, evil menace for Israel. 37 Innocent people were murdered around the altar; the Holy Place was defiled by murderers. 38 The people of Jerusalem fled in fear, and the city became a colony of foreigners. Jerusalem was foreign to its own people, who had been forced to abandon the city. 39 Her Temple was as empty as a wilderness; her festivals were turned into days of mourning, her Sabbath joy into shame. Her honor became an object of ridicule. 40 Her shame was as great as her former glory, and her pride was turned into deepest mourning.
 - 3) 41-43 Antiochus now issued a decree that all nations in his empire should abandon their own customs and become one people. All the Gentiles and even many of the Israelites submitted to this decree. They adopted the official pagan religion, offered sacrifices to idols, and no longer observed the Sabbath. 44 The king also sent messengers with a decree to Jerusalem and all the towns of Judea, ordering the people to follow customs that were foreign to the country. 45 He ordered them not to offer burnt offerings, grain offerings, or wine offerings in the Temple, and commanded them to treat Sabbaths and festivals as ordinary work days. 46 They were even ordered to defile the Temple and the holy things in it. 47 They were commanded to build pagan altars, temples, and shrines, and to sacrifice pigs and other unclean animals there. 48 They were forbidden to
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- circumcise their sons and were required to make themselves ritually unclean in every way they could, 49 so that they would forget the Law which the Lord had given through Moses and would disobey all its commands. 50 The penalty for disobeying the king's decree was death.
- 4) 51 The king not only issued the same decree throughout his whole empire, but he also appointed officials to supervise the people and commanded each town in Judea to offer pagan sacrifices. 52 Many of the Jews were ready to forsake the Law and to obey these officials. They defiled the land with their evil, 53 and their conduct forced all true Israelites to hide wherever they could. 54 On the fifteenth day of the month of Kislev in the year 145, King Antiochus set up The Awful Horror on the altar of the Temple, and pagan altars were built in the towns throughout Judea. 55 Pagan sacrifices were offered in front of houses and in the streets. 56 Any books of the Law which were found were torn up and burned, 57 and anyone who was caught with a copy of the sacred books or who obeyed the Law was put to death by order of the king. 58 Month after month these wicked people used their power against the Israelites caught in the towns. 59 On the twenty-fifth of the month, these same evil people offered sacrifices on the pagan altar erected on top of the altar in the Temple. 60 Mothers who had allowed their babies to be circumcised were put to death in accordance with the king's decree. 61 Their babies were hung around their necks, and their families and those who had circumcised them were put to death. 62 But many people in Israel firmly resisted the king's decree and refused to eat food that was ritually unclean. 63 They preferred to die rather than break the holy covenant and eat unclean food—and many did die. 64 In his anger God made Israel suffer terribly. [NAB].
- d. These harsh persecutions were sent upon Israel on account of their prior rebellions against Jehovah. We perceive no miracle being wrought during these four hundred years of dark despair. The had called the tune and must now pay the piper. We have no reason to doubt the historical reports from the writer of Maccabees and Josephus. Sin brings awful punishment! Consider the generation which was destroyed in the Great Flood; think of the woeful tragedies the Jews suffered when the Romans besieged and captured Jerusalem in 70 A.D. Eternal punishment in *Gehenna*, a place prepared for Satan and his angels is beyond our full comprehension, but we are able to grasp enough of its pain and terror to be deterred from sin! God is righteous.
7. Verses 13-14: “Then I heard one saint speaking, and another saint said unto that certain saint which spake, How long shall be the vision concerning the daily sacrifice, and the transgression of desolation, to give both the sanctuary and the host to be trodden under foot? And he said unto me, Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed.”
- a. Other translations:
- 1) NKJV: Then I heard a holy one speaking; and another holy one said to that certain one who was speaking, "How long will the vision be, concerning the daily sacrifices and the transgression of desolation, the giving of both the sanctuary and the host to be trampled underfoot?" And he said to me, "For two thousand three hundred days; then the sanctuary shall be cleansed."
 - 2) ASV: “Then I heard a holy one speaking; and another holy one said unto that certain one who spake, How long shall be the vision concerning the continual burnt-offering, and the transgression that maketh desolate, to give both the sanctuary and the host to be trodden under foot? And he said unto me, Unto two thousand and three hundred evenings and mornings; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed.”
- b. The individuals in the vision styled “saints” in the KJV are called “holy ones” in the other two versions cited. These were angelic beings. It was in the vision that the two angels spoke to each other; Daniel recorded their conversation as part of his report of this miraculous scene.
- c. How long is the time period which is said to be for twenty-three hundred evening and mornings?
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Should be consider each evening and each day as a separate day?

- 1) The creation week of Genesis one describes the things brought into existence on six succeeding days which are each described as evening and morning. It took an evening and a morning to make one twenty-four hour day. Judging by this use of the terms, there were to be twenty-three hundred days consisting each of an evening and a morning. The Jews started their days at evening with the day ending at the next evening. To the Romans, the new day began at midnight and ended at the next midnight; this is the way we divide the day. The reference to 2300 means twenty-three hundred days.
 - 2) Keil agrees with this view: "When the Hebrews wish to express separately day and night, the component parts of a day of a week, then the number of both is expressed. They say, e.g., forty days and forty nights (Gen 7:4,12; Ex 24:18; 1 Kings 19:8), and three days and three nights (Jonah 2:1 ; Matt 12:40), but not eighty or six days-and-nights, when they wish to speak of forty or three full days. A Hebrew reader could not possibly understand the period of time 2300 evening-mornings of 2300 half days or 1150 whole days, because evening and morning at the creation constituted not the half but the whole day."
 - 3) The Israelites were required to offer sacrifices continually, morning and evening: "Now this is that which thou shalt offer upon the altar; two lambs of the first year day by day continually. The one lamb thou shalt offer in the morning; and the other lamb thou shalt offer at even: And with the one lamb a tenth deal of flour mingled with the fourth part of an hin of beaten oil; and the fourth part of an hin of wine for a drink offering. And the other lamb thou shalt offer at even, and shalt do thereto according to the meat offering of the morning, and according to the drink offering thereof, for a sweet savour, an offering made by fire unto the LORD. This shall be a continual burnt offering throughout your generations at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation before the LORD: where I will meet you, to speak there unto thee" (Ex. 29:38-42).
 - d. "The period referred to is that between the desolation inflicted on the temple by Antiochus Epiphanes and its cleansing by Judas Maccabaeus. It is somewhat difficult to fix the exact space of time intended by these two thousand three hundred evening-mornings. Does it mean two thousand three hundred days? For this may be urged that this succession. "evening and morning," not "morning and evening," resembles Gen 1. If this resemblance is intentional, then "evening-morning" means a space of twenty-four hours. If the days are literal days, then the space of time would amount to nearly six years and a half, if we take the year here as three hundred and sixty days. Another view is that day and night are separated and each reckoned; hence the number of days involved would be eleven hundred and fifty - fifty-five days more than three average years, and seventy days more than three years of three hundred and sixty days each. If, however, the year be the lunar year of three hundred and fifty-four days, it closely approximates to three years and a quarter" (Pulpit Commentary).
 - e. Commentators have set forth a variety of calculations as to the meaning of the 2300 days. Leupold offers a rational view:
 - 1) But these computations offer grave difficulties. Reckon as you will, there is no clear-cut period of either the one or the other length. Then the juggling of facts and figures begins. But the very fact that neither the longer period of almost seven years nor the shorter of almost three-and-a-half can be made to tally with known historical facts should serve to cause interpreters to cease continuing along this line. *Meinhold* has said rightly: "An entirely satisfactory computation has neither been found here nor for the kindred periods in chapters nine and twelve." He is absolutely correct.
 - 2) We do not deem it important to show the unsatisfactory nature of the different computations that have been made. Anyone who is sufficiently interested may make a computation according to the
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first ten chapters of First Maccabees and see what the issues are. Here is a brief digest of the pertinent events as they are recorded in First Maccabees. We give the years according to the Greek era, as they are given in this apocryphal book. The year 145 in the following schedule corresponds to about 167 B. C.

- a) 137. Antiochus begins to rule, conquers Egypt.
 - b) 143. Antiochus comes to the Temple in Jerusalem, plunders it and slays many.
 - c) 145. Antiochus sends a captain to Jerusalem who gains entrance under false pretexts and fortifies David's citadel; interferes with worship; the sanctuary is desolate; commands that one religion be practiced throughout his realm, abolishes all sacrifices and festivals, lets sow's meat be offered, forbids circumcision; on the 15th of Kislev "abomination" is set on the altar*; altars are erected in Jewish cities; books of the law are burned; on the 25th of Kislev he sacrifices on a new altar; revolt of Mattathias; Judas defeats Appolonius.
 - d) 147. Antiochus advances to Persia to raise revenues, appoints Lysias captain from the Euphrates to Egypt; Lysias chooses three captains: Ptolemy, Nicanor, and Gorgias; Jerusalem is desolate; the sanctuary is removed to Mizpah; Judah defeats Gorgias at Emmaus; Lysias gathers a great force at Beth Zur (Edom); Lysias is defeated, withdraws to Antioch; Judah restores the sanctuary and the altar.
 - e) 148. On the 25th of the ninth month (Kislev) sacrifice is again offered;* the feast of dedication is decreed; Antiochus attacks Elymais in Persia, is defeated, and returns to Babylon.
 - f) 148. Antiochus dies in Babylon; Antiochus Eupator, his son, is made king; Lysias assembles a great army, no decisive encounter occurs; Lysias besieges Jerusalem without success.
 - g) 151. Demetrius becomes king, slays Antiochus and Lysias; Alcimus, the high priest, slanders Judah; Nicanor is sent with an army, blasphemes in the Temple; Nicanor is defeated and slain on the 13th of Adar (twelfth month.*) We have marked with an asterisk the key dates that are usually used in the prevailing computations.
- 3) There is something basically wrong with such computations. They go on an assumption which does not apply to the book of Daniel. None of the numbers that occur in its visions are in the nature of exact arithmetical calculations. What *Zoekler* calls the "ideal prophetic value" of the numbers (*den prophetisch-idealen Wert*) is the consideration to be reckoned with. We could also designate it the symbolic use of numbers. From this point of view the number 2,300 can be interpreted in but one way. Divided by 365 to determine the number of years, it resolves itself into six years and 110 days. In other words, not into a complete period of seven years. If there had been seven years, since seven is the mark of a divine work, this period would have been characterized as a *divine* period of judgment. As it now stands, this number signifies *not even a full period of divine judgment*. *Keil* compares Judg. 6:1, where the Israelites were delivered into the hands of the Midianites seven years. Construed thus, this figure has a very distinct meaning as do those other figures that are found in Daniel. The fact that it is expressed in days reminds the troubled Israelites that the Lord will not let this period extend a day beyond what they can bear.²
- f. Josephus provides us with the following account of Jewish history during the time which Daniel in these verses is describing:
- 1) ABOUT this time, upon the death of Onias the high priest, they gave the high priesthood to Jesus his brother; for that son which Onias left [or Onias IV.] was yet but an infant; and, in its proper place, we will inform the reader of all the circumstances that befell this child. But this Jesus, who was the brother of Onias, was deprived of the high priesthood by the king, who was angry with

² Leupold, H. C. (1949). *Exposition of Daniel* (pp. 354–357). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House.

- him, and gave it to his younger brother, whose name also was Onias; for Simon had these three sons, to each of which the priesthood came, as we have already informed the reader. This Jesus changed his name to Jason, but Onias was called Menelaus. Now as the former high priest, Jesus, raised a sedition against Menelaus, who was ordained after him, the multitude were divided between them both. And the sons of Tobias took the part of Menelaus, but the greater part of the people assisted Jason; and by that means Menelaus and the sons of Tobias were distressed, and retired to Antiochus, and informed him that they were desirous to leave the laws of their country, and the Jewish way of living according to them, and to follow the king's laws, and the Grecian way of living. Wherefore they desired his permission to build them a Gymnasium at Jerusalem. And when he had given them leave, they also hid the circumcision of their genitals, that even when they were naked they might appear to be Greeks. Accordingly, they left off all the customs that belonged to their own country, and imitated the practices of the other nations.
- 2) Now Antiochus, upon the agreeable situation of the affairs of his kingdom, resolved to make an expedition against Egypt, both because he had a desire to gain it, and because he contemned the son of Ptolemy, as now weak, and not yet of abilities to manage affairs of such consequence; so he came with great forces to Pelusium, and circumvented Ptolemy Philometor by treachery, and seized upon Egypt. He then came to the places about Memphis; and when he had taken them, he made haste to Alexandria, in hopes of taking it by siege, and of subduing Ptolemy, who reigned there. But he was driven not only from Alexandria, but out of all Egypt, by the declaration of the Romans, who charged him to let that country alone; according as I have elsewhere formerly declared. I will now give a particular account of what concerns this king, how he subdued Judea and the temple; for in my former work I mentioned those things very briefly, and have therefore now thought it necessary to go over that history again, and that with great accuracy.
 - 3) King Antiochus returning out of Egypt for fear of the Romans, made an expedition against the city Jerusalem; and when he was there, in the hundred and forty-third year of the kingdom of the Seleucidse, he took the city without fighting, those of his own party opening the gates to him. And when he had gotten possession of Jerusalem, he slew many of the opposite party; and when he had plundered it of a great deal of money, he returned to Antioch.
 - 4) Now it came to pass, after two years, in the hundred forty and fifth year, on the twenty-fifth day of that month which is by us called Chasleu, and by the Macedonians Apelleus, in the hundred and fifty-third olympiad, that the king came up to Jerusalem, and, pretending peace, he got possession of the city by treachery; at which time he spared not so much as those that admitted him into it, on account of the riches that lay in the temple; but, led by his covetous inclination, (for he saw there was in it a great deal of gold, and many ornaments that had been dedicated to it of very great value,) and in order to plunder its wealth, he ventured to break the league he had made.
 - a) So he left the temple bare, and took away the golden candlesticks, and the golden altar [of incense], and table [of shew-bread], and the altar [of burnt-offering]; and did not abstain from even the veils, which were made of fine linen and scarlet. He also emptied it of its secret treasures, and left nothing at all remaining; and by this means cast the Jews into great lamentation, for he forbade them to offer those daily sacrifices which they used to offer to God, according to the law. And when he had pillaged the whole city, some of the inhabitants he slew, and some he carried captive, together with their wives and children, so that the multitude of those captives that were taken alive amounted to about ten thousand.
 - b) He also burnt down the finest buildings; and when he had overthrown the city walls, he built a citadel in the lower part of the city, for the place was high, and overlooked the temple; on which account he fortified it with high walls and towers, and put into it a garrison of Macedonians. However, in that citadel dwelt the impious and wicked part of the [Jewish]
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multitude, from whom it proved that the citizens suffered many and sore calamities.

- c) And when the king had built an idol altar upon God's altar, he slew swine upon it, and so offered a sacrifice neither according to the law, nor the Jewish religious worship in that country. He also compelled them to forsake the worship which they paid their own God, and to adore those whom he took to be gods; and made them build temples, and raise idol altars in every city and village, and offer swine upon them every day. He also commanded them not to circumcise their sons, and threatened to punish any that should be found to have transgressed his injunction. He also appointed overseers, who should compel them to do what he commanded. And indeed many Jews there were who complied with the king's commands, either voluntarily, or out of fear of the penalty that was denounced. But the best men, and those of the noblest souls, did not regard him, but did pay a greater respect to the customs of their country than concern as to the punishment which he threatened to the disobedient; on which account they every day underwent great miseries and bitter torments; for they were whipped with rods, and their bodies were torn to pieces, and were crucified, while they were still alive, and breathed.
- d) They also strangled those women and their sons whom they had circumcised, as the king had appointed, hanging their sons about their necks as they were upon the crosses. And if there were any sacred book of the law found, it was destroyed, and those with whom they were found miserably perished also. (Josephus: Antiquities of the Jews, PC Study Bible formatted electronic database Copyright © 2003, 2006 by Biblesoft, Inc. All rights reserved.)
- g. After a period of cruel treatment at the hands of Antiochus IV, the Jews began a movement which led to a period of political and religious freedom, until the Romans invaded and conquered their land. [The Romans allowed the Jews to run their own religious affairs]. Josephus provides details about removal of the yoke Antiochus IV had placed on the nation:
 - 1) NOW at this time there was one whose name was Mattathias, who dwelt at Modin, the son of John, the son of Simeon, the son of Asamoneus, a priest of the order of Joarib, and a citizen of Jerusalem. He had five sons; John, who was called Gaddis, and Simon, who was called Matthes, and Judas, who was called Maccabeus, and Eleazar, who was called Auran, and Jonathan, who was called Apphus. Now this Mattathias lamented to his children the sad state of their affairs, and the ravage made in the city, and the plundering of the temple, and the calamities the multitude were under; and he told them that it was better for them to die for the laws of their country, than to live so ingloriously as they then did.
 - 2) But when those that were appointed by the king were come to Modin, that they might compel the Jews to do what they were commanded, and to enjoin those that were there to offer sacrifice, as the king had commanded, they desired that Mattathias, a person of the greatest character among them, both on other accounts, and particularly on account of such a numerous and so deserving a family of children, would begin the sacrifice, because his fellow citizens would follow his example, and because such a procedure would make him honored by the king.
 - a) But Mattathias said he would not do it; and that if all the other nations would obey the commands of Antiochus, either out of fear, or to please him, yet would not he nor his sons leave the religious worship of their country. But as soon as he had ended his speech, there came one of the Jews into the midst of them, and sacrificed, as Antiochus had commanded. At which Mattathias had great indignation, and ran upon him violently, with his sons, who had swords with them, and slew both the man himself that sacrificed, and Apelles the king's general, who compelled them to sacrifice, with a few of his soldiers. He also overthrew the idol altar, and cried out, "If," said he, "any one be zealous for the laws of his country, and for the worship of God, let him follow me."

- b) And when he had said this, he made haste into the desert with his sons, and left all his substance in the village. Many others did the same also, and fled with their children and wives into the desert, and dwelt in caves. But when the king's generals heard this, they took all the forces they then had in the citadel at Jerusalem, and pursued the Jews into the desert; and when they had overtaken them, they in the first place endeavored to persuade them to repent, and to choose what was most for their advantage, and not put them to the necessity of using them according to the law of war.
- c) But when they would not comply with their persuasions, but continued to be of a different mind, they fought against them on the sabbath day, and they burnt them as they were in the caves, without resistance, and without so much as stopping up the entrances of the caves. And they avoided to defend themselves on that day, because they were not willing to break in upon the honor they owed the sabbath, even in such distresses; for our law requires that we rest upon that day.
- d) There were about a thousand, with their wives and children, who were smothered and died in these caves; but many of those that escaped joined themselves to Mattathias, and appointed him to be their ruler, who taught them to fight, even on the sabbath day; and told them that unless they would do so, they would become their own enemies, by observing the law [so rigorously], while their adversaries would still assault them on this day, and they would not then defend themselves, and that nothing could then hinder but they must all perish without fighting. This speech persuaded them. And this rule continues among us to this day, that if there be a necessity, we may fight on sabbath days.
- e) So Mattathias got a great army about him, and overthrew their idol altars, and slew those that broke the laws, even all that he could get under his power; for many of them were dispersed among the nations round about them for fear of him. He also commanded that those boys which were not yet circumcised should be circumcised now; and he drove those away that were appointed to hinder such their circumcision.
- 3) But when he had ruled one year, and was fallen into a distemper, he called for his sons, and set them round about him, and said:
- a) "O my sons, I am going the way of all the earth; and I recommend to you my resolution, and beseech you not to be negligent in keeping it, but to be mindful of the desires of him who begat you, and brought you up, and to preserve the customs of your country, and to recover your ancient form of government, which is in danger of being overturned, and not to be carried away with those that, either by their own inclination, or out of necessity, betray it, but to become such sons as are worthy of me; to be above all force and necessity, and so to dispose your souls, as to be ready, when it shall be necessary, to die for your laws; as sensible of this, by just reasoning, that if God see that you are so disposed he will not overlook you, but will have a great value for your virtue, and will restore to you again what you have lost, and will return to you that freedom in which you shall live quietly, and enjoy your own customs.
- b) Your bodies are mortal, and subject to fate; but they receive a sort of immortality, by the remembrance of what actions they have done. And I would have you so in love with this immortality, that you may pursue after glory, and that, when you have undergone the greatest difficulties, you may not scruple, for such things, to lose your lives. I exhort you, especially, to agree one with another; and in what excellency any one of you exceeds another, to yield to him so far, and by that means to reap the advantage of every one's own virtues.
- c) Do you then esteem Simon as your father, because he is a man of extraordinary prudence, and be governed by him in what counsels he gives you. Take Maccabeus for the general of your
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army, because of his courage and strength, for he will avenge your nation, and will bring vengeance on your enemies. Admit among you the righteous and religious, and augment their power."

- 4) When Mattathias had thus discoursed to his sons, and had prayed to God to be their assistant, and to recover to the people their former constitution, he died a little afterward, and was buried at Modin; all the people making great lamentation for him. Whereupon his son Judas took upon him the administration of public affairs, in the hundred forty and sixth year; and thus, by the ready assistance of his brethren, and of others, Judas cast their enemies out of the country, and put those of their own country to death who had transgressed its laws, and purified the land of all the pollutions that were in it. (from Josephus: Antiquities of the Jews, PC Study Bible formatted electronic database Copyright © 2003, 2006 by Biblesoft, Inc. All rights reserved.)

B. Daniel 8:15-27: The Vision is Further Delieniated to Daniel.

1. Verses 15-16: "And it came to pass, when I, even I Daniel, had seen the vision, and sought for the meaning, then, behold, there stood before me as the appearance of a man. And I heard a man's voice between the banks of Ulai, which called, and said, Gabriel, make this man to understand the vision." NKJV: Then it happened, when I, Daniel, had seen the vision and was seeking the meaning, that suddenly there stood before me one having the appearance of a man. And I heard a man's voice between the banks of the Ulai, who called, and said, "Gabriel, make this man understand the vision."
 - a. Other versions:
 - 1) Then it happened, when I, Daniel, had seen the vision and was seeking the meaning, that suddenly there stood before me one having the appearance of a man. And I heard a man's voice between *the banks of* the Ulai, who called, and said, "Gabriel, make this *man* understand the vision" (NKJV).
 - 2) "And it came to pass, when I, even I Daniel, had seen the vision, that I sought to understand it; and, behold, there stood before me as the appearance of a man. And I heard a man's voice between the banks of the Ulai, which called, and said, Gabriel, make this man to understand the vision" (ASV).
 - b. Only two holy angels are named in Scripture, and Daniel names both. Gabriel, mentioned in this verse, seems to be God's special messenger (see also Dan. 9:21; cf. Luke 1:19, 26). The other is Michael, who is described as "one of the chief princes" (Dan. 10:13), "your prince" (Dan. 10:21), "the great prince" (Dan. 12:1), and "the archangel" (Jude 1:9). He is also a leader of God's armies (Rev. 12:7) and the guardian of Israel (Dan. 12:1). [AMG's Complete Word Study Bible].
 - 1) Daniel 9:21: "Yea, while I was speaking in prayer, the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, touched me about the time of the evening oblation."
 - 2) Luke 1:19: "And the angel answering said unto him, I am Gabriel, that stand in the presence of God; and am sent to speak unto thee, and to shew thee these glad tidings."
 - 3) Luke 1:26: "And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth."
 - 4) Daniel 10:13: "But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me one and twenty days: but, lo, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me; and I remained there with the kings of Persia."
 - 5) Daniel 10:21: "But I will shew thee that which is noted in the scripture of truth: and there is none that holdeth with me in these things, but Michael your prince."
 - 6) Daniel 12:1: "And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the

- children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book.”
- 7) Jude 1:9: “Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee.”
 - 8) Revelation 12:7: “And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels.”
- c. Notice that it was Daniel who had seen the vision; it was not someone else who had seen it and later described it to the Daniel. The prophet was mulling over the possible meaning of the vision, when he beheld another person who had the appearance of a man. Obviously, this was not a man he saw, but some supernatural being who had the likeness of a man in the vision. When angelic being appeared to people in Bible episodes, it was often (usually) in the physical shape of a man. We do not read about female angels or little children angels appearing to people. The angles spoke to people in human language.
 - d. In this part of the vision, for the supernatural revelation was still on-going, Daniel heard a man’s voice speaking; this sound was coming (in the vision) from between the two banks of the Ulai. The speaker was the person who is merely described as having the appearance of a man; this being was between the two banks of the river, thus would be hovering above the water of that stream.
 - e. The speaker (unidentified by name) instructed Gabriel to reveal the meaning of the vision to Daniel. Some scholars have supposed the person to be either God or Christ, but it could have been some angel who was superior to Gabriel. Clearly the instruction given to Gabriel was God’s will.
 - 1) “Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee” (Jude 9).
 - 2) Michael is first mentioned in the scriptures in Daniel and later in Revelation. He was an archangel, a term meaning chief of the angels. It may, therefore, that this unnamed speak was Michael.
 - 3) Brother Hailey: “Later, Gabriel was ‘caused to fly swiftly’ unto Daniel (9:21). And when he appeared before Zacharias to announce the birth of John the Baptist, he introduced himself as, ‘Gabriel, that stand [s] in the presence of God’ (Luke 1:19). And six months later, ‘Gabriel was sent from God’ with a message to Mary in Nazareth (v. 26). The instructor who made the vision understandable to Daniel was a special messenger, Gabriel, an angel sent from God to reveal the meaning to him” (pp.158f).
2. Verses 17-18: “So he came near where I stood: and when he came, I was afraid, and fell upon my face: but he said unto me, Understand, O son of man: for at the time of the end shall be the vision. Now as he was speaking with me, I was in a deep sleep on my face toward the ground: but he touched me, and set me upright.”
 - a. Other translations:
 - 1) No he came near where I stood, and when he came I was afraid and fell on my face; but he said to me, "Understand, son of man, that the vision refers to the time of the end." Now, as he was speaking with me, I was in a deep sleep with my face to the ground; but he touched me, and stood me upright. (NKJV).
 - 2) “So he came near where I stood; and when he came, I was affrighted, and fell upon my face: but he said unto me, Understand, O son of man; for the vision belongeth to the time of the end. Now as he was speaking with me, I fell into a deep sleep with my face toward the ground; but he touched me, and set me upright. “ (ASV).
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- 3) "And he came near where I stood, and as he came I was panic stricken, and I fell down upon my face, and he said unto me, Understand, oh! Son of man, for with the time of the end is the visions. And while he was speaking with me, I swooned upon my face to the ground, and he touched me, and made me to stand upright" (Young's Translation, p.176).
- b. Out of fear, Daniel fell to the ground on his face. Could it be that the prophet was so shocked by what he had seen that collapsed on the ground, in a coma? Certainly, he was full of fear. This was the usual effect the appearance of divine power or presence had on humans:
 - 1) Isaiah 6:1-5: "In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, *is* the LORD of hosts: the whole earth *is* full of his glory. And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke. Then said I, Woe *is* me! for I am undone; because I *am* a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts."
 - 2) Matthew 28:2-4: "And, behold, there was a great earthquake: for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it. His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow: And for fear of him the keepers [*the military guards*] did shake, and became as dead *men*."
 - a) His appearing was sudden; the earthquake was violent; the power manifested in moving the stone was awesome; his countenance was like lightning, and his clothing was white as snow. "Both the appearance and the action of this angel were majestic in the extreme. He came down from heaven like a stream of light; he stood at the door of the sepulcher, with raiment white as snow and a countenance gleaming like lightning; with resistless hand he rolled back the great stone, at whose fall the ground trembled with an earthquake; then he calmly took a seat on the stone and turned his gleaming face upon the soldiers, as if to say, See what I have done! No wonder that 'the keepers did shake and become as dead men'" (McGarvey, p.250).
 - b) It was probably still dark when the angel came, thus the light of his clothing and countenance would appear even more brilliant. These were not weak and cowardly men, but men accustomed to violence and fearful experiences. Their reaction is therefore more impressive. They shook and became as dead men. This was the usual response by men on finding themselves suddenly in the presence of supernatural beings (cf. Dan. 5:5-6).
 - 3) Revelation 1:17: " And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last."
- c. Gabriel approached the prostrate prophet, and spoke the encouraging words that told Daniel the end of time was not yet come; that he would reveal some of the things that would occur when the end came, thus his great fright. It may be that the prophet supposed the end of time had arrived at that very moment, but he was told of some things that would take place at that later date.
- d. Daniel was in a deep sleep as the angel spoke to him; he knew what Gabriel said and felt the angel's touch. The prophet was "set upright."
3. Verse 19: "And he said, Behold, I will make thee know what shall be in the last end of the indignation: for at the time appointed the end shall be."
 - a. Other versions:
 - 1) NKJV: And he said, "Look, I am making known to you what shall happen in the latter time of the indignation; for at the appointed time the end shall be.

- 2) ASV: “And he said, Behold, I will make thee know what shall be in the latter time of the indignation; for it belongeth to the appointed time of the end.”
- b. Barnes: “In the future time when the Divine indignation shall be manifest toward the Hebrew people; to wit, by suffering the evils to come upon them which Antiochus would inflict. It is everywhere represented that these calamities would occur as a proof of the Divine displeasure on account of their sins....[For at the time appointed the end shall be] It shall not always continue. There is a definite period marked out in the Divine purpose, and when that period shall arrive, the end of all this will take place.”
- c. Before the Assyrian and Babylonian captivities of the people of Israel, Jehovah had warned the people of the time of wrath which he would then put upon them; this would be in punishment for their many rebellions against him. Following seventy years in captivity in Babylonia, God would enable many of his people to return to the land of promise; even some of the captives taken by Assyria came back. Heaven’s wrath would be completed at the proper time. Compare these passages:
- 1) Isaiah 10:5: “O Assyrian, the rod of mine anger, and the staff in their hand is mine indignation.”
 - 2) Isaiah 10:25: “For yet a very little while, and the indignation shall cease, and mine anger in their destruction.”
 - 3) Isaiah 26:20: “Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast.”
 - 4) Jeremiah 25:12: “And it shall come to pass, when seventy years are accomplished, that I will punish the king of Babylon, and that nation, saith the LORD, for their iniquity, and the land of the Chaldeans, and will make it perpetual desolations.”
 - 5) Jeremiah 29:10: “For thus saith the LORD, That after seventy years be accomplished at Babylon I will visit you, and perform my good word toward you, in causing you to return to this place.”
 - 6) Daniel 9:2: “ In the first year of his reign I Daniel understood by books the number of the years, whereof the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah the prophet, that he would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem.”
- d. But Daniel is speaking of another case of indignation (righteous wrath) which would be visited upon his people. This occurred during the painful tyranny forced on the Jews by Antiochus.
- e. But the prophet was told that this time of persecution would have an end. The Jews, having access to Daniel’s writings, could know that time of relief was certain to come, thus would be hopeful for a better time. The work of the Maccabees brought a period of independence for the nation, during which they had opportunity to rebuild their civil and religious conditions. Their self-rule continued until the Romans conquered their territory, but even then, their masters allowed the Jews to practice their religion and to live in relative tranquillity.
4. Verse 20: “The ram which thou sawest having two horns are the kings of Media and Persia.” NLJV: The ram which you saw, having the two horns — they are the kings of Media and Persia.
- a. Daniel is plainly told the identities of the people depicted by the ram which had two horns. In biblical usage, a horn denotes strength and authority. The ram represented the Medo-Persian Empire.
 - b. The two horns refer to the two kings of this powerful political entity. The Medes were not as strong as the Persians; the Persians were a large and powerful nation; the Medes less so. But combining their strength, they became such a crushing force that even mighty Babylon could not stand before them.
5. Verse 21: “And the rough goat is the king of Grecia: and the great horn that is between his eyes is the first king.” NKJV: And the male goat is the kingdom of Greece. The large horn that is between its eyes is the first king.”
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- a. The rough goat represented the king of Greece, an empire that was during Daniels time still a minor force in the world. The king would be Alexander, the son of Philip.
 - b. As time unfolded, Greece developed into a mighty power, over-powering and destroying the once mighty Medo-Persian Empire. We have noted earlier Alexander's invasion of Persian territory and of his continued success against all the armies he met.
 - c. But this first king (Alexander) died at a young age. He did not select anyone to take over his empire. The four great generals of his army divided the empire between themselves. Details of that division were listed on previous pages.
6. Verse 22: "Now that being broken, whereas four stood up for it, four kingdoms shall stand up out of the nation, but not in his power." NKJV: As for the broken horn and the four that stood up in its place, four kingdoms shall arise out of that nation, but not with its power."
- a. The prediction given to Daniel fully concur with historical events that unfolded through the years to come. The first horn (king) died; four other horns (kings) took his place. But these four rulers did not the power that Alexander had possessed. [See the notes earlier in this chapter for the identities and the territories controlled by these four lesser kings].
 - b. "After conquering the Persian empire, Alexander pressed on eastward until he came with the realm of India; there his army refused to go farther. He turned his way back to Babylon where he died at the early age of 33 years. This was symbolized by the breaking of 'the great horn,' and the raising up of the four notable horns toward the four winds (vs. 8)" (Hailey, p.161).
7. Verses 23-25: "And in the latter time of their kingdom, when the transgressors are come to the full, a king of fierce countenance, and understanding dark sentences, shall stand up. And his power shall be mighty, but not by his own power: and he shall destroy wonderfully, and shall prosper, and practise, and shall destroy the mighty and the holy people. And through his policy also he shall cause craft to prosper in his hand; and he shall magnify himself in his heart, and by peace shall destroy many: he shall also stand up against the Prince of princes; but he shall be broken without hand."
- a. Other translations:
 - 1) NKJV: "And in the latter time of their kingdom, When the transgressors have reached their fullness, A king shall arise, Having fierce features, Who understands sinister schemes. His power shall be mighty, but not by his own power; He shall destroy fearfully, And shall prosper and thrive; He shall destroy the mighty, and also the holy people. "Through his cunning He shall cause deceit to prosper under his rule; And he shall exalt himself in his heart. He shall destroy many in their prosperity. He shall even rise against the Prince of princes; But he shall be broken without human means.
 - 2) ASV: "And in the latter time of their kingdom, when the transgressors are come to the full, a king of fierce countenance, and understanding dark sentences, shall stand up. And his power shall be mighty, but not by his own power; and he shall destroy wonderfully, and shall prosper and do his pleasure; and he shall destroy the mighty ones and the holy people. And through his policy he shall cause craft to prosper in his hand; and he shall magnify himself in his heart, and in their security shall he destroy many: he shall also stand up against the prince of princes; but he shall be broken without hand."
 - b. Clearly, the king with the fierce countenance would be closely connected with the time when the four kings would be in power, in fact, the text says he would do his wickedness during the last part of the reign of the four kings. The ruler described was Antiochus IV who directed harsh assaults against the people of God. In our comments on this evil man earlier in the chapter, we have quoted historical records which detailed some of his evil deeds.
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- c. The text points out that this man's authority in thus dealing with Israel did not arise from himself. It was Jehovah who allowed him to come to power, and using his own defiled heart, to develop his cruel punishment against the Jews. God allowed this to happen as a means of punishing their own sinful conduct. This penalty tested them, and punished them, and helped them to attain to a more likely condition to receive the Messiah when he later came. Antiochus IV grievously afflicted Israel. The rise of the Maccabees produced a period of self-rule by Israel, in which their religious activities made a recovery.
 - d. No powerful alien army invaded his territory, but God raised up strength of the Jews to bring about the demise of Antiochus.
 - e. Brother Hailey has these fine comments: In following his policy of craft, cunning, and cruelty toward God's people and others, and by exalting himself in his own heart, Antiochus was able to exert his efforts toward achieving his goal for a while. But when he stood up against God, the "Prince of princes," he was "broken without hand." He was rewarded with destruction. In their false sense of security, in their false view that even in their faithlessness, God would fight for them, many were destroyed (p.162).
8. Verse 26: "And the vision of the evening and the morning which was told is true: wherefore shut thou up the vision; for it shall be for many days."
- a. Other translations:
 - 1) NKJV: "And the vision of the evenings and mornings Which was told is true; Therefore seal up the vision, For it refers to many days in the future."
 - 2) ASV: "And the vision of the evenings and mornings which hath been told is true: but shut thou up the vision; for it belongeth to many days to come."
 - b. Daniel was told to preserve the revelation he had received, for its fulfillment would be in the future. The information it contained could be a great source of hope and comfort when those harsh time came. First, as noted before, those days of persecution would have an end. This would encourage the weak in faith to endure; it would strengthen those who trying to do right.
 - c. Some have falsely alleged that the book of Daniel was unknown until the time of Antiochus. Generations before Antiochus, when Alexander the Great entered Palestine with his army, he spared the city of Jerusalem from assault, when the Jewish leaders showed him what Daniel had written about him. Josephus offers this information (§52 [11.52]): "And when the Book of Daniel was showed him wherein Daniel declared that one of the Greeks should destroy the empire of the Persians, he supposed that himself was the person intended. And as he was then glad, he dismissed the multitude for the present; but the next day he called them to him, and bid them ask what favors they pleased of him; whereupon the high priest desired that they might enjoy the laws of their forefathers, and might pay no tribute on the seventh year. He granted all they desired. And when they entreated him that he would permit the Jews in Babylon and Media to enjoy their own laws also, he willingly promised to do hereafter what they desired. And when he said to the multitude, that if any of them would enlist themselves in his army, on this condition, that they should continue under the laws of their forefathers, and live according to them, he was willing to take them with him, many were ready to accompany him in his wars" [Josephus: *Antiquities of the Jews*].
9. Verse 27: "And I Daniel fainted, and was sick certain days; afterward I rose up, and did the king's business; and I was astonished at the vision, but none understood it."
- a. Other translations:
 - 1) NKJV: And I, Daniel, fainted and was sick for days; afterward I arose and went about the king's business. I was astonished by the vision, but no one understood it.
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- 2) ASV: “And I Daniel fainted, and was sick certain days; afterward I rose up, and did the king's business; and I was astonished at the vision, but none understood it.”
- b. The grievous nature of the persecution awaiting his people, caused Daniel to become faint and sick for a period of time. He greatly cared for Israel; God used him magnificently in their behalf by bringing him to great authority and influence in the Babylonian Captivity. His power was continued well into the Persian rule.
- c. We can understand the sorrow the prophet suffered, with the knowledge of what lay ahead for the Jews. Perhaps he tried to prepare them for those hard times, but how could they comprehend? Daniel, Ezekiel, and Jeremiah (earlier) had shown them that God would set up an eternal kingdom sometime in the future. Maybe they were unable to conceive a hard period of suffering and the glorious nature of the upcoming kingdom. Their forefathers had been formed into a nation during their centuries of slavery in Egypt. They had to endure forty years of hardship in the wilderness before they could enter the land of “milk and honey.”
- d. The apostasy that tore asunder the Lord’s church in America, beginning shortly after the War Between the States and ending about the close of the nineteenth century, caused untold grief and hardship on the faithful minority who stayed with the truth. Those who divided the brotherhood took with them the great majority of the people, the property and the money belonging to the Lord.
- 1) But in the passing of time, our faithful brethren labored long, hard and courageously to spread the gospel. They met with great success! In the 1950s, the Lord’s church was the fastest growing religious group in the country. Meanwhile, the earlier departures from the truth by the liberal element led to more and more rejections of truth. Their membership plummeted.
- 2) Another great apostasy has been afflicting the Lord’s people about a hundred years after the other. Many of the smaller congregations have dwindled in number but they had remained loyal. Many of the larger congregations have grown in numbers, but they have done so through compromise and worldliness. We are very well aware of the pain in seeing those who once faithful to the Lord, not holding hands with the world. Although we try to show those unsuspecting brethren the truth, they are unable or unwilling to perceive it.
- e. Leupold:
- 1) The recipient of the vision had already in vv. 17 and 18 been overcome by contact with heavenly beings and supernatural revelation and had required strengthening before he was able even to receive what was to be communicated. It need not seem strange that at the close of this particular revelation his earlier weakness should again befall him—“I was exhausted”—and that a further reaction should set in in the form of a temporary sickness “for several days.”
- 2) But being a man of great fidelity to duty, as soon he has recovered sufficient strength, Daniel again attends to the king’s business. Nothing indicates that Daniel held a position under Cyrus that was as high as that which he had held under Nebuchadnezzar or under Darius. Nor does this statement make any such claim. There still seemed to be important work that he was able to do, in which he could further the interests of the ruler as well as of the people of God. So he that had been above reproach (6:4) in his previous administration continued with the same fidelity though his position was no longer what it had been, that of prime minister.
- 3) The way in which Daniel’s weakness, the faithful performance of his work, and his being appalled at the vision are grouped together in this verse shows how apparently, even in the midst of the performance of his tasks, the thought of the unusual revelations that had been committed to him kept arising continually. Nor was that in the least strange. Here was one individual who alone of all mortals had been given a glimpse behind the curtain shrouding the future. He alone knew of the crumbling of empires and their successive downfall. But this did not merely amaze him or
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- cause him to wonder. It actually “appalled” him. Such knowledge about the crashing of human structures and the suffering of God’s saints was no light thing to bear. We see more clearly in the light of this fact and in Daniel’s reaction why God has not revealed more of the future to the sons of man: they would be unduly disturbed and grieved by such disclosures.
- 4) We are ourselves rather perplexed by the concluding statement of the verse: “There was no man that understood it,” viz., the vision. It would seem as though Daniel must have understood because he received an interpretation at the hand of a competent instructor. It would seem equally simple to conclude that Daniel could readily have imparted what he understood to others who were of like mind with him. For, as we saw in the preceding verse, there was no injunction laid upon him in the matter of keeping this revelation secret: Daniel could tell others what he had been told.
 - 5) The clue to this particular perplexity on Daniel’s part lies in the simple fact that every prophecy, no matter how clearly it is given, has an element of the mysterious in it so that the mind of even an enlightened saint is quite unable to grasp more than the merest outlines of the truth till the fulfillment comes. What seems overwhelmingly clear to us now in the light of the historical fulfillment as we know it simply was not understood by Daniel. Witness the parallel experiences of Christ’s disciples concerning His predictions of His death and His resurrection and the tragic perplexity with reference to even His plainest statements: “They understood none of these things; and this saying was hid from them, and they perceived not the things that were said,” Luke 18:34. In the face of his perplexity Daniel carefully retained the very words that had been given even though he did not understand their import. That fidelity was still the primary duty of God’s prophets.¹

The Sickness of the Prophet Daniel

From Daniel 8:27, we read of the prophet’s ailment: “And I Daniel fainted, and was sick certain days; afterward I rose up, and did the king’s business; and I was astonished at the vision, but none understood it.”

The grievous nature of the persecution awaiting his people caused Daniel to become faint and sick for a period of time. He greatly cared for Israel; God used the prophet magnificently in their behalf by bringing him to great authority and influence during their Babylonian Captivity. His great civil power was continued well into the Persian rule.

A study of Daniel’s eighth chapter will show us the great suffering that lay ahead of God’s people. His sickness was connected with the sorrow he felt for the dire persecution his people would later suffer. We can understand the sorrow the prophet suffered, with the knowledge of what was in store for Israel. Perhaps he tried to prepare them for those hard times, but how could they comprehend? Daniel, Ezekiel, and Jeremiah (earlier) had shown them that God would set up an eternal kingdom sometime in the future. Maybe they were unable to reconcile a hard period of suffering and the glorious nature of the upcoming kingdom. Their forefathers had been formed into a nation during their centuries of slavery in Egypt, but they had to endure forty years of hardship in the wilderness before they could enter rest and joy of the land of “milk and honey.”

Those harsh years in the wilderness brought up various rebellions and strifes among the Israelites. Their unbelief

¹ Leupold, H. C. (1949). *Exposition of Daniel* (pp. 371–373). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House.

kept them from entering the promised land forthwith. The ten spies scared them with reports of the great walled cities, the very large and strong population, and the mighty giants that occupied the land. “And they brought up an evil report of the land which they had searched unto the children of Israel, saying, The land, through which we have gone to search it, is a land that eateth up the inhabitants thereof; and all the people that we saw in it are men of a great stature. And there we saw the giants, the sons of Anak, which come of the giants: and we were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight” (Num. 13:32-33).

This news filled the Israelites with grievous fear and mourning: “And all the congregation lifted up their voice, and cried; and the people wept that night. And all the children of Israel murmured against Moses and against Aaron: and the whole congregation said unto them, Would God that we had died in the land of Egypt! or would God we had died in this wilderness!” (Num. 14:1-2).

Their faith weak faith deserted them! They thought they should elect a leader who would take them back to Egypt (Num. 14:3-4). How quickly they had forgotten all of the miraculous demonstrations of Jehovah’s power in the ten plagues and in crossing the Red Sea! Moses and Aaron and Joshua and Caleb were heart-sick over this lack of faith! “Then Moses and Aaron fell on their faces before all the assembly of the congregation of the children of Israel. And Joshua the son of Nun, and Caleb the son of Jephunneh, which were of them that searched the land, rent their clothes: And they spake unto all the company of the children of Israel, saying, The land, which we passed through to search it, is an exceeding good land. If the LORD delight in us, then he will bring us into this land, and give it us; a land which floweth with milk and honey. Only rebel not ye against the LORD, neither fear ye the people of the land; for they are bread for us: their defence is departed from them, and the LORD is with us: fear them not” (Num. 14:5-9). The rebels called on the multitudes to stone these men to death!

This rebellion could have been avoided if the Israelites had listened to the report of the two courageous spies: “And Caleb stilled the people before Moses, and said, Let us go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it” (Num. 13:30). But Israel rebelled. The majority fell into apostasy. All of the men who left Egypt were condemned to die in the wilderness, except Joshua and Caleb. “For the LORD had said of them, They shall surely die in the wilderness. And there was not left a man of them, save Caleb the son of Jephunneh, and Joshua the son of Nun” (Num. 26:65).

The apostasy that tore asunder the Lord’s church in America, beginning shortly after the War Between the States and ending about the close of the nineteenth century, caused untold grief and hardship on the faithful minority who stayed with the truth. Those who divided the brotherhood took with them the great majority of the people, the property, and the money belonging to the Lord. But in the passing of time, our faithful brethren labored long, hard and courageously to spread the gospel. They met with great success! In the 1950s, the Lord’s church was the fastest growing religious group in the country. Meanwhile, the earlier departures from the truth by the liberal element led to more and more rejections of truth among their members. Their membership plummeted.

Another great apostasy began afflicting the Lord’s people about a hundred years after the other. Many of the smaller congregations have dwindled in number but they had remained loyal. Many of the larger congregations have grown in numbers, but they have done so through compromise, worldliness and sheep-stealing. We are very well aware of the pain in seeing those who once were faithful to the Lord, now holding hands with the world. Although we try to show those unsuspecting brethren the truth, they are unable or unwilling to perceive the truth. What great sickness of heart the faithful have experienced over this latest apostasy!

Christians who go into apostasy have great reason rather to remain faithful. The fully-revealed and Spirit-inspired word of God has been given and preserved intact into our hands. It is mighty hard for me to understand why one who has learned and known the will of God to turn back to the weak and beggarly elements of the world!

Galatians 1:6-11: "I marvel that ye are so quickly removing from him that called you in the grace of Christ unto a different gospel; which is not another gospel only there are some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, should preach unto you any gospel other than that which we preached unto you, let him be anathema. As we have said before, so say I now again, if any man preacheth unto you any gospel other than that which ye received, let him be anathema. For am I now seeking the favor of men, or of God? or am I striving to please men? if I were still pleasing men, I should not be a servant of Christ. For I make known to you, brethren, as touching the gospel which was preached by me, that it is not after man" (ASV).

Galatians 4:9: "But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage?"

2 Peter 2:20-22: "For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them. But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire."

Daniel was much grieved over the persecution the future Jews would suffer. That suffering would create strength within those who remained faithful, and enable them to appreciate the grandeur, the glory and value of the eternal kingdom that was to be established! Thousands of them obeyed the gospel of Christ on the day it was established (Acts 2). Multitudes of them obeyed Christ as the gospel was spread abroad (Acts 6:7). When the door of the kingdom was opened to the Gentiles, untold thousands of them became Christians, also. It may have appeared to our brethren back then that the whole world was on the verge of turning to Christ.

But the New Testament warned of a great apostasy that was to take place at a not-too-future time:

2 Thessalonians 2:1-12: "Now we beseech you, brethren, touching the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our gathering together unto him; to the end that ye be not quickly shaken from your mind, nor yet be troubled, either by spirit, or by word, or by epistle as from us, as that the day of the Lord is just at hand; let no man beguile you in any wise: for it will not be, except the falling away come first, and the man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition, he that opposeth and exalteth himself against all that is called God or that is worshipped; so that he sitteth in the temple of God, setting himself forth as God. Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things? And now ye know that which restraineth, to the end that he may be revealed in his own season. For the mystery of lawlessness doth already work: only there is one that restraineth now, until he be taken out of the way. And then shall be revealed the lawless one, whom the Lord Jesus shall slay with the breath of his mouth, and bring to nought by the manifestation of his coming; even he, whose coming is according to the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceit of unrighteousness for them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God sendeth them a

working of error, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be judged who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.”

2 Timothy 3:1-13: "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away. For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts, Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith. But they shall proceed no further: for their folly shall be manifest unto all *men*, as theirs also was. But thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, charity, patience, Persecutions, afflictions, which came unto me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra; what persecutions I endured: but out of *them* all the Lord delivered me. Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived."

2 Timothy 4:1-5: "I charge *thee* therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away *their* ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry."

The first great apostasy the Lord's church experienced began in the latter part of the first century. It was already beginning by the time Paul wrote Second Thessalonians: "For the mystery of iniquity doth already work..." (2:7). It had fully enveloped the church by 606 A.D. Most likely there were small groups of faithful Christians who continued to serve the Lord, but whose existence and experiences history did not record. In modern times, various groups of faithful saints have been discovered in Ethiopia and even in western Europe. These various congregations thought that they were the only true New Testament Christians, until our brethren made contact with them. These people had restored the Lord's church in their localities, just as other people did in America beginning in the late seventeen hundreds.

The seed of the Lord's kingdom [his church] is in the gospel [the word of God—Luke 8:11]. At any time or place where the New Testament is found, the church can be restored. The Restoration is illustrated by a pioneer experience. A wagon train became lost in the desert; some water was found but it was too bitter to drink. One man went upstream a considerable distance and found pure, unpolluted water. The stream was pure at its source, but became bitter and polluted as it proceeded farther from that source. Just so with the present religious situation in our world: the source remains as pure and unpolluted as ever; as time went by men went farther and farther from the purity of the original. We must get back to the pure unpolluted spring of truth which is the New Testament! [Bob Winton].

Daniel 9

A. Daniel 9:1-2: Daniel and the Writings of Jeremiah.

1. Verse 1: "In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of the seed of the Medes, which was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans."
 - a. According to historical records a man named Gubaru, a Mede, was appointed by King Cyrus to be ruler in Babylon at this time. Gubaru was born in 601 B.C. which would make him 62 years old when he invaded Babylon, exactly the age found in Daniel 5:31. He became ruler in Babylon in 539 B.C.
 - b. Leupold tells us this:
 - 1) Since one major objection to this identification has not yet been touched upon, we wish to dispose of it before we proceed. It is claimed that there is no proof available that Gobryas can be said to be a "Mede" because he is described as being of "Gutium." Wilson offers the following to show how Media may well be included in this term: "Gutium was a country of undefined extent but probably embracing all the territory between Babylonia on the one side and the mountains of Armenia to the north and Mt. Zagros to the northeast on the other, and perhaps even the country beyond Mt. Zagros whose capital city was Ecbatana." After the thoroughgoing refutation that Wilson has offered of this as well as of all other current objections on the question of the identity of Darius the Mede we believe that serious questions as to the correctness of our account can hardly trouble any man who is ready to weigh all the sound evidence submitted by this able scholar.
 - 2) Before we proceed at least a brief statement should be made about the character of this Darius the Mede. Because he allowed himself to be entrapped into issuing a decree that was unnecessarily tyrannical and also dangerous to Daniel in particular and found his wishes overridden by his lords, the king is sometimes represented as being a very weak figure and is otherwise derided. We believe that the evidence found in this chapter points to at least a moderately capable monarch, who undertakes a reorganization of his kingdom, displays some courage and positive conviction, has a measure of administrative ability, but was, perhaps, not always as alert as he might have been against the wiles of conniving courtiers. In brief, he was a pretty fair monarch as Oriental monarchs of those days went.¹
 - c. ISBE on Darius:
 - 1) The name of three or four kings mentioned in the Old Testament. In the original Persian it is spelled "Darayavaush"; in Babylonian, usually "Dariamush"; in Susian (?), "Tariyamaush"; in Egyptian "Antaryuash"
 - 2) "Darius." In meaning it is probably connected with the new Persian word Dara, "king." Herodotus says it means in Greek
 - 3) Darius the Mede (Dan 6:1; 11:1) was the son of Ahasuerus (Xerxes) of the seed of the Medes (Dan 9:1). He received the government of Belshazzar the Chaldaean upon the death of that prince (Dan 5:30-31; 6:1), and was made king over the kingdom of the Chaldaeans. From Dan 6:28 we may infer that Darius was king contemporaneously with Cyrus. Outside of the Book of Daniel there is no mention of Darius the Mede by name, though there are good reasons for identifying him with Gubaru, or Ugbaru, the governor of Gutium, who is said in the Nabunaid-Cyrus Chronicle to have been appointed by Cyrus as his governor of Babylon after its capture from the Chaldaeans. Some reasons for this identification are as follows:
 - a) Gubaru is possibly a translation of Darius. The same radical letters in Arabic mean "king," "compeller," "restrainer." In Hebrew, derivations of the root mean "lord," "mistress," "queen"; in Aramaic, "mighty," "almighty."

- b) Gutium was the designation of the country North of Babylon and was in all possibility in the time of Cyrus a part of the province of Media.
 - c) But even if Gutium were not a part of Media at that time, it was the custom of Persian kings to appoint Medes as well as Persians to satrapies and to the command of armies. Hence, Darius-Gubaru may have been a Mede, even if Gutium were not a part of Media proper.
 - d) Since Daniel never calls Darius the Mede king of Media, or king of Persia, it is immaterial what his title or position may have been before he was made king over the realm of the Chaldaeans. Since the realm of the Chaldaeans never included either Media or Persia, there is absolutely no evidence in the Book of Daniel that its author ever meant to imply that Darius the Mede ever ruled over either Media or Persia.
 - e) That Gubaru is called governor (*pihatu*), and Darius the Mede, king, is no objection to this identification; for in ancient as well as modern oriental empires the governors of provinces and cities were often called kings. Moreover, in the Aramaic language, no more appropriate word than "king" can be found to designate the ruler of a sub-kingdom, or province of the empire.
 - f) That Darius is said to have had 120 satraps under him does not conflict with this; for the Persian word "satrap" is indefinite as to the extent of his rule, just like the English word "governor." Besides, Gubaru is said to have appointed *pihatu*s under himself. If the kingdom of the Chaldaeans which he received was as large as that of Sargon he may easily have appointed 120 of these sub-rulers; for Sargon names 117 subject cities and countries over which he appointed his prefects and governors. [from International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia, Electronic Database Copyright © 1996, 2003, 2006 by Biblesoft, Inc. All rights reserved.]
2. Verse 2: "In the first year of his reign I Daniel understood by books the number of the years, whereof the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah the prophet, that he would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem."
- a. Daniel had access to the inspired text of God's revealed word. He could know that Israel had turned away from God's will (vs. 5-6). Clearly, the written revelation was still in the hands of certain Jews; perhaps the prophet had copies of the Scriptures in his own possession. He knew the precepts and judgments from which Israel had turned.
 - b. Specifically, Daniel make reference to what God had revealed to Jeremiah, prior to the Babylonian captivity, regarding the seventy years appointed for them to be under the control of the Chaldeans.
 - 1) Jeremiah 25:11: "And this whole land shall be a desolation, and an astonishment; and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years."
 - 2) Jeremiah 25:12: "And it shall come to pass, when seventy years are accomplished, that I will punish the king of Babylon, and that nation, saith the LORD, for their iniquity, and the land of the Chaldeans, and will make it perpetual desolations."
 - 3) Jeremiah 29:10: "For thus saith the LORD, That after seventy years be accomplished at Babylon I will visit you, and perform my good word toward you, in causing you to return to this place."
 - c. The first invasion of the Babylonians of Jerusalem was in 606 B.C., at which time they killed a number of Jews and deported a certain number of the citizens into Chaldea. The second investment of Jerusalem was in 597 B.C., with similar results. When Israel rebelled against Babylon again in 586, the invaders returned, destroyed the city and the temple, and pulled down much of the wall. Cyrus, the king of the Medo-Persian Empire, overcame the Babylonians in 539 B.C., and when he was shown what had been written in the writings of Isaiah, in which Cyrus was called by name, he permitted all the Jews who desired, to return to Jerusalem. This decree was made in 536 B.C., exactly seventy years
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from the initial conquest of Jerusalem by Babylon in 606 B.C.

- d. Daniel correctly understood from the writings of Jeremiah that Israel would be under the heel of Babylonia for seventy years. He knew that the time factor was now coming to its conclusion. Therefore he set forth his prayer to God that his people might return home. They were not deported from Canaan at one time, and they would not return in one body at the same time.

Table of Old Testament Events

DATE B.C.	EVENT
606	Babylonians conquer Jerusalem; some Jews are taken into captivity
597	Babylonians re-take Jerusalem; more Jews are taken into captivity
586	Babylonians destroy the temple and Jerusalem; other Jews are taken into captivity
536	Cyrus the Medo-Persian king releases Israel to return to Jerusalem
535	Work begins on rebuilding the temple
520	Haggai and Zechariah stirred up the people to complete the temple
516	The temple reconstruction is finally completed
483	Esther becomes queen in the Medo-Persian kingdom
474	Esther delivers Israel from the destruction Haman had devised
457	Ezra comes to Jerusalem
444	Nehemiah goes to Jerusalem to rebuild the walls of the city
432	The marriage problem is resolved

B. Daniel 9:3-19: Daniel's Prayer in Behalf of Israel.

1. Daniel 9:3-4: "And I set my face unto the Lord God, to seek by prayer and supplications, with fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes: And I prayed unto the LORD my God, and made my confession, and said, O Lord, the great and dreadful God, keeping the covenant and mercy to them that love him, and to them that keep his commandments."
 - a. Daniel *set his face* toward the Lord God in humble prayer. Three times daily, the prophet was before his window, praying. No prayer is acceptable to Jehovah unless it is offered humbly, without pride and ostentation. Many prayers in high places are merely officious, word-speaking, without meaning, but are speeches directed toward man and not God.
 - b. Daniel made supplications for God's pardon for his own and his fellow-Jews, for their rebellion against the Lord. Knowing that the time for the fulfillment of Jeremiah's prophecy was at hand, and being aware of Israel's continuing guilt of transgression, he made a rather lengthy and appropriate appeal to the Lord for forgiveness.
 - c. Daniel's prayers were accompanied by fasting and sackcloth and ashes. Fasting was often done while the individual was clothed in sackcloth [a rough garment made of sackcloth], and sitting in ashes, which were sifted upon the head.
 - 1) 2 Samuel 12:16-23: "David therefore besought God for the child; and David fasted, and went in, and lay all night upon the earth. And the elders of his house arose, and went to him, to raise him up from the earth: but he would not, neither did he eat bread with them. And it came to pass on the seventh day, that the child died. And the servants of David feared to tell him that the child was dead: for they said, Behold, while the child was yet alive, we spake unto him, and he would not hearken unto our voice: how will he then vex himself, if we tell him that the child is dead? But when David saw that his servants whispered, David perceived that the child was dead: therefore David said unto his servants, Is the child dead? And they said, He is dead. Then David arose from the earth, and washed, and anointed himself, and changed his apparel, and came into the house of the LORD, and worshipped: then he came to his own house; and when he required, they set bread before him, and he did eat. Then said his servants unto him, What thing is this that thou hast done? thou didst fast and weep for the child, while it was alive; but when the child was dead, thou didst rise and eat bread. And he said, While the child was yet alive, I fasted and wept: for I said, Who can tell whether GOD will be gracious to me, that the child may live? But now he is dead, wherefore should I fast? can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me."
 - 2) Job 2:4-8: "And Satan answered the LORD, and said, Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life. But put forth thine hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will curse thee to thy face. And the LORD said unto Satan, Behold, he is in thine hand; but save his life. So went Satan forth from the presence of the LORD, and smote Job with sore boils from the sole of his foot unto his crown. And he took him a potsherd to scrape himself withal; and he sat down among the ashes."
 - 3) See Addenda __ For Article by Guy N. Woods on Fasting, etc.



2. Verses 5-6: “We have sinned, and have committed iniquity, and have done wickedly, and have rebelled, even by departing from thy precepts and from thy judgments: Neither have we hearkened unto thy servants the prophets, which spake in thy name to our kings, our princes, and our fathers, and to all the people of the land.”
 - a. Other translations:
 - 1) “We have sinned, and have dealt perversely, and have done wickedly, and have rebelled, even turning aside from thy precepts and from thine ordinances; neither have we hearkened unto thy servants the prophets, that spake in thy name to our kings, our princes, and our fathers, and to all the people of the land” (ASV).
 - 2) “We have sinned and committed iniquity, we have done wickedly and rebelled, even by departing from Your precepts and Your judgments. Neither have we heeded Your servants the prophets, who spoke in Your name to our kings and our princes, to our fathers and all the people of the land” (NKJV).
 - b. Solomon, anticipating Israel’s future punishment in a foreign land, knew that they could be restored into God’s favor and return to their homeland, if they would acknowledge their previous wickedness, and repent sincerely: “Yet if they shall bethink themselves in the land whither they were carried captives, and repent, and make supplication unto thee in the land of them that carried them captives, saying, We have sinned, and have done perversely, we have committed wickedness” (1Kings 8:47).
 - c. In our present text, Daniel and many Jews are in the land of captivity. He admitted the sinfulness of the people, describing their spiritual crimes against Jehovah in several significant terms.
 - 1) They had sinned.
 - a) Sin is personal; it is a transgression of God’s law (1 John 3:4; Rom. 3:10-26). Each individual sinner must repent of his own sins.
 - b) A nation is sinful if enough of its citizens, laws, and national practices violate God’s word. A wicked nation repents as its people (individually) repent, and as its laws and practices are changed.
 - c) God’s will is for each person to be holy: “As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance: But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy” (1 Pet. 1:14-16). If we miss the mark of being holy, we commit sin. “Sin” is defined as “missing the mark” which God has set. We are holy only if we live according to God’s standard.
 - 2) We have committed iniquity [dealt perversely).
 - a) “It is equivalent to saying that they had sinned in every way possible” (Barnes).
 - b) “To bow down, make crooked, pervert, commit iniquity, (do) perverse (ly), trouble, do wickedly, do wrong” (Strong, p.86, on #5753).
 - 3) We have done wickedly.
 - a) They had willfully violated God’s will, and had turned to all manner of evil practices, including all that is comprehended in idolatry.
 - b) Wicked practices grow out of wicked thoughts, just as good practices grow out of pure thoughts. “But those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile the man. For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries,

fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies” (Matt. 15:18-19).

- 4) We have rebelled.
 - a) They did this by turning aside from God’s precepts and judgments. What God had told them to do they did not do, and not do, that they did.
 - b) “His series reaches its climax in the phrase *we have turned aside*, a form of expression being used in the Hebrew which emphasizes the action. In all this confession of sin, Daniel, who had lived most of his life in Babylon and was now an old man, by using the pronoun *we*, identified himself with his people. This is the more remarkable, when we consider how pure was his character” (Young, p.185).
 - c) The rebellious nature of the people of Judah, prior to their total subjection by Babylon, is shown by Jeremiah 6:16: “Thus saith the LORD, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. But they said, *We will not walk therein.*”
- d. “A further bit of clear insight into the nature of Israel’s plight is contained in the last word, which traces all these various manifestations of sin to their actual root, which is departure from God’s Word, which is here designated as ‘commandments’ and ‘ordinances’ because they had both spoken with authority (*mitswah*) and had also given final decisions for doubtful cases (*mishpat*). Departure (*sôr*) from God’s Word is the beginning of all moral disorders. The absolute infinitive (*sôr*) is here used after the four finite verbs of the series—a rather common construction in Hebrew (cf., *K. S.* 218b) and not an indication of the later degeneracy of the language as some claim. In fact, the construction is quite appropriate. It generalizes and shows the fundamental wrong by the less specific infinitive form.
 - 1) “The law of Moses had, of course, been fundamental in Israel’s life. But historically another factor had appeared: the prophets had expounded and applied this law according to the needs of successive generations. Daniel confesses that here, too, a sad oversight had occurred: he and his people had not hearkened unto these prophets who had spoken in obedience to a divine behest (‘Thy servants’). In this instance the guilty persons were primarily the ‘kings and the princes,’ who had been warned more specifically than others, and whose example helped very largely to determine the course of conduct of the multitude.
 - 2) “To these Daniel adds ‘our fathers,’ the godless generations preceding his own, who by their example had directly promoted further godlessness. Last are ‘the people at large’ to whom the example of the higher-ups always finally descends. Practically the same words are found in Jer. 44:21. Prophets and priests were not as guilty as the other groups referred to and are, therefore, passed by in the enumeration of the guilty.”¹
- e. The Law of Moses was God’s definitive revelation to Israel. It was to be effective for a certain period of time. “...It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator” (Gal. 3:19).
 - 1) Through the years, various problems and rebellions appeared in Israel. God raised up certain judges to deal with these troubles (see Book of Judges).
 - 2) God also sent to the nation certain inspired prophets, who revealed further guidance and rebukes to Israel. These also were enabled to make known great predictions, which would offer hope and motivation to the people.
 - 3) Israel rebelled, despite the information they had been given. The greater the knowledge, the greater

¹ Leupold, H. C. (1949). *Exposition of Daniel* (pp. 383–385). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House.

- the responsibility. Daniel brought up the guilt of his people in his marvelous prayer.
3. Verses 7-10: “O Lord, righteousness belongeth unto thee, but unto us confusion of faces, as at this day; to the men of Judah, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and unto all Israel, that are near, and that are far off, through all the countries whither thou hast driven them, because of their trespass that they have trespassed against thee. O Lord, to us belongeth confusion of face, to our kings, to our princes, and to our fathers, because we have sinned against thee. To the Lord our God belong mercies and forgivenesses, though we have rebelled against him; Neither have we obeyed the voice of the LORD our God, to walk in his laws, which he set before us by his servants the prophets.”
 - a. God is always right and is the source of righteousness in men. The apostle Paul wrote: “For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith” (Rom. 1:16-17).
 - 1) The word **therein** is a reference to the gospel. The gospel reveals the righteousness of God. It is in the gospel that we find the righteousness of God. This is not speaking of God's personal righteousness. That he is righteous and perfectly holy is taught throughout God's book. But that is not the point here. The apostle is affirming that the plan by which God makes man to become righteous is given in the gospel.
 - 2) The commandments of God are righteousness (Ps. 119:172); there is nothing about his word that is unrighteous or which encourages unrighteousness. It promotes and produces righteousness in those who will sincerely follow its dictates.
 - 3) When we obey the gospel, we "work righteousness" (Acts 10:34-35). "He that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous" (1 John 3:7; cf. Romans 6:16).
 - 4) Paul decried the fact that the Jews had not "submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God" (Rom. 10:1-3). What they had done was to refuse to obey the gospel (Rom. 10:13-18; 2 Thess. 1:8-9; Rom. 6:16-18; 1 Pet. 1:22-25).
 - b. While Jehovah was righteous, Israel had made themselves to be unrighteous. When they violated God's word, they contaminated themselves with sin. The blood of animals which were offered by the Israelites under the Mosaic Law could not take away the guilt of sin (Heb. 10:1-4).
 - c. The Atonement Sacrifice, offered once each year, could only “roll forward” their guilt until the next day of Atonement. Their forgiveness was based on the greatest of all sacrifices, the crucifixion of Christ. Those who were obedient to God during the Patriarchal Age and the Mosaic Age received the benefits of the cross [see Leviticus 16].
 - d. "Whom [Christ] God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God" (Rom. 3:25).
 - 1) God has set Christ forth to be a propitiation for our sins. God initiated the action that brought about the result indicated in the verse. To propitiate means to "render favorable, to conciliate." The word is used in 1 John 2:2, 4:10, Luke 18:13, Hebrews 2:17, and in this text. Several profound truths are taught in this great verse.
 - 2) "'Propitiation' is a translation of *hilasterion* and refers to the atoning sacrifice of Christ. '*Expiation*' probably comes closer to the original than '*propitiation*.' These words—redemption and propitiation—show the great power of God which is available to all who will come to Jesus Christ through faith in his word" (Winford Claiborne, *The Book of Romans*, Spiritual Sword Lectures, 1983, p.74).

- 3) By the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ, together with the work of his personal ministry and the message of the gospel, God can look with favor toward mankind; we can be reconciled to God, and thus be at peace with him; Christ paid the debt; he ransomed us; and made it possible for us to be loosed from the guilt and bondage of sin.
 - 4) The reconciliation which Christ effected is obtained (on our part) by faith in his blood (Col. 1:20; 1 Peter 1:18-19; Eph. 1:7; 1 Cor. 6:20). To give one's blood is to give his life, for the life of the flesh is the blood (Gen. 9:4; Lev. 17:11). Jesus willingly gave his life and shed his blood for fallen humanity; only those who will believe in the significance of his death, loving him for his supreme sacrifice, and earnestly believing the message the Savior gave, can secure the benefits he offers. But salvation by faith is not salvation by faith only (Jas. 2:24).
 - 5) The Father set Christ forth to be the expiation of our sins, and thus declared his righteousness. The death of Christ for the sins of the world was God's plan for the solution to the great problem. God wanted to save his fallen offspring; but he must not compromise his holiness or his justice; but by allowing his only begotten Son to die in our place, he was able to satisfy justice, maintain his own holiness, and show mercy to man. God did not vent his wrath for men against Christ, to appease his anger; it was God himself who put forth the propitiatory offering for man.
 - 6) God's plan for making men righteous extends backwards in time to benefit those who lived in the past, but were dead when Christ died (Heb. 9:15,22). *Remission* is from a Greek word which means "passing over" (see margin). Hebrews 9:15 gives an inspired commentary on the thought, and shows that the idea is that of forgiving, not ignoring the guilt of the offenders. But upon what basis did God forgive their sins? The only possible basis was their faithfulness to the law under which they lived.
 - 7) The forbearance of God lies at the heart of God's willingness to help man. He was patient with the men of Noah's generation (1 Pet. 3:20-21), but his patience had a limit (Gen. 6:3-5). Acts 17:30 also shows God's forbearance: he put up with many things from man then which he will not condone today. "And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent" (Acts 17:30).
- e. Righteousness belongs to God, but "confusion of faces" belongs to the men of Israel. Having been unrepentant of their rebellion against Heaven, they had been harshly conquered by the Babylonians and taken into captivity.
- 1) This sinful generation was deeply shamed over their state, and confusion permeated them. "How could this dreadful condition have come upon us, the chosen people of God?" Ezekiel shows that even in Babylonia, the Israelites continued their resistance to Jehovah.
 - 2) Even to the time of this chapter, Daniel reports that they were still in this state of confusion and captivity, continuing to suffer the hardship of servitude in all the lands to which the nation had been carried.
- f. The prophet confessed to God in behalf of his people their "confusion of face." Daniel knew that this condition was due punishment for the sins of the nation. By this time, perhaps the majority of the exiled people perceived the cause of their present degradation (verse 8). Even the kings and princes and the fathers of Israel had sinned—and all suffered this great shame.
- g. Daniel's prayer, sincerely offered and recorded by inspiration for posterity, acknowledged that God alone is capable of forgiving them, and showing the mercies (the compassion) that they sorely needed (verse 9).
- h. The great failure of the nation was in their disobedience to the voice of God, to the laws of God,
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which the Lord had set before Israel through the prophets. Jehovah had sent many prophets to Israel through the centuries, who sought to turn the people back to his law. They had been fully taught and warned, but the majority continued in iniquity.

4. Verses 11-13: “Yea, all Israel have transgressed thy law, even by departing, that they might not obey thy voice; therefore the curse is poured upon us, and the oath that is written in the law of Moses the servant of God, because we have sinned against him. And he hath confirmed his words, which he spake against us, and against our judges that judged us, by bringing upon us a great evil: for under the whole heaven hath not been done as hath been done upon Jerusalem. As it is written in the law of Moses, all this evil is come upon us: yet made we not our prayer before the LORD our God, that we might turn from our iniquities, and understand thy truth.”
 - a. “By bringing upon the people all that he had threatened in case of their disobedience. Daniel saw that there was a complete fulfillment of all that he had said would come upon them. As all this had been threatened, he could not complain; and as he had confirmed his words in regard to the threatening, he had the same reason to think that he would in regard to his promises. What Daniel here says was true in his time, and in reference to his people will be found to be true at all times, and in reference to all people. Nothing is more certain than that God will ‘confirm’ all the words that he has over spoken, and that no sinner can hope to escape on the ground that God will be found to be false to his threatenings, or that he has forgotten them, or that he is indifferent to them” (Barnes).
 - b. By the time of this chapter, Jerusalem had been captured by the Babylonians, the temple had been destroyed along with the other great houses of the city, and the walls had been pulled down. The last group of Jews had been transported to Babylonia; Jeremiah reports that a good many were left behind; these migrated to Egypt.
 - c. Daniel notes that what had happened to Jerusalem was unique among other great cities which had been assaulted. “By bringing upon the people all that he had threatened in case of their disobedience. Daniel saw that there was a complete fulfillment of all that he had said would come upon them. As all this had been threatened, he could not complain; and as he had confirmed his words in regard to the threatening, he had the same reason to think that he would in regard to his promises. What Daniel here says was true in his time, and in reference to his people will be found to be true at all times, and in reference to all people. Nothing is more certain than that God will ‘confirm’ all the words that he has over spoken, and that no sinner can hope to escape on the ground that God will be found to be false to his threatenings, or that he has forgotten them, or that he is indifferent to them” (Pulpit Commentary).
 - d. God had made definite threats against Israel when they should rebel against him and refuse to repent.
 - 1) Deuteronomy 30:15-20: “See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil; In that I command thee this day to love the LORD thy God, to walk in his ways, and to keep his commandments and his statutes and his judgments, that thou mayest live and multiply: and the LORD thy God shall bless thee in the land whither thou goest to possess it. But if thine heart turn away, so that thou wilt not hear, but shalt be drawn away, and worship other gods, and serve them; I denounce unto you this day, that ye shall surely perish, and that ye shall not prolong your days upon the land, whither thou passest over Jordan to go to possess it. I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live: That thou mayest love the LORD thy God, and that thou mayest obey his voice, and that thou mayest cleave unto him: for he is thy life, and the length of thy days: that thou mayest dwell in the land which the LORD swore unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give them.”

- 2) Jeremiah 6:14-17: “They have healed also the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, saying, Peace, peace; when there is no peace. Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination? nay, they were not at all ashamed, neither could they blush: therefore they shall fall among them that fall: at the time that I visit them they shall be cast down, saith the LORD. Thus saith the LORD, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. But they said, We will not walk therein. Also I set watchmen over you, saying, Hearken to the sound of the trumpet. But they said, We will not hearken.”
 - e. Sin (violating God’s law) is common to all accountable people.
 - 1) 1 John 3:4: “Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law.”
 - 2) Romans 3:23: “For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.”
 - 3) Ecclesiastes 7:20: “For there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not.”
 - 4) Ecclesiastes 7:29: “Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions.”
 - f. Even during our Lord’s personal mission on earth, the Jewish people generally were still rebelling against God’s law.
 - 1) Mark 7:6-13: “He answered and said unto them, Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, as the washing of pots and cups: and many other such like things ye do. And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition. For Moses said, Honour thy father and thy mother; and, Whoso curseth father or mother, let him die the death: But ye say, If a man shall say to his father or mother, It is Corban, that is to say, a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; he shall be free. And ye suffer him no more to do ought for his father or his mother; Making the word of God of none effect through your tradition, which ye have delivered: and many such like things do ye.”
 - 2) Matthew 13:14-15: “And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive: For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.”
 - g. Daniel perceived that the disasters which had come upon Israel were brought about on account of their determined repudiation of God’s law. They were now reaping what they had sown (Gal. 6:7-8). “Even the most casual attention to this prayer reveals that Daniel's concern was centered upon the devastated state of the city of Jerusalem. Here in the prayer, Daniel said, ‘Under the whole heaven’ there does not exist another example of the kind of ruthless destruction that had been poured out upon Jerusalem....Let the Bible student note the significance of this. Is the situation that was extant when Daniel uttered this prayer to be identified with the days of Antiochus Epiphanes and the Maccabean wars? Indeed no! Antiochus did not destroy the city of Jerusalem; and, although he desecrated the temple, he did not destroy it; and therefore, we have here another proof of the utter absurdity of the impossible theory that this prophecy was written in the Maccabean period” (Coffman).
 - h. Leupold:
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- 1) When Daniel repeats: “we are the ones who must be ashamed,” we are made to feel that he has in mind more than mere embarrassment. He refers to the shame of guilt and consequently does not mince words: sin, SIN, is the direct cause of all these misfortunes....
 - 2) Note that in v. 9 the prayer abandons direct address and speaks about God in the third person in the manner of reflection. Also for “Thou” there is substituted “the Lord, our God,” a more formal and dignified statement which reflects the majesty of God more fully.¹
5. Verses 14-15: “Therefore hath the LORD watched upon the evil, and brought it upon us: for the LORD our God is righteous in all his works which he doeth: for we obeyed not his voice. And now, O Lord our God, that hast brought thy people forth out of the land of Egypt with a mighty hand, and hast gotten thee renown, as at this day; we have sinned, we have done wickedly.”
- a. “The prayer is divided into two parts. Vv. 4-14 contain the confession of sin and guilt; vv. 15-19 the supplication for mercy, and the restoration of the holy city and its sanctuary lying in ruins” (Keil).
 - b. God is said to have watched over the evil. He brought this punishment [evil: harsh treatment] upon Israel as the proper penalty for their evil conduct and impenitence. He sent this punishment and he controlled it. He made sure that they were not annihilated as a people.
 - 1) Jeremiah 30:11: “For I am with thee, saith the LORD, to save thee: though I make a full end of all nations whither I have scattered thee, yet will I not make a full end of thee: but I will correct thee in measure, and will not leave thee altogether unpunished.”
 - 2) Amos 9:8: “Behold, the eyes of the Lord GOD are upon the sinful kingdom, and I will destroy it from off the face of the earth; saving that I will not utterly destroy the house of Jacob, saith the LORD.”
 - c. Nothing that God has ever done could be rightly considered unrighteous; his actions and words are always righteous.
 - 1) He is utterly fair and impartial.
 - a) Romans 2:11: "For there is no respect of persons with God."
 - b) Romans 2:16: "In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel."
 - 2) His actions, words, and motives are perfectly just.
 - a) Genesis 18:25: "That be far from thee to do after this manner, to slay the righteous with the wicked: and that the righteous should be as the wicked, that be far from thee: Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?"
 - b) Psalms 89:14: "Justice and judgment *are* the habitation of thy throne: mercy and truth shall go before thy face."
 - c) We are instructed be righteous in our judgments: “Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment” (John 7:24).
 - d) Daniel 6:10-17: "Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house; and his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime. Then these men assembled, and found Daniel praying and making supplication before his God. Then they came near, and spake before the king concerning the king's decree; Hast thou not signed a decree,

¹ Leupold, H. C. (1949). *Exposition of Daniel* (pp. 386–387). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House.

that every man that shall ask *a petition* of any God or man within thirty days, save of thee, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions? The king answered and said, The thing *is* true, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which altereth not. Then answered they and said before the king, That Daniel, which *is* of the children of the captivity of Judah, regardeth not thee, O king, nor the decree that thou hast signed, but maketh his petition three times a day. Then the king, when he heard *these* words, was sore displeased with himself, and set *his* heart on Daniel to deliver him: and he laboured till the going down of the sun to deliver him. Then these men assembled unto the king, and said unto the king, Know, O king, that the law of the Medes and Persians *is*, That no decree nor statute which the king establisheth may be changed. Then the king commanded, and they brought Daniel, and cast *him* into the den of lions. *Now* the king spake and said unto Daniel, Thy God whom thou servest continually, he will deliver thee. And a stone was brought, and laid upon the mouth of the den; and the king sealed it with his own signet, and with the signet of his lords; that the purpose might not be changed concerning Daniel." The pagan king could not satisfy both civil justice and extend mercy to Daniel.

- d. "There are abundant mercies in God, and not only forgiveness but forgivenesses; he is a God of pardons (Neh 9:17, marg.); he multiplies to pardon, Isa 55:7. Though we have rebelled against him, yet with him there is mercy, pardoning mercy, even for the rebellious. It is likewise a support to them to think that God had formerly glorified himself by delivering them out of Egypt; so far he looks back for the encouragement of his faith (v. 15): 'Thou hast formerly brought thy people out of Egypt with a mighty hand, and wilt thou not now with the same mighty hand bring them out of Babylon? Were they then formed into a people, and shall they not now be reformed and new-formed? Are they now sinful and unworthy, and were they not so then? Are their oppressors now mighty and haughty, and were they not so then? And has not God said the their deliverance out of Babylon shall outshine even that out of Egypt?' Jer 16:14,15. The force of this plea lies in that, 'Thou hast gotten thyself renown, hast made thyself a name' (so the word is) 'as at this day, even to this day, by bringing us out of Egypt; and wilt thou lose the credit of that by letting us perish in Babylon? Didst thou get a renown by that deliverance which we have so often commemorated, and wilt thou not now get thyself a renown by this which we have so often prayed for, and so long waited for?'" [Matthew Henry].
6. Verses 16-17: "O Lord, according to all thy righteousness, I beseech thee, let thine anger and thy fury be turned away from thy city Jerusalem, thy holy mountain: because for our sins, and for the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem and thy people are become a reproach to all that are about us. Now therefore, O our God, hear the prayer of thy servant, and his supplications, and cause thy face to shine upon thy sanctuary that is desolate, for the Lord's sake."
 - a. "O Lord, according to all thy righteousness, let thine anger and thy wrath, I pray thee, be turned away from thy city Jerusalem, thy holy mountain; because for our sins, and for the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem and thy people are become a reproach to all that are round about us. Now therefore, O our God, hearken unto the prayer of thy servant, and to his supplications, and cause thy face to shine upon thy sanctuary that is desolate, for the Lord's sake" (ASV).
 - b. What God had brought upon Israel was a penalty intended as a punishment for their long history of rebellion. This affliction was painful and hurtful. God did righteously in inflicting this calamity.
 - 1) It was a case of righteous indignation: "But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up for thyself wrath in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God" (Rom. 2:5).
 - 2) God's wrath was a judicial wrath—not accompanied with harsh words or acrimonious pronouncements. They had been more than adequately warned. Jehovah's patience came to an end. They had earned the punishment he had unleashed.

- 3) The city of Jerusalem, the location of the marvelous temple, where God had met with his people on those holy days he had appointed, was now in ruins; the temple was utterly destroyed, the great palaces had been razed, and the protecting walls around the city had been pulled down.
 - 4) Jeremiah 32:31-36: “For this city hath been to me a provocation of mine anger and of my wrath from the day that they built it even unto this day; that I should remove it from before my face, because of all the evil of the children of Israel and of the children of Judah, which they have done to provoke me to anger, they, their kings, their princes, their priests, and their prophets, and the men of Judah, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem. And they have turned unto me the back, and not the face: and though I taught them, rising up early and teaching them, yet they have not hearkened to receive instruction. But they set their abominations in the house which is called by my name, to defile it. And they built the high places of Baal, which are in the valley of the son of Hinnom, to cause their sons and their daughters to pass through the fire unto Molech; which I commanded them not, neither came it into my mind, that they should do this abomination, to cause Judah to sin. And now therefore thus saith Jehovah, the God of Israel, concerning this city, whereof ye say, It is given into the hand of the king of Babylon by the sword, and by the famine, and by the pestilence.”
- c. The time for their promised return home from captivity was at hand. Daniel’s prayer, in which he confessed the sinfulness of the nation, was necessary if God was to allow them to rebuild their lives, spiritual and practical, in their homeland. [Getting reestablished in Palestine would not be a quick or painless endeavor]. Before those efforts could be made, there must be an individual and national repentance. At this time in their experiences, when it was manifest that God had meant what he said, their hearts were in tune with Jehovah’s will.
 - d. The prophet beseechingly asked God to turn his face in kindness toward his people; he pleads that he might look with pleasure upon Jerusalem again, where the sanctuary (the temple) had been located. It was his hope that the temple could be rebuilt and the nation be restored to their former standing with the Almighty. If such could be the case, the great glory could be brought to their God.
 - e. “Here is a pathetic complaint of the reproach that God's people lay under, and the ruins that God's sanctuary lay in, both which redounded very much to the dishonour of God and the diminution of that name and renown which God had gained by bringing them out of Egypt. 1. God's holy people were despised. By their sins and the iniquities of their fathers they had profaned their crown and made themselves despicable, and then though they are, in name and profession, God's people, and upon that account truly great and honourable, yet they become a reproach to all that are round about them. Their neighbours laugh them to scorn, and triumph in their disgrace. Note, Sin is a reproach to any people, but especially to God's people, that have more eyes upon them and have more honour to lose than other people. 2. God's holy place was desolate. Jerusalem, the holy city, was a reproach (v. 16) when it lay in ruins; it was an astonishment and a hissing to all that passed by. The sanctuary, the holy house, was desolate (v. 17), the altars were demolished, and all the buildings laid in ashes.” (Matthew Henry).
 - f. “The nub of the petition is finally reached: ‘Cause Thy face to shine upon Thy sanctuary which is desolate.’ The expression ‘causing the face to shine,’ *ha’er panîm*, means letting the face radiate benevolence and good-will toward one, the surest token of being well disposed toward him. Prayer is made first for the ‘sanctuary,’ *miqdash*, ‘the holy place,’ because to have a means of establishing communion with God is more essential than to have a strong city. It is as though Daniel would leave it to the Lord whatever He might be pleased to add of material prosperity as long as only the sanctuary is restored and free communion with God assured.”¹

¹ Leupold, H. C. (1949). *Exposition of Daniel* (pp. 391–393). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House.

7. Verses 18-19: “O my God, incline thine ear, and hear; open thine eyes, and behold our desolations, and the city which is called by thy name: for we do not present our supplications before thee for our righteousnesses, but for thy great mercies. O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive; O Lord, hearken and do; defer not, for thine own sake, O my God: for thy city and thy people are called by thy name.”
 - a. The basis for Daniel’s prayer was the fact that God was his God. The prophet had maintained a relationship with Jehovah; he prayed three times daily, facing Jerusalem. His sincerity cannot be doubted. “The intensity of conviction and importunity expressed in this prayer well serve as a model for the attitude in all true prayer” (Young, p.189).
 - b. Daniel asks God incline his ear, to attune his mind to hear and receive the petition he is placing before the God of Israel.
 - 1) 1 Peter 3:10-12: “For he that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile: Let him eschew evil, and do good; let him seek peace, and ensue it. For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil.”
 - 2) Psalm 66:18: “If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me.”
 - 3) Proverbs 28:9: “He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be abomination.”
 - c. Daniel was fully aware of the fact that Israel could not expect God’s blessings based on their own righteousness. Their conduct for many years had been unrighteous. He knew that Jehovah’s help arises from his tender mercy and not from our merits.

C. Daniel 9:20-23: God Sends Gabriel in Response to Daniel’s Prayer.

1. Verses 20-21: “And whiles I was speaking, and praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my supplication before the LORD my God for the holy mountain of my God; Yea, whiles I was speaking in prayer, even the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, touched me about the time of the evening oblation.”
 - a. Other translations:
 - 1) American Standard Version: “And whiles I was speaking, and praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my supplication before the LORD my God for the holy mountain of my God; Yea, whiles I was speaking in prayer, even the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, touched me about the time of the evening oblation.”
 - 2) New King James: “Now while I was speaking, praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my supplication before the Lord my God for the holy mountain of my God, yes, while I was speaking in prayer, the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, reached me about the time of the evening offering.”
 - b. “The principal difficulty in the exposition of the chapter is in this portion; and indeed there is perhaps no part of the prophecies of the Old Testament that is, on some accounts, more difficult of exposition, as there is, in some respects, none more clear, and none more important. It is remarkable, among other things, as not being a direct answer to the prayer, and as seeming to have no bearing on the subject of the petition—that the city of Jerusalem might be rebuilt, and the temple restored; but it directs the mind onward to another and more important event—the coming of the Messiah, and the final closing of sacrifice and oblation, and a more entire and enduring destruction of the temple and city, after it should have been rebuilt, than had yet occurred. To give this information, an angel—the same one

whom Daniel had seen before—was sent forth from heaven, and came near to him and touched him, and said that he was commissioned to impart to him skill and understanding” (Barnes).

- c. The prophet was speaking to God in prayer, confessing his own sins and the sin of Israel, and putting before the Lord his supplication in behalf of the holy mountain (Jerusalem; the temple). He knew from studying the books [especially, the book of Jeremiah—Dan. 9:2], that the time of his nation’s captivity was nearing its end. It was troubling to the godly people of Israel in Babylonia to remember their former great advantages in their homeland, before the Chaldeans conquered them. Clearly, despondency had disheartened the people. Daniel’s prayer was to plead with Jehovah to bring about their return, even as he had promised.
- d. Daniel stated that while he was still speaking, making known his prayer to God, Gabriel appeared to him. Luopold offers this:
 - 1) To emphasize the fact that the answer was given before the prayer had terminated, Daniel repeats, “While I was yet speaking in prayer.” Though the Hebrew says “in *the* prayer” it here means in the prayer that I was then making. The expression “the man Gabriel,” which is used in describing an angel, may seem very out of place until we note that “man,” *’ish*, is in the Hebrew also used in the sense of a “retainer or servant.” This indicates that the thought involved is that Gabriel is “a man of God,” that is to say, His obedient servant. The term “Gabriel” means “man of God,” but with this difference: the first root, *gébher*, means “man” as the strong one, and the second root, *’el*, means the “Strong God.”
 - 2) The vision at the beginning” is the one mentioned in 8:16. That vision marked the beginning of Daniel’s experience with Gabriel. Daniel cannot but recall how on that first occasion the seeing of the angel and the listening to his revelation were an exhausting experience as 8:18, 27 indicated. The contact with these supernatural disclosures was so taxing an experience that, when Gabriel, appeared, Daniel was wearied to the point of falling into a deep sleep until (8:18) he was touched and strengthened by the angel. After the angel’s interpretation had been added to the original vision, the effect produced upon Daniel was that he “fainted and was sick certain days” (8:27). It is not to be wondered at that physical reaction recurred at once, as soon as the angel appeared to Daniel a second time. Memory often suggests certain physical reactions in connection with significant experiences. It is, therefore, most natural to construe the phrase *mu’aph bí’aph*, “in a state of utter exhaustion,” literally, “wearied in weariness,” as a modifier of “I” which is the subject of *ra’ithi*, “saw,” even though its position puts it nearer to “he touched,” *noghéa’*.¹
- e. Gabriel is mentioned in four places in the Bible:
 - 1) Daniel 8:16: “And I heard a man's voice between the banks of Ulai, which called, and said, Gabriel, make this man to understand the vision.”
 - 2) Daniel 9:21: “Yea, whiles I was speaking in prayer, even the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, touched me about the time of the evening oblation.”
 - 3) Luke 1:19: “And the angel answering said unto him, I am Gabriel, that stand in the presence of God; and am sent to speak unto thee, and to shew thee these glad tidings.”
 - 4) Luke 1:26: “And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth.”
- f. Gabriel, and all other angels noted in the Scriptures, was a man (i.e., in the appearance of a man). The

¹ Leupold, H. C. (1949). *Exposition of Daniel* (pp. 400–401). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House.

Pulpit commentary states:

- 1) This shows the rapidity of the Divine answer to prayer; even before we ask, "our Father knows what things we have need of." The man Gabriel. The name Gabriel, as mentioned above, means "Hero of God;" and the word here translated "man" is the ordinary word for "man," 'ish. It may be remarked that in Scripture angels are always "men;" never, as in modern art and poetry, "women." Whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning. This really means "whom I had seen previously in vision," the reference being to Dan 8:16. Being caused to fly swiftly. As above mentioned, there is considerable difficulty in deciding which meaning is to be taken as the correct....
 - 2) Touched me about the time of the evening oblation. Daniel is so absorbed in his devotions that not till Gabriel touched him did he recognize the presence of an angel—visitant. The time of the evening offering does not imply that those offerings were made in Babylon, but simply that, through the half-century that had intervened since the capture of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar the sacred hour had been kept in remembrance, not impossibly as being one consecrated to prayer. Daniel had been using this season to make known his request and petition to God. "Oblation," *minhah*, the bloodless meat offering (Lev 2:1,4,14).
2. Verses 22-23: "And he informed me, and talked with me, and said, O Daniel, I am now come forth to give thee skill and understanding. At the beginning of thy supplications the commandment came forth, and I am come to shew thee; for thou art greatly beloved: therefore understand the matter, and consider the vision."
 - a. Other translations:
 - 1) American Standard Version: "And he informed me, and talked with me, and said, O Daniel, I am now come forth to give thee skill and understanding. At the beginning of thy supplications the commandment came forth, and I am come to shew thee; for thou art greatly beloved: therefore understand the matter, and consider the vision."
 - 2) New King James: "And he informed me, and talked with me, and said, "O Daniel, I have now come forth to give you skill to understand. At the beginning of your supplications the commandment went out, and I have come to tell you, for you are greatly beloved; therefore consider the matter, and understand the vision."
 - b. Daniel, being a prophet of God, had been endowed with the ability to interpret dreams and visions, giving the correct meaning. He had been inspired to record and report the information previously appearing in his book. He could not know what was to happen in the future of his people. The verses to follow will tell him in figurative language what lay ahead.
 - 1) Daniel and the Israelites still in Babylonia were facing a dark future; they did not understand what the years ahead held in store. The wise and godly ones of the captive nation could see that the entire nation might be absorbed by the Chaldeans, losing their special identity and being submerged in idolatry. But God had assured them that they would not lose their identity as a people (Jer. 30:11), but that would not be the case the Canaanites nations. What happened to the Moabites? Where are the Philistines? Can any individual today be identified as a descendant of Ammon?
 - 2) Daniel "knew that if he reckoned seventy years from the time when he himself had been carried captive, then the period was drawing to a close: but the sins of the people were still there. It might be that God would restrain the fulfilment of his promise; the more so that, if the prophecy of Jeremiah were reckoned from the fall of Jerusalem, twenty years would yet have to run. Daniel is concerned about the sins of his people, knowing that, unless they were removed, renewed
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punishment would befall them” (Pulpit Commentary).

3) “The angel Gabriel is the messenger sent forth to interpret to Daniel the ways of God with his people. The angel Gabriel is sent to give Daniel an explanatory oracle or word that he may be comforted concerning his people. The reason of this is, ‘for thou art greatly beloved’” [*ibid.*].

c. What the prophet is about to be told relates to the Messiah and his work. That would be assurance that the nation would continue in history, and at the same time, the Anointed One’s mission would spell great changes in God’s dealings with mankind, including the Jews.

D. Daniel 9:24-27: The Seventy Weeks. [See Addenda ___ For a detailed outline of the Seventy Weeks].

1. Verse 24: “Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy.”

a. Other translations:

1) American Standard Version: “Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy.”

2) New King James: “Seventy weeks are determined For your people and for your holy city, To finish the transgression, To make an end of sins, To make reconciliation for iniquity, To bring in everlasting righteousness, To seal up vision and prophecy, And to anoint the Most Holy.”

b. Daniel’s concern was in regards to the completion of the seventy years of subjection of Israel to the Chaldeans. The angel introduced, not the period of seventy years, but of seventy weeks, 490 days, which in prophetic language, represented 490 years. It was true, of course, that the seventy years of captivity were virtually over, and the Jews would soon be permitted to return home, but the angel’s message reached far into the future, to reveal events of much greater importance.

1) These seventy weeks (490 years) pertained to Jerusalem [the holy city which was of such great value to Daniel] and the Jews (Daniel’s people). The prophet was consumed with the seventy years, but he now learns of a much longer and more important period of time.

2) Daniel had been praying in regards to seventy years; the seventy weeks would therefore be in reference to seventy times seven years.

3) These seventy weeks had been determined.

a) Whatever the meaning about the events covered by the seventy weeks, these things had been decreed by Jehovah, thus was authoritative and dependable.

b) “The meaning of the statement is that a period of 490 years had been carved out of time and set for a definite purpose—the purpose being the accomplishing of the great object for which the temple and the city should and would be rebuilt in the first place. In reality the statement means or implies that the temple of Jehovah and the city would be rebuilt; and further, the statement implies that a period of 490 years, beginning at a particular time, would be required for the temple and city to accomplish the object of their existence” (*Sound Doctrine*, page 5, Rex Turner, 1977).

c. A great purpose to be served in consequence of the events of this period of time was to “finish the transgression.” “Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law” (1 John 3:4). To transgress is to step over or break a law. One who steps over God’s law is

one who commits sin.

- 1) Every accountable person commits sin (Rom. 3:23; Eccl. 7:20). Sin separates the guilty party from God (Isa. 59:1-1).
- 2) Neither the goodness of man nor the Law of Moses could remove the guilt of sin (Eph. 2:8-9; Acts 13:38-39; Heb. 10:1-4).
- 3) The death of Christ, the perfect sacrifice, can remove the guilt of sin (Heb. 9:26-29; 1 Cor. 15:1-4; Eph. 1:3,7; Rev. 1:5).
- 4) Manifestly, this prophecy has reference to the first coming of Christ (not to his second coming). Any interpretation that seeks to apply this prophecy to a later time is erroneous.
- 5) "Finish" in the Hebrew means "to restrain."
 - a) The sense of "shutting up," or "restraining," accords better with the connection than that of "finishing." The reference of the whole passage is undoubtedly to the Messiah, and to what would be done sometime during the "seventy weeks;" and the meaning here is, not that he would "finish transgression" — which would not be true in any proper sense, but that he would do a work which would "restrain" iniquity in the world, or, more strictly, which would "shut it up" — enclose it — as in a prison, so that it would no more go forth and prevail. The effect would be that which occurs when one is shut up in prison, and no longer goes at large. There would be a restraining power and influence which would check the progress of sin" (Barnes).
 - (1) When the principles of the gospel are found in a society, and followed by a significant number, sin is under a degree of restraint. This describes American society through many generations, until unbelief and immorality became popular and widespread.
 - (2) Revelation 20:1-3 describes Satan as being bound for a long, but unspecified, period of time, under the figurative term "one thousand years." See **Appendix 4** for a discussion of this passage. Today, the devil can only control us through our weakness (of the flesh, of the eyes, and pride of life—1 John 2:15-17). False teachers can deceive us; our friends and relatives can move us to sinful conduct; but Satan can no longer overwhelm us as he once was able to do by causing demons to inhabit our mortal bodies.
 - b) Hailey remarks: This applied to the people of God under the Messiah who have been "born of water and the Spirit" (John 3:5); in whom is the reign of God in their hearts (Luke 17:2-21); who are "led by the Spirit of God" (Rom. 8:14). Who have put off the old man and put on the new (Eph. 4:22-24). These are the ones in whom transgression is restrained (p.187).
 - c) 1 John 1:6-10: "If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us."
- d. Another purpose stated is "make an end of sins." It appears that *to finish the transgression* and *to make an end of sins* are parallel, but there must be a subtle distinction since they are listed separately. *Hebrew parallelisms* are prominent in the Old Testament. To *end* is to seal up [sins].
 - 1) Hebrews 9:22: "And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission."

- 2) Revelation 1:5: “And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood.”
- 3) Isaiah 53:5-12: “But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all....for he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken....Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin....He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities. Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.”
- 4) Matthew 26:28: “For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.”
- 5) By the end of the 490 years, Christ had died on the cross, been buried, and resurrected from the dead, ascended back to heaven, and had made atonement for sin.
 - a) Daniel 7:13-14: “I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.”
 - b) Hebrews 7:25-28: “Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them. For such a high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's: for this he did once, when he offered up himself. For the law maketh men high priests which have infirmity; but the word of the oath, which was since the law, maketh the Son, who is consecrated for evermore.”
- e. The next purpose stated is to “make reconciliation for iniquity.” The Hebrew parallelism appears to be continued in this item. Transgression, sin and iniquity are different ways of describing the violation God’s will and the resulting soiled condition of the soul.
 - 1) Being fully qualified, Christ became the mediator between man and God. He was able to restore fallen man back to the relationship with God that was lost in Eden (Gen. 3). This reconciliation is available to every accountable person, if they are willing to meet God’s conditions. All those individuals who follow Jehovah’s instructions for salvation, obtain reconciliation will all the other blessings that accompany that operation.
 - a) The Law of Moses stood between God and man.
 - (1) It was given to Jews only, and excluded the Gentiles.
 - (2) Christ fulfilled and removed the Mosaic Law (Matt. 5:17-18; Gal. 3:22-25; Col 2:14; Eph 2:14-16).
 - b) Death stood between God and man (1 Cor. 15:19-26, 57).
 - c) Sin stood between God and man (1 John 2:1-2; Heb. 7:25; John 14:6; Rev 22:17).

- 2) When this prophecy was completed, the means of reconciliation between God and man had been established.
 - a) Romans 5:10-11: “For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. And not only that, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation” (NKJ).
 - b) 2 Corinthians 5:17-19: “Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation (ASV).
 - c) Mark 16:15-16: “And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.”
 - d) Acts 10:34-35: “Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.”
 - e) Acts 2:38: “Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.”
 - f) Acts 3:19: “Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord.”
 - g) Ephesians 2:14-18: “For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh. For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father.”
 - h) Colossians 1:20-22: “And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven. And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unproveable in his sight.”
- f. Another purpose of the prophecy was to “bring in everlasting righteousness.”
 - 1) Righteousness is the doing of God’s will.
 - a) Psalm 119:142: “Thy righteousness is an everlasting righteousness, and thy law is the truth.”
 - b) Psalm 119:151: “Thou art near, O LORD; and all thy commandments are truth.”
 - c) Psalm 119:172: “My tongue shall speak of thy word: for all thy commandments are righteousness.”
 - d) Matthew 3:15: “And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him.”
 - e) Acts 10:34-35: “Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no

respector of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.”

- f) 1 John 3:7: “Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous.”
 - g) Acts 13:10: “And said, O full of all subtilty and all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord?”
 - h) Acts 17:31: “Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.”
 - i) Acts 24:25: “And as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled, and answered, Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee.”
 - j) Romans 1:16-17: “For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.” The gospel is God’s method by which we are made to become righteous.
- 2) In what sense is the righteousness of the prophecy everlasting?
- a) The gospel of Christ is everlasting—it will never end (1 Pet. 1:21-25; Matt. 24:35; Rev. 22:18-19).
 - b) The gospel of Christ removes the guilt of all our sins, and that guilt will never be brought up against us again: “For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more” (Heb. 8:12).
 - c) The gospel of Christ removes sins which a Christian commits: “If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us” (1 John 1:6-10). The blood of Christ continues to cleanse our soul as we continue to walk in the light of the gospel.
 - d) The righteousness provided by the gospel of Christ is everlasting in the sense that it pertains to every accountable person of every society throughout the remainder of time—to those who hear, believe and obey the gospel.
 - e) Hebrews 7:23-25: “And they truly were many priests, because they were not suffered to continue by reason of death: But this man, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood. Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.” Our Savior and High Priest will always live, thus the righteousness he extends to his followers will always be available.
- g. After the 490 years, vision and prophecy would be *sealed up*.
- 1) With the fulfillment of the prophecy of the 490 years, vision and prophecy would be sealed up; Christ fulfilled all the vision and prophecies of the Old Testament that pertained to him and his mission.
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- a) Luke 24:25-27, 44: “And he said unto them, O foolish men, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! Behooved it not the Christ to suffer these things, and to enter into his glory? And beginning from Moses and from all the prophets, he interpreted to them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself...And they rose up that very hour, and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven gathered together, and them that were with them.”
 - b) Acts 3:24: “Yea and all the prophets from Samuel and them that followed after, as many as have spoken, they also told of these days.”
 - c) 1 Peter 1:10-11: “Concerning which salvation the prophets sought and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: searching what time or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did point unto, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glories that should follow them.”
- 2) But also, the giving of visions and prophecies would end.
- a) 1 Corinthians 13:8-10: “Love never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall be done away; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall be done away. For we know in part, and we prophesy in part; but when that which is perfect is come, that which is in part shall be done away.”
 - b) Ephesians 4:8-13: “Wherefore he saith, When he ascended on high, he led captivity captive, And gave gifts unto men And he gave some to be apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, unto the work of ministering, unto the building up of the body of Christ: till we all attain unto the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a fullgrown man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.”
- h. The prophecy also points to the anointment of the most Holy.
- 1) The kings of Israel [from the tribe of Judah] were anointed, beginning with David. Jesus, a physical descendant of David, was also to be anointed, but not by some earthly procedure.
 - a) Acts 2:34-36: “For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, Until I make thy foes thy footstool. Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.”
 - b) Psalm 24:7-10: “Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory? The LORD strong and mighty, the LORD mighty in battle. Lift up your heads, O ye gates; even lift them up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory? The LORD of hosts, he is the King of glory. Selah.”
 - c) Daniel 7:13-14: “I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.”
 - d) Mark 16:19: “So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God.”
 - e) Hebrews 12:1-2: “Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us
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run with patience the race that is set before us, Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.”

- 2) Christ ascended from the earth (Acts 1:9-11) and returned to Heaven. The above passages set forth a depiction of the anointing and coronation of our Lord as King over his kingdom. When the kingdom was established on the Pentecost Day noted in Acts 2, Christ was in Heaven, seated at the Father’s right hand.
 - a) On that very occasion he took up the reins of his spiritual kingdom and has reigned over his people ever since.
 - b) “The statement, ‘anoint the most Holy,’ means that the Messiah would be anointed or crowned king. David was anointed king, and all the kings who descended from him were anointed. Peter declared on Pentecost that God hath made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom ye crucified” (Turner, “Sound Doctrine,” p.6, 1977).
 - c) The word *Christ* means the *Anointed One*. *Messiah* is the Hebrew equal of the New Testament name *Christ*. He had been anointed in various ways during his earthly ministry; but the ultimate anointing and coronation took place in Heaven after his ascension.
2. Verse 25: “Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times.”
 - a. Other translations:
 - 1) American Standard Version: “Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times.”
 - 2) New King James: "Know therefore and understand, That from the going forth of the command To restore and build Jerusalem Until Messiah the Prince, There shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; The street shall be built again, and the wall, Even in troublesome times.”
 - b. Daniel is given a word of caution at the very beginning of this key section of the prophecy: *Know therefore and understand*. The message could be known and understood; but there is a hint that it might be misunderstood by some. Indeed, there have been myriads of wild mis-interpretations!
 - 1) In a similar vein, John gives this statement in the opening lines of Revelation: “Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand” (Rev. 1:3). One cannot keep the words of God’s revelation unless he has an understanding of the information.
 - 2) Those who read and hear the *words of prophecy* are blessed. The phrase “words of prophecy” affirms the contents of the book to be inspired. To prophesy is to speak for God, with his approval and under his control.
 - 3) The reading and hearing of God’s word furnishes blessings only if we grasp the meaning of the passage. This is especially true when we are studying the books of Daniel and Revelation. Many are likely to take a figure of speech as having a literal meaning, thus is apt to dash off into some fantastic view that is contrary to the specific passage and to the general teachings of the Bible.
 - c. Two prominent commentators:

- 1) Coffman: “Daniel 9:25 advances the prophecy by giving the ‘terminus a quem’ for the seventy weeks, namely from the date of the commandment to restore and to rebuild the city of Jerusalem. This of course was somewhat subsequent to the end of the Babylonian captivity; and the difficulty is compounded by our ignorance of just exactly when that commandment went forth. It is not even known if this means the commandment ‘from God’ or by some kingly edict. There are several proposals as to just exactly when we should begin counting the seventy weeks The nearest thing we have to proof that these 490 days should actually be understood as 490 years derives from the fact that Christ identified this prophecy as reaching to 70 A.D., which definitely favors the day for a year understanding of it.”
 - 2) Barnes: In the previous verse, the statement was a general one; in this, the angel states the time when the period of the seventy weeks was to commence, and then that the whole period was to be broken up or divided into three smaller portions or epochs, each evidently marking some important event, or constituting an important era. The first period of seven weeks was evidently to be characterized by something in which it would be different from what would follow, or it would reach to some important epoch, and then would follow a continuous period of sixty-two weeks, after which, during the remaining one week, to complete the whole number of seventy, the Messiah would come and would be cut off, and the series of desolations would commence which would result in the entire destruction of the city.”
- d. Daniel was told that from the time the decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince would be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks [i.e., sixty-nine weeks; or four hundred and eighty-three years].
- 1) Notice first that there is a period of seven weeks [forty-nine days; forty-nine years]. We must figure this period of time as that which precedes the sixty-two weeks [years].
 - a) The decree giving the Israelites permissions to return to Palestine was issued between 539-536 B.C. It is obvious that they could not instantly be prepared for such a long and difficult journey. Evidence shows that the first group of Jews made their journey to Jerusalem in 536 B.C.
 - b) Ezra’s trip from Babylon to Jerusalem required four months: “And he came to Jerusalem in the fifth month, which was in the seventh year of the king. For upon the first day of the first month began he to go up from Babylon, and on the first day of the fifth month came he to Jerusalem, according to the good hand of his God upon him” (Ezra 7:8-9). Perhaps this would be the same traveling time necessary for Zerubbabel and Nehemiah to make their journeys. American pioneers who traveled by wagon from Missouri to the west coast needed four or more months to complete their hard and hazardous trip.
 - 2) “There are two ways of computing these sixty-nine heptads (or 483 years). First, by starting from the decree of Artaxerxes issued to Nehemiah in 445 B.C. (cf. Neh. 2:4, 8) and reckoning the 483 years as lunar years of 360 days each, which would be equivalent to 471 solar years and would result in the date A.D. 26 for the appearance of the Messiah and His ‘cutting off’ (or crucifixion). Or, more reasonably, the starting point may be identified with the decree of Artaxerxes in his seventh year, issued for the benefit of Ezra in 457 B.C. This apparently included authority to restore and build the city of Jerusalem (as we may deduce from Ezra 7:6,7, and also 9:9, which states, ‘God...hath extended lovingkindness unto us in the sight of the kings of Persia, to give us a reviving, to set up the house of God, and to repair the ruins thereof, and to give us a wall in Judea and in Jerusalem,’ ASV). Even though Ezra did not actually succeed in accomplishing the rebuilding of the walls till Nehemiah arrived thirteen years later, it is logical to understand 457 B.C. as the *terminus a quo* for the decree predicted in Daniel 9:25; 483 solar years from 457 B.C.
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- would come out to A.D. 26 as the time of Christ's ministry (or A.D. 27, since a year is gained when passing from 1 B.C. to A.D. 1)" [Archer, 2007, p.380].
- 3) Zerubbabel completed the work he was commissioned to do at Jerusalem. "Now these are the children of the province that went up out of the captivity, of those which had been carried away, whom Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon had carried away unto Babylon, and came again unto Jerusalem and Judah, every one unto his city; Which came with Zerubbabel: Jeshua, Nehemiah, Seraiah, Reelaiah, Mordecai, Bilshan, Mispar, Bigvai, Rehum, Baanah. The number of the men of the people of Israel" (Ezra 2:1-2, ASV).
 - 4) "Now it is true, the above command as reported by Chronicles and Ezra speaks in terms of the restoration of the *Temple*. Our passage [Dan. 7:25] speaks of *Jerusalem*. But the divergence is only a seeming one. From his heathen point of view, as a successful conqueror and empire builder, Cyrus prefers to follow a policy of appeasement, especially in the matter of not incurring the displeasure of any of the gods of the conquered nations, for he was a religious man. So he ordains that the Temple at Jerusalem is to be restored. Similar favors were shown to other cities and idols as inscriptions of Cyrus prove. He could not have implied that the Temple alone should be restored and not the city, for where would the people have lived? All arguments to the effect that Cyrus was averse to the restoration of Jerusalem and had not allowed it proceed on an unwarranted assumption. Would some 43,000 exiles have returned merely to build the Temple and have refrained from building or from hoping to build their homes in Jerusalem? Quite unthinkable. But homes for 43,000 exiles in one place—and they settled mostly in one place—constitute a city" (Leupold).
 - 5) The work of Ezra continued what Zerubbabel began.
 - a) "Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled, the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing, saying, Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, The LORD God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth; and he hath charged me to build him an house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah" (Ezra 1:1-2).
 - b) "And the elders of the Jews builded, and they prospered through the prophesying of Haggai the prophet and Zechariah the son of Iddo. And they builded, and finished it, according to the commandment of the God of Israel, and according to the commandment of Cyrus, and Darius, and Artaxerxes king of Persia" (Ezra 6:14).
 - e. The efforts of Zerubbabel, Ezra and Nehemiah resulted in the erection of a temple, the restoration of the Mosaic Law (in practice by the Jews), and the rebuilding of the walls around Jerusalem.
 - 1) Verse twenty-five of our text warned that this great work would be done during troublous times. Nehemiah provides a record of these troubles and hardships.
 - 2) We are told here that the street would likewise be built. This street likely was associated with the temple, which would be the focal point of Jerusalem.
 - f. The period of the 483 years were dark and hard times for the Israelites. It covers primarily the time period between the end of the Old Testament history and the beginning of the New Covenant. The history of the Jews during this time frame is one of struggle, persecution and warfare.

See Addenda ____ For material on this era.

3. Verse 26: "And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be

with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined.”

a. Other Translations:

- 1) American Standard Version: “And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined.”
- 2) New King James: "And after the sixty-two weeks Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself; And the people of the prince who is to come Shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end of it shall be with a flood, And till the end of the war desolations are determined.”

b. After the 62 weeks (and the seven weeks that preceded the sixty-two weeks), the Messiah would be cut off. At the end of the 62 weeks, he would begin his earthly mission, which would last three and one half years. Cut off:

- 1) Leviticus 7:20: “But the soul that eateth of the flesh of the sacrifice of peace offerings, that pertain unto the LORD, having his uncleanness upon him, even that soul shall be cut off from his people.”
- 2) This expression was used to denote capital punishment, except where some limiting condition is stated: *cut off from the congregation*. In our Lord’s case, when he was cut off he was executed as though he was a criminal; the Roman method for executing common criminals and slaves was crucifixion—an awful way to die.

c. In the midst of the 70th week (a 7-year span of time), the Messiah would cause the sacrifice and oblation to cease (vs. 27). Thus, after 483 years the Messiah would come (that is, he would begin his ministry); after half of the seven year span was over, he would cancel out the sacrifices. This he did when he died on the cross:

- 1) "Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, *even* the law of commandments *contained* in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, *so* making peace" (Eph. 2:15).
- 2) "Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross" (Col. 2:14). He was "cut off" (vs. 26) and ended the sacrifices at the same time.
- 3) This would place his death in 30 A.D. (which is 486.5 years after the order to Ezra in 457 B.C. (483 years + 3.5 years of the final 7 year period = 486.5).
- 4) The second half of the final seven-year period would give time for Peter to preach to the Gentile house of Cornelius (Acts 10, 11), and for the conversion of Saul of Tarsus (Acts 9).

d. The death [the cutting-off] of the Messiah was not due to any criminal activity of his own; he was entirely free of guilt! He was entirely innocent. Several witnesses during his last earthly hours attest his innocence.

- 1) Judas (Matt. 27:3), Pilate’s wife (Matt. 29:19), the Roman soldiers (Matt. 27:54), and the placard (John 19:19) declared his innocence and his true identity.
 - 2) Matthew 27:4: "Saying, I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood. And they said, What *is that* to us? see thou *to that*."
 - 3) Matthew 27:19: "When he was set down on the judgment seat, his wife sent unto him, saying, Have thou nothing to do with that just man: for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of him."
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- 4) Matthew 27:22-24: "Pilate saith unto them, What shall I do then with Jesus which is called Christ? *They* all say unto him, Let him be crucified. And the governor said, Why, what evil hath he done? But they cried out the more, saying, Let him be crucified. When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but *that* rather a tumult was made, he took water, and washed *his* hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see ye *to it*."
 - 5) Matthew 27:54: "Now when the centurion, and they that were with him, watching Jesus, saw the earthquake, and those things that were done, they feared greatly, saying, Truly this was the Son of God."
 - 6) John 19:19-20: "And Pilate wrote a title, and put *it* on the cross. And the writing was, JESUS OF NAZARETH THE KING OF THE JEWS. This title then read many of the Jews: for the place where Jesus was crucified was nigh to the city: and it was written in Hebrew, *and* Greek, *and* Latin."
 - 7) Other plain Biblical statements also declare his innocence.
 - a) Hebrews 4:15: "For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as *we are*, yet without sin."
 - b) 1 Peter 2:22: "Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth."
 - e. The prophecy next states that a certain [unnamed] prince would come and destroy the city. This is the same city which was rebuilt and restored by Zerubbabal, Ezra and Nehemiah. This would be at some time following the conclusion of the seventy weeks [490 years]. The people of the prince (the army of the Roman general) would bring destruction on the city and its inhabitants.
 - 1) The invading prince is not Christ, but the leader of the Roman army, which first was led by Vespasian and later by his son, Titus. They would wreak havoc on the Jews, ostensibly for their rebellion against Roman rule, but actually they were paying a grievous penalty for their rejection of God's will. As was often the case, God used unsuspecting individuals and nations as a means to punish his rebellious people.
 - 2) In the midst of the week He would cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease. In the midst of the week the Messiah would be cut off. In this connection the prophecy stresses that '...the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined' (v. 26). The Record further says, '...and upon the wing of abominations shall come one that maketh desolate' (ASV, v. 27). It should be pointed out that the prophecy does not say that the city would be destroyed within the span of the one week. Rather, it says that within that week the destruction of the city was determined. One could hardly read verses 26 and 27 without recalling our Lord's words: 'Behold, your house is left unto you desolate' (Mt. 23:38)" (Deaver, **Biblical Notes**, June, 1977, pp.24f).
 - 3) That Daniel's prophecy pointed to the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 is undeniable in view of the Lord's divine interpretation. Further evidence is seen from Luke's inspired description of this same statement: "And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. Then let them which are in Judaea flee to the mountains...for there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon **this** people" (Luke 21:20-23). Add to this the uninspired comment by Josephus, the Hebrew historian: "In this very same manner Daniel also wrote concerning the Roman government, and that our country should be made desolate by them" (Book X, Chap. XI,7, p.227). These facts, taken together with the context of Matthew 24:15, show conclusively that the "abomination of desolation" was experienced when the Roman army surrounded the city of Jerusalem for the purpose of conquering it with force.
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- 4) "The armies referred to [Luke 21:20] are unquestionably the Roman armies which finally besieged and destroyed the city. They are called the abomination of desolation because, being heathen armies, they were an abomination to the Jews, and because they brought desolation on the country. The 'holy place' in which they were to stand is the holy territory round about the holy city" (McGarvey, *Matthew and Mark*, p.207).
- 5) Consider: "For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be" (Matt. 24:21).
 - a) Parallel passages:
 - (1) Mark 13:19: "For *in* those days shall be affliction, such as was not from the beginning of the creation which God created unto this time, neither shall be."
 - (2) Luke 21:23-24: "But woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck, in those days! for there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people. And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled."
 - b) Notice that the time when this great tribulation was to be is the same as when the abomination of desolation came and when the saints were to flee from Judea and Jerusalem. We know that this great tribulation is not something that is to occur at the end of time because of the information preceding its mention and by the limiting statement of verse 34. There is no reason for taking the statement of verse 21 as a figure of speech. Jesus said plainly that the suffering of that period of time was unparalleled in history. It had greater suffering than that which was experienced during Noah's flood (those people died quickly, in a relatively painless way); it was greater than when God destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah (their death was not preceded with any long period of agony); it was greater than the suffering felt by those who died in either of the Atomic explosions in Japan (for those mostly died instantly).
 - c) In fact, when Josephus' record is consulted, we have much reason to understand it literally. Josephus gave the following reports:
 - (1) 1,100,000 Jews died at Jerusalem during the siege and fighting, and another 97,000 were captured and placed in slavery. How foolish the Jewish bravado of Matthew 27:25: "His blood be on up, and on our children."
 - (2) Women ate their own babies, men broke into houses and stole food from children's mouths, and neighbor robbed neighbor for the food they had.
 - (3) Rich Jews swallowed gold, deserted to the Romans, hoping to get away with some of their wealth. When the soldiers discovered the scheme, they began killing those who surrendered, ripping open their bodies in search of the coins. Thousands died in this fashion, two thousand in only one night.
 - (4) Many were beaten and tortured by the Roman soldiers; thousands were crucified in various bodily positions as jests. This was done until all of the wood had been used as crosses, and even places to erect crosses were filled!
 - (5) By actual count, 115,880 bodies were carried through one gate in three months; there were 600,000 in all thus disposed of. When the bodies could no longer be thrown outside the city, they were stored in large houses within the city.
 - (6) Thousands of the captives were later forced to fight beasts and each other in arenas; this

for the enjoyment of spectators.

- (7) Jerusalem was overthrown and the temple was utterly destroyed; Matthew 24:2 was literally fulfilled. When the Romans broke into the city, Josephus said, "...They slew whomsoever they found, without distinction, and burned the houses and all the people who had fled into them; and when they entered for the sake of plunder, they found whole families of dead persons, and houses full of carcasses destroyed by famine, then they came out with their hands empty. And though they thus pitied the dead, they had not the same emotion for the living, but killed all they met, whereby they filled the lanes with dead bodies. The whole city ran with blood, insomuch that many things which were burning were extinguished by the blood" (Wars, Book VI, chap. 8,5; chap. 9,3). He also reports that the city fell to the Romans on the same calendar day that it had fallen to Nebuchadnezzar in 606 B.C.
- f. "And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined" (Dan. 9:26).
- 1) The foregoing depictions of old Jerusalem's final destruction effectively demonstrate the reality of Daniel's prophecy.
 - 2) The Messiah would be cut off (crucified) and at a later time, the Romans would overwhelm the city of Jerusalem to destroy both it and the sanctuary (the temple). Throughout this war, there would be desolations which the rebellious Jews would justly suffer.
 - 3) This invading prince is the "little horn" of Daniel seven: Vespasian and Titus; later, the third Flavian Emperor, Domitian, would bring a great persecution against Christians. For details, see comments under Daniel 7:8-9.
 - 4) We are told that the *people* of the prince would destroy Jerusalem. They were led by the prince (the general of the Roman army), but the soldiers gladly and fiercely fought against the Jews, on account of their rebellion against Rome and their stubborn resistance.
4. Verse 27: "And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate."
- a. Other translations:
- 1) American Standard Version: "And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate."
 - 2) New King James: "Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week; But in the middle of the week He shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall be one who makes desolate, Even until the consummation, which is determined, Is poured out on the desolate."
- b. During the final week the Messiah would confirm the covenant with many. The antecedent of *he* is the Messiah of verse twenty-six. The confirmation of the covenant could not refer to the *prince* of that verse; it is not the prince but the people of the prince who are the subject of the last part of the verse. The singular pronoun *he* could not refer to the *people of the prince*.
- 1) "[And he shall confirm the covenant] literally, 'he shall make strong' —The idea is that of giving

- strength, or stability; of making firm and sure. The Hebrew word here evidently refers to the ‘covenant’ which God is said to establish with his people—so often referred to in the Scriptures as expressing the relation between Him and them, and hence used, in general, to denote the laws and institutions of the true religion—the laws which God has made for his church; his promises to be their protector, etc., and the institutions which grow out of that relation.... This would be fulfilled if he should perform such a work as would bring the ‘many’ into a relation to God corresponding to what was sustained to him by his ancient people; that is, bring them to be his true friends and worshippers” (Barnes).
- a) Mark 16:20: “And they went forth, and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word by the signs that followed. Amen.”
 - b) Hebrews 2:1-4: “Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things that were heard, lest haply we drift away from them. For if the word spoken through angels proved steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward; how shall we escape, if we neglect so great a salvation? which having at the first been spoken through the Lord, was confirmed unto us by them that heard; God also bearing witness with them, both by signs and wonders, and by manifold powers, and by gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to his own will.”
 - c) Jude 3: “Beloved, while I was giving all diligence to write unto you of our common salvation, I was constrained to write unto you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints.”
- 2) The Messiah would be put to death at the mid-point of the seven-year period of time under the present context. Three and one-half years from the beginning of this public ministry, our Lord would be crucified. During the rest of this period (for three and one-half more years), he would make the covenant strong.
- a) In other words, the church would be established at Jerusalem with a large number of converts (Acts 2); the gospel would quickly spread to the area around the city; a great company of priests would obey the gospel (Acts 6:7); a persecution would afflict the brethren at Jerusalem, causing them to spread out, preaching the word wherever they went (Acts 8:1-4); the gospel would be taken to the Samaritans (Acts 8:5ff); Saul of Tarsus would be converted (Acts 9); Peter would take the gospel to the first Gentiles (Acts 10-11). All this progress could have been accomplished by the end of the seven-year span of time—thus the covenant (the gospel) would have been made strong with many!
 - b) Acts 11:19-21: “They therefore that were scattered abroad upon the tribulation that arose about Stephen travelled as far as Phoenicia, and Cyprus, and Antioch, speaking the word to none save only to Jews. But there were some of them, men of Cyprus and Cyrene, who, when they were come to Antioch, spake unto the Greeks also, preaching the Lord Jesus. And the hand of the Lord was with them: and a great number that believed turned unto the Lord.”
 - c. During the one week (seven years; week number seventy in Daniel’s prophecy); the perfect sacrifice would have been made (the death of Christ; his burial; his resurrection; his ascension); the church was established (the eternal kingdom was set up); the gospel was rapidly spread to many people. The Lord’s covenant was made strong and unbreakable. All of these great transactions would have been done in those seven momentous years!
 - d. The destruction of Jerusalem, the temple and all of its ordinances, the deaths of a huge number of Jewish people, the rest of the Jews widely scattered—these disasters would take place in 70 A.D., when the Roman army assaulted their city and nation. Some scholars endeavor to extend the seven-
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year period under consideration for some forty years, to include the Roman invasion, but to this writer, there does not seem to be any need for this. After the sixty-nine weeks [483 years] were over, the Messiah would be slain at the middle of the final week [week number seventy; seven years]. At some time after the covenant had been made strong, then the prince and his army come to destroy Jerusalem.

- e. In the middle of this seven-year period, the Messiah would cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease. These religious activities would end.
 - 1) The law of Moses would be replaced by the gospel of Christ at the time the Savior died on the cross, but the Jews continued to practice the rites and ceremonies of the Mosaic Law until the Romans destroyed the city and the temple.
 - a) Matthew 5:17: “Think not that I came to destroy the law or the prophets: I came not to destroy, but to fulfil.”
 - b) Ephesians 2:13-18: “But now in Christ Jesus ye that once were far off are made nigh in the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who made both one, and brake down the middle wall of partition, having abolished in the flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; that he might create in himself of the two one new man, so making peace; and might reconcile them both in one body unto God through the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: and he came and preached peace to you that were far off, and peace to them that were nigh: for through him we both have our access in one Spirit unto the Father.”
 - c) Colossians 2:14: “having blotted out the bond written in ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us: and he hath taken it out that way, nailing it to the cross.”
 - d) Romans 7:1-7: “Or are ye ignorant, brethren (for I speak to men who know the law), that the law hath dominion over a man for so long time as he liveth? For the woman that hath a husband is bound by law to the husband while he liveth; but if the husband die, she is discharged from the law of the husband. So then if, while the husband liveth, she be joined to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if the husband die, she is free from the law, so that she is no adulteress, though she be joined to another man. Wherefore, my brethren, ye also were made dead to the law through the body of Christ; that ye should be joined to another, even to him who was raised from the dead, that we might bring forth fruit unto God. For when we were in the flesh, the sinful passions, which were through the law, wrought in our members to bring forth fruit unto death. But now we have been discharged from the law, having died to that wherein we were held; so that we serve in newness of the spirit, and not in oldness of the letter. What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Howbeit, I had not known sin, except through the law: for I had not known coveting, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet.”
 - e) Jeremiah 31:31-34 Behold, the days come, saith Jehovah, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was a husband unto them, saith Jehovah. But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith Jehovah: I will put my law in their inward parts, and in their heart will I write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people: and they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know Jehovah; for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith Jehovah: for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin will I remember no more.”

- f) Hebrews 8:12-13: “For I will be merciful to their iniquities, And their sins will I remember no more. In that he saith, A new covenant he hath made the first old. But that which is becoming old and waxeth aged is nigh unto vanishing away.”
- g) Hebrews 10:6-10: “In whole burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hadst no pleasure: Then said I, Lo, I am come (In the roll of the book it is written of me) To do thy will, O God. Saying above, Sacrifices and offerings and whole burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure therein (the which are offered according to the law), then hath he said, Lo, I am come to do thy will. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second. By which will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.”
- 2) Since the destruction of the temple in 70 A.D., the Jews have been unable to offer the sacrifices and oblations prescribed by the Law of Moses. Further, the Jews cannot know their tribal identities. It is impossible for them to know who is of the priestly tribe, Levi.
- a) All the extensive records stored in the temple, in which their tribal identity could be traced, have all been destroyed. Their temple is gone, so the sacrifices and oblations cannot be offered; the Levitical priests cannot be known, so there is no one qualified to offer sacrifices and oblations.
- b) God ended the Mosaic law at the cross; it was literally ended at the destruction of the temple by the Romans. “And Jesus cried again with a loud voice, and yielded up his spirit. And behold, the veil of the temple was rent in two from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake; and the rocks were rent” (Matt. 27:50-51). The rending of the veil signified several significant things:
- (1) The abrogation of the Old Covenant (Matt. 27:50-51; 2 Cor. 3:14-16; Heb. 9:7-10). It also abolished the office of the Old Testament high priest, and lesser priests.
 - (2) The mysteries of God's eternal plan, which were unrevealed until the New Testament was given, were now to be opened to man's understanding (Eph. 1:11; Rom. 16:25-26; Matt. 13:17).
 - (3) It symbolizes the separation between God and men, and the need for a mediator which role the Levitical high priest filled. The rending of the veil proclaims that all men are on equal standing with God and need no human priest as mediator (1 Timothy 2:5; 1 Peter 2:5,9; Matthew 23:8; Revelation 1:6, ASV).
 - (4) Its rending symbolizes the fact that Christ, our High Priest, was about to enter heaven, and offer the atoning sacrifice for us (Hebrews 9:6-17).
 - (5) The veil being rent pictures the fact that the way into heaven has now been opened (Hebrews 9:8; 10:19-22).
- 3) “Sacrifices generally referred to the killing and offering of animals to God; and oblations were the various bloodless offerings—meal-offering, peace-offerings, which were offered to Jehovah according to the Mosaic law. The ceasing of these was an effect, the cause of which was the death of the Messiah which fulfilled the purpose of these sacrifices and took them away. They did not cease to be offered until the temple was destroyed but they ceased to be effectual. These pertained to the first covenant, the Mosaic, which He took out of the way that He might establish the second (Heb. 10:9)” [Hailey, p.198].
- f. The overspreading of abominations.
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- 1) Compare: "When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand)" [Matt. 24:15].
 - a) Daniel spoke of this abomination of desolation: See Daniel 9:24-27. "God, through Gabriel, told Daniel: 'Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon the holy city.' The 70 weeks are divided into 3 sections: 7 weeks, 62 weeks, and 1 week. The 70 weeks were determined with a view to six things: (1) to finish the transgression, (2) to make an end of sins, (3) to make reconciliation for iniquity, (4) to bring in everlasting righteousness, (5) to seal up the vision and prophecy, and (6) to anoint or consecrate the Holy of Holies. These six things obviously relate to the Christ—His being, His mission, and His church. He came to deal with the problem of sin, to make possible God's plan for man's righteousness, to establish His church. The 70 weeks would bring to a completion the development of the Scheme of Redemption. Likely, the 'anointing of the Holy of Holies' refers to the establishment of the church. The 7 weeks span the time from the decree of Cyrus to the end of Nehemiah's work. The 62 weeks span the time from the end of Nehemiah's work to the coming of the Messiah. The 1 week clearly is the personal ministry of the Christ. The 62 weeks come after the 7 weeks, and the 1 week comes after the 62 weeks (thus, after 69 weeks). During the final week the Messiah would confirm the covenant with many. In the midst of the week He would cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease. In the midst of the week the Messiah would be cut off. In this connection the prophecy stresses that '...the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined' (v. 26). The Record further says, '...and upon the wing of abominations shall come one that maketh desolate' (ASV, v. 27). It should be pointed out that the prophecy does not say that the city would be destroyed within the span of the one week. Rather, it says that within that week the destruction of the city was determined. One could hardly read verses 26 and 27 without recalling our Lord's words: 'Behold, your house is left unto you desolate' (Mt. 23:38)" (Deaver, **Biblical Notes**, June, 1977, pp.24f).
 - b) That Daniel's prophecy pointed to the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 is undeniable in view of the Lord's divine interpretation. Further evidence is seen from Luke's inspired description of this same statement: "And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. Then let them which are in Judaea flee to the mountains...for there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon **this** people" (Luke 21:20-23). Add to this the uninspired comment by Josephus, the Hebrew historian: "In this very same manner Daniel also wrote concerning the Roman government, and that our country should be made desolate by them" (Book X, Chap. XI,7, p.227). These facts, taken together with the context of Matthew 24:15, show conclusively that the "abomination of desolation" was experienced when the Roman army surrounded the city of Jerusalem for the purpose of conquering it with force.
 - c) "The armies referred to [Luke 21:20] are unquestionably the Roman armies which finally besieged and destroyed the city. They are called the abomination of desolation because, being heathen armies, they were an abomination to the Jews, and because they brought desolation on the country. The 'holy place' in which they were to stand is the holy territory round about the holy city" (McGarvey, p.207).
 - d) The Romans worshiped the ensigns they carried before their armies. All Gentile idols and objects of worship were considered abominable by the Jewish people (Jer. 4:1; 2 Kings 23:13; I Kings 11:5,7). When these ensigns of idolatry were seen by the Jewish Christians, the next verses tell them to flee from Jerusalem. Perhaps most of them would be able to escape when the Roman army was first sighted; but historians record that the Roman army withdrew for a
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spell, and that during this break in the siege, the remainder of the Christians escaped. The escape was possible in either case only because of the Lord's forewarning given here.

- e) In Daniel 9:24-27 and 11:31, predictions concerning the cessation of the daily sacrifice and oblation, and the pollution of the sanctuary, are connected with the abomination; and this is connected with the destruction of Jerusalem by the Roman army in A.D. 70. The sacrifices legally ended at the cross (Col. 2:14); they literally ended when the temple was destroyed, many of the Jews were slaughtered, many others taken as captives, and the rest of them dispersed—in A.D. 70. "And arms shall stand on his part, and they shall pollute the sanctuary of strength, and shall take away the daily *sacrifice*, and they shall place the abomination that maketh desolate" (Dan. 11:31).
 - f) Josephus gives an added detail to the pollution of the sanctuary: "And now the Romans...upon the burning of the holy house itself, and of all the buildings laying round about it, brought their ensigns to the temple, and set them over against its eastern gate; and there did they offer sacrifices to them, and there did they make Titus imperator, with the greatest acclamations of joy" (Wars, Book VI, Chap. VI,1, p.583).
- 2) American Standard Version: "And he shall make a firm covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease; and upon the wing of abominations shall come one that maketh desolate; and even unto the full end, and that determined, shall wrath be poured out upon the desolate" (Dan. 9:27).
- a) In this version, *overspreading of abominations* is given as *the wing of abominations*. It is as if the abominations to come would cover over those who are to be afflicted. The Jewish people had made full their rebellion against God by rejecting the Messiah.
 - b) Jesus had already warned them that he would make their *house* [the temple, and all its components) desolate: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, that killeth the prophets, and stoneth them that are sent unto her! how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord" (Matt. 23:37-39).
 - c) The "one" who would come to bring desolation was Titus and his Roman army.
 - (1) Matthew 24:1-2: "And Jesus went out from the temple, and was going on his way; and his disciples came to him to show him the buildings of the temple. But he answered and said unto them, See ye not all these things? verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down."
 - (2) Luke 19:41-43: "And when he drew nigh, he saw the city and wept over it, saying, If thou hadst known in this day, even thou, the things which belong unto peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes. For the days shall come upon thee, when thine enemies shall cast up a bank about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side."
 - d) Because the Jews rejected God and his Redeemer, great sorrows and destruction and death would be brought upon them.
 - (1) Luke 21:20-24: "But when ye see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that her desolation is at hand. Then let them that are in Judaea flee unto the mountains; and let them that are in the midst of her depart out; and let not them that are in the country enter therein. For these are days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled. Woe unto them that are with child and to them that give suck in those days! for there shall be
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great distress upon the land, and wrath unto this people. And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led captive into all the nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.”

- (2) Details were given earlier in these comments, especially from Josephus, which reveal the extent of the death and destruction and suffering which came upon those ignorant, benighted people.
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Daniel 10

A. Daniel 10:1-3: Another Vision is About to be Reported by the Prophet.

1. Verse 1: “In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia a thing was revealed unto Daniel, whose name was called Belteshazzar; and the thing was true, even a great warfare: and he understood the thing, and had understanding of the vision.”
 - a. Other versions:
 - 1) “In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia a thing was revealed unto Daniel, whose name was called Belteshazzar; and the thing was true, even a great warfare: and he understood the thing, and had understanding of the vision” (ASV).
 - 2) “In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia a message was revealed to Daniel, whose name was called Belteshazzar. The message *was* true, but the appointed time *was* long; and he understood the message, and had understanding of the vision. In those days I, Daniel, was mourning three full weeks. I ate no pleasant food, no meat or wine came into my mouth, nor did I anoint myself at all, till three whole weeks were fulfilled” (NKJ, verses 1-3).
 - b. Cyrus had conquered the Empire of Babylon in 539 B.C. After a period of time, he gave the Jews permission (plus financial and other aid) to return to Jerusalem and begin to rebuild their nation. By the time of this verse, the first group of some fifty thousand Israelites returned home. It was during the third year of Cyrus (536 B.C.) that the revelation of this chapter was given to Daniel. The prophet did not return to Jerusalem (there is an absence of information to that end); by this time, undoubtedly he was an old man—perhaps ninety years old at this point; besides, there was other work for him to do in the land of his captivity.
 - c. Daniel reminds his readers that he was known in Babylon by his Chaldean name, Belteshazzar: “And the prince of the eunuchs gave names unto them: unto Daniel he gave the name of Belteshazzar; and to Hananiah, of Shadrach; and to Mishael, of Meshach; and to Azariah, of Abed-nego” (Dan. 1:7). He started his work in Babylon about 606 B.C., when he and his friends were captured at Jerusalem and were carried to Babylonia. He became known to the Babylonians at the time, but **now** a new empire was in power. He identifies himself to current readers and preserves his Hebrew name.
 - d. At this time, the prophet states that a “thing” (a message) was given to him; the message was true and he understood it. “The noun *dabar* stretches all the way from anything that can be covered by the word thing or matter to the most sublime and dynamic notion of the word of God” (Theological Wordbook, p.179). Inspiration affirms that the message was entirely trustworthy—it is true!
 - e. Daniel stated that he comprehended the thing revealed. With his understanding of the previous visions, he could accurately deduct the meaning of the upcoming events ready to be unfolded. What lay in the future was a long period of suffering and hardship for his people. The seventy weeks of the previous chapter included descriptions of the troubles the Jewish people were to face.
2. Verses 2-3: “In those days I, Daniel, was mourning three whole weeks. I ate no pleasant bread, neither came flesh nor wine into my mouth, neither did I anoint myself at all, till three whole weeks were fulfilled.”
 - a. ASV: “In those days I, Daniel, was mourning three whole weeks. I ate no pleasant bread, neither came flesh nor wine into my mouth, neither did I anoint myself at all, till three whole weeks were fulfilled.”
 - b. The author reports that he refrained from eating the normal food which he had normally been consuming. This implies that the strict diet he and his friends had eaten in their early time in Babylon was no longer being followed. This diet was intended to show that they did not need the exalted meals

the Babylonians thought were essential for these young men to be healthy. The normal food he had lately been accustomed to eating, he lay aside. He did not eat meat and did not drink wine, during the three weeks of mourning. This suggests that he was fasting during this time.

- c. The struggles and troubles his brethren endured when they first returned to Jerusalem were minor in comparison to the harsh times revealed in Daniel 9:26-27.
 - 1) The books of Ezra and Nehemiah tell us of hardships the Jews faced in rebuilding the temple, the city and the walls of the city, and getting the Mosaic Law back in place.
 - 2) Our Lord gave detailed predictions of what was in store for the Jews: “And ye shall hear of wars and rumors of wars; see that ye be not troubled: for these things must needs come to pass; but the end is not yet. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; and there shall be famines and earthquakes in divers places. But all these things are the beginning of travail. Then shall they deliver you up unto tribulation, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all the nations for my name's sake. And then shall many stumble, and shall deliver up one another, and shall hate one another. And many false prophets shall arise, and shall lead many astray. And because iniquity shall be multiplied, the love of the many shall wax cold. But he that endureth to the end, the same shall be saved. And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world for a testimony unto all the nations; and then shall the end come. When therefore ye see the abomination of desolation, which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (let him that readeth understand), then let them that are in Judaea flee unto the mountains: let him that is on the housetop not go down to take out things that are in his house: and let him that is in the field not return back to take his cloak. But woe unto them that are with child and to them that give suck in those days! And pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on a sabbath: for then shall be great tribulation, such as hath not been from the beginning of the world until now, no, nor ever shall be” (Matt. 24:6-21).

B. Daniel 10:4-9: The Vision On the Twenty-Fourth Day of the First Month.

1. Verses 4-6: “And in the four and twentieth day of the first month, as I was by the side of the great river, which is Hiddekel, I lifted up mine eyes, and looked, and, behold, a man clothed in linen, whose loins were girded with pure gold of Uphaz: his body also was like the beryl, and his face as the appearance of lightning, and his eyes as flaming torches, and his arms and his feet like unto burnished brass, and the voice of his words like the voice of a multitude.”
 - a. Other versions:
 - 1) “Now on the twenty-fourth day of the first month, as I was by the side of the great river, that is, the Tigris, I lifted my eyes and looked, and behold, a certain man clothed in linen, whose waist was girded with gold of Uphaz! His body was like beryl, his face like the appearance of lightning, his eyes like torches of fire, his arms and feet like burnished bronze in color, and the sound of his words like the voice of a multitude” (NKJ).
 - 2) “And in the four and twentieth day of the first month, as I was by the side of the great river, which is Hiddekel, I lifted up mine eyes, and looked, and, behold, a man clothed in linen, whose loins were girded with pure gold of Uphaz: his body also was like the beryl, and his face as the appearance of lightning, and his eyes as flaming torches, and his arms and his feet like unto burnished brass, and the voice of his words like the voice of a multitude” (ASV).
 - b. “If this was the period of Daniel’s fast, which it appeared to be, then Daniel fasted during the Passover and week of unleavened bread that followed (Deut. 16:1; Ex. 12:15). Why Daniel was by the river Hiddekel (the Tigris, margin; also cf. Gen. 2:14 and margin) is not revealed. But it was there that the

vision appeared unto him” (Hailey, p.206).

- 1) Deuteronomy 16:1: “Observe the month of Abib, and keep the passover unto Jehovah thy God; for in the month of Abib Jehovah thy God brought thee forth out of Egypt by night.”
 - 2) Exodus 12:15: “Seven days shall ye eat unleavened bread; even the first day ye shall put away leaven out of your houses: for whosoever eateth leavened bread from the first day until the seventh day, that soul shall be cut off from Israel.”
- c. The Tigris (or Hiddekel) was located at Babylon, no doubt only a short distance from Daniel’s abode. We are not told why he was there or the identity or number of men who were with him. If this experience was during the period of his fast, the men with him were likely fellow-Jews, who may also have been fasting.
- d. The prophet next described the individual who appeared to him in the vision.
- 1) The description reminds us of what is said about John’s vision of Christ in Revelation 1:10-17 : “I was in the Spirit on the Lord’s day, and I heard behind me a great voice And I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And having turned I saw seven golden candlesticks; and in the midst of the candlesticks one like unto a son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about at the breasts with a golden girdle. And his head and his hair were white as white wool, white as snow; and his eyes were as a flame of fire; and his feet like unto burnished brass, as if it had been refined in a furnace; and his voice as the voice of many waters. And he had in his right hand seven stars: and out of his mouth proceeded a sharp two-edged sword: and his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength. And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as one dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying, Fear not; I am the first and the last.”
 - 2) In the above passage, Christ is pictured as being in the midst of the candlesticks, perhaps indicating that they were arranged in a circle. Being in their midst shows his closeness with them; he knows their struggles, problems, strong points, sins, and needs. He is their controlling force and sustaining power.
 - a) Colossians 1:17: "And he is before all things, and by him all things consist."
 - b) Colossians 3:17: "And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, *do* all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him."
 - c) Hebrews 1:3: "Who being the brightness of *his* glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high."
- e. Barnes offers this:
- 1) The subsequent disclosures showed that he was an angel, but when angels have appeared on earth they have commonly assumed the human form. The margin is, "one." So also is the Hebrew "one man." The name of this celestial messenger is not given Linen was the common raiment of priests, because it was supposed to be more pure than wool, Ex 28:42; Lev 6:10; 16:4,23; 1 Sam 2:18. It was also worn by prophets, Jer 13:1, and is represented as the raiment of angels, Rev 15:6. The nature of the raiment would suggest the idea at once that this person thus appearing was one sustaining a saintly character.
 - 2) With a girdle made of fine gold; that is, probably, it was made of something in which fine gold was interwoven, so as to give it the appearance of pure gold Nothing is known of Uphaz, unless, as Gesenius supposes, the word is a corruption of Ophir Ophir was celebrated for its gold, but its situation is unknown.
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- 3) There is a very striking resemblance between the description here given and that of the Saviour as he appeared to John in Patmos "Beryl" is "a mineral of great hardness, occurring in green and bluish-green six-sided prisms. It is identical with the emerald, except that the latter has a purer and richer color.
 - 4) And his face as the appearance of lightning—bright, shining. In Rev 1:16 it is, "And his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength."
 - 5) And his eyes as lamps of fire. Keen, penetrating. So in Rev 1:14: "His eyes were as a flame of fire."
 - 6) And his arms and his feet like in color to polished brass. So in Rev 1:15: "And his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace." See the notes at that passage. The meaning is, that they were bright-like burnished metal. The Hebrew here is, "like the eye of brass;" then, as the word eye comes to denote the "face or countenance," the meaning is, "like the face or appearance of brass." Complete Ex 10:5,15; Num 22:5,11. It is easy to conceive of the appearance which one would make whose arms and feet resembled burnished brass.
 - 7) And the voice of his words like the voice a multitude. A multitude of people—loud and strong. So in Rev 1:15: "And his voice as the sound of many waters."
2. Verses 7-9: "And I, Daniel, alone saw the vision; for the men that were with me saw not the vision; but a great quaking fell upon them, and they fled to hide themselves. So I was left alone, and saw this great vision, and there remained no strength in me; for my comeliness was turned in me into corruption, and I retained no strength. Yet heard I the voice of his words; and when I heard the voice of his words, then was I fallen into a deep sleep on my face, with my face toward the ground."
- a. Other versions:
 - 1) "And I, Daniel, alone saw the vision, for the men who were with me did not see the vision; but a great terror fell upon them, so that they fled to hide themselves. Therefore I was left alone when I saw this great vision, and no strength remained in me; for my vigor was turned to frailty in me, and I retained no strength. Yet I heard the sound of his words; and while I heard the sound of his words I was in a deep sleep on my face, with my face to the ground" (NKJ).
 - 2) "And I, Daniel, alone saw the vision; for the men that were with me saw not the vision; but a great quaking fell upon them, and they fled to hide themselves. So I was left alone, and saw this great vision, and there remained no strength in me; for my comeliness was turned in me into corruption, and I retained no strength. Yet heard I the voice of his words; and when I heard the voice of his words, then was I fallen into a deep sleep on my face, with my face toward the ground" (ASV).
 - b. The men with Daniel did not see the vision, but there was something about the circumstances that caused them to be full of fear. They could not see the vision, but could they hear any sound? Or was it the prophet's appearance or demeanor that communicated terror to the others? All the others fled from the scene and sought to hide themselves. Whatever it was, they men began to quake, much like the soldiers who were guarding the tomb or our Lord.
 - 1) "And behold, there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled away the stone, and sat upon it. His appearance was as lightning, and his raiment white as snow: and for fear of him the watchers did quake, and became as dead men" (Matt. 28:2-4).
 - 2) We also remember the effect a miraculous event had on Belshazzar: "In the same hour came forth the fingers of a man's hand, and wrote over against the candlestick upon the plaster of the wall of the king's palace: and the king saw the part of the hand that wrote. Then the king's countenance
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- was changed in him, and his thoughts troubled him; and the joints of his loins were loosed, and his knees smote one against another” (Dan. 5:5-6).
- 3) When Saul of Tarsus was addressed from Heaven by Christ, the men with him heard the voice but they did not understand the language used as the Lord conversed with Saul.
 - a) Acts 9:7: “And the men that journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing the voice, but beholding no man.”
 - b) Acts 22:7-9: “And I fell unto the ground, and heard a voice saying unto me, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And I answered, Who art thou, Lord? And he said unto me, I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom thou persecutest. And they that were with me beheld indeed the light, but they heard not the voice of him that spake to me.” [They heard the voice but did not understand what was being said).
 - c) Acts 26:14: “And when we were all fallen to the earth, I heard a voice saying unto me in the Hebrew language, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? it is hard for thee to kick against the goad.” The conversation was in the Hebrew language, which evidently the people of Paul’s company did not understand.
 - c. Daniel found himself alone as he watched this great vision. His strength faded away; his vigor was gone; but he heard the words that were spoken to him. So overcome was he that he was lying on the earth, with his face to the ground. The sight of the great person and the sound of his voice wrought this powerful effect on the prophet. This was a man who had seen and heard other impressive and awesome things.

C. Daniel 10:10-21: Prophecies Concerning Persia and Greece.

1. Verses 10:11: “And, behold, a hand touched me, which set me upon my knees and upon the palms of my hands. And he said unto me, O Daniel, thou man greatly beloved, understand the words that I speak unto thee, and stand upright; for unto thee am I now sent. And when he had spoken this word unto me, I stood trembling.”
 - a. Other versions:
 - 1) “Suddenly, a hand touched me, which made me tremble on my knees and on the palms of my hands. And he said to me, ‘O Daniel, man greatly beloved, understand the words that I speak to you, and stand upright, for I have now been sent to you.’ While he was speaking this word to me, I stood trembling” (NKJ).
 - 2) “And, behold, a hand touched me, which set me upon my knees and upon the palms of my hands. And he said unto me, O Daniel, thou man greatly beloved, understand the words that I speak unto thee, and stand upright; for unto thee am I now sent. And when he had spoken this word unto me, I stood trembling” (ASV).
 - b. Daniel was still prostrate upon the ground, with his face toward the earth—a position showing great fear and awe at what he had seen and heard.
 - 1) None of us has ever experienced such an event, but we can imagine the fear and sense of littleness that the prophet had. Perhaps you and I have had a sudden and fearful event that left us weak and troubled.
 - 2) This person, which we take to have been an angel of God, touched the prophet and set him upon his knees and palms of his hand. In our mind maybe we can picture this taking place. Daniel needed help in getting even to this position.

- c. The prophet was in need not only of physical assistance, but he needed the words of encouragement which the angel pronounced to him. He told Daniel that he was greatly beloved. The Divine Three held him in great esteem; likewise also by the angelic hosts. For many years Daniel enjoyed a high standing with Nebuchadnezzar and other great leaders of the Babylonian and Persian Empires. The heavenly messenger had been sent to him to offer him aid and reassurance.
 - d. The angel told Daniel to stand upright. He was able to get upon his feet, but he stood trembling. The strong effects of the experience still affected him.
2. Verses 12-14: “Then said he unto me, Fear not, Daniel: for from the first day that thou didst set thine heart to understand, and to chasten thyself before thy God, thy words were heard, and I am come for thy words. But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me one and twenty days: but, lo, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me; and I remained there with the kings of Persia. Now I am come to make thee understand what shall befall thy people in the latter days: for yet the vision is for many days.”
- a. Other versions:
 - 1) “Then he said to me, ‘Do not fear, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart to understand, and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard; and I have come because of your words. But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me twenty-one days; and behold, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I had been left alone there with the kings of Persia. Now I have come to make you understand what will happen to your people in the latter days, for the vision refers to many days yet to come’” (NKJ).
 - 2) “Then said he unto me, Fear not, Daniel; for from the first day that thou didst set thy heart to understand, and to humble thyself before thy God, thy words were heard: and I am come for thy words' sake. But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me one and twenty days; but, lo, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me: and I remained there with the kings of Persia. Now I am come to make thee understand what shall befall thy people in the latter days; for the vision is yet for many days” (ASV).
 - b. Daniel was told to suppress his terror because from the first day in which he had committed himself to understand and to humble himself before God, his words (prayers) were heard. The angel was sent to Daniel because of the prophet’s words (prayers). Notice these two important matters: seek to know (God’s will) and humble self before God.
 - c. Barnes: During the whole time in which Daniel was engaged in fasting and prayer (Dan 10:2-3). The angel had been sent forth to make arrangements to secure the answer to his prayer when he began to pray, but had been delayed during all that time by the opposition which he had met with in Persia. That is, it required all that time to overcome the obstacles existing there to the accomplishment of these purposes, and to make those arrangements which were necessary to secure the result. Mean-time, Daniel, not knowing that these arrangements were in a process of completion, or that an angel was employed to secure the answer to his prayers, yet strong in faith, was suffered to continue his supplications with no intimation that his prayers were heard, or that he would be answered.[Barnes' Notes, Electronic Database Copyright © 1997, 2003, 2005, 2006 by Biblesoft, Inc. All rights reserved.]
 - d. Was not the heavenly messenger (the angel) able to cope with the opposition raised by the prince of Persia? In a direct angel -vs- man struggle, no earthly being could thwart the efforts of a supernatural being. We have the case of Jacob battling an angel, but there were extraordinary matters involved.
 - 1) Genesis 32:24-31: “And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day. And when he saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the hollow of his thigh; and the hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint, as he wrestled with him. And he said,
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- Let me go, for the day breaks. And he said, I will not let you go, except you bless me. And he said unto him, What is your name? And he said, Jacob. And he said, Your name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince have you power with God and with men, and have prevailed. And Jacob asked him, and said, Tell me, I pray you, your name. And he said, Why is it that you do ask my name? And he blessed him there. And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel: for I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved. And as he passed over Peniel the sun rose upon him, and he limped upon his thigh.”
- 2) When the "man" could not prevail against Jacob, he touched Jacob's thigh: dislocated his thigh socket (hip joint); we are not told whether this was a temporary or permanent injury.
 - a) Hosea 12:3-4 identifies the "man" as an angel: "He took his brother by the heel in the womb, and by his strength he had power with God: Yea, he had power over the angel, and prevailed: he wept, and made supplication unto him: he found him *in* Bethel, and there he spake with us" (Hos. 12:3-4). How could a man over-power an angel? Obviously no man could do so, unless it was God's purpose to permit it. That Jacob's opponent was more than a man is indicated by his putting the patriarch's thigh out of joint with only a touch.
 - b) The angel asked Jacob's name (not for information but to call attention to the name he was to receive). "Jacob" (supplanter, heel-catcher) becomes "Israel" (prince of God). The descendants of Abraham in history are not known as "children of Jacob," but "children of Israel" [Jacob's new name].
 - e. God regularly strives with men:
 - 1) Genesis 6:3: "And the LORD said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be a hundred and twenty years."
 - a) In this case, God gave up on reforming that generation of mankind, since they were unwilling to make any changes for the better. They had only themselves to blame for the upcoming world-wide flood. Every human being on earth was slain, with the exception of those eight people aboard Noah's ark. If God had not taken this drastic action against the rebellious race, to what greater depth of rebellion, corruption and depravity would the next generation have descended? And the generations that followed?
 - b) Genesis 6:5: "And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually."
 - (1) 2 Peter 2:5: "And spared not the ancient world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly."
 - (2) God gave those of Noah's generation a period of one hundred and twenty years to repent, during which time Noah was preaching righteousness to them. They refused. They were destroyed.
 - (3) One hundred and eighty-five thousand soldiers of the Assyrian army which had invaded Judah were slain by the power of one angel: "And the angel of Jehovah went forth, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians a hundred and fourscore and five thousand; and when men arose early in the morning, behold, these were all dead bodies" (Isa. 37:36). This was the only recourse God could take; these invaders had to be destroyed—there was no possibility of persuading these pagan warriors to return home quietly. Indeed, it was necessary for the king of Assyria to be removed from office (Isa. 37:37-38).
 - c) Jehovah does not coerce any man to obey his word; rather, he seeks to persuade. Evidently, it was a case of the angel (in some means) endeavoring to convince the prince of Persia (the

king) to change his ways. This persuasion could likely take a period of time and would involve the the king agreeing to make the proper change.

- 2) Paul and Barnabas met with some stubborn, unbelieving Jews during their first great journey. These people were in open rebellion against God.
 - a) Acts 13:44-51: "And the next sabbath day came almost the whole city together to hear the word of God. But when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with envy, and spoke against those things which were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming. Then Paul and Barnabas grew bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing you put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles. For so has the Lord commanded us, saying, I have set you to be a light of the Gentiles, that you should be for salvation unto the ends of the earth. And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed. And the word of the Lord was published throughout all the region. But the Jews stirred up the devout and honorable women, and the chief men of the city, and raised persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and expelled them out of their district. But they shook off the dust of their feet against them, and came unto Iconium."
 - b) Paul and Barnabas grew bold in their remarks, and declared that it was God's plan that the gospel first be presented to the Jews (Rom. 1:16; 11:12ff), but since these people rejected it, they were determined to preach it to the Gentiles, who had shown a willingness to accept it.
 - c) These Jews had in effect judged themselves to be unworthy of eternal life by their rejection of the gospel. In the spiritual election of which the Bible speaks, God "votes" for us, the devil "votes" against us, and we cast the deciding "ballot." Paul says plainly that eternal life was something that they could have obtained by receiving the message; but since they pushed the word away from them, they thereby forfeited that blessing. This statement by the apostles shows that the Calvinistic doctrine of unconditional election and reprobation is false. *Men do have a choice to obey or disobey God.*
 - d) But God's patience has a limit. Man can grow so hard that God's truth, and thus his grace (Rom. 5:21; Acts 10:34-35; Ps. 119:172; 1 John 3:7; John 8:32; 17:17; 1 Pet. 1:24-25) will not have the proper effect on him (Eph. 4:18-19; 1 Tim. 4:2; 2 Cor. 3:3-4).
 - (1) Genesis 6:3: "And the LORD said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also *is* flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years."
 - (2) Jeremiah 7:16: "Therefore pray not thou for this people, neither lift up cry nor prayer for them, neither make intercession to me: for I will not hear thee."
 - (3) Hosea 4:17: "Ephraim *is* joined to idols: let him alone."
 - (4) Romans 1:28: "And even as they did not like to retain God in *their* knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient."
 - (5) 2 Peter 3:8-10: "But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day *is* with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up."
- f. The scholars commonly follow a theory on this passage that invents another angel against which the

angel of the passage strives unsuccessfully. They allege that the “prince of Persia” was Persia’s guardian angel (cf. Young, p.227). Here we would have one angel fighting against another angel, while both are on heavenly missions! God does not fight against himself!

- 1) Neither God nor Christ nor the Holy Spirit are ever in opposition to each other. The three members of the divine three (the Trinity), are of one nature and of one purpose.
 - 2) But men oppose themselves individually and oppose each other. “ In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth” (2 Tim. 2:25).
- g. Daniel had a natural interest in the future welfare of his people, just as Americans are gravely concerned about what shall befall our nation as the future unfolds. But Daniel’s people were also God’s people during the Mosaic Age in which Israel was Heaven’s special people. The angel said he was sent that the prophet might have an understanding of what lay ahead for Israel—in the latter days. The vision would not be fulfilled immediately, but was reserved to take place many days later. The prophet has already recorded several pictures of important matters that would lie ahead of Israel and the world.
- 1) In chapter two, Daniel predicted the establishment of God’s eternal kingdom, which would have meaning for both Jews and Gentiles.
 - 2) In chapter seven, he gave much information about the great kingdoms which would have strong impact on Israel and the followers of the Messiah.
 - 3) In chapter nine, he gave important details regarding the coming and work of the Messiah, setting forth even certain time factors that were involved in his mission.
 - 4) Again in chapter nine, Daniel provided certain information about the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple, which would occur during the Roman attack in 70 A.D.
3. Verses 15-17: “And when he had spoken such words unto me, I set my face toward the ground, and I became dumb. And, behold, one like the similitude of the sons of men touched my lips: then I opened my mouth, and spake, and said unto him that stood before me, O my lord, by the vision my sorrows are turned upon me, and I have retained no strength. For how can the servant of this my lord talk with this my lord? for as for me, straightway there remained no strength in me, neither is there breath left in me.”
- a. Other translations:
 - 1) “And when he had spoken unto me according to these words, I set my face toward the ground, and was dumb. And, behold, one in the likeness of the sons of men touched my lips: then I opened my mouth, and spake and said unto him that stood before me, O my lord, by reason of the vision my sorrows are turned upon me, and I retain no strength. For how can the servant of this my lord talk with this my lord? for as for me, straightway there remained no strength in me, neither was there breath left in me.” (ASV).
 - 2) When he had spoken such words to me, I turned my face toward the ground and became speechless. And suddenly, one having the likeness of the sons of men touched my lips; then I opened my mouth and spoke, saying to him who stood before me, "My lord, because of the vision my sorrows have overwhelmed me, and I have retained no strength. For how can this servant of my lord talk with you, my lord? As for me, no strength remains in me now, nor is any breath left in me" (NKJV).
 - b. Upon hearing this message, Daniel set his face toward the ground and became unable to speak. Even
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if he had not lost his ability to speak, he certainly lost his willingness to say anything. What could he have said in view of what the angel had just said in praise of the prophet in verses eleven and twelve? He accepted those kind words in gratitude and humility.

- c. Another being who appeared in form like one of the sons of men [i.e., in appearance he looked like a man]. This person touched Daniel's lips and returned to him the ability to speak. This was no mere man who did this, but was clearly another angelic messenger from God.
 - d. Daniel spoke to the other angel who had been conversing with the prophet. He addressed this angel as "my lord." He recognized the greatness of the angel, thus did the prophet humble himself before this heavenly messenger. He did not make the mistake of trying to worship this person, for no angel has the right to receive reverential worship from a man, and no man is to receive worship from another human.
 - 1) Revelation 22:8-9: "And I John saw these things, and heard them. And when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which shewed me these things. Then saith he unto me, See thou do it not: for I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God."
 - 2) Acts 10:25-26: "And as Peter was coming in, Cornelius met him, and fell down at his feet, and worshipped him. But Peter took him up, saying, Stand up; I myself also am a man."
 - e. Daniel told the angel that the vision he had already been shown had brought him extremely great sorrows in behalf of what was in store for his people, and stated he had been left without any strength. He stated that he was at a loss to speak to this great angel who had shown him these great things, which had taken away his breath and strength. Since this great prophet had been thus affected by the presence of an angel, what will it be like to be in the presence of a member of the Divine Trinity!
4. Verses 18-19: "Then there came again and touched me one like the appearance of a man, and he strengthened me, And said, O man greatly beloved, fear not: peace be unto thee, be strong, yea, be strong. And when he had spoken unto me, I was strengthened, and said, Let my lord speak; for thou hast strengthened me."
 - a. It seems that Daniel's recovery was by degrees; the first touch he received restored his ability to speak; this touch gave him back his normal strength.
 - b. "The numerous times Daniel mentioned his weakness being relieved and his strength revived by the touches of the hand of an unnamed messenger from God, should impress all believers with the confidence that God is the source of spiritual strength" (Hailey, p.215).
 - c. Compare: "Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us" (Rom. 8:34).
 5. Verses 20-21: "Then said he, Knowest thou wherefore I come unto thee? and now will I return to fight with the prince of Persia: and when I am gone forth, lo, the prince of Grecia shall come. But I will shew thee that which is noted in the scripture of truth: and there is none that holdeth with me in these things, but Michael your prince."
 - a. Other versions:
 - 1) ASV: "Then said he, Knowest thou wherefore I am come unto thee? and now will I return to fight with the prince of Persia: and when I go forth, lo, the prince of Greece shall come. But I will tell thee that which is inscribed in the writing of truth: and there is none that holdeth with me against these, but Michael your prince."
 - 2) NKJ: Then he said, "Do you know why I have come to you? And now I must return to fight with

the prince of Persia; and when I have gone forth, indeed the prince of Greece will come. But I will tell you what is noted in the Scripture of Truth. No one upholds me against these, except Michael your prince.”

- b. The angel had come in response to Daniel’s prayer in behalf of the Israelite people (Dan. 9). Much information regarding their future was presented, some of which was distressing to the prophet, so much so that he was unable to speak for a time.
 - c. Now the angel was set to return to deal further with the prince of Persia. Remember that at a later time in Persia’s history, that one evil man [Haman] arose who was determined to cause the annihilation of the Jews (see Esther 5-9). The Jews were preserved. Haman was at least one of the princes in Persia who was a deadly enemy of God’s people.
 - d. Without specifying any definite time, the angel told Daniel that the prince of Greece would come. As noted many times earlier in this material, the prince of Greece [Alexander the Great] invaded and conquered the Empire of Persia. The Grecian Empire would hold sway during the short lifetime of Alexander and would continue under four of his generals and their replacements until that empire was itself overcome by the Empire of Rome.
 - e. The efforts of the heavenly messenger, who had been talking with Daniel, and Michael, would be brought against the enemies of God’s people, whether they were from among the Persians or the Greeks. But it will be remembered that Cyrus, the Persian ruler, was instrumental in getting the Jews once again established in their old homeland. And through the godly influence of Esther, her husband the king, aided the Jews in opposing the ungodly plan which Haman had laid.
 - f. Verse twenty-one mentions “the scripture of truth.” Hailey takes that thought to be a reference to God’s eternal purpose (p.216), and not to some specific written portion of the Bible. “The symbolical book which would be completely carried out by the Lamb of God was in the hand of God (Rev. 5:21), and in His providence nothing could thwart its being fulfilled” (Hailey, *ibid.*).
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Daniel 11

A. Daniel 11:1-4: A Mighty King to Arise.

1. Verses 1-2: “Also I in the first year of Darius the Mede, even I, stood to confirm and to strengthen him. And now will I shew thee the truth. Behold, there shall stand up yet three kings in Persia; and the fourth shall be far richer than they all: and by his strength through his riches he shall stir up all against the realm of Grecia.”
 - a. Coffman on Chapter Eleven:
 - 1) The remarkably accurate prophecies of this chapter are so true, so astounding, and so wonderfully accurate that the whole critical world for centuries have never questioned a single one of them. The only allegation that Bible enemies have ever been able to bring against this chapter is that it is so exactly accurate that it had to be written after the events prophesied had already occurred. This slander against the Book of Daniel has existed a long time. It was first advanced by Malchus Porphyrius a follower of Plotinus who was bitterly opposed to Christianity....
 - 2) Since the great burden of these prophecies concerns the time following 250 B.C. (all of the prophecies dealing with Antiochus and the Maccabean rebellion), the undeniable refutation of the critical position is inherent in the fact that every single line of Daniel existed centuries prior to those events! The Septuagint (LXX) (translated into Greek in 250 B.C.) has every line of Daniel, centuries prior to the events which are admittedly prophesied in Daniel!
 - 3) It is a comment on the sterility and impotence of criticism that not a single new argument has been invented against Daniel in the last 1600 years!
 - 4) The present-day student of the Bible is not overly concerned about the details of the pre-Christian history of Israel during the inter-testamental period and with the details of the depraved struggles of the pagan world powers and their ultimate efforts to exterminate the true worship of God. The undisputed point to remember about all of this is that Daniel's prophecy has an accurate, detailed account of what was to happen, and of what did actually occur.
 - 5) There is no way that this prophecy actually qualifies as some kind of a historical survey passed off as a pretended prophecy. The critical proposition that some forger in the second century wrote this is obviously ridiculous. What "historical survey" could possibly have passed over the tremendous military campaign of Xerxes against Greece with its tremendous battles which are still the talk of all mankind? Later on in Daniel 11:34, the great campaigns of the Maccabees were practically ignored, being called in that verse "a little help!" It is simply impossible to suppose that any person whatever could have written such a thing after those stirring events of the Maccabean rebellion.
 - b. The speaker is the heavenly messenger of the preceding chapter. He reports that during the first year of Darius, he was present to confirm and strengthen this great ruler. God had decreed the fall of the empire of Babylon at the hands of the Medes and Persians. The angel says he was present to lend aid and power to the conquerors of Babylon. We are not told what his specific input to this victory was.
 - c. The angel announces to Daniel that he would show additional truths regarding the future. There would be three kings in Persian, plus a fourth who would be richer and stronger on account of his greater wealth. But this fourth king would incite the rising power of Greece, which would bring trouble to all who stood in the way of this western entity.
 - d. The test of a true prophet is in the fulfillment of his prediction.
 - 1) Deuteronomy 18:20-22: “But the prophet, that shall speak a word presumptuously in my name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or that shall speak in the name of other gods, that

- same prophet shall die. And if thou say in thy heart, How shall we know the word which Jehovah hath not spoken? when a prophet speaketh in the name of Jehovah, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which Jehovah hath not spoken: the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously, thou shalt not be afraid of him.”
- 2) The prophecies given in the book of Daniel were fulfilled. They were indeed words of truth.
 - a) 1 Peter 1:10-11: “Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow.”
 - b) 2 Peter 1:20-21: “Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.”
2. Verse 3: “And a mighty king shall stand up, that shall rule with great dominion, and do according to his will.”
- a. There was one great king already in power in Persia [Cyrus]. Daniel was told that three other kings would arise in the upcoming years [Cambyses, Smerdia, and Darius]. Another king, mighty and rich, would follow, but whose kingdom would be weakened [Xerxes, the Ahasuerus of Esther]. This king’s disastrous invasion of Greece would spell the end of the Persian Empire, after the Grecian military might had reached great proportions, and Alexander later pointed his army toward the rich and weak Empire of Persian which was then ripe for the taking.
 - b. Hailey reports: “Cyrus was king at the time; the three kings that followed him were Cambyses, Smerdia, and Darius Hystaspis (Darius the Great, the great organizer of the empire). This makes Xerxes, the Ahasuerus of the book of Esther, the fourth. To ‘stand up’ was to come to power. It is thought that the six month festivity when his sub-rulers and servants were gathered to the palace (Esther 1:4) was the occasion of his plans to invade Greece. In his effort to subdue Greece Xerxes was ingloriously defeated, though he inflicted much suffering upon that nation. There were many other rulers over Persia, but these would exert the greatest influence on Israel’s future” (p.220).
 - c. "Darius reigned 522-486 B.C. He was succeeded by Xerxes (486-463 B.C.), who invaded Greece, was stopped at Thermopylae, defeated at the naval battle at Salamis, and nearly annihilated at Plataea (479 B.C., Cf. POTH, 386). The Ahasuerus of the book of Esther is identified with this Xerxes (FLAP, 200). The book of Esther opens in the third year of the reign of Ahasuerus (Xerxes), 483 B.C., at which time he gave a great feast. King Ahasuerus commanded that Vashti, the queen, be brought before the people at the feast, and Vashti refused. The king then had Vashti deposed as queen, at the advice of his counsellors (Esther 1:10-22)...During the next four years Ahasuerus (Xerxes) was engaged in his battles against the Greeks, finally suffering a disastrous humiliation in the battle at Plataea in 479 B.C.. He returned to his capital at Shushan. It seems likely that the remaining events in the book of Esther (Esther 2-10) come in this period of the life of Ahasuerus, after 479 B.C. (POTH, 388). During this time Esther became the queen of Persia, and was able to save her people, the Jews, from the machinations of Haman, who earlier had persuaded Ahasuerus to have the Jews killed (Esther 3:8,9,13)" (Free, p.244).
- 1) Thermopylae (Greek, “Hot Gates”), pass in ancient Greece, southeast of Lamiá, between Mount Oeta and the Malian Gulf and leading from Thessaly (Thessalia) into Locris. The name of the pass is taken from hot sulfur springs in the vicinity. Thermopylae was the main route by which an invading army could penetrate from the north into southern Greece. In ancient times it was a narrow track about 15 m (about 50 ft) wide passing under a cliff, but alluvial deposits have so
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altered the coastline that it is now a broad swampy plain from 2.4 to 4.8 km (1.5 to 3 mi) wide. During the Persian Wars, Thermopylae won eternal fame as the scene of the heroic death of Leonidas I and his 1400 men, 300 of whom were Spartans, in their attempt to stem the tide of Persian invasion in 480 bc. The Greeks were betrayed by Ephialtes, a Thessalian, into the hands of the Persians, who, by following a path over the mountain, attacked the Greeks from the rear. The Battle of Thermopylae was recorded by the Greek historian Herodotus in his History. Again, in 191 bc, the Seleucid king Antiochus III (the Great) was defeated while attempting to check the Romans at this point. [Encarta © 1993-2003 Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved].

2) The Battle at Plataea.

- a) In 480, the Persian king Xerxes invaded Greece. After victories at Thermopylae and Artemisium and a ... setback in the straits of Salamis, it seemed as if he would return to Greece to finish the job in the summer of 479. However, the Persian commander in Europe, Mardonius, had insufficient troops to overcome the Greek army that united at the Cithaeron mountain range and was commanded by Pausanias.
 - b) On the plain north of Plataea, the decisive battle took place, and the Persians were defeated. Both sides feared to cross the river, which would break their array and make them vulnerable. Therefore, the Greeks first held the line of sources in the south, hoping to lure the Persians to the mountain feet, where their cavalry would be useful. When Mardonius did not swallow the bait, the Greeks advanced to the river, but were repelled by the Persian archers. When the Greeks retreated, the Persians believed they had already won the day, crossed the river, and were defeated by the superior phalanx of the Spartans. The Athenians captured the Persian camp.
 - c) The main sources for the engagement is Herodotus' ninth book, which is written from the perspective of the soldiers, who must have found the marching up and down very confusing. There is little attention to Pausanias' role, and the outcome is presented as a victory of Spartan stubbornness. Herodotus' battle of Plataea is very much a soldiers' battle.
 - d) In fact, some of the complex Greek maneuvers may have been intended by Pausanias to give the Persians the impression that their opponents were insecure, poorly-commanded, and afraid to fight. This might have lured the invaders across the river. The fact that Pausanias fell from grace shortly after this battle will have done little to do him justice—still, he was one of the few Greeks to defeat an imperial Persian army in open battle, and commander of the greatest Greek army the world had ever seen.
 - e) After their victory, the Greeks erected the Serpents' Column in Delphi. Constantine the Great brought this victory monument to the hippodrome of Constantinople, where it still stands. The column once carried a golden tripod with the inscription, that is dubiously attributed to the poet Simonides: This is the gift the saviors of far-flung Hellas upraised here, Having delivered their states from loathsome slavery's bonds. [Livious.org].
- 3) “Xerxes I was the son of Darius and Atossa, a daughter of Cyrus. Early in his reign (486-465 B.C.) he put down put down a rebellion in Egypt, after which he prepared for the invasion of Greece. The campaign got off to a good start. The brave Spartans were defeated at Thermopylae (480 B.C.) And Athens itself was occupied and pillaged. At Salamas, however, the Persians lost their fleet and the tide of battle turned. Xerxes turned over the command of his army to a general, Mardonius, and returned to Asia. Mardonius was unable to recover the initiative in fighting the Greeks, and Xerxes was killed by one of his own guards” (*The Biblical World*, p.443).
- d. Persia is eminently connected with the history of Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther. The following background information is helpful in grasping a view of those ancient events. PERSIA. A world
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empire that flourished from 539 to 331 B.C.

- 1) The Early History. The original native name Parsa, or Persia, was descriptive of the homeland of the Persians in the western and larger part of the Iranian plateau that extended from the Indus on the E to the Tigris on the W. Iran was another native designation of the land. This name was officially restored in 1935 by the Persian government and means "the [land] of the Aryans." It is descriptive of the people of Aryan language who came into the highland (c. 1500 BC). The Amadai, or Medes, and the inhabitants of the land of Parsua W of Lake Urmia, or Persians, were the two Aryan tribes that were to come into the greatest prominence. The Medes occupied the NW portion of the territory. Their capital city was Hagmatana, later Ecbatana, modern Hamadan. Cyaxares, the Mede, was confederate with Nabopolassar in the fall of Nineveh in 612 BC. Gradually the Persians migrated southward and settled in Anshan in a portion of country that they called Parsamash, in recollection of their old homeland of Parsua. Around 700 BC their leader was named Achaemenes. This name prevailed in the later Persian kings. About the middle of the seventh century B.C. the king of Parsamash was called Tiespes. He was a notable conqueror and increased the territories of the Persians E of Anshan and N of the Persian Gulf. This extended country became known as Parsa or Persian Land.
 - 2) Cyrus II, The Great. The founder of the mighty Persian Empire ascended the throne of Anshan c. 559 BC. Astyages, the Mede, was conquered by Cyrus who took Ecbatana. Henceforth Cyrus grew greater and greater with Parsa taking the lead, Media coming second, and Elam third. The supremacy of the Persians was hereafter established, although the Medes continued to be held in high esteem. Reference is made in Scripture to "Persia and Media" (Est 1:19), as well as "the Medes and Persians" (Dan 5:28). With lightning-like rapidity Cyrus extended his conquests, defeating Croesus of Lydia (c. 546 BC) and Babylon (539 BC), thus establishing the mighty Persian Empire. Cyrus was a remarkably humane leader (cf. Isa 45:1-4). It was he who issued the decree restoring the Jews to their homeland (2 Chron 36:22-23; Ezra 1:2-4). Archaeology has demonstrated that Cyrus's concession to the exiles was not an isolated account of generosity but a general policy of a remarkably beneficent leader of winning the favor of his new subjects by showing consideration for their religious beliefs. Cyrus's capital was Pasargadae in the land of Parsa. On his ruined palace can still be read the repeated words, "I, Cyrus the king, the Achaemenid." Cyrus was killed in battle in 530 BC. His body was returned to Pasargadae and buried in a tomb that is still extant. Plutarch (c. A.D. 46-120) says the inscription on the tomb ran thus: "O man, whosoever thou art and whensoever thou comest, for I know that thou wilt come, I am Cyrus and I won for the Persians their empire. Do not, therefore, begrudge me this little earth which covers my body."
 - 3) Cambyses II (530 BC - 522 BC) was Cyrus's son, who conquered Egypt. Shortly after his Egyptian triumphs civil war broke out, evidently led by his brother Bardiya or Smerdis. Cambyses is believed to have suffered a self-inflicted wound as he leaped on his horse in a hurry and in an excited state to ride off to deal with the insurrection. Reportedly the chape of Cambyses' dagger sheath came off, and he accidentally stabbed himself in the thigh and died about three weeks later somewhere in Syria. The Persian Empire almost collapsed in the confusion that followed; but Darius seems to have assassinated Bardiya, won the throne for himself, and subdued the revolts that broke out in the various provinces.
 - 4) Darius I, The Great (522 BC - 486 BC). This powerful ruler put down the rebellion, saved the empire, and recorded his victory over his enemies on the famous Rock of Behistun, visible from the old caravan road from Ecbatana to Babylon. This pivotal monument, with its trilingual inscriptions describing Darius's quelling of the insurrection, furnished the key to the decipherment of Akkad cuneiform, just as the Rosetta Stone opened up the ancient language of the Nile River.
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- Darius ruled a vast empire. The closing years of his reign saw the outbreak of the Graeco-Persian wars and the defeat of Persia at Marathon (490 BC), a precursor to the later defeat at Salamis (480 BC). The mighty empire over which Darius and his successors ruled extended from the Grecian Archipelago on the W, the Caucasus Mountains and the Caspian Sea on the N, to the Arabian and Nubian deserts on the S (cf. Est 1:1; 10:1) and the Indus River on the E. This vast territory was nearly 3,000 miles long and 500 to 1,500 miles wide, constituting an area of some 2 million square miles. In this huge kingdom Judah was a tiny dependency practically lost in the vast stretch of empire.
- 5) Xerxes (485 BC - 465 BC). Xerxes followed his father Darius on the Persian throne. This king, as well as his father, was devoted to Ahura-Mazda. Xerxes is evidently the Ahasuerus of the book of Esther. Esther did not become queen until the seventh year of Xerxes' reign (478 BC), after his return from his defeat in Greece (480 BC) when Herodotus states that he paid attention to his harem (9.108). Although the queen at this time is said to have been Amestris, certainly Xerxes, from what we know of him, may well have had other wives.
 - 6) Artaxerxes I Longimanus (464 BC - 423 BC). Artaxerxes I succeeded Xerxes. In his reign Nehemiah was cupbearer and visited Jerusalem (Neh 2:1). The Elephantine Papyri, discovered in 1903 on the island of Elephantine at the First Cataract of Egypt, shed important light on the Artaxerxes-Nehemiah era. Ezra 7:1-8 specifies that Ezra journeyed to Jerusalem in Artaxerxes' seventh year. This was 458 BC, if Artaxerxes I is meant. In such a case Ezra precedes Nehemiah.
 - 7) Later Kings. Following Artaxerxes I the splendid Persian throne was occupied by Darius II (423 BC - 404 BC), Artaxerxes II Mnemon (404 BC - 359 BC), Artaxerxes III Ochus (359 BC - 338 BC), Arses (338 BC - 335 BC), and Darius III (335 BC - 331 BC), when the far-flung Persian Empire fell to the conquests of Alexander the Great [The New Unger's Bible Dictionary. Originally published by Moody Press of Chicago, Illinois. Copyright (c) 1988].
3. Verse 4: "And when he shall stand up, his kingdom shall be broken, and shall be divided toward the four winds of heaven; and not to his posterity, nor according to his dominion which he ruled: for his kingdom shall be plucked up, even for others beside those."
 - a. Leupold brings us up to this point with these remarks:
 - 1) The history of Persia, which is not a major issue in this instance, is disposed of briefly. Three kings shall arise in succession, to be followed by a fourth who shall be enormously rich. Since Cyrus was on the throne at this time (cf., 10:1), the three next in order of succession are referred to by the "three more," that is to say, Cambyses who began to reign in 529 B. C.; Pseudo-Smerdis, whose reign began in 522; and Darius Hystaspis, who came to the throne in 521 B. C. The fourth is, without a doubt, Xerxes, of whom history records that he accumulated great riches, especially for his great expedition against Greece. He began to reign in 485 B. C.
 - 2) There is no reason why the prophet should go any farther into this aspect of history at this point. He never intended to do anything other than to summarize. He cannot be charged with not having had the facts of history correct because he mentions only four out of a possible nine kings. It is obvious to those who try to read sympathetically what the prophet offers that he mentions Xerxes as the one with whom the Persian glory went on the decline so rapidly that hardly one of the remaining kings is worthy of notice. *Fausset* says very correctly: "After his [i.e., Xerxes'] overthrow at Salamis, Persia is viewed as politically dead, though it had *existence*."
 - 3) The fact that the reference to the fourth king is a reference to Xerxes is apparent from the rest of the verse, where we read: "But when he has gotten strong through his riches he shall stir up his resources against the kingdom of Greece." It is a matter of historical record that Xerxes spent four years gathering his army from all parts of his empire, and that the sum total of his men amounted
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to more than two and a half million. Daniel's record is silent in regard to the outcome of the expedition. The reason is not hard to find. Nothing is said because the expedition achieved nothing. After the same manner the remaining kings are not mentioned because they achieved nothing. Instead, the momentous occurrences in the Greek Empire under Alexander are taken in hand.¹

- b. Salamís, Battle of, important Greek naval victory in 480 bc, during the Persian Wars that halted the advance of Xerxes I, the King of Persia, and ended the Persian threat to Greek civilization. The battle occurred in a strait near the island of Salamís, not far from Athens. The Persians under Xerxes had been advancing with great success through Greece, and in 480 bc had captured Athens. Both Greek and Persian supplies were running low, and there was disagreement among the Greeks as to what their next move should be. Some advocated withdrawal to Corinth. However, the Athenian general Themistocles argued that it would be more effective to pursue an aggressive naval policy and hold their position. When he threatened to leave with the Athenian navy, the rest of the Greek force agreed to his plan. By some accounts, Themistocles then sent a secret message to Xerxes, saying that his Athenian navy was prepared to turn against the rest of the Greeks and that the Persians had only to attack to secure a victory. Xerxes, perhaps fooled by this ploy, attacked with his fleet of about 400 ships. When the Persian navy advanced, the fleet of about 380 Greek ships backed further into the bay, a tactical maneuver designed to draw in the Persians. Crowded in the narrow strait of Salamís, the Persian ships were rammed, sunk, or boarded by the Greeks for hand-to-hand combat. The battle was a decisive victory for the outnumbered Greeks, who lost only about 40 ships, compared to the more than 200 lost by the Persians. [*Encarta* © 1993-2003 Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved].
- c. The kingdom of Xerxes would not be left to his own posterity, but would later be plucked by the hand of others, that is, the Grecians who would in time invade and conquer and despoil the riches of the once mighty Empire of the Persians.
- d. Clarke tells us of the earlier tragic end of the family of Alexander.
 - 1) His wife Statira was murdered soon after his death by his other wife Roxana.
 - 2) His brother Aridaeus, 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 fifteen years after his death not one of his family or posterity remained alive!
 - 6) "Blood calls for blood." He (Alexander) was the great butcher of men. He was either poisoned, or killed himself by immoderate drinking, when he was only thirty-two years and eight months old: and a retributive Providence destroyed all his posterity, so that neither root nor branch of them was left on the face of the earth. Thus ended Alexander, the great butcher; and thus ended his family and posterity.

B. Daniel 11:5-12: The King of the South.

1. Verses 5-6: "And the king of the south shall be strong, and one of his princes; and he shall be strong above him, and have dominion; his dominion shall be a great dominion. And in the end of years they shall join themselves together; for the king's daughter of the south shall come to the king of the north to make

¹ Leupold, H. C. (1949). *Exposition of Daniel* (pp. 476–477). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House.

an agreement: but she shall not retain the power of the arm; neither shall he stand, nor his arm: but she shall be given up, and they that brought her, and he that begat her, and he that strengthened her in these times.”

a. Other Translations:

- 1) American Standard Version: “And the king of the south shall be strong, and one of his princes; and he shall be strong above him, and have dominion; his dominion shall be a great dominion. And at the end of years they shall join themselves together; and the daughter of the king of the south shall come to the king of the north to make an agreement: but she shall not retain the strength of her arm; neither shall he stand, nor his arm; but she shall be given up, and they that brought her, and he that begat her, and he that strengthened her in those times.”
 - 2) New King James Version: “Also the king of the South shall become strong, as well as one of his princes; and he shall gain power over him and have dominion. His dominion shall be a great dominion. 6 And at the end of some years they shall join forces, for the daughter of the king of the South shall go to the king of the North to make an agreement; but she shall not retain the power of her authority, and neither he nor his authority shall stand; but she shall be given up, with those who brought her, and with him who begot her, and with him who strengthened her in those times.”
- b. “The angel here leaves the general history of the empire, and confines himself, in his predictions, to two parts of it—the kingdom of the south, and the kingdom of the north; or the kingdoms to the north and the south of Palestine—that of Syria and that of Egypt; or that of the Seleucidae, and that of the Ptolemies. The reason why he does this is not stated, but it is, doubtless, because the events pertaining to these kingdoms would particularly affect the Jewish people, and be properly connected with sacred history The ‘king of the south’ here is, undoubtedly, the king of Egypt. This part of the empire was obtained by Ptolemy, and was in the hands of his successors until Egypt was subdued by the Romans. Between the kingdoms of Egypt and Syria long and bloody wars prevailed, and the prospective history of these wars it is the design of the angel here to trace. As the remainder of the chapter refers to these two dynasties, until the death of the great persecutor, Antiochus Epiphanes, and as the events referred to were very important in history” (Barnes).
- c. The designation of the two kings, one to the north and the other to the south, identify them in their relative positions to Israel. Being each much more powerful than tiny Israel, they could influence the Jews at will, having only to be concerned about each other. Here, we are told that one of these two kingdoms was greater than the other. “As a matter of actual historical fact, the dominion of the Seleucids did greatly exceed that of the Ptolemies. It reached from Phrygia in the west to the Indus on the east” (Young, p.234).
- d. At the appropriate time, “in the end of years,” certain events transpired. There had been a destructive war between the two kings. As part of a peace agreement, Berenice (daughter of Ptolemy) was to become wife to Antiochus II, king of Syria, who divorced his former wife, Laodice, and disinherited her son.
- 1) “To make an agreement — literally, rights, i.e., to put things to rights between the belligerents. But she shall not retain the power of the arm — she shall not be able to effect the purpose of the alliance, namely, that she should be the mainstay of peace. Ptolemy having died, Antiochus took back Laodice, who then poisoned him, and caused Berenice and her son to be put to death, and raised her own son, Seleucus Nicator, to the throne” (Jamieson).
 - 2) We wonder how many modern-day politicians and their family members might do similar things if they could do so with impunity!
- e. “The angel here leaves the general history of the empire, and confines himself, in his predictions, to two parts of it—the kingdom of the south, and the kingdom of the north; or the kingdoms to the north
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and the south of Palestine—that of Syria and that of Egypt; or that of the Seleucidae, and that of the Ptolemies. The reason why he does this is not stated, but it is, doubtless, because the events pertaining to these kingdoms would particularly affect the Jewish people, and be properly connected with sacred history Between the kingdoms of Egypt and Syria long and bloody wars prevailed, and the prospective history of these wars it is the design of the angel here to trace. As the remainder of the chapter refers to these two dynasties, until the death of the great persecutor, Antiochus Epiphanes, and as the events referred to were very important in history (Barnes).

- f. For an excellently detailed account of the history of these Persian monarchs, see *Between The Testaments*, by Charles F. Pfeiffer, pub. by Baker, pages 11-43. Cambyses, son of Cyrus, while returning home from a protracted campaign in Egypt and Ethiopia, died of a wound accidentally self-inflicted when mounting his horse. The Persian record of his death suggests suicide, We know that he suffered from epileptic fits. Cyrus had at least two sons, Cambyses and his brother, Bardiya. Cambyses is reported to have murdered Bardiya. Before his death, a revolt in the homeland had been initiated by one Gaumata.
- 1) The news of this revolt was what precipitated Cambyses' hasty return from Egypt. Gaumata claimed to be Bardiya, the brother of Cambyses, and heir to the throne. After Cambyses died, the army remained loyal to the government which he represented. Two months later the pretender (known as Pseudo-Smerdis) Gaumata was taken prisoner and executed. Legend states that, after the death of Cambyses, seven Persian nobles, under the leadership of Darius, conspired against the false Bardiya. They agreed to choose as king the one whose horse neighed first after sunrise.
 - 2) Through the ruse of his groom, the throne was won for Darius. Darius claimed to be the legitimate successor of Cambyses. In the eyes of many of his contemporaries he was a usurper. The Behistun inscription shows the pains which Darius Hystaspis took to prove that he was the scion of the house of Achemenes. Darius Hystaspis is the emperor who protected the Jews from their Samaritan enemies, who were trying to thwart the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem and the temple.
 - 3) Darius found in the royal archives at Ecbatana the decree of Cyrus that the Jews be permitted to re-occupy and rebuild their commonwealth. Darius determined that the decree must be honored. His royal order is found in Ezra. Darius attempted to conquer the Scythians (originating in the vast plains of western Russia and settling north of the Black Sea, and west and south as far as the Danube) but they only retreated. Their "scorched earth" policy compelled Darius to give up pursuing them. He conquered Asia Minor and its coastal cities of commerce. He conquered large portions of India and Egypt and turned his attention to Greece. When Darius landed at Marathon, he was met by the Athenian army.
 - 4) Before reinforcements could arrive from Sparta, the Athenians met the Persians and won a resounding victory. Seven Persian ships were captured by the Greeks, and the remainder withdrew. Troubles in Egypt demanded the attention of Darius, and he gave up his plans for resuming his operations against Greece. Shortly after Marathon, Egypt was in open revolt against Darius. The heavily garrisoned troops living off the land, and the heavy tribute and taxes demanded by Darius, proved too much for the Egyptians. The Greeks had probably encouraged revolting in Egypt and other trouble spots in the Persian Empire. Before the Egyptian revolt was ended, Darius had died. As an organizer of the civil government, he has seldom been equaled. The royal palace which he built at Persepolis was one of the great structures of antiquity. Darius could be cruel. He ruled as an absolute monarch. Organizationally, the Persian Empire reached its peak of efficiency under Darius, but decay had already begun to set in. Xerxes was the son of Darius by Atossa, a daughter of Cyrus. For twelve years he served under his father as viceroy of Babylon before succeeding to the throne at the death of Darius. The Persian form of the name Xerxes is Khshayarsha, which, in
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- Hebrew, is rendered Ahasuerus (cf. Ezra 4:6 and the Book of Esther).
- 5) Under Xerxes the Persians were soundly defeated by the Greeks at Salamis, 480 B.C. He lived 14 years after the loss of Greece, but little is known about him in that time. He was murdered by a usurper, Artabanus, who is said to have reigned seven months before being killed by Artaxerxes, the third son and legitimate heir of Xerxes.
 - 6) Xerxes was about 55 years old when he was assassinated. He was reported to be very rich and indulgent and to act habitually like a spoilt child. The Esther episode agrees well with this description. He was given to ostentation and loved display, and appears to have been susceptible to the flattery and intrigue of fawning courtiers. From this time on the strength of the Persian empire began to wane and it was finally overwhelmed by Alexander the Great. [Cf. College Press].
2. Verses 7-8: “But out of a branch of her roots shall one stand up in his estate, which shall come with an army, and shall enter into the fortress of the king of the north, and shall deal against them, and shall prevail: And shall also carry captives into Egypt their gods, with their princes, and with their precious vessels of silver and of gold; and he shall continue more years than the king of the north.”
- a. When Alexander died in 323 B.C., he left no heir. A son was posthumously born to Roxana, Alexander’s Bactrian wife, but the *diadochoi*, or “successors” of Alexander, seized power before he could reach maturity. One of the *diadochoi*, Cassander, murdered Roxana and her son. Alexander had had many able generals, but there was not one that arose as his logical successor.
 - 1) By 315 B.C., after seven years of struggle, four outstanding leaders appeared: Antigonus who occupied the country from the Mediterranean to central Asia; Cassander, who ruled Macedonia; Ptolemy Lagi who ruled Egypt and Southern Syria; and Lysimachus, ruler of Thrace. Ptolemy’s foremost general was Seleucus who occupied an important role in the subsequent history of Palestine.
 - 2) In 315 B.C., Ptolemy, Cassander, and Lysimachus formed an alliance to check Antigonus, who aspired in his own right to be a second Alexander. After much fighting within the alliance it came to a head in 301 B.C. when Lysimachus, Seleucus (now almost independent of Ptolemy) and Cassander with their combined forces met and overcome the forces of the empire-conscious Antigonus at Ipsus, in Phrygia. Antigonus died on the battlefield, and his Asiatic empire came to an end. Ptolemy had remained on the sidelines during the fighting at Ipsus. It had been agreed that Syria and Palestine would be assigned to Ptolemy in the event of victory over Antigonus.
 - 3) Since Ptolemy had not taken an active part in the fighting the other three allies decided that the territories of Syria and Palestine should be assigned to Seleucus, It is nothing short of supernatural and miraculous to observe how the actual history of this period and this part of the world and these people confirms in minute detail the prophecies here made by Daniel some 300 years before it transpired!
 - 4) The minuteness and detail of this eleventh chapter, and its actual fulfillment to the letter is the one factor motivating the destructive critics of the Bible to place the Book of Daniel as late as the 2nd century B.C. For if the Book of Daniel was written near 600-500 B.C. his prediction of these details of history which can only have happened to the Ptolemies and Seleucids is proof-positive of supernatural revelation! The history unfolds in even more detail in the succeeding verses of this eleventh chapter. [See College Press].
 - b. Paraphrase: And the king of Egypt shall be strong, and his favorite general shall be stronger than he is, and shall reign over a larger dominion. And after the expiration of a course of years alliances will be formed between the successors of these two.
 - 1) To carry out the terms of the agreements the daughter of the king of Egypt will go to the king of Syria as his wife.
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- 2) The king of Syria himself shall not last long as a consequence of his promiscuous actions toward his wives. One of the blood relatives of the king of Egypt's daughter will stand in the place of the king of Egypt and he shall come against the army of the king of Syria. He shall even enter the fortified territories of the king of Syria.
 - 3) He will do according to his will and deal with those who murdered his sister. He will rob their temples and carry their gods of silver and gold back to Egypt. He shall refrain some years from attacking the king of Syria. But the king of Syria will march against the king of Egypt but he shall be completely defeated and retreat to his own land [College Press].
- c. A search from Leupold reveals this.
- 1) All that has been recorded thus far or will be presented in the section about to be taken in hand has not yet touched directly upon the people of God. But by sketching a longer period of the history of these times the author makes us aware of the inveterate opposition that grew up between these two powers of the north and of the south, and how sooner or later Israel's position, being between the two as she was, was bound to become dangerous.
 - a) After Ptolemy Philadelphus there comes Ptolemy III, called Euergetes. He is the one spoken of as coming up in "his [i.e., Ptolemy Philadelphus'] place." This new king was of the same stock as Berenice and thus "a scion of her roots."
 - b) He did in reality make strong inroads into the Syrian power and laid low all that the Syrians had built up, so much so that Syria was brought extremely low, even the "strongholds" of the king—*ma'oz* may be taken collectively, for we are not sure whether any particular stronghold of the king of the north is referred to. By translating "and shall deal against them" we follow *A. R.* We take these words to mean that he shall engage in operations of a military character against him or "them," referring to all that are associated with the Syrian king; and "shall prevail," that is to say, have success in all these endeavors.
 - 2) So for the time being the Egyptian power shall be on the ascendant and the Syrian pretty much on the wane. The account of the successes of Philadelphus against the Syrians continues. The very temples will be captured and sacked and the idol images carried away by the Egyptians. Whenever that happened, it was regarded as being about as thorough an overthrow as a nation could suffer. For after the gods had been brought low and had been rendered unable to help themselves, the last line of defense of the nation was broken as, for example, Isa. 46:1, 2 indicates with reference to the fall of Babylon.
 - a) To make the picture of the humiliation as complete as possible there are listed after the "gods" also their images and the "precious vessels of silver and gold." It is also indicated that this was an affliction of more than a passing nature by the fact that the years of the reign of the king of the south shall exceed those of the king of the north, and that he will thus be able to make his conquests of more lasting effect.
 - b) The vast wealth that Ptolemy brought back to Egypt from his campaigns won for him the name "Euergetes" i.e., the "Benefactor." For as *Jerome* reports (see *Meinhold*) there was a sum of 40,000 talents of silver involved and 2,500 idol statues....
 - 3) Yet it would be wrong to assume that the Syrian power will be permanently broken. Therefore, one instance of how Syria will strike back is reported (v. 9) before this part of the record is brought to a close.¹
3. Verses 9-10: "So the king of the south shall come into his kingdom, and shall return into his own land. But his sons shall be stirred up, and shall assemble a multitude of great forces: and one shall certainly

¹ Leupold, H. C. (1949). *Exposition of Daniel* (pp. 483–484). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House.

come, and overflow, and pass through: then shall he return, and be stirred up, even to his fortress.”

a. Other Translations:

- 1) American Standard Version: “And he shall come into the realm of the king of the south, but he shall return into his own land. And his sons shall war, and shall assemble a multitude of great forces, which shall come on, and overflow, and pass through; and they shall return and war, even to his fortress.”
- 2) New King James Version: “Also the king of the North shall come to the kingdom of the king of the South, but shall return to his own land. However his sons shall stir up strife, and assemble a multitude of great forces; and one shall certainly come and overwhelm and pass through; then he shall return to his fortress and stir up strife.”

b. That is, into the kingdom of the north, or the kingdom of Syria. This verse seems to be a summary of what had been said about his invading Syria. He would come, on account of the wrongs done to his sister, into the kingdom of the north, and would then return again to his own land. But his sons shall be stirred up, and shall assemble a multitude of great forces: and one shall certainly come, and overflow, and pass through: then shall he return, and be stirred up, even to his fortress.

- 1) *But his sons shall be stirred up* means, to be rough; then, in Piel, to excite, stir up ... Here it means, according to Gesenius (Lexicon), that they would be excited or angry. The reference here, according to Lengerke, Maurer, Gill, and others, is to the son of the king of the north, Seleucus Callinicus. He was killed, according to Justin (lib. xxvii. c. 3), by a fall from his horse. The war with Egypt was continued by his two sons, Seleucus Ceraunus and Antiochus the Great, until the death of the former, when it was prosecuted by Antiochus alone. See Prideaux, iii. 136. Seleucus Ceraunus succeeded his father—assuming the name of Ceraunus, or the Thunderer; but, dying soon, he left the crown to his brother, Antiochus the Great, then only fifteen years of age, by whom the war with Egypt was successfully prosecuted.
- 2) *And shall assemble a multitude of great forces.* Against Egypt. In such a war they would naturally summon to their aid all the forces which they could command. [And one shall certainly come] There is a change here in the Hebrew from the plural to the singular number, as is indicated in our translation by the insertion of the word "one." The fact was, that the war was prosecuted by Antiochus the Great alone. Seleucus died in the third year of his reign, in Phrygia; being slain, according to one report (Jerome), through the treachery of Nicanor and Apaturius, or, according to another, was poisoned.
- 3) Antiochus succeeded to the empire, and prosecuted the war. This was done for the purpose of recovering Syria from the dominion of Ptolemy of Egypt, and was conducted with various degrees of success, until the whole was brought under the control of Antiochus [And pass through] Through the land — not the land of Egypt, but every part of Syria. [Then shall he return] Margin, "be stirred up again." The margin is the more correct rendering — the Hebrew word being the same as what is used in the first part of the verse. The idea would seem to be, that he would be aroused or stirred up after a defeat, and would on the second expedition enter into the strongholds or fortresses of the land. This was literally true. Ptolemy marched into Syria with an army of seventy thousand foot, five thousand horse, and seventy-three elephants, and was met by Antiochus with an army of sixty-two thousand foot, six thousand horse, and one hundred and two elephants. In a great battle, Antiochus was defeated, and returned to Antioch (Prideaux, Con. iii. 151-153); but the following year he again rallied his forces, and invaded Syria, took Gaza and the other strongholds, and subdued the whole country of Syria (including Palestine) to himself.
- 4) *Even to his fortress.* The singular for the plural; perhaps using the word "fortress" by way of eminence, as denoting his "strongest" fortress, and, therefore, including all the others. [Barnes].

- c. Though Seleucus Callinicus, as we saw above, had attempted to regain what Syria had lost he had succeeded only in making a bold attempt. The rulers who are now mentioned as “his sons” are Seleucus the Third and Antiochus the Third, who jointly carried on what their father had not been able to accomplish. But they did not work together long because the former came to an untimely end. It is for this reason that the gathering of a throng is ascribed to both, and that the verb is then changed to the singular, for it is Antiochus III, called also the Great, who then carries on alone. The Hebrew marginal reading is “his son”—another solution.
- 1) The verb plus the infinitive (*ba’ bo’*) is the strengthened form of the verb “go.” It is like our “advance right on,” for Antiochus did make great and rapid conquests. At that time Egypt was actually in possession of Seleucia on the Orontes as well as of Tyrus and of other lands in northern Syria. All these Antiochus took and did “sweep along and cross over” (cf., Isa. 8:8) and came even so far south as to be able to “make an attack upon his fortress.”
 - 2) Between the two expeditions he had been beguiled into making a truce, but when he saw that this had been based on deceptions practiced by the enemy he returned to his campaign, conquered the Egyptians at Sidon, swept on down through Palestine, and was able to penetrate so far south as to attack the Egyptian “fortress” Gaza. Some interpreters claim it must have been Raphia, which is a bit farther south. During all this time the Egyptian, Ptolemy Philopator, had spent his time idly pursuing the vices that were practiced by so many kings of that time, and no substantial resistance had therefore been offered to Antiochus. But the Egyptian monarch now bestirred himself.¹
4. Verses 11-12: “And the king of the south shall be moved with choler, and shall come forth and fight with him, even with the king of the north: and he shall set forth a great multitude; but the multitude shall be given into his hand. And when he hath taken away the multitude, his heart shall be lifted up; and he shall cast down many ten thousands: but he shall not be strengthened by it.”
- a. Other Translations:
 - 1) American Standard Version: “And the king of the south shall be moved with anger, and shall come forth and fight with him, even with the king of the north; and he shall set forth a great multitude, and the multitude shall be given into his hand. And the multitude shall be lifted up, and his heart shall be exalted; and he shall cast down tens of thousands, but he shall not prevail.”
 - 2) New King James Version: “And the king of the South shall be moved with rage, and go out and fight with him, with the king of the North, who shall muster a great multitude; but the multitude shall be given into the hand of his enemy. When he has taken away the multitude, his heart will be lifted up; and he will cast down tens of thousands, but he will not prevail.”
 - b. There were more skirmishes until Antiochus in the spring of 217 B.C. had conquered all of Palestine and had reached in his conquests the Egyptian frontier town of Raphia, An Egyptian army under the personal command of Ptolemy Philopater met the Syrians south of Raphia. Here the armies of Antiochus met disastrous defeat. Historians record that Ptolemy went forth to fight with 70,000 infantry, 5,000 cavalry and 73 elephants. The Syrians are reported to have lost 10,000 infantry, 300 cavalry, 5 elephants dead plus 4,000 lost as prisoners. Ptolemy IV, however, was too much of a “playboy” to utilize his success to the fullest. He resumed his life of luxury and dissolutions and died in 203 B.C., without building up or strengthening his imperial fortifications. [See College Press].
 - c. The feelings of the Egyptian king are indicated by the expression “he shall become embittered.” He is known to have gathered a large force consisting, we are told, of 73,000 men—and 73 elephants. The army of Antiochus was even greater: 72,000 foot soldiers, 6,000 horse, and 102 elephants. Antiochus at first gained the advantage in the battle. The tables were later turned because the Syrian king had too

¹ Leupold, H. C. (1949). *Exposition of Daniel* (pp. 485–486). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House.

soon abandoned caution and had sought to plunder an enemy that was not yet fully conquered. So he lost the battle in the end, and the Egyptian king was victorious as was foretold here: “and the multitude shall be given into his hand.” The “multitude” of the opposing army “was disposed of,” and “tens of thousands” were “brought low.” But since he was so much addicted to luxurious living, it was a matter of little concern to him whether the success was properly utilized to the full or not. He promptly returned to his former indolent mode of life and so proved the truth of the statement that he “shall not prove himself strong.” Though some of the things recorded are of a more or less trivial nature, they are recorded as typical. Just such events as these make up the pages of history.¹

- d. “The multitude of antiochus shall be carried away by Ptolemy The heart of Ptolemy will be lifted up in pride over the victory. He, Ptolemy, will cause thousands to fall. This was fulfilled in the defeat at Raphia which he inflicted upon Antiochus, in which, according to Polybias (V:86) the Syrians lost 10,000 infantry, 300 cavalry, 5 elephants and 4,000 prisoners He gained no lasting advantage. Apparently Ptolemy was a man of dissolute life, who did not press the advantages gained in battle, but soon resumed his easy life” (Young, p.238).

C. Daniel 11:13-19: The King of the North.

1. Verses 13-14: “For the king of the north shall return, and shall set forth a multitude greater than the former, and shall certainly come after certain years with a great army and with much riches. And in those times there shall many stand up against the king of the south: also the robbers of thy people shall exalt themselves to establish the vision; but they shall fall.”
 - a. Other Translations:
 - 1) American Standard Version: “And the king of the north shall return, and shall set forth a multitude greater than the former; and he shall come on at the end of the times, even of years, with a great army and with much substance. And in those times there shall many stand up against the king of the south: also the children of the violent among thy people shall lift themselves up to establish the vision; but they shall fall.”
 - 2) New King James Version: “For the king of the North will return and muster a multitude greater than the former, and shall certainly come at the end of some years with a great army and much equipment. Now in those times many shall rise up against the king of the South. Also, violent men of your people shall exalt themselves in fulfillment of the vision, but they shall fall.”
 - b. “Antiochus had managed to gather a large army because of his successes in the East and now returned to battle against Egypt. This occurred about 13 years after the battle at Raphia. Ptolemy Philopator was dead and his son was only a child of but four years” (Young, p.238).
 - c. The serious setback just recorded did not discourage King Antiochus, who is not without reason called “the Great.” He raised a greater army and secured better equipment and again attained some of the success that had attended his first efforts. What made it possible for him to “come right on” was the fact that the king of Egypt offered no opposition, and that after his death various uprisings occurred that materially weakened the Egyptian power and broke it by internal dissension: many were “rising up against the king of the south.” But that, unfortunately, led some of the Jews (“thy people,” says the angel) to attempt an uprising against the Egyptian dominion under which they had fared relatively well. That uprising was headed by a certain Tobias. That undertaking was to bring trouble upon them, the trouble that had been prophesied in the visions of Daniel. The angel refers to that fact when he says that the Jews shall do this to “establish the vision.” This uprising on the part of the Jews proved abortive: “but they shall fall.” We see from this one incident how intimately the fortunes of the Jews were intertwined with those of these two warring nations, and how soon the Jews could become deeply

¹ Leupold, H. C. (1949). *Exposition of Daniel* (pp. 486–487). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House.

involved in trouble.¹

- d. After the Battle of Panion, near the sources of the Jordan, Scopas, the Egyptian general, fled to Sidon where Antiochus besieged him by land and sea. In the spring of 198 B.C. Scopas was forced to surrender, leaving the whole of Syria in the hands of Antiochus. . . . In passing through his newly acquired territories, Antiochus came to Jerusalem where, according to Josephus, the inhabitants gave him a cordial welcome. The “glorious land” refers, of course, to Palestine. The phrase, “in his hand shall be destruction,” should be according to Leupold, and the RSV, “all of it shall be in his power.” In other words, Antiochus II does not devastate the land of Palestine, but he had complete control of the land and its people. Historians report of Antiochus that “he released Jerusalem from all taxes for three years, and afterwards from one-third of the taxes. He also sent a large sum of money for the service of the Temple and released the elders, priests, scribes and singing men from all taxes for the future.” When a king remits taxes and has such control over the influential men of the nation, it is evident that he controls even the minute details of their society. (See College Press).
- e. *And in those times there shall many stand up against the king of the south.* Against the king of Egypt. That is, not only Antiochus the Great, who was always opposed to him, and who was constantly waging war with him, but also others with whom he would be particularly involved, or who would be opposed to him....Antiochus and Philip of Macedon entered into an agreement to invade the dominions of Ptolemy Epiphanes, and to divide them between themselves.
 - 1) At the same time a treasonable plot was laid against the life of Ptolemy by Scopas the Aetolian (Polyb. xvii.), who had under his command the army of the Egyptians, and who designed to take advantage of the youth of the king, and seize upon the throne. This project was defeated by the vigilance of Aristomenes, the prime minister.... These facts fully accord with what is said in the passage before us.
 - 2) *Also the robbers of thy people shall exalt themselves.* The angel here turns to Daniel, and states what would be done in these circumstances by his own people—the Jews. It is to be remembered that, in these times, they were alternately under the dominion of the Egyptian and the Syrian monarchs—of Ptolemy and of Antiochus. The principal seat of the wars between Syria and Egypt was Palestine—the border land between them and Judea, therefore, often changed masters But the angel now says that a portion of his people would take occasion, from the weakness of the youthful monarch of Egypt, and the conspiracies in his own kingdom, and the foreign combinations against him, to attempt to throw off his authority, and to become independent. That part of the people who would attempt to do this is designated in the common translation as "the robbers of thy people." [Barnes' Notes, Electronic Database Copyright © 1997, 2003, 2005, 2006 by Biblesoft, Inc. All rights reserved].
2. Verses 15-16: “So the king of the north shall come, and cast up a mount, and take the most fenced cities: and the arms of the south shall not withstand, neither his chosen people, neither shall there be any strength to withstand. But he that cometh against him shall do according to his own will, and none shall stand before him: and he shall stand in the glorious land, which by his hand shall be consumed.”
 - a. Other Translations:
 - 1) American Standard Version: “So the king of the north shall come, and cast up a mound, and take a well-fortified city: and the forces of the south shall not stand, neither his chosen people, neither shall there be any strength to stand. But he that cometh against him shall do according to his own will, and none shall stand before him; and he shall stand in the glorious land, and in his hand shall be destruction.”

¹ Leupold, H. C. (1949). *Exposition of Daniel* (pp. 487–488). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House.

- 2) New King James Version: “So the king of the North shall come and build a siege mound, and take a fortified city; and the forces of the South shall not withstand him. Even his choice troops shall have no strength to resist. But he who comes against him shall do according to his own will, and no one shall stand against him. He shall stand in the Glorious Land with destruction in his power.”
- b. There had been an interruption of the victorious advance of Antiochus when his attention was claimed by difficulties in Pergamum. During his absence the Egyptian general Scopas had recaptured some of the territory that Antiochus had just gained. But Antiochus soon ousted him and with great losses drove him back to the city of Sidon, which seems to be the “well-fortified city” referred to. The Hebrew has “city of fortifications,” implying many and good fortifications by the plural of intensity.
- 1) When it is said that the king “raised a rampart,” that refers to his assault upon the city, which, apparently, ultimately succeeded. For though the Egyptians sent three of their best generals to lift the siege of the city, these were driven back: “and the forces of the south will not stand, neither his chosen people, neither shall there be any power to stand.” This triple statement expressing inability is a strong way of stating its intensity.
 - 2) The subject of the first verb is still Antiochus. As we remarked in connection with verses 13 and 14, he encounters practically no opposition and so attains success for a considerable period of time. The uprising of the Jews mentioned in v. 14 led to his going to the “glorious land”—Palestine, of course, cf., 8:9. In this latter passage it had been said that this uprising was instigated by only the “violent among thy people.” These apparently constituted a minority, for the bulk of the people had been treated tyrannically by the Egyptian king and as a result had felt impelled to revolt against him and thus to regard the Seleucidae with greater favor. Of Antiochus the Great, Rappoport reports that he “released Jerusalem from all taxes for three years, and afterwards from one-third of the taxes. He also sent a large sum of money for the service of the Temple, and released the elders, priests, scribes, and singing men from all taxes for the future.”
 - 3) When a king remits taxes, one may point to his kindness. Yet the mere fact that he has complete control of the situation is equally apparent and may with equal propriety be stressed and the statement be made that he has things entirely in hand. The latter statement would emphasize how low the nation that was being treated thus had fallen.¹
3. Verses 17-19: “He shall also set his face to enter with the strength of his whole kingdom, and upright ones with him; thus shall he do: and he shall give him the daughter of women, corrupting her: but she shall not stand on his side, neither be for him. After this shall he turn his face unto the isles, and shall take many: but a prince for his own behalf shall cause the reproach offered by him to cease; without his own reproach he shall cause it to turn upon him. Then he shall turn his face toward the fort of his own land: but he shall stumble and fall, and not be found.”
- a. Other Translations:
- 1) American Standard Version: “And he shall set his face to come with the strength of his whole kingdom, and with him equitable conditions; and he shall perform them: and he shall give him the daughter of women, to corrupt her; but she shall not stand, neither be for him. After this shall he turn his face unto the isles, and shall take many: but a prince shall cause the reproach offered by him to cease; yea, moreover, he shall cause his reproach to turn upon him. Then he shall turn his face toward the fortresses of his own land; but he shall stumble and fall, and shall not be found.”
 - 2) New King James Version: "He shall also set his face to enter with the strength of his whole kingdom, and upright ones with him; thus shall he do. And he shall give him the daughter of women to destroy it; but she shall not stand with him, or be for him. After this he shall turn his face to the

¹ Leupold, H. C. (1949). *Exposition of Daniel* (pp. 488–490). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House.

- coastlands, and shall take many. But a ruler shall bring the reproach against them to an end; and with the reproach removed, he shall turn back on him. Then he shall turn his face toward the fortress of his own land; but he shall stumble and fall, and not be found.”
- b. Antiochus plots (“sets his face”) to throw all the power and cunning of his whole kingdom at Egypt in order to conquer her. It is nothing short of amazing that God knows not only historical events before they happen but also the schemes of men, before they are even thought! Antiochus The Great III plots that he will give his daughter to Egypt to corrupt her. History again confirms in absolute perfection the omniscience of God. In a treaty (198 B.C.) with Ptolemy V (Epiphanes), who was then only seven years of age, Antiochus III betrothed his daughter Cleopatra to Ptolemy V. (204-181 B.C.) The marriage, however, was not consummated until five years later. Antiochus hoped by this stratagem to gain an advantage over the king of Egypt by trusting that his daughter would be her father’s ally rather than her husband’s. But, as history records, Cleopatra constantly sided with her husband over against her father-fulfilling the words, “she shall not stand, neither be for him.”
- 1) When the Carthaginian, Hannibal, was defeated by the Romans at Zama (202 B.C.), bringing to an end the Punic War, he fled eastward and took refuge in the court of Antiochus III. Interested in stirring up trouble for Rome, Hannibal encouraged Antiochus to invade Greece. Rome thereupon declared war on Antiochus, The Roman forces moved into Greece, where Antiochus had come in his move to conquer Macedonia, defeated Antiochus, and forced him to retreat to Asia Minor. There at Magnesia, between Sardis and Smyrna, the Romans under the brilliant Cornelius Scipio defeated Antiochus (190 B.C.). He had to pay an enormous indemnity (15,000 talents or more), surrender his war elephants and his navy. His younger son, later to rule as Antiochus IV (Epiphanes), was taken to Rome as hostage for the payment of the indemnity.
 - 2) Antiochus marched against the revolted Armenians in 187 B.C. In order to replenish his exhausted treasury, he attempted to plunder a temple and both he and his soldiers were slain by the Elamites. So he died in disgrace and violence.
 - 3) The next to rule was Seleucus IV (Philopator) (187-175 B.C.), son of Antiochus III (The Great) and brother of Antiochus IV (who was away in Rome as a hostage). Rome had so thoroughly defeated Syria that she was now able to demand, and get an enormous tribute annually—a thousand talents. Syria was forced to exact heavy taxes from its tributary nations which included Palestine. A special tax collector by the name of Heliodorus (cf. II Mace. 7) was sent to appropriate the rich treasures. (See College Press).
- c. Verse 17 speaks of only a purpose on the part of Antiochus. It is claimed that Livy, the Roman historian, also refers to this intention on the part of the king of Syria. But this was a purpose that was never carried out. Nothing more than that is implied in the statement, “He shall set his face.” But it may well be asked why mere purposes that do not materialize should be recorded in this series of predictions in which only the bold outline of history is given. The answer, we believe, lies in this, that as the whole chapter has thus far emphasized God’s control of the affairs of history by foretelling what will transpire, so God’s foreknowledge is here stressed to the point of showing that God knows even the hidden purposes of men which never materialize. The feature that was characteristic of this expedition was apparently that everything attempted was going to be done on “equitable terms” which Antiochus would have faithfully carried out. But that all belongs to the contemplated expedition with a great army that never materialized.
- 1) The next item is, however, a matter of history. Since the two main actors on the stage are the king of the north and the king of the south, and since the one under consideration is the king of the north, the “to one” must refer to the king of the south. It is a fact that is verified by history that Antiochus the Great gave his daughter Cleopatra in marriage to Ptolemy Epiphanes, and that it was the purpose of the father to gain an advantage over the king of Egypt by trusting that his daughter would be her
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- father's ally rather than her husband's. That is what is meant by the infinitive of purpose "to destroy it," i.e., the kingdom. The next statement is also verifiable: "This shall not stand, neither shall it be to his advantage." The girl felt it her duty to be faithful to her husband and so refused to be a tool in her father's hands.
- 2) We have translated *'iyyim* "coastlands," which is a more accurate rendering than the more common "isles," for this expression refers to the entire intricate coastline of the Mediterranean plus the islands. Antiochus made this expedition to gain control of Asia Minor and the islands of Ionia, which the Romans sought to control, in addition to assuming a guardianship over the young Egyptian king. This action was, therefore, designed to break the power of Rome. By 196 B. C., he had gotten hold of even a part of Thrace.
 - 3) Rome resented this particularly because she exercised a kind of mandate over Thrace. The expedition of Antiochus finally called forth the active resistance of Rome, which led to a battle near Magnesia in 190, in which battle Lucius Scipio administered such a sound drubbing to Antiochus that the "presumptuous boastings" of the Syrian were silenced once and for all. Yet Scipio himself was not to make the same mistake that the man whom he had conquered had made. He achieved his victory "without repaying him with like boasting."
 - 4) This statement seems to have a sharp note of sarcasm. He whose face had in warlike conquests been turned against the fortresses of others shall after his humiliating defeat turn to "the fortresses of his own land." Here no trouble or defeat could befall him. So disheartened shall the king become. In fact, his end shall be still more ignominious: he "shall stumble and fall and shall be found no more."
 - 5) All that was recorded in this section was intended to be nothing more than a rough, though accurate, outline of the general course of history for a short period that would come to a climax in a season of unusual difficulty for the people of God. Nothing more was to be demonstrated than that God knew what would come to pass. That knowledge again constituted a sure proof that God could also control what He foreknew. It served no purpose to relate a lot of minor detail. To expect that all this could be understood before the events involved transpired is to expect what was never intended.¹

d. Barnes:

- 1) *After this shall he turn his face unto the isles.* The islands of the Mediterranean, particularly those in the neighborhood of and constituting a part of Greece. This he did in his wars with the Romans, for the Roman power then comprehended that part of the world, and it was the design of Antiochus, as already remarked, to extend the limits of his empire as far as it was at the time of Seleucus Nicator. This occurred after the defeat of Scopas, for, having given his daughter in marriage to Ptolemy, he supposed that he had guarded himself from any interference in his wars with the Romans from the Egyptians, and sent two of his sons with an army by land to Sardis, and he himself with a great fleet sailed at the same time into the AEgean Sea, and took many of the islands in that sea.
- 2) The war which was waged between Antiochus and the Romans lasted for three years, and ended in the defeat of Antiochus, and in the subjugation of the Syrian kingdom to the Roman power, though, when it became a Roman province, it continued to be governed by its own kings. In this war, Hannibal, general of the Carthaginians, was desirous that Antiochus should unite with him in carrying his arms into Italy, with the hope that together they would be able to overcome the Romans; but Antiochus preferred to confine his operations to Asia Minor and the maritime parts of Greece; and the consequence of this, and of the luxury and indolence into which he sank, was his ultimate overthrow

¹ Leupold, H. C. (1949). *Exposition of Daniel* (pp. 490–492). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House.

- 3) *And shall take many.* Many of those islands; many portions of the maritime country of Asia Minor and Greece. As a matter of fact, during this war which he waged, he became possessed of Ephesus, Aetolia, the island of Euboea, where, in the year 191 B.C. he married Eubia, a young lady of great beauty, and gave himself up for a long time to festivity and amusements—and then entrenched himself strongly at the pass of Thermopyloe. Afterward, when driven from that stronghold, he sailed to the Thracian Chersonesus, and fortified Sestos, Abydos, and other places, and, in fact, during these military expeditions, obtained the mastery of no inconsiderable part of the maritime portions of Greece. The prophecy was strictly fulfilled, that he should "take many" of those places.
 - 4) *But a prince for his own behalf.* A Roman prince, or a leader of the Roman armies. The reference is to Lucius Cornelius Scipio, called Scipio Asiaticus, in contradistinction from Publius Cornelius Scipio, called "Africanus, from his conquest over Hannibal and the Carthaginians. The Scipio here referred to received the name "Asiaticus," on account of his victories in the East, and particularly in this war with Antiochus. He was a brother of Scipio Africanus, and had accompanied him in his expedition into Spain and Africa. After his return he was rewarded with the consulship for his services to the state, and was empowered to attack Antiochus, who had declared war against the Romans. In this war he was prosperous, and succeeded in retrieving the honor of the Roman name, and in wiping off the reproach which the Roman armies had suffered from the conquests of Antiochus. When it is said that he would do this "for his own, behalf," the meaning is, doubtless, that he would engage in the enterprise for his own glory, or to secure fame for himself. It was not the love of justice, or the love of country, but it was to secure for himself a public triumph—perhaps hoping, by subduing Antiochus, to obtain one equal to what his brother had received after his wars with Hannibal. The motive here ascribed to this "prince" was so common in the leaders of the Roman armies, and has been so generally prevalent among mankind, that there can be no hesitation in supposing that it was accurately ascribed to this conqueror, Scipio, and that the enterprise in which he embarked in opposing Antiochus was primarily "on his own behalf."
 - 5) *Shall cause the reproach offered by him to cease.* The reproach offered by Antiochus to the Roman power The reference is to the disgrace brought on the Roman armies by the conquests of Antiochus. Antiochus had seemed to mock that power; he had engaged in war with the conquerors of nations; he had gained victories, and thus appeared to insult the majesty of the Roman name. All this was turned back again, or caused to cease, by the victories of Scipio.
 - 6) *Without his own reproach.* Without any reproach to himself—any discomfiture—any imputation of want of skill or valor. That is, he would so conduct the war as to secure an untarnished reputation. This was in all respects true of Scipio.
 - 7) *He shall cause it to turn upon him.* The reproach or shame which he seemed to cast upon the Romans would return upon himself. This occurred in the successive defeats of Antiochus in several engagements by water and by land, and in his final and complete overthrow at the battle of Magnesia (190 B.C.) by Scipio. After being several times overcome by the Romans, and vainly suing for peace, "Antiochus lost all presence of mind, and withdrew his garrisons from all the cities on the Hellespont, and, in his precipitate flight, left all his military stores behind him. He renewed his attempts to enter into negotiations for peace, but when he was required to relinquish all his possessions west of the Taurus, and defray the expenses of the war, he resolved to try his fortune once more in a battle by land. Antiochus brought into the field seventy thousand infantry, twelve thousand cavalry, and a great number of camels, elephants, and chariots armed with scythes. To these the Romans could oppose but thirty thousand men, and yet they gained a decisive victory. The Romans lost only three hundred and twenty-five men; while, of the forces of Antiochus, fifty thousand infantry, four thousand cavalry, and fifteen elephants were left dead on the field, fifteen hundred men were made prisoners, and the king himself with great difficulty made his escape to
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- Sardis. He now humbly sued for peace, and it was granted on the terms with which he had formerly refused compliance—that he should surrender all his possessions west of the Taurus, and that he should defray the expenses of the war. He further obligated himself to keep no elephants, and not more than twelve ships. To secure the performance of these conditions, the Romans required him to deliver up twelve hostages of their own selection, among whom was his son Antiochus, afterward surnamed Epiphanes." — Jahn's "Hebrew Commonwealth," pp. 248, 249.
- 8) Then he shall turn his face toward the fort of his own land: but he shall stumble and fall, and not be found. *Then he shall turn his face toward the fort of his own land.* The strong fortifications of his own land—for the Hebrew word is in the plural. This he would do, of course, for protection. He would cease his attempts at conquest, and endeavor to find security in his own fortresses. As a matter of fact, after this defeat, Antiochus, in order to replenish his exhausted coffers, and to find the means of meeting the claims of the Romans, went into certain provinces of his empire. He attempted no other foreign wars, but sought security in his own dominions.
 - 9) *But he shall stumble and fall, and not be found.* He died in an attempt to plunder the temple of Elymais. In this he provoked the people to an insurrection, and was slain, together with the soldiers who were with him. What was his "motive" for plundering that temple is uncertain, whether it was to meet the demands of the Romans, or whether it was avarice (Justin, xxxii. 2); but it was in this way that he "stumbled and fell," and passed away

D. Daniel 11:20-29: Other Great Events.

1. Verses 20-21: "Then shall stand up in his estate a raiser of taxes in the glory of the kingdom: but within few days he shall be destroyed, neither in anger, nor in battle. And in his estate shall stand up a vile person, to whom they shall not give the honour of the kingdom: but he shall come in peaceably, and obtain the kingdom by flatteries."
 - a. Other Translations:
 - 1) American Standard Version: "Then shall stand up in his place one that shall cause an exactor to pass through the glory of the kingdom; but within few days he shall be destroyed, neither in anger, nor in battle. And in his place shall stand up a contemptible person, to whom they had not given the honor of the kingdom: but he shall come in time of security, and shall obtain the kingdom by flatteries."
 - 2) New King James Version: "There shall arise in his place one who imposes taxes on the glorious kingdom; but within a few days he shall be destroyed, but not in anger or in battle. And in his place shall arise a vile person, to whom they will not give the honor of royalty; but he shall come in peaceably, and seize the kingdom by intrigue."
 - b. Coffman:
 - 1) "Then shall stand up in his place one ... and in his place shall stand up a contemptible person ..." (Daniel 11:20-21) Antiochus III was succeeded by Seleucus IV (Philopater) who sent his chief minister to take charge of the Temple treasures in Jerusalem. That chief minister (Heliodorus) murdered Seleucus IV and tried to usurp the kingdom, but he was dispossessed by Antiochus IV (Epiphanes), the brother of Seleucus. Antiochus Epiphanes was the contemptible one.
 - 2) We leave it to any fair minded person to judge whether or not all of this is spelled out in the prophecy. The purpose of such detail is to show how it would have been impossible for a prophecy written before the event could possibly have contained so many details. However, critics need to remember that the sacred prophecies contain all kinds of the most detailed information.
 - 3) Examples: (1) The exact amount, kind, and disposition of the 30 pieces of silver weighed out for Jesus' betrayal by Judas was prophesied (Zechariah 11:12). (2) There were two Bethlehems in

- ancient Israel; but the prophet declared that Christ would be born in Bethlehem Judah (Micah 5:2). (3) More than 20 of the most particular details of the crucifixion of Christ were foretold in Psalms 22, including even the fact of the soldiers gambling for the seamless robe of Christ! This list could be extended for many pages; but it is obvious to all Christians that true prophecy did indeed predict the most exact and circumstantial details; and the very fact of the critics finding all the details noted above in this prophecy of Daniel is merely what they should have expected to find. Remember, there is no doubt whatever that Daniel existed for centuries before these events happened.
- c. Antiochus Epiphanes (176-164 B.C.).
- 1) The real feature of this great prophecy is not the exact historical events foretold, but the development of the pagan world powers in their opposition to God and to his holy worship. The mighty features of the prophecy are therefore these: lust, murder, greed, avarice, cunning deceit, falsehood, treachery, violation of trust, breaking of treaties, mass extermination of whole populations, self-glorification, disregard of all sacred things, hatred of both God and man. Brother, there is your prophetic picture of the pagan world governments that rose up to destroy the worship of God and to remove his holy name from the face of the earth, culminating in the outrages of Antiochus Epiphanes
 - 2) The focal point of all the events prophesied here is noted in Daniel 11:15, where we have these lines, "The forces of the south shall not stand, NEITHER HIS CHOSEN PEOPLE." This refers to God's chosen people. It was the overwhelming of Israel itself by the pagan world powers that formed the focal center of the holy prophet's attention in this chapter. To miss this is to miss the whole point of the prophecy. [See Coffman].
- d. From Barnes, we glean the following:
- 1) *Then shall stand up in his estate.* The idea here is simply that he would be succeeded in the kingdom by such an one. His successor would have the character and destiny which the prophecy proceeds to specify.
 - 2) *A raiser of taxes.* One who shall be mainly characterized for this; that is, whose government would be distinguished eminently by his efforts to wring money out of the people. The Hebrew word means, properly, to urge, to drive, to impel, and it is then applied to one who urges or presses a debtor, or who exacts tribute of a people.
 - a) The word is used with reference to "money" exactions in Deut 15:2-3: "Every creditor that lendeth ought unto his neighbor, he shall not exact it of his neighbor or of his brother. Of a foreigner thou mayest exact it again."
 - b) So in 2 Kings 23:35, Jehoiakim taxed the land "to give the money according to the commandment of Pharaoh: he exacted the silver and the gold of the people of the land."
 - c) In Zech 9:8 — "And no oppressor shall pass through them anymore" — the same word is used. Here it denotes one who would be mainly characterized by his extorting tribute of his people, or using means to obtain money.
 - 3) *In the glory of the kingdom.* The word "in" here is supplied by our translators. Lengerke renders it, "who shall suffer the tax-gatherer (*eintreiber*) to go through the glory of the kingdom." This is evidently the meaning. He would lay the richest and most productive parts of his kingdom under contribution. This might be either to pay a debt contracted by a former monarch; or to carry on war; or to obtain the means of luxurious indulgence; or for purposes of magnificence and display.
 - a) But within few days. A comparatively brief period. Compare Gen 27:44; 29:20. It is impossible from this to determine the precise period which he would live, but the language would leave the impression that his would be a short reign.
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- b) He shall be destroyed. That is, his power shall be broken." he shall cease to reign. It would not be certainly inferred from this that he would be put to death, or would die at that time, but that his reign then would come to an end, though it might be in some peaceful way.
- c) Neither in anger. Hebrew, "angers." Not in any tumult or excitement, or by any rage of his subjects. This would certainly imply that his death would be a peaceful death.
- d) Nor in battle. As many kings fell. The description would indicate a reign of peace, and one whose end would be peace, but who would have but a brief reign. The reference here is, undoubtedly, to Seleucus Philopator, the oldest son of Antiochus the Great, and his immediate successor. The fulfillment of the prediction is seen in the following facts in regard to him:
- (1) As an exactor of tribute. He was bound to pay the tribute which his father had agreed to pay to the Romans. This tribute amounted to a thousand talents annually, and consequently made it necessary for him to apply his energies to the raising of that sum. The Jewish talent of silver was equal to (in the 1850's) about \$1,505 of American money (about 339 British pounds), and, consequently, this thousand talents, of the Jewish talent of silver here referred to, was equal to (in 1850's) about a million and a half dollars. The Greek talent of silver was worth (in 1850's) \$1,055 of American money (about 238 British pounds), and, if this was the talent, the sum would be about one million dollars. To raise this, in addition to the ordinary expenses of the government, would require an effort, and, as this was continued from year to year, and as Seleucus was known for little else, it was not unnatural that the should be characterized as the "raiser of taxes."
 - (2) Especially would this be true in the estimation of the Jews, for no small part of these taxes, or this revenue, was derived from Palestine. Seleucus, taking advantage of the disturbances in Egypt, had reunited to the Syrian crown the provinces of Coelo-Syria and Palestine, which his father Antiochus the Great had given in dowry to his daughter Cleopatra, who was married to Ptolemy Epiphanes In the year 176 B.C., Simon, a Benjamite, who became governor of the temple at Jerusalem, the farmer of the revenues of the Egyptian kings, attempted to make some innovations, which were steadily resisted by the high priest Onias III. Simon, in anger, went to Apollonius, governor of Coelo-Syria under Seleucus, and informed him of the great treasures contained in the temple. "The king," says Jahn ("Heb. Commonwealth," p. 255), "through a friend to the Jews, and though he had regularly made disbursements, according to the directions of his father, toward sustaining the expenses of the sacrifices at Jerusalem, determined to apply to his own use the treasures of the temple, for the annual payment of one thousand talents to the Romans had reduced his finances to a very low ebb. With the design, therefore, of replenishing his exhausted treasury, he sent Heliodorus to Jerusalem to plunder the temple." Compare Appian, "Syriac." xlv. 60-65. See also Prideaux, "Con." iii. 208; 2 Macc 1:3. Besides this, the necessity of raising so much revenue would give him the character of a "raiser of taxes."
 - (3) This was done in what might properly be termed "the glory of his kingdom," or in what would, in the language of an Hebrew, be so called-Coelo-Syria and Palestine. To the eye of a Hebrew this was the glory of all lands, and the Jewish writers were accustomed to designate it by some such appellation
 - (4) His reign continued but a short time-answering to what is here said, that it would be for a "few days." In fact, he reigned but eleven or twelve years, and that, compared with the long reign of Antiochus his father-thirty-seven years-was a brief period.
 - (5) The manner of his death. He did not fall in battle, nor was he cut off in a popular tumult. He was, in fact, poisoned. In the eleventh year of his reign, he sent his only son Demetrius as
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hostage to Rome, and released his brother Antiochus, who had resided twelve years in that city. As the heir to the crown was now out of the way, Heliodorus sought to raise himself to the royal dignity, and for this purpose he destroyed the king by poison. He attached a large party to his interests, and finally gained over those who were in favor of submitting to the king of Egypt. Antiochus Epiphanes received notice of these transactions while he was at Athens on his return from Rome. He applied himself to Eumenes, king of Pergamos, whom, with his brother Attalus, he easily induced to espouse his cause, and they, with the help of a part of the Syrians, deprived Heliodorus of his usurped authority. Thus, in the year 175 B.C., Antiochus Epiphanes quietly ascended the throne, while the lawful heir, Demetrius, was absent at Rome. Appian, "Syriac." lxxv. 60-65; Jahn, "Heb. Commonwealth," ch. ix. Section 91. The remainder of this chapter is occupied with a detail of the crimes, the cruelties, and the oppressions of Antiochus Epiphanes, or Antiochus IV.

- 4) And in his estate shall stand up a vile person, to whom they shall not give the honour of the kingdom: but he shall come in peaceably, and obtain the kingdom by flatteries. The reference here is to Antiochus Epiphanes, who reigned from 175 B.C. to 163 B.C. The epithet "vile" here given him was one which his subsequent history showed was eminently appropriate to him in all respects, as a man and as a prince.
 - a) The Hebrew word rendered "vile" properly means one despised or held in contempt, Isa 49:7; Ps 22:6 (7). The meaning here is, that he was one who deserved to be despised, and who would be held in contempt—a man of a low, base, contemptible character. Never were terms better applied to a man than these to Antiochus Epiphanes—both before and after his ascension to the throne. The manner of his seizing upon the crown is stated above.
 - b) He was surnamed Epiphanes, "the Illustrious," because, if we believe Appian, he vindicated the claims of the royal family against the usurpations of the foreigner Heliodorus. He also bore the name Theos "God," which is still seen upon his coins.
 - c) But by his subjects he was called Epimanes [Epimanees, "the Insane," instead of "Epiphanes"—a name which he much more richly deserved. The following statement from Jahn (Heb. Commonwealth, ch. x. Section 92) will show with what propriety the term "vile" was applied to him: "He often lounged like a mere idler about the streets of Antioch, attended by two or three servants, and not deigning to look at the nobles; would talk with goldsmiths and other mechanics in their workshops, engage in idle and trifling conversation with the lowest of the people, and mingle in the society of foreigners and men of the vilest character. He was not ashamed to go into the dissipated circles of the young, to drink and carouse with them, and to assist their merriment by singing songs and playing on his flute. He often appeared in the public baths among the common people, engaging in every kind of foolish jest, without the least regard to the dignity of his station and character. Not unfrequently he was seen drunk in the streets, when he would throw his money about, and practice various other fooleries equally extravagant. He would parade the streets of his capital in a long robe, and with a garland of roses upon his head: and if any attempted to pass by or to follow him, he would pelt them with stones, which he carried concealed under his garments," etc.
 - 5) *To whom they shall not give the honor of the kingdom.* That is, the people. Or, in other words, it should not be conferred on him by any law or act of the nation, or in any regular succession or claim. The true heir to the crown was Demetrius, who was absent at Rome. On him the crown would have regularly devolved; but in his absence it was obtained by Antiochus by arts which he practiced, and not by any voluntary grant of the nation.
 - 6) *But he shall come in peaceably.* Quietly; without war or force; by art rather than by arms The idea seems to be, that he would do it when the nation was not expecting it, or apprehending it; when
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they would be taken off their guard, and he would "steal a march upon them." All this accorded with fact. The nation seemed not to have anticipated that Antiochus would attempt to ascend the throne on the death of his brother. But he quietly left Rome—while Demetrius, his nephew, the true heir to the crown, remained there; came to Athens, and learned what was the state of things in Syria, where Heliodorus had usurped the authority; made an agreement with the king of Pergamos to aid him, and, by the assistance of a part of the Syrians who were opposed to the usurper Heliodorus, deprived him of the authority, and himself took possession of the crown. No one seemed to suspect that this was his aim, or to doubt that his object was to remove an usurper that his nephew might be placed on the throne.

- 7) *And obtain the kingdom by flatteries.* "The word," says Elliott (Rev. iv. 133), "has a double sense, being applied both to the slipperiness of a path, and the slipperiness or flattering and deceit of the tongue." In the former sense it occurs in Ps 35:6, "Let their way be dark and slippery;" in the latter, its originating verb, Prov 2:16; 7:5, "The stranger that flattereth or dissembleth with his words;" and Prov 29:5, "A man that flattereth (or dissembleth to) his neighbor."
- a) In this latter sense the verbal seems to be used both here and in the verses (Dan 11:32,34) below: "arts of dissimulation." —Gesenius. The probable meaning here is, that he would obtain the throne by acts of dissembling, and by promises of rewards and offices. Such promises he would probably make to Eumenes, king of Pergamos, and to the Syrian nobles and people who espoused his cause. It would not be difficult to secure the aid of multitudes in this way, and the character of Antiochus was just such as to permit him to use any of these arts to accomplish his ends.
- b) Perhaps, also, he might hold out the hope of aid from the Romans, with whom he had long lived. It was no uncommon thing for an usurper to make his way by flattering certain classes of a people, and by promises of largesses, of offices, and of the removal of oppressive burdens.
2. Verses 22-23: "And with the arms of a flood shall they be overflown from before him, and shall be broken; yea, also the prince of the covenant. And after the league made with him he shall work deceitfully: for he shall come up, and shall become strong with a small people."
- a. Other Versions:
- 1) American Standard Version: "And the overwhelming forces shall be overwhelmed from before him, and shall be broken; yea, also the prince of the covenant. And after the league made with him he shall work deceitfully; for he shall come up, and shall become strong, with a small people."
 - 2) New King James Version: "With the force of a flood they shall be swept away from before him and be broken, and also the prince of the covenant. And after the league is made with him he shall act deceitfully, for he shall come up and become strong with a small number of people."
- b. "At this point the most prominent person in the chapter, Antiochus Epiphanes, is brought before us (Dan. 11:21-24). He was the younger brother of the late king, and had resided for some years at Rome as a hostage, (I Macc. 1:10) and knowing that he was not legally entitled to the kingdom, obtained it by flattery and by stealth. Having once become master of the situation, he determined to act in the most tyrannical manner, his power becoming greater day by day. His troops rushed on as a torrent that none could stem, overwhelming all that were brought into contact with him, even 'the prince of the covenant,' that is, the priests and rulers of Jerusalem. He succeeded in making a league with one high priest, but broke it, and gave the high priesthood to another" (Hailey, p.228).
- c. The following is gleaned from College Press:
- 1) Jerusalem was ruled by the High Priest, Onias 111, a descendant of Simon the Just, and a strictly orthodox Jew. The Jews who looked favorably (and there were large numbers of them) on Greek
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- culture opposed Onias and espoused the cause of his brother, Jason. By promising larger tribute to Antiochus, Jason succeeded in having himself appointed High Priest and Onias was slain by command of Antiochus in 172 B.C. Jason (who had changed his name from the Hebrew Joshua to the Greek Jason) encouraged the Hellenizing of Palestine. A gymnasium was built in Jerusalem. Jewish lads exercised there in the nude. Greek names were adopted in place of the Jewish names by people and for cities. Hebrew ways and doctrines were looked upon as “behind the times.”
- 2) In opposition to this paganizing of their culture there arose a resistance movement so zealous it became fanatical. The Hasidim (the “separated ones”) swore to follow the ways of their fathers, even welcoming death to do so. This caused consternation in the Syrian court and Antiochus sought a means of solving the unrest in Palestine. The opportunity came for a change in Palestine when a dispute arose between Jason and one of his closest associates. Menelaus, of the tribe of Benjamin, could make no legal claim to the office of high priest, but by offering higher tribute to Antiochus than that being paid by Jason, he was nominated to the office of High Priest. A Syrian garrison was stationed in the citadel in Jerusalem to insure order and respect for the new High Priest. This infuriated the Hasidim, and Jason began plotting ways and means to regain his office.
 - 3) Meanwhile, Antiochus was on campaign against Egypt. By many devices of intrigue, flattery and deceit, and with a comparatively small army, he won a significant victory at Pelusium and captured Memphis and generally all of lower and central Egypt. He penetrated into the heart of their country before the Egyptians were fully aware of the fact or had made arrangements to resist. Antiochus cagily made it a point to establish as friendly a relation with a defeated opponent as possible. Even while the battle raged at Pelusium, Antiochus displayed great kindness toward the Egyptians, everywhere interfering to check the slaughter by his soldiers, and thus won the hearts of his foes.
 - 4) While Antiochus was busy fighting in Egypt, Jason raised an army in Transjordan and raided Jerusalem. Menelaus beat off the attack, but it became obvious to Antiochus that large segments of Judaism were still opposed to Hellenism and Syrian control in Palestine. On the return of Antiochus from Egypt Menelaus welcomed him in Jerusalem. What was left of the Temple treasure was placed at his disposal. Since Menelaus was unpopular with many of the Jews, he found it all the more expedient to court the favor of Antiochus.

d. Leupold.

- 1) For the present the king’s method of establishing himself is pictured in general terms. Disregarding for the most part reference to individual historical events, the account describes picturesquely that it shall be a time when armies shall surge back and forth through the land, in fact, “floods of armies.” Then to picture the countersurge the verb “flooded away” is used, a detail that is usually not indicated by the translations. Armies shall thus be disposed of before Antiochus as he gains ground in his, at first precarious, position. At that time even a prince of the covenant loses his life.
 - 2) We now see the king at the point where he can begin to deal with other nations as an equal. He forms leagues, the customary device for enhancing one’s influence Whereas he first used force and then formed leagues, his third device, which is only too common in international politics, was to “practice deceit.” If the sequence of the events recorded is to be viewed strictly from the standpoint of time, this might refer to the first Egyptian expedition. This might then be an indication of the mode of operation that was adopted by the king while he was in Egypt when he espoused the cause of Ptolemy Philometor, his one nephew, over against that of Ptolemy Euergetes, his other nephew, all the while pretending that it was only his nephew’s interests that he had at heart The nephews themselves finally saw that their uncle was “practicing deceit,” and that he was “becoming strong with but a few people by stealth.”
3. Verses 24-26: “He shall enter peaceably even upon the fattest places of the province; and he shall do that
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which his fathers have not done, nor his fathers' fathers; he shall scatter among them the prey, and spoil, and riches: yea, and he shall forecast his devices against the strong holds, even for a time. 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 they shall forecast devices against him. Yea, they that feed of the portion of his meat shall destroy him, and his army shall overflow: and many shall fall down slain.”

a. Other Translations.

- 1) American Standard Version: “In time of security shall he come even upon the fattest places of the province; and he shall do that which his fathers have not done, nor his fathers' fathers; he shall scatter among them prey, and spoil, and substance: yea, he shall devise his devices against the strongholds, even for a time. 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 war in battle with an exceeding great and mighty army; but he shall not stand; for they shall devise devices against him. Yea, they that eat of his dainties shall destroy him, and his army shall overflow; and many shall fall down slain.”
- 2) New King James Version: “He shall enter peaceably, even into the richest places of the province; and he shall do what his fathers have not done, nor his forefathers: he shall disperse among them the plunder, spoil, and riches; and he shall devise his plans against the strongholds, but only for a time. He shall stir up his power and his courage against the king of the South with a great army. And the king of the South shall be stirred up to battle with a very great and mighty army; but he shall not stand, for they shall devise plans against him. Yes, those who eat of the portion of his delicacies shall destroy him; his army shall be swept away, and many shall fall down slain.”

b. Let’s hear what Leupold has to say:

- 1) The other means for strengthening his position is now described. Oriental princes generally plundered their provinces to the fullest extent. This king also does so and concentrates on the “fertile spots of the provinces” or, as *A. V.* translates, “the fattest places.” But this ruler did not squander these things on himself in luxurious living but did the unusual thing of distributing lavishly to men “plunder, spoils, and goods.” This method certainly helped him to buy men and influence. It was, however, not the traditional thing to do, for neither his “fathers nor father’s fathers” had done thus. Among the fortresses against which he “devised devices” might be mentioned Pelusium on the border of Egypt, which fortress he managed to keep garrisoned for himself so as to keep the entrance into Egypt open against any time when he might return. But, as usual, such underhand dealings gave him an advantage “only for a time.”
- 2) Since we do not believe, as we have indicated above, that a strict historical sequence is aimed at in this prediction we are not under the necessity of determining whether this refers to the first or to the second expedition of Antiochus. It does point to great preparations on the part of both kings, and this again led to many battles, with defeats being plentiful on both sides. But the outcome is the important thing: “he [the king of the south] shall not stand.” But this is only seemingly the final result as we shall see later. It was not the strength or the skill of the king of the south that ultimately saved him. The temporary victory of the king of the north was to be attributed largely to “devices” that he had been able to employ.
- 3) The subject is still the king of the south. One factor that will work toward his overthrow will be treachery in his very court circles. Men who eat at the very table with the king shall play into the hand of the enemy. So shall “his army be swept away, and many shall fall down slain.”

c. Again we check in with Barnes.

- 1) *And with the arms of a flood.* The reference here is to some mighty invasion of some country by Antiochus, which would sweep everything before him. There seems to be some confusion of

metaphor in the phrase, "the arms of a flood." The idea in the mind of the writer appears to have been this: He saw an invasion of some country by hosts of men under the command of Antiochus. This it was not unnatural to compare with an "inundation of waters" spreading over a land. See Isa 8:8. Nor was it altogether unnatural to speak of an inundation as having "arms" extending far and near; sweeping everything to itself, or carrying it away. Thus we speak of an arm of the sea, an arm of a river, etc. In this manner the inundation—the invasion—seemed to spread itself out like waters, sweeping all away.

- a) [Shall they be overflowed, from before him] The prophet does not specify "who" they would be that would thus be overthrown. Some have supposed that the reference is to the Hebrews, but the more correct interpretation is what refers it to Egypt As a matter of fact, the forces of Heliodorus, the forces of the Hebrews, and the forces of the Egyptians, were alike broken and scattered before him. The eye of the prophet, however, seems rather here to be on the invasion of Egypt, which was one of the earliest and most prominent acts of Antiochus, and into the history of which the prophet goes most into detail.
 - b) [Yea, also the prince of the covenant] He also shall be broken and overcome. There has been some diversity of opinion as to who is meant by "the prince of the covenant" here. Many suppose that it is the high priest of the Jews, as being the chief prince or ruler under the "covenant" which God made with them, or among the "covenant" people. But this appellation is not elsewhere given to the Jewish high priest, nor is it such as could with much propriety be applied to him. The reference is rather to the king of Egypt, with whom a covenant or compact had been made by Antiochus the Great, and who was supposed to be united, therefore, to the Syrians by a solemn treaty. See Lengerke, "in loc." So Elliott, "Rev." iv. 133.
- 2) And after the league made with him he shall work deceitfully: for he shall come up, and shall become strong with a small people....
- a) A treaty of peace and concord. The great subject of contention between the kings of Syria and Egypt was the possession of Coelo-Syria and Palestine. This they often endeavored to settle by conquest as each of them claimed that in the original partition of the empire of Alexander this portion of the empire fell to himself; and often they endeavored to settle it by treaty These provinces had been secured to Ptolemy Lagus by the treaty made 301 B.C., and they had been again pledged by Antiochus the Great, in dowry, when his daughter Cleopatra should be made queen of Egypt Antiochus Epiphanes, however, was by no means disposed to confirm this grant, and hence, the wars in which he was involved with the Egyptians.
 - b) He shall work deceitfully. In reference to the covenant or treaty above referred to. He shall endeavor to evade its claims; he shall refuse to comply with its conditions; he shall not deliver up the provinces according to the terms of the compact. The history accords exactly with this, for he did not intend to comply with the terms of the treaty, but sought every means to evade it, and finally waged a succession of bloody wars with Egypt. In reference to the terms of this treaty, and to secure their respective interests, both parties sent ambassadors to Rome to urge their claims before the Roman Senate
 - c) The purpose of Antiochus was undoubtedly not to surrender Coelo-Syria and Palestine according to the treaties which had been made; and yet he designed to secure them if possible without an open rupture, and hence, his arts of diplomacy, or his efforts to evade compliance with the terms of the compact
 - d) For he shall come up. Come upon Egypt. The result would be war. Rather than surrender the provinces according to the treaty, he would ultimately invade Egypt, and carry war into its borders.
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- e) And shall become strong with a small people. The meaning of this seems to be, that at first his own forces would be small; that he would go up in such a way as not to excite suspicion, but that, either by an increase of his forces there, by uniting himself to confederates, by alluring the people by the promise of rewards, or by gradually taking one town after another and adding them to his dominions, he would become strong The fact in the case was, that Antiochus pretended in his invasion of Egypt to be the friend of the Egyptian king, and that he came to aid him, and to settle him finally on the throne. By degrees, however, he became possessed of one town after another, and subdued one place after another, until he finally became possessed of the king himself, and had him entirely in his power.
4. Verses 27-29: "And both these kings' hearts shall be to do mischief, and they shall speak lies at one table; but it shall not prosper: for yet the end shall be at the time appointed. Then shall he return into his land with great riches; and his heart shall be against the holy covenant; and he shall do exploits, and return to his own land. At the time appointed he shall return, and come toward the south; but it shall not be as the former, or as the latter."
- a. Other Translations:
- 1) American Standard Version: "And as for both these kings, their hearts shall be to do mischief, and they shall speak lies at one table: but it shall not prosper; for yet the end shall be at the time appointed. Then shall he return into his land with great substance; and his heart shall be against the holy covenant; and he shall do his pleasure, and return to his own land. At the time appointed he shall return, and come into the south; but it shall not be in the latter time as it was in the former."
 - 2) New King James Version: "Both these kings' hearts shall be bent on evil, and they shall speak lies at the same table; but it shall not prosper, for the end will still be at the appointed time. While returning to his land with great riches, his heart shall be moved against the holy covenant; so he shall do damage and return to his own land. At the appointed time he shall return and go toward the south; but it shall not be like the former or the latter."
- b. "The king of this country [vs. 28] was Ptolemy Philometor, son of Cleopatra, nephew to Antiochus Epiphanes, who overcame him at Pelusium (I Macc. 1:16-19). It appears that the Egyptians had amassed a large number of troops, but that the devices that were planned against them were of so crafty a nature that they were forced to yield. By some act of treachery it may have been that the battle was lost, and the strong cities of Egypt and a considerable amount of spoil came into the hands of the Syrians" (Hailey, pp.229f).

E. Daniel 11:30-37: More Events.

1. Verses 30-31: "For the ships of Chittim shall come against him: therefore he shall be grieved, and return, and have indignation against the holy covenant: so shall he do; he shall even return, and have intelligence with them that forsake the holy covenant. And arms shall stand on his part, and they shall pollute the sanctuary of strength, and shall take away the daily sacrifice, and they shall place the abomination that maketh desolate."
- a. Other Translations:
- 1) American Standard Version: "For ships of Kittim shall come against him; therefore he shall be grieved, and shall return, and have indignation against the holy covenant, and shall do his pleasure: he shall even return, and have regard unto them that forsake the holy covenant. And forces shall stand on his part, and they shall profane the sanctuary, even the fortress, and shall take away the continual burnt-offering, and they shall set up the abomination that maketh desolate."
 - 2) New King James Version: "For ships from Cyprus shall come against him; therefore he shall be grieved, and return in rage against the holy covenant, and do damage. So he shall return and show
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- regard for those who forsake the holy covenant. 31 And forces shall be mustered by him, and they shall defile the sanctuary fortress; then they shall take away the daily sacrifices, and place there the abomination of desolation.”
- b. Coffman:
- 1) We have already noted the almost negligent reference to the "little help" that the Maccabees would give to God's cause in that emergency (Daniel 11:34). This absolutely forbids any notion that anyone in the second century B.C. era could have authored this chapter.
 - 2) "The abomination that maketh desolate ..." It is the use which Jesus Christ himself made of this passage that must take priority in our efforts to understand it. In the first instance of that "abomination," it was without question the desecration of the Temple, the pollution of the altar by the offering of a sow upon it, the erection of an image of Zeus Olympus in the Temple itself, and other outrages of Antiochus. However Christ in Matthew 24:15,16 (and related passages) mentioned another "abomination of desolation" that would come into the "Holy Place," making that a signal for the Christians living at that time to flee from the City of Jerusalem, which they did, saving their lives by their flight to Pella, during the final destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. Thus this "abomination of desolation" was associated with "the end of the first Israel" in the destruction of their nation, their worship, and their status as "God's chosen people."
- c. “Up to this verse there is a general agreement among commentators, that the reference is to Antiochus Epiphanes. From this verse, however, to the end of the chapter, there is no little diversity of opinion. One portion suppose that the description of Antiochus and his deeds continues still to be the design of the prophet; another, that the Romans are here introduced ...” (Barnes).
- d. Antiochus has been the subject of the prophecy. We are now told that another entity would come against him, described as “the ships of Chittim.” “The expression *ships of Chittim*, is based Balaam’s prophecy, Num. 24:24. Jerome seems to have discovered the correct meaning by his translation *triremes*, for the reference appears to be to the Roman ships of Popilus Laenas which, according to Livy (45:10; also Poly.29:1) sailed to Egypt in order to prevent Syria from taking that country. *Chittim* in the OT denotes the inhabitants of Cyprus” (Young, p.244).
- e. “What happened is a famous historical episode that has often been retold. C. Popillius Laenas headed the Roman embassy at the time when it encountered Antiochus, who was besieging Alexandria. The Roman appraised him of the demand of the senate that he quit the land. Antiochus hesitated and sought to gain time, With his staff the Roman drew a circle about the king and curtly told him that his decision must be reached before he stepped outside of the circle, or else he would have to meet the Romans in war. Antiochus, having lived in Rome as a young man for many years, well knew the strength of the Romans and, above all things, wanted to keep them appeased, and so, though thoroughly vexed and agitated, he had to give his word that he would withdraw from Egypt immediately.
- 1) “The rage he was unable to vent on Egypt is now turned against the people of Palestine. If Egypt was to remain unconquered by him and a rival power, Antiochus found it more necessary than ever to retain his hold on Palestine. He dispatched Appolonius, his general, to occupy the city of Jerusalem. In a Sabbath attack, when he knew that the orthodox Jews would not fight, he slaughtered large numbers of the Jews.
 - 2) “The city walls were destroyed, and a new fortress, the Akra, was built on the site of the citadel, Antiochus’ forces were assisted by Menelaus and his apostate followers, Antiochus ‘had regard’ unto these that had forsaken the holy covenant” (College Press).
- f. The presence of the Romans would naturally bring distress to Antiochus. Evil men such as Antiochus are inclined to strike out at someone else when they face troubles. If you get too close to a dog fight, one of the participants is apt to bite you. In the present case, this wicked ruler struck out against the
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holy covenant God had given to Israel. The rage he felt toward Egypt and Rome could not be vented against those powerful foes, but the Israelites were close at hand, and were hated by Antiochus. They were unable to defend themselves or God's system.

- g. As we see in this passage, Antiochus and his people would take away the daily sacrifice—they would forbid the Jews to engage in these religious activities; they would pollute the altar by burning bodies of swine on it. In various ways, the holy places of Jerusalem would be contaminated so that the rites and ceremonies of the Mosaic Law could not be carried on.
 - h. The theme developed in Daniel reveals that there would be four great world powers—the Babylonian, the Persian, the Grecian and the Roman Empires. Each of these would develop in turn, the former being overcome by the next in line, until the Romans would take complete control. This is shown in chapter two where the great image is used to describe these powerful empires. Using a different set of figures, Daniel seven provides more information about these great nations. In regards to the fourth empire (Rome), we are told of a “little horn” that would bring great trouble to God's people.
 - i. “The messenger sent to Daniel upon this occasion [Dan. 10] seemed to have been one of special honor and rank (vv. 5-9). His mission was ‘to make thee [Daniel] understand what shall befall thy people in the latter days; for the vision is yet for many days’ (v. 14); not the latter days of time, but of the Jewish economy, which occurred in the days of the Roman Empire and its world domination. In chapter 8 the second and third kingdoms were dealt with, and in chapter 11:5-35 the contemptible one, Antiochus Epiphanes and his effort to destroy the kingdom of God were revealed. So, beginning with verse 11:36 the Holy Spirit was ready to bring the book to a conclusion with the fourth kingdom, the Roman, and to deal with its end” (Hailey, p.234).
2. Verses 32-33: “And such as do wickedly against the covenant shall he corrupt by flatteries: but the people that do know their God shall be strong, and do exploits. And they that understand among the people shall instruct many: yet they shall fall by the sword, and by flame, by captivity, and by spoil, many days.”
- a. Other Translations:
 - 1) American Standard Version: “And such as do wickedly against the covenant shall he pervert by flatteries; but the people that know their God shall be strong, and do exploits. And they that are wise among the people shall instruct many; yet they shall fall by the sword and by flame, by captivity and by spoil, many days.”
 - 2) New King James Version: “Those who do wickedly against the covenant he shall corrupt with flattery; but the people who know their God shall be strong, and carry out great exploits. And those of the people who understand shall instruct many; yet for many days they shall fall by sword and flame, by captivity and plundering.”
 - b. “The word rendered ‘arms,’ in the verse before us ... means, properly, the arm—especially the lower arm below the elbow; and then comes to denote strength, might, power; and thence, is applied to a military force, or an army. See Dan 11:15. Such is undoubtedly the meaning here, and the reference is to the military force which Antiochus would employ to wreak his vengeance on the Jews—particularly by the instrumentality of Apollonius. Others would apply this to the Romans, and suppose that they are introduced here; but this construction is forced and unnatural, for (a) the reference in the previous verses was, undoubtedly, to Antiochus, and the narrative seems to proceed as if there were no change. (b) There is nothing in the statement which does not agree with what was done by Antiochus” (Barnes).
 - c. “The apostate Jews who have forsaken the Law of their God will be perverted by Antiochus, in that he will aid and abet them in their designs. This he will do by flattery and intrigues. Those, however, who remain loyal to God will show themselves valiant and will accomplish much in their cause. I Macc. 1:62 reads, “‘And many in Israel were strong, and were fortified in themselves, not to eat unclean things. And they chose to die, that they might not be defiled with the meats, nor profane the
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holy covenant; and they died” (Young, p.245).

d. Jospheus offers the following:

- 1) “Now it came to pass, after two years, in the hundred forty and fifth year, on the twenty-fifth day of that month which is by us called Chasleu, and by the Macedonians Apelleus, in the hundred and fifty-third olympiad, that the king came up to Jerusalem, and, pretending peace, he got possession of the city by treachery; at which time he spared not so much as those that admitted him into it, on account of the riches that lay in the temple; but, led by his covetous inclination, (for he saw there was in it a great deal of gold, and many ornaments that had been dedicated to it of very great value,) and in order to plunder its wealth, he ventured to break the league he had made. So he left the temple bare, and took away the golden candlesticks, and the golden altar [of incense], and table [of shew-bread], and the altar [of burnt-offering]; and did not abstain from even the veils, which were made of fine linen and scarlet.
 - 2) “He also emptied it of its secret treasures, and left nothing at all remaining; and by this means cast the Jews into great lamentation, for he forbade them to offer those daily sacrifices which they used to offer to God, according to the law. And when he had pillaged the whole city, some of the inhabitants he slew, and some he carried captive, together with their wives and children, so that the multitude of those captives that were taken alive amounted to about ten thousand. He also burnt down the finest buildings; and when he had overthrown the city walls, he built a citadel in the lower part of the city, for the place was high, and overlooked the temple; on which account he fortified it with high walls and towers, and put into it a garrison of Macedonians. However, in that citadel dwelt the impious and wicked part of the [Jewish] multitude, from whom it proved that the citizens suffered many and sore calamities.
 - 3) “And when the king had built an idol altar upon God's altar, he slew swine upon it, and so offered a sacrifice neither according to the law, nor the Jewish religious worship in that country. He also compelled them to forsake the worship which they paid their own God, and to adore those whom he took to be gods; and made them build temples, and raise idol altars in every city and village, and offer swine upon them every day. He also commanded them not to circumcise their sons, and threatened to punish any that should be found to have transgressed his injunction. He also appointed overseers, who should compel them to do what he commanded.
 - 4) “And indeed many Jews there were who complied with the king's commands, either voluntarily, or out of fear of the penalty that was denounced. But the best men, and those of the noblest souls, did not regard him, but did pay a greater respect to the customs of their country than concern as to the punishment which he threatened to the disobedient; on which account they every day underwent great miseries and bitter torments; for they were whipped with rods, and their bodies were torn to pieces, and were crucified, while they were still alive, and breathed. They also strangled those women and their sons whom they had circumcised, as the king had appointed, hanging their sons about their necks as they were upon the crosses. And if there were any sacred book of the law found, it was destroyed, and those with whom they were found miserably perished also” (Josephus, Book 12, V, 4).
 - 5) Consider Barnes’ learned comments:
 - a) On the meaning of the phrase "abomination of desolation," see the notes at Dan 9:27. The reference here is, undoubtedly, to something that Antiochus set up in the temple that was an indication of desolation, or the result of his having laid the temple in ruins.
 - b) The very expression occurs in 1 Macc 1:54: "Now, the fifteenth day of the month Casleu, in the hundred and forty-fifth year, they set up the "abomination of desolation" upon the altar, and builded idol-altars throughout the cities of Judah on every side." This would seem, from 1 Macc
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1:59, to have been an idol-altar erected "over" or "upon" the altar of burnt-offerings. "They did sacrifice upon the idol-altar, which was upon the altar of God." "At this time an old man, by the name of Athenaeus, was sent to Jerusalem to instruct the Jews in the Greek religion, and compel them to an observance of its rites. He dedicated the temple to Jupiter Olympius; and on the altar of Jehovah he placed a smaller altar, to be used in sacrificing to the pagan god." - Jahn, "Heb. Commonwealth," pp. 267,268.

- c) The reference here is, probably, to this altar, as being in itself and in the situation where it was located an "abominable" thing in the eyes of the Hebrews, and as being placed there by a "desolater," or "waster." The same "language" which is used here is applied in Dan 9:27, and in the New Testament, with great propriety to what the Romans set up in the temple as an indication of its conquest and profanation; but that fact does not make it certain that it is so to be understood "here," for it is as applicable to what Antiochus did as it is to what was done by the Romans.
- d) *And they that under stand among the people.* Among the Hebrew people. The allusion is to such as, in those times of so general corruption and apostasy, should have a proper understanding of the law of God and the nature of religion. There were such in the days of Judas Maccabeus, and it is reasonable to suppose that they would endeavor to inculcate just views among the people.
- (1) [Shall instruct many] In the nature of religion; in their duty to their country and to God.
 - (2) [Yet they shall fall by the sword] They shall not be immediately nor always successful. Their final triumph would be only after many of them had fallen in battle, or been made captives. Matrathins, the father of Judas Maccabeus, who began the opposition to Antiochus (1 Macc 2:1), having summoned to his standard as many as he could induce to follow him, retired for security to the mountains. He was pursued, and refusing to fight on the Sabbath, his enemies came upon him, and killed many of his followers, 1 Macc 2:14-37. The author of the book of Maccabees (1 Macc 2:38) says of this: "So they rose up against them in battle on the sabbath, and they slew them, with their wives and children, and their cattle, to the number of a thousand people."
 - (3) [And by flame] By fire. That is, probably, their dwellings would be fired, and they would perish in the flames, or in caves where they fled for shelter, or by being cast into heated caldrons of brass. See 2 Macc 6:11: "And others that had run together into caves near by" (when Antiochus endeavored to enforce on them the observance of pagan laws and customs), "to keep the sabbath-day secretly, being discovered to Philip, were all burnt together, because they made a conscience to help themselves for the honor of the most sacred day." 2 Macc 7:3-5: "Then the king, being in a rage, commanded pans and caldrons to be made hot: which immediately being heated, he commanded to cut out the tongue of him that spake first, and to cut off the utmost parts of his body, the rest of his brethren and his mother looking on. Now when he was thus maimed in all his members, he commanded him, being yet alive, to be brought to the fire, and to be fried in the pan," etc.
 - (4) [By captivity] 1 Macc 1:32: "But the women and children took they captive." See also 2 Macc 5:24.
 - (5) [And by spoil] By plunder, to wit, of the temple and city. See 1 Macc 1:20-24.
 - (6) [Many days] Hebrew, "days." The time is not specified, but the idea is that it would be for a considerable period. Josephus says it was three years. - "Ant." b. xii. ch. vii. Sections 6, 7; 1 Macc 1:59; 4:54; 2 Macc 10:1-7.
- e) Those Jews who had followed Menelaus in welcoming the paganization of their religion and society were encouraged by the deceit and flattery of Antiochus' representatives to become even
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more degenerate and apostate. On the other hand, the pious Jews suffered extreme tortures but they left examples of courage and faith in their wake. The laws of Antiochus promulgating Hellenism and proscribing Judaism were enforced with the utmost cruelty. An aged scribe, Eleazar, was flogged to death because he refused to eat swine's flesh. A mother and her seven children were successively butchered, in the presence of the governor, for refusing to pay homage to an image. Two mothers who had circumcised their new-born sons were driven through the city and cast headlong from the wall. But such loyalty to God's laws in the face of suffering only served to fan the spark of freedom in the hearts of the pious Jews. This spark would later ignite and burn into a flame in the Maccabean family. [College Press].

3. Verses 34-35: "Now when they shall fall, they shall be holpen with a little help: but many shall cleave to them with flatteries. And some of them of understanding shall fall, to try them, and to purge, and to make them white, even to the time of the end: because it is yet for a time appointed."
 - a. Other Translations.
 - 1) American Standard Version: "Now when they shall fall, they shall be helped with a little help; but many shall join themselves unto them with flatteries. And some of them that are wise shall fall, to refine them, and to purify, and to make them white, even to the time of the end; because it is yet for the time appointed."
 - 2) New King James Version: "Now when they fall, they shall be aided with a little help; but many shall join with them by intrigue. And some of those of understanding shall fall, to refine them, purify them, and make them white, until the time of the end; because it is still for the appointed time."
 - b. "Apparently this prophecy (note that it is related in the future tense) was fulfilled in the appearance of Judas Maccabaeus who, however, was unable to put an end to all the distresses of the people (cf. 1 Macc. 3:11ff; 4:1:4ff). Many hypocrites will associate themselves with the faithful who oppose Antiochus. This hypocritical association was doubtless due in part at least to the severity with which apostates were treated" (Young, p.245).
 - c. It is now revealed to the prophet that in the midst of all the paganizing of the covenant people in the centuries to come there will be a "faithful remnant"—the wise ones. In the book of Maccabees they are called "the godly ones— Hasidim," (cf. 1 Mace. 2 :42), These godly ones will teach others the faithful way of God, but many of them shall suffer much for their faith. It is possible that Hebrews 11 :32-40 may have reference to these times. The "little help" they receive probably refers to Judas Maccabees whose efforts were valiant enough but he was never able to put an end to all the distresses of the people (cf. 1 Mace. 3 :1ff; 4:14ff). Many Jews who did not really believe in the Maccabean cause played the hypocrite and joined it for fear of being classified as an apostate. The suffering this remnant had to endure for its faith, however, would have a purging, purifying effect. It did not take long to separate the hypocrites from the true "godly ones." [See College Press).
 - d. Those who remain faithful to Jehovah, regardless where and when they live, will face opposition and even persecution from those who repudiate God's will.
 - 1) 2 Timothy 3:12: "Yea, and all that would live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution."
 - 2) 1 Peter 4:4-5: "wherein they think strange that ye run not with them into the same excess of riot, speaking evil of of: who shall give account to him that is ready to judge the living and the dead."
 4. Verses 36-37: "And the king shall do according to his will; and he shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvellous things against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished: for that that is determined shall be done. Neither shall he regard the God of his fathers, nor the desire of women, nor regard any god: for he shall magnify himself above all."
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a. Other Translations:

- 1) American Standard Version: "And the king shall do according to his will; and he shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvellous things against the God of gods; and he shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished; for that which is determined shall be done. Neither shall he regard the gods of his fathers, nor the desire of women, nor regard any god; for he shall magnify himself above all."
- 2) New King James Version: "Then the king shall do according to his own will: he shall exalt and magnify himself above every god, shall speak blasphemies against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the wrath has been accomplished; for what has been determined shall be done. He shall regard neither the God of his fathers nor the desire of women, nor regard any god; for he shall exalt himself above them all."

b. We here insert the comments Barnes made on this passage:

- 1) *And the king shall do according to his will.* Shall be absolute and supreme, and shall accomplish his purposes. This refers, it seems to me, beyond question, to Antiochus Epiphanes, and was exactly fulfilled in him. He accomplished his purposes in regard to the city and temple in the most arbitrary manner, and was, in every respect, an absolute despot. It should be said, however, here, that most Christian interpreters suppose that the allusion here to Antiochus ceases, and that henceforward, it refers to Antichrist The only reason alleged for this is, that there are things affirmed here of the "king" which could not be true of Antiochus. But, in opposition to this, it may be observed:
 - a) That the allusion in the previous verses is undoubtedly to Antiochus Epiphanes.
 - b) There is no indication of any "change," for the prophetic narrative seems to proceed as if the allusion to the same person continued.
 - c) The word "king" is not a word to be applied to Antichrist, it being nowhere used of him.
 - d) Such a transition, without anymore decided marks of it, would not be in accordance with the usual method in the prophetic writings, leaving a plain prediction in the very midst of the description, and passing on at once to a representation of one who would arise after many hundreds of years, and of whom the former could be considered as in no way the type. The most obvious and honest way, therefore, of interpreting this is, to refer it to Antiochus, and perhaps we shall find that the difficulty of applying it to him is not insuperable.
 - 2) *And he shall exalt himself.* No one can doubt that this will agree with Antiochus Epiphanes—a proud, haughty, absolute, and stern monarch, the purpose of whose reign was to exalt himself, and to extend the limits of his empire.
 - 3) *And magnify himself above every god.* That is, by directing what gods should or should not be worshipped; attempting to displace the claim of all those who were worshipped as gods at his pleasure, and establishing the worship of other gods in their place. Thus he assumed the right to determine what god should be worshipped in Jerusalem, abolishing the worship of Jehovah, and setting up that of Jupiter Olympius in the stead; and so throughout his whole dominion, by a proclamation, he forbade the worship of any god but his, 1 Macc 1:44-51; Jos. Ant. b. xii. ch. v. Section 4,5. One who assumes or claims the right to forbid the adoration of any particular god, and to order divine homage to be rendered to anyone which he chooses, exalts himself above the gods, as he in this way denies the right which they must be supposed to claim to prescribe their own worship.
 - 4) *And shall speak marvelous things.* The Hebrew word ... would properly denote things wonderful, or fitted to excite astonishment; things that are unusual and extraordinary: and the meaning here is, that the things spoken would be so impious and atrocious—so amazing and wonderful for their
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wickedness, as to produce amazement.

- 5) *Against the God of gods.* The true God, Jehovah; he is supreme, and is superior to all that is called God, or that is worshipped as such. Nothing could be better descriptive of Antiochus than this; nothing was ever more strikingly fulfilled than this was in him.
 - 6) *And shall prosper until the indignation be accomplished.* Referring still to the fact that there was an appointed time during which this was to continue. That time might well be called a time of "indignation," for the Lord seemed to be angry against his temple and people, and suffered this pagan king to pour out his wrath without measure against the temple, the city, and the whole land.
 - 7) *For that that is determined shall be done.* What is purposed in regard to the city and temple, and to all other things, must be accomplished. Compare Dan 10:21. The angel here states a general truth—that all that God has ordained will come to pass. The application of this truth here is, that the series of events must be suffered to run on, and that it could not be expected that they would be arrested until all that had been determined in the Divine mind should be effected. They who would suffer, therefore, in those times must wait with patience until the Divine purposes should be brought about, and when the period should arrive, the calamities would cease.
- c. Hailey offers his view on this section.
- 1) "Objections have been made to making verses 36 and following, apply to the Romans on the ground that there is no indication of such a change between verses 35 and 36. But the same, even stronger objection could be made to applying verse 36 and following to the antichrist It seems that 'the king' is used here as it was used in chapter seven 'The four beasts are four kings' (7:17); 'The fourth beast shall be a fourth kingdom' (v. 23). The conclusion is that the beast equals king equals kingdom; therefore the king is a kingdom, the fourth empire The [Roman] emperors magnified themselves above every god by deifying themselves, or allowing the people to deify them. The emperors and their magistrates spoke 'marvelous things against the God of gods' by forcing the people to confess, 'Caesar is God,' or, 'Caesar is Lord' under the penalty of death" (pp.234f).
 - 2) "The disregard of 'the king' (the fourth empire and the emperors who represented it) of its former gods, the desire of women, and the magnifying of themselves above these, is exemplified to its supreme extent in Nero" (ibid., p.235).
- d. Many commentators want to make the evil one of this passage the so-called "antichrist." This is a made-up personage who is supposed to appear at the end of time and do battle with Christ on a literal battlefield. From all of the talk about *antichrist*, one might get the idea that the Bible is overrunning with information about this subject. The apostle John reminded his auditors that they had heard of the coming of the antichrist. He is about to give more information about this personage. This personage is depicted as be *anti* with reference to Christ. He stands opposed to Christ. One can stand in opposition to Christ by working directly against him or by taking the place of Christ in the thinking of his disciples. See the outline in **Appendix 6** for more information of the antichrist. The word *antichrist* appears only in the writings of John:
- a) 1 John 2:18: "Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time."
 - b) 1 John 2:22: "Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son."
 - c) 1 John 4:3: "And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world."
 - d) 2 John 7: "For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is
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come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist.”

- e. Barnes thinks the text is still speaking of Antiochus. “This was in all respects true of Antiochus. At his pleasure he worshipped the gods commonly adored in his country, or the gods worshipped by the Greeks and Romans, or no gods. And, in a special manner, instead of honoring the god of his fathers, and causing the image of that god to be placed in the temple at Jerusalem, as it might have been supposed he would, he caused the altar of Jupiter Olympius to be set up there, and his worship to be celebrated there. In fact, as Antiochus had been educated abroad, and had passed his early life in foreign countries, he had never paid much respect to the religion of his own land.”
- f. Although this section in Daniel is far from simple, this writer leans toward the view espoused by Hailey.

F. Daniel 11:38-45: More Events.

1. Verses 38-39: “But in his estate shall he honour the God of forces: and a god whom his fathers knew not shall he honour with gold, and silver, and with precious stones, and pleasant things. Thus shall he do in the most strong holds with a strange god, whom he shall acknowledge and increase with glory: and he shall cause them to rule over many, and shall divide the land for gain.”
 - a. Other translations:
 - 1) American Standard Version: “But in his place shall he honor the god of fortresses; and a god whom his fathers knew not shall he honor with gold, and silver, and with precious stones, and pleasant things. And he shall deal with the strongest fortresses by the help of a foreign god: whosoever acknowledgeth him he will increase with glory; and he shall cause them to rule over many, and shall divide the land for a price.”
 - 2) New King James Version: “But in their place he shall honor a god of fortresses; and a god which his fathers did not know he shall honor with gold and silver, with precious stones and pleasant things. Thus he shall act against the strongest fortresses with a foreign god, which he shall acknowledge, and advance its glory; and he shall cause them to rule over many, and divide the land for gain.”
 - b. The king of the passage is said to be successful in conquering even the strongest of fortresses. It would be with the aid of a *foreign god* that he would be able to conquer. In reality, of course, no man-made idol (god) has any power to act or speak; none of them has any being, none is alive. It is true that some ancient idolaters attributed success to their gods, but that was only in their imagination. The allusion of the passage might be in this sense.
 - c. There is another aspect that might have a connection to Daniel’s statement. In many cases in the history of Israel, God’s people rebelled against him and were punished by the armed invasion of some pagan nation. The invaders would claim the victory by their own prowess or by the power of their idol. But the fact was, that Jehovah allowed or in some way enabled the enemy to defeat Israel. Their loss was God’s penalty against them for their rebellion. The Babylonians overcame their nation—this was Jehovah’s means of punishing the Jews. But he likewise used yet another nation to punish Babylon.
2. Verses 40-41: “And at the time of the end shall the king of the south push at him: and the king of the north shall come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, and with horsemen, and with many ships; and he shall enter into the countries, and shall overflow and pass over. He shall enter also into the glorious land, and many countries shall be overthrown: but these shall escape out of his hand, even Edom, and Moab, and the chief of the children of Ammon.”
 - a. Other translations:
 - 1) American Standard Version: “And at the time of the end shall the king of the south contend with him; and the king of the north shall come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, and with

- horsemen, and with many ships; and he shall enter into the countries, and shall overflow and pass through. He shall enter also into the glorious land, and many countries shall be overthrown; but these shall be delivered out of his hand: Edom, and Moab, and the chief of the children of Ammon.”
- 2) New King James Version: “At the time of the end the king of the South shall attack him; and the king of the North shall come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, horsemen, and with many ships; and he shall enter the countries, overwhelm them, and pass through. He shall also enter the Glorious Land, and many countries shall be overthrown; but these shall escape from his hand: Edom, Moab, and the prominent people of Ammon.”
 - b. “This is admittedly a difficult passage, and is so indicated by the varied interpretations of it. In my view the popular antichrist theory of interpretation is among the most untenable of all. If one keeps within the bounds of Daniel’s total context of his visions, he may reach a reasonable and possible understanding of the passage” (Hailey, p.237).
 - c. The Romans were a strong people, with stalwart soldiers that seemed invincible. They came to the east, sweeping away all opposition that was in their way. In the words of the text, they came with many ships, horsemen and chariots.
 - 1) The Syrians and the Egyptians fell under his awesome power. The king would be the emperors of the Roman Empire under whom were the countless legions of Roman soldiers. Their weapons were mighty; they tactics were overwhelming; their ships unstoppable.
 - 2) Only the nations of Edom, Moab, and Ammon were not overcome. We are not told why. It might be on account of their long opposition to Israel. Perhaps they aided the Romans when they came into the *Glorious Land* [The Promised Land].
 - d. “The ‘time of the end’ must properly denote the end or consummation of the series of events under consideration, or the matter in hand, and properly and obviously means here the end or consummation of the transactions which had been referred to in the previous part of the vision. It is equivalent to what we should say by expressing it thus: ‘at the winding up of the affair.’ In Dan 12:4,9,13, the word ‘end,’ however, obviously refers to another close or consummation—the end or consummation of the affairs that reach far into the future—the final dispensation of things in this world.
 - 1) “It has been held by many that this could not be understood as referring to Antiochus, because what is here stated did not occur in the close of his reign.
 - 2) “Perhaps at first sight the most obvious interpretation of what is said in this and the subsequent verses to the end of the chapter would be, that, after the series of events referred to in the previous verses; after Antiochus had invaded Egypt, and had been driven thence by the fear of the Romans, he would, in the close of his reign, again attack that country, and bring it, and Libya, and Aethiopia into subjection (Dan 11:43); and that when there, tidings out of the north should compel him to abandon the expedition and return again to his own land” (Barnes).
 - e. The time of the end is used in reference to the end of time—the end of the world, the end of the universe, the Second Coming of Christ. All these event will occur at the same instant of time. When the Roman legions entered Palestine, they gained complete control over all Syria and Egypt. The Grecian Empire was entirely taken over by the power of Rome. This spelled the end of things as they had been; a complete new order would then have been established.
 - f. “In 63 B.C. two brothers were fighting over the position of High Priest and King when Rome intervened. Pompey, the Roman general stationed in Syria, entered the picture to help settle the quarrel. He settled it by annexing the Jewish kingdom to Rome. He continued the conquest by overthrowing many countries, but Edom, Moab, and portions of the children of Ammon escaped” (Hailey, p.238).
3. Verses 42-43: “He shall stretch forth his hand also upon the countries: and the land of Egypt shall not
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escape. But he shall have power over the treasures of gold and of silver, and over all the precious things of Egypt: and the Libyans and the Ethiopians shall be at his steps.”

a. Other Translations:

- 1) American Standard Version: “He shall stretch forth his hand also upon the countries; and the land of Egypt shall not escape. But he shall have power over the treasures of gold and of silver, and over all the precious things of Egypt; and the Libyans and the Ethiopians shall be at his steps.”
- 2) New King James Version: “He shall stretch out his hand against the countries, and the land of Egypt shall not escape. He shall have power over the treasures of gold and silver, and over all the precious things of Egypt; also the Libyans and Ethiopians shall follow at his heels.”

b. Antiochus held power over the people in his area, but he could not be regarded as a world-conqueror. He could not control Egypt; he certainly could not have conquered the Libyans and Ethiopians. But these and many other nations and territories fell under the control of mighty Rome.

c. Having overcome Syria, controlled Palestine, and man-handled Egypt, it would only be a natural procedure for them to extend their power into Lybia and Ethiopia.

4. Verses 44-45: “But tidings out of the east and out of the north shall trouble him: therefore he shall go forth with great fury to destroy, and utterly to make away many. And he shall plant the tabernacles of his palace between the seas in the glorious holy mountain; yet he shall come to his end, and none shall help him.”

a. Other Translations:

- 1) American Standard Version: “But tidings out of the east and out of the north shall trouble him; and he shall go forth with great fury to destroy and utterly to sweep away many. And he shall plant the tents of his palace between the sea and the glorious holy mountain; yet he shall come to his end, and none shall help him.”
- 2) New King James Version: “But news from the east and the north shall trouble him; therefore he shall go out with great fury to destroy and annihilate many. And he shall plant the tents of his palace between the seas and the glorious holy mountain; yet he shall come to his end, and no one will help him.”

b. “Whether this prophecy was fulfilled by the threat of invasion by barbarians from the north and east, that is, the Huns, Goths, and other invaders, or threats of rebellion among Roman possessions, is uncertain. Rome could tolerate neither, so it could have been either, or both. At any rate, Rome would respond to the threat in its usual vigorous and crushing manner” (Hailey, p.239).

c. Pompey entered the “Holy Land” in 63 B.C. After the Jewish rebellion against Roman rule a good many years later, the Roman army entered the land with vengeance on it mind. Jerusalem was besieged and taken in 70 A.D. by the army under Titus. There was no earthly power that could have stopped them.

d. But Daniel provides assurance that this cruel power would itself be overcome and come to its end. There would be no one who could or world help it. Rome fell in 476 A.D. It will not rise again.

Daniel 12

A. Daniel 12:1-4: Many Will Be Raised From the Dust.

1. “This final chapter of Daniel is interpreted in various ways by different schools of scholars. Practically all of the critics limit the application to the last days of Antiochus, supposing that Daniel was totally mistaken about the resurrection which he mentioned, there being no resurrection whatever that marked the closing of the Antiochus persecution. We must reject this in its entirety, because we cannot believe that Christ would have quoted part of this chapter, applying it to the destruction of Jerusalem with antitypical overtones in the final judgment itself unless there had been much more here than a blunder on the part of the prophet Daniel” (Coffman).
2. Verse 1: “And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book.”
 - a. Other Translations.
 - 1) American Standard Version: “And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince who standeth for the children of thy people; and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book.”
 - 2) New King James Version: “At that time Michael shall stand up, The great prince who stands watch over the sons of your people; And there shall be a time of trouble, Such as never was since there was a nation, Even to that time. And at that time your people shall be delivered, Every one who is found written in the book.”
 - b. According to Hailey:
 - 1) “‘The king’ would enter the glorious land, which he did in the person of Pompey (11:41). But he would also plant his tents between the Mediterranean Sea and the glorious mount Zion. This he did when Titus brought his Roman troops and besieged the city in A.D. 70, destroying the people as a nation, the city, and the temple. But like all heathen world powers, he would come to an end. And like the passing of Nineveh as ‘a great as last!’ (See Nahum 3:19), so would come the passing of the Roman empire, the fourth beast of Daniel’s dream” (p.240).
 - 2) “‘At that time,’ the time of the siege of Jerusalem by the Romans ... ‘shall Michael stand up,’ that is, to fulfill his role as the angelic prince of Daniel’s people, who has been introduced already [10:13]” (p.241).
 - 3) Note: Brother Rex Turner, another great Bible scholar, rejected brother Hailey’s view, but did not offer any argument against it (*Daniel, The Prophet of God*, p.291).
 - c. At the time of the events being predicted, we are told that there would be troubles “such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time” (ASV). This certainly appears to be parallel to our Lord’s declaration in Matthew 24:21: “For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.” Does not this connect our text to the Roman destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D.? It seems so to this writer.
 - d. Excerpt from author’s commentary on Matthew 24:21: "For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be."
 - 1) Parallel passages:
 - a) Mark 13:19: "For *in* those days shall be affliction, such as was not from the beginning of the creation which God created unto this time, neither shall be."

- b) Luke 21:23-24: "But woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck, in those days! for there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people. And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled."
- 2) Notice that the time when this great tribulation was to be is the same as when the abomination of desolation came and when the saints were to flee from Judea and Jerusalem. We know that this great tribulation is not something that is to occur at the end of time because of the information preceding its mention and by the limiting statement of verse 34. There is no reason for taking the statement of verse 21 as a figure of speech. Jesus said plainly that the suffering of that period of time was unparalleled in history. It had greater suffering than that which was experienced during Noah's flood (those people died quickly, in a relatively painless way); it was greater than when God destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah (their death was not preceded with any long period of agony); it was greater than the suffering felt by those who died in either of the Atomic explosions in Japan (for those mostly died instantly).
- 3) In fact, when Josephus' record is consulted, we have much reason to understand it literally. Josephus gave the following reports:
- a) 1,100,000 Jews died at Jerusalem during the siege and fighting, and another 97,000 were captured and placed in slavery. How foolish the Jewish bravado of Matthew 27:25: "His blood be on up, and on our children."
- b) Women ate their own babies, men broke into houses and stole food from children's mouths, and neighbor robbed neighbor for the food they had.
- c) Rich Jews swallowed gold, deserted to the Romans, hoping to get away with some of their wealth. When the soldiers discovered the scheme, they began killing those who surrendered, ripping open their bodies in search of the coins. Thousands died in this fashion, two thousand in only one night.
- d) Many were beaten and tortured by the Roman soldiers; thousands were crucified in various bodily positions as jests. This was done until all of the wood had been used as crosses, and even places to erect crosses were filled!
- e) By actual count, 115,880 bodies were carried through one gate in three months; there were 600,000 in all thus disposed of. When the bodies could no longer be thrown outside the city, they were stored in large houses within the city.
- f) Thousands of the captives were later forced to fight beasts and each other in arenas; this for the enjoyment of spectators.
- g) Jerusalem was overthrown and the temple was utterly destroyed; Matthew 24:2 was literally fulfilled. When the Romans broke into the city, Josephus said, "...They slew whomsoever they found, without distinction, and burned the houses and all the people who had fled into them; and when they entered for the sake of plunder, they found whole families of dead persons, and houses full of carcasses destroyed by famine, then they came out with their hands empty. And though they thus pitied the dead, they had not the same emotion for the living, but killed all they met, whereby they filled the lanes with dead bodies. The whole city ran with blood, insomuch that many things which were burning were extinguished by the blood" (Wars, Book VI, chap. 8,5; chap. 9,3). He also reports that the city fell to the Romans on the same calendar day that it had fallen to Nebuchadnezzar in 606 B.C.
- e. Daniel was told that on that occasion "thy people shall be delivered." *Delivered* and *saved* are equivalents; the salvation indicated depends on the nature of the deliverance. Paul said in 2 Timothy
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4:17 that had been delivered out of the mouth of the lion—his life was saved. Mark 16:16 stated that those who believe and are baptized will be saved—delivered from the guilt of their past sins. In what sense were Daniel's people to be delivered and who precisely would be delivered?

- 1) If our conclusion is correct and the troubles in the text are those related to the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, then the deliverance is salvation from the physical dangers and ordeals of the siege in A.D. 70. "But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved" (Matt. 24:13).
 - a) The "end" the Lord is speaking of in this section of the chapter is limited by the statement in verse 34 to "this generation." While it is true that a Christian must endure to the end of his life if he expects to go to heaven (Rev. 2:10; Matt. 10:22), this is not the "end" being presented in this setting. It is the end of the Jewish system, for this is the subject he is discussing.
 - b) The salvation is the preservation of their physical lives (cf. verses 15-20; Luke 21:18-24). The end the Lord is contemplating is connected to the proclamation of the gospel throughout the world; the end will come only after that great effort has been completed.
 - c) "The persecutions that shall come—unto the end; to the destruction of the Jewish polity, without growing cold or apostatizing—shall be saved, shall be delivered in all imminent dangers, and have his soul at last brought to an eternal glory. It is very remarkable that not a single Christian perished in the destruction of Jerusalem, though there were many there when Cestius Gallus invested the city; and, had he persevered in the siege, he would soon have rendered himself master of it; but, when he unexpectedly and unaccountably raised the siege, the Christians took that opportunity to escape....This counsel was remembered and wisely followed by the Christians afterward. Eusebius and Epiphanius say, that at this juncture, after Cestius Gallus had raised the siege, and Vespasian was approaching with his army, all who believed in Christ left Jerusalem and fled to Pella, and other places beyond the river Jordan; and so they all marvelously escaped the general shipwreck of their country: not one of them perished" (Adam Clark, Comments on Matthew 24).
 - d) "But the people of the church in Jerusalem had been commanded by a revelation, vouchsafed to approved men there before the war, to leave the city and to dwell in a certain town of Perea called Pella. And when those that believed in Christ had come thither from Jerusalem, then, as if the royal city of the Jews and the whole land of Judea were entirely destitute of holy men, the judgment of God at length overtook those who had committed such outrages against Christ and his apostles, and totally destroyed that generation of impious men. But the number of calamities which everywhere fell upon the nation at that time; the extreme misfortunes to which the inhabitants of Judea were especially subjected, the thousands of men, as well as women and children, that perished by the sword, by famine, and by other forms of death innumerable,—all these things, as well as the many great sieges which were carried on against the cities of Judea, and the excessive sufferings endured by those that fled to Jerusalem itself, as to a city of perfect safety, and finally the general course of the whole war, as well as its particular occurrences in detail, and how at last the abomination of desolation, proclaimed by the prophets, stood in the very temple of God, so celebrated of old, the temple which was now awaiting its total and final destruction by fire,— all these things any one that wishes may find accurately described in the history written by Josephus." [Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Series 2, Volume 1, PC Study Bible formatted electronic database Copyright © 2003, 2006 by Biblesoft, Inc.].
- 2) Those to be delivered were the ones named were recorded in the book. But what book?
 - a) Malachi 3:16-18: "Then they that feared the LORD spake often one to another: and the LORD hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared

the LORD, and that thought upon his name. And they shall be mine, saith the LORD of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him. Then shall ye return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not.”

- (1) There was a faithful few in Malachi's generation who still feared the Lord, and hearkened to his word.
 - (2) Though their names remain unknown to us, yet God acknowledged them as his own. These were men and women of whom the world was unworthy, who were too good for this world (Heb. 11:38).
 - (3) These faithful ones listened and learned from Malachi, and sought each other out, and spake often one to another. Implied in this observation, is doubtless the offering of encouraging words to one another. Such communion would produce strength and hope. Even in good times, when the gospel is popular, God's people need to encourage each other; in troublesome times, we certainly need encouragement.
- b) This book of remembrance is equivalent to the *book of Life* noted elsewhere in the Bible.
- (1) Exodus 32:32-33: "Yet now, if thou wilt forgive their sin--; and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which thou hast written. And the LORD said unto Moses, Whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book."
 - (2) Psalm 56:8: "Thou tellest my wanderings: put thou my tears into thy bottle: are they not in thy book?"
 - (3) Psalm 69:28: "Let them be blotted out of the book of the living, and not be written with the righteous."
 - (4) Philippians 4:3: "And I entreat thee also, true yokefellow, help those women which laboured with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and with other my fellowlabourers, whose names are in the book of life."
- f. In our Lord's discourse in Matthew 24, he provided information that would forewarn his people who would be at Jerusalem when the Roman army approached. He told them in effect that the mighty walls of their great city could not protect them from the impending assault. They were told to quickly flee as soon as the invaders were in sight.
- 1) Matthew 24:16-20: "Then let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains: Let him which is on the housetop not come down to take any thing out of his house: Neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes. And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days! But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day."
 - 2) They were to pray that the day of their flight would be on a weekday and in a time of good weather. The flight would be difficult for those who had small children and women who were pregnant. If they had to flee during winter time, greater hardships would be met, and difficulties in travel would be experienced due to cold and rain. If it were on the Sabbath, they would have difficulty escaping Jerusalem, for the gates of the city were closed on those occasions.
 - 3) The Jews could even be expected to offer hindrance to their escape since they still enforced the rules limiting travel on the Sabbath. This detail shows that the time period involved was when the Sabbath would have been a problem for the Christians. Sabbath keeping was officially removed when Jesus died on the cross (Col. 2:14-17; Rom. 7:1-7). But the Jews stilled practiced Sabbath-keeping, enforcing strict control until the Romans destroyed their national status.
- g. We are told that all the Christians escaped from Jerusalem, fleeing to Pella, which was about 100 miles
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away. When the Romans temporarily withdrew, the rest of the saints were able to escape. The Romans returned, laid siege to the city from April to about September, when the city fell. The Lord had promised in Luke 21:18 that the saints would be preserved, provided they followed his directions: "But there shall not an hair of your head perish."

3. Verse 2: "And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt."
 - a. Other Translations.
 - 1) American Standard Version: "And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt."
 - 2) New King James Version: "And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, Some to everlasting life, Some to shame and everlasting contempt."
 - b. "This prophecy, which applies to the time of the Messiah's teaching, has its parallel in Ezekiel's prophecy of the dry bones and their resurrection (Ezek. 27:14), neither of which, Ezekiel or Daniel, refers to the final resurrection. Ezekiel's prophecy referred to a spiritual resurrection of the Jews in Babylon and their return to Judea, for Jehovah added, 'Son of man these bones are the whole house of Israel' (v. 11f; read also vv. 12-14), and the resurrection of Daniel's prophecy referred to the spiritual resurrection of the people under the teaching of Jesus and the apostles" (Hailey, p.243).
 - 1) Matthew 24:14: "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come."
 - 2) During the almost forty years from the time of this discourse to the destruction of Jerusalem, the apostles and other faithful saints had been busy proclaiming the gospel in their world. Romans 1:8 speaks of the faith of the Romans saints as having been spoken of "throughout the whole world." Romans 10:18 describes the fact that the sound of gospel preaching "went into all the earth."
 - 3) Colossians 1:5-6 says that the gospel had been taken into all the earth (cf. Mark 16:15). Colossians 1:23 declares that the gospel had been "preached to every creature which is under heaven." The book of Romans was written about 56-58 A.D. and Colossians was written about 62 A.D.
 - 4) The condition of verse 14 was fulfilled prior to the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. About seven or eight years before the end, the condition had been met. This is not something which still lies in the future from our day; it has already been fulfilled.
 - c. Our current text is highly controverted. On the surface it appears to speak of the resurrection of the last day. The words of the verse certainly fit that great event. But we must be sure that we do not take this or any other verse out of its context. One of the most difficult decisions a Bible student must make is to determine whether a statement is to be taken as literal or figurative. Although our Lord said he was a door and as the light of the world, we recognize these as figures of speech. Could the resurrection of Daniel 12:2 could be construed as a figurative resurrection?
 - 1) If it is a literal resurrection (at the last day), how does that view fit into the immediate context? If it is a figurative resurrection, how does that view fit into the immediate context?
 - 2) If the reference is to the resurrection at the end of time, we would have to explain why Daniel used "many" instead of "all." The Bible teaches that all the dead will be raised at the Second Coming of Christ.
 - a) John 5:28-29: "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." Not a single dead person will not be raised!

- b) Acts 24:15: “And have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust.”
- 3) If the reference is to the figurative resurrection of those who were spiritually dead, then why did Daniel describe their former condition as sleeping in the dust of the earth? If the statement is a figure of speech, the explanation is obvious—they were redeemed, made alive, and brought into full fellowship with God.
- a) Isaiah 59:1-2: “Behold, the LORD'S hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear.”
- b) John 5:25: “Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live.”
- c) Ephesians 2:1-6: “And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others. But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus” (NKJV).
- d. Consider the word *sleep* as it is often used in the Bible.
- 1) Those who have died physically are described as “sleeping.”
- a) 1 Thessalonians 4:13-14: “But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.”
- b) John 11:12-13: “Then said his disciples, Lord, if he sleep, he shall do well. Howbeit Jesus spake of his death: but they thought that he had spoken of taking of rest in sleep.”
- c) Acts 13:36: “For David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell on sleep, and was laid unto his fathers, and saw corruption.”
- d) 1 Corinthians 15:51: “Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed.”
- 2) Those who are spiritual dead (though they are physically alive) are described as sleeping.
- a) 1 Timothy 5:6: “But she that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth.”
- b) Romans 13:11: “And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed.”
- c) 1 Corinthians 11:30: “For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep.”
- d) 1 Thessalonians 5:6: “Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober.”
- e. Daniel reports that on the occasion he describes or in the situation that he depicts, many would awake—from their physical or spiritual slumber. Some would awake to everlasting life and some to shame and everlasting contempt. These statements would fit either the great resurrection of the last day or the spiritual revival of a lost soul who obeys the gospel.
- f. “The better explanation is that through the preaching of the word by Jesus, many were brought to spiritual life. But because iniquity abounded, the love of many waxed cold, they gave up the faith and went back to Judaism, or back into the world. They were raised by the Gospel, some to everlasting life,
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some to everlasting contempt, so not all of them remained faithful to Jesus Christ” (Hailey, p.244).

g. Contempt:

- 1) “Abhorrence, thrusting away” (*Young’s Analytical Concordance*).
 - 2) “The context usually gives a clue as to which translation should be preferred, whether anger, or displeasure, indignation, wrath, rage or fury” (*Theological Wordbook*, p.374).
 - 3) Romans 2:8: “But unto them that are factious, and obey not the truth, but obey unrighteousness, shall be wrath and indignation” (ASV).
 - 4) Hebrews 10:27: “But a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and a fierceness of fire which shall devour the adversaries” (ASV).
4. Verse 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.”
- a. Other Translations.
 - 1) American Standard Version: “And they that are wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever.”
 - 2) New King James Version: “Those who are wise shall shine Like the brightness of the firmament, And those who turn many to righteousness Like the stars forever and ever.”
 - b. This verse gives a beautiful picture of the wonderful influence of the Christian life [the following is from the American Standard Version].
 - 1) Matthew 5:14: “Ye are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hid.”
 - 2) Philippians 2:14-16: “Do all things without murmurings and questionings: that ye may become blameless and harmless, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom ye are seen as lights in the world, holding forth the word of life; that I may have whereof to glory in the day of Christ, that I did not run in vain neither labor in vain.”
 - 3) Isaiah 2:3: “And many peoples shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of Jehovah, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of Jehovah from Jerusalem.”
 - 4) Isaiah 60:2: “For, behold, darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the peoples; but Jehovah will arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee.”
 - c. Faithful Christians are the only ones who can really give light to the world (and this is the reflected light of Christ!). The world of the first century was in utter darkness as is shown by the crime, strife and sin which were so prevalent. The great Greek philosophers (Plato, Socrates, Aristotle) had given their wisdom and influence to the world but the world was still steeped in spiritual darkness.
 - 1) In the face of the failure of the earth's great men (philosophers, political and military leaders, religionists, *et al*), the Lord announced in this passage that those lowly Jewish disciples (fishermen, tax collectors, etc.) would be the world's hope for light! The great thinkers have been baffled by this.
 - 2) The ordinary Christian who knows little or nothing about philosophy and other human wisdom, knows and understands more about life than the greatest worldly experts. This is possible because he knows the Book, which gives us all that pertains to life and godliness (2 Pet. 1:3; 2 Tim. 3:16-17; Heb. 4:12; Acts 20:32; John 10:10; Matt. 5:1-12; 5:13-7:29).
 - 3) "The world through its wisdom knew not God, it was God's good pleasure through the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe" (1 Cor. 1:21, ASV). About 35 years after the Lord's church
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- was established, Tacitus (the Roman historian), wrote with astonishment: "This pestilent superstition, thou checked for the time being, broke out afresh, not only in Juda, where the mischief started, but also at Rome, where all manner of horrible and loathsome things pour in and become fashionable" (see Marlin, p.69). This unbelieving scholar could not understand how the flame of Christianity could go on burning. God's truth is not based on worldly wisdom (1 Cor. 1:26-29).
- d. Light dispels darkness; the two can not occupy the same space at the same time; where light goes, darkness vanishes. God is light; Christ is light; Christians are light; the gospel is light; truth is light (1 John 1:5; John 8:12; Ph. 2:15; Eph. 5:8; 2 Cor. 4:4-5; John 8:32; 17:17). Light is good: (see Wallace, p. 25):
- 1) Because it makes visibility possible; the light of the gospel makes it possible for us to see (2 Cor. 4:6).
 - 2) Because it is pure; light does not get dirty; it is the one element on earth that cannot be contaminated. The gospel is pure; no one can contaminate it or is allowed to change it. It will be pure when we face it in Judgment (cf. Jn. 12:48; Ps. 19:8; 12:6; Jas. 3:17).
 - 3) Because of its healing propensities: rays of the sun, ultra-violet (Mal. 4:2).
 - 4) Because it protects from evil: crime and evil usually occur in darkness; we put up security lights to give protection (Jn. 3:19; 1 Jn. 1:7).
 - 5) Because it makes life possible: without the sun's light, plants cannot grow and live. Without the light of the gospel, there would be no spiritual life possible for us.
- e. The darkness that is to be dispelled by the light of Christians includes that of vice, ignorance, unbelief, religious error. The Jews were aloof from the world; their idea of their duty to God was to keep separate from the Gentiles; a common idea they had towards the Gentiles was that they were created to burn in torment. They were to keep separated from the evil of the unbelieving world of the Old Testament; but they were intended to be an encouragement to godly living. Under Christ, we have the obligation to shine forth, passively and actively, so that as many as possible will obey the Lord. Many sin because of ignorance (Acts 3:17; Eph. 4:17-19; Hos. 4:6; 1 Tim. 1:13; Acts 17:23).
5. Verse 4: "But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased."
- a. Other Translations.
- 1) American Standard Version: "But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased."
 - 2) New King James Version: "But you, Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book until the time of the end; many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall increase."
- b. "Daniel was told to 'shut up the words,' that is, bring them to a close; 'and seal the book.' To seal a document, in this case a book, was done 'by affixing seal impressions from stamp or cylinder seals.' This could be done by stamping into wax or clay; or by rolling a cylinder across it, leaving an impression (TWOT 1 334). 'Even to the time of the end,' the end of the Jewish economy, which had been the subject dealt with by the angel. The sealing was to preserve the accuracy of the prophecy and the integrity of its authorship" (Hailey, p.245).
- c. "*Many shall run to and fro.* Many shall endeavour to search out the sense; and knowledge shall be increased by these means; though the meaning shall not be fully known till the events take place: THEN the seal shall be broken, and the sense become plain. This seems to be the meaning of this verse, though another has been put on it, namely, 'Many shall run to and fro preaching the Gospel of Christ, and therefore religious knowledge and true wisdom shall be increased.' This is true in itself; but it is not
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the meaning of the prophet's words" (Adam Clarke's Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright © 1996, 2003, 2005, 2006 by BibleSoft, Inc. All rights reserved.)"

- d. As suggested above by Clarke, the full meaning of the prophecy could not be known until it came to its fulfillment. Angels and prophets sought to know the full meaning of God's great plan to save the world, but they could not know until the entire revelation was made known. "Concerning which salvation the prophets sought and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: searching what time or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did point unto, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glories that should follow them. To whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto you, did they minister these things, which now have been announced unto you through them that preached the gospel unto you by the Holy Spirit sent forth from heaven; which things angels desire to look into" (1 Pet. 1:10-12).
 - 1) The Old Testament prophets spoke beforehand of the grace which we now have. It was not their lot during this lifetime to enjoy the blessings this grace would offer.
 - 2) Matthew 13:17: "For verily I say unto you, That many prophets and righteous *men* have desired to see *those things* which ye see, and have not seen *them*; and to hear *those things* which ye hear, and have not heard *them*."
 - 3) Peter's mention of this fact was intended to make the brethren appreciate their blessings more, so as to remain faithful in the persecutions they faced. It has the same effect on us.
- e. The nature of inspired prophecies was such that the prophet was not always privy to the meaning of the predictions he gave. Daniel was a case in point; in some cases, he was told; in other cases, he was left in the dark: "Then I Daniel looked, and, behold, there stood other two, the one on this side of the bank of the river, and the other on that side of the bank of the river. And *one* said to the man clothed in linen, which *was* upon the waters of the river, How long *shall it be* to the end of these wonders? And I heard the man clothed in linen, which *was* upon the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand and his left hand unto heaven, and swore by him that liveth for ever that *it shall be* for a time, times, and an half; and when he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, all these *things* shall be finished. And I heard, but I understood not: then said I, O my Lord, what *shall be* the end of these *things*? And he said, Go thy way, Daniel: for the words *are* closed up and sealed till the time of the end" (Dan. 12:5-9).
 - 1) Deuteronomy 29:29: "The secret *things* belong unto the LORD our God: but those *things* which are revealed *belong* unto us and to our children for ever, that *we* may do all the words of this law."
 - 2) Even the apostles of Christ were not allowed to know certain things until the time was right: "When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel? And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power. But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:6-8).
 - 3) "Here is indisputable evidence of the verbal inspiration of the prophetic writings. These prophecies, far from being the productions of the prophets, unaided by inspiration, were so far above and beyond them, that they were dependent on others for instruction enabling them to grasp the significance of their own writings. A remarkable example of this will be seen in the instance of Daniel inquiring of the angel the meaning of the matters revealed to him" (Woods, pp.32f).
 - 4) The prophets of the Old Testament searched diligently to learn the details of when these great events and blessings would come. It was not their lot to experience these, or to know the details thereof. They could not learn the details in the Old Testament writings, just as we cannot learn from the New Testament when the end of time will be. Jesus knew the Old and New Testaments

perfectly, but still did not know when the Second Coming would be: "But of that day and *that* hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father. Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is" (Mark 13:32-33).

- 5) The prophets searched what time and what manner of time [*chronos* and *kairos*]; these are expressions indicating duration of time and periods of time. Both of these terms are used in Acts 1:6-8: "It is not for you to know the *chronos* or the *kairos*." Undoubtedly, Daniel 9:25-27 was one such prophecy: "Know therefore and understand, *that* from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince *shall be* seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times. And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof *shall be* with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined. And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make *it* desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate."

B. Daniel 12:5-13: What Shall Be The End Of These Things?

1. Verses 5-6: "Then I Daniel looked, and, behold, there stood other two, the one on this side of the bank of the river, and the other on that side of the bank of the river. And one said to the man clothed in linen, which was upon the waters of the river, How long shall it be to the end of these wonders?"
 - a. Other Translations.
 - 1) American Standard Version: "Then I, Daniel, looked, and, behold, there stood other two, the one on the brink of the river on this side, and the other on the brink of the river on that side. And one said to the man clothed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, How long shall it be to the end of these wonders?"
 - 2) New King James Version: "Then I, Daniel, looked; and there stood two others, one on this riverbank and the other on that riverbank. And one said to the man clothed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, "How long shall the fulfillment of these wonders be?"
 - b. There were two angels involved in this scene, one on the near side and the other at the edge of the river on the far side. Evidently, the river is the same as noted in Daniel 10:4: "And in the four and twentieth day of the first month, as I was by the side of the great river, which is Hiddekel."
 - c. Consider the following:
 - 1) Aside from being the conclusion, this portion of the book of Daniel may at the same time be regarded as being an instance of that which Peter refers to in 1 Pet. 1:10, 11, where he indicates that the prophets themselves are known to have sought to determine "what time or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did point unto." The fact that an angel takes the initiative in the matter of making inquiries as to the time involved shows that such inquiries may be good and wise. Man can hardly avoid thinking in terms of the time that is being designated. Though an answer is given, it is significant that this answer is for the most part couched in general terms. That is apparently all with reference to the time element that is essential for the knowledge of man though his curiosity might prompt him to desire much information along this line. Aside from that he is bidden to content himself and quietly to go his way and to comfort himself also with the thought of the power of the good Lord to give to all their promised rewards.
 - 2) In connection with our consideration of 10:5 we cast our vote in favor of the interpretation which regards the "man clothed in linen" as being one of the angels of the very highest order, that is to say, like unto Michael. When the marvelous vision recorded in that chapter first revealed him, he was

- alone in the presence of the prophet, for the prophet's personal attendants had fled. As Daniel now glances about after this angel's communications have been concluded he discerns two others standing near by
- 3) "How long will it be to the end of these wonders?" The point of the question is therefore, "How long will it take for that entire series of wonderful things just foretold completely to unfold itself?" Behind that question lie two alternatives that apparently give rise to the questions: "Will these events that have been foretold follow in quick succession upon one another and so be concluded in a comparatively short time; or will it be a case of a development that is long drawn out and extends over long ages to come?"¹
- d. Obviously, this answer cannot be provided. Specifically to know what lies in our future may have little or no comfort to us; if the future is known to be rosy and blissful, we might ignore our present duties and become indolent and useless; if the future is known to be full of harsh troubles, we might not be able to summon the necessary strength and determination to face them.
 - 1) But the promises we have of the blessings awaiting us in Heaven, stir us up to greater faithfulness so that our hope is realized.
 - 2) On the other hand, as we accept the reality of a trouble-filled future in this life, we gather to us the necessary resolve to meet each day and each distress and vexation. We can obtain aid from God and our fellow-saints.
 - e. A study of history reveals that humans can cope with tremendous hardships!
 - 1) How did the Indians endure the afflictions of "The Trail of Tears?"
 - 2) How did the South survive the horrors inflicted on them by the invasion of the northern army, during and after the War Between the States?
 - 3) How were the Israelites able to meet the awful hardships of slavery in Egypt?
 - 4) There are countless other such cases in the annals of history.
2. Verse 7: "And I heard the man clothed in linen, which was upon the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand and his left hand unto heaven, and swore by him that liveth for ever that it shall be for a time, times, and an half; and when he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished."
 - a. Other Translations.
 - 1) American Standard Version: "And I heard the man clothed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand and his left hand unto heaven, and swore by him that liveth for ever that it shall be for a time, times, and a half; and when they have made an end of breaking in pieces the power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished."
 - 2) New King James Version: "Then I heard the man clothed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand and his left hand to heaven, and swore by Him who lives forever, that it shall be for a time, times, and half a time; and when the power of the holy people has been completely shattered, all these things shall be finished."
 - b. The two beings who appeared in this supernatural scene with Daniel are styled "men," but obviously they were angelic personages, in the form of men. This is a common occurrence in other such biblical events where angels appeared. One of these angels is said to be "above the waters of the river." The KJV says he was "upon" the waters. John saw an angel standing upon the sea in Revelation 10:5-7: "And the angel that I saw standing upon the sea and upon the earth lifted up his right hand to heaven,

¹ Leupold, H. C. (1949). *Exposition of Daniel* (pp. 535–539). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House.

and swear by him that liveth for ever and ever, who created the heaven and the things that are therein, and the earth and the things that are therein, and the sea and the things that are therein, that there shall be delay no longer: but in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he is about to sound, then is finished they mystery of God, according to the good tidings which he declared to his servants the prophets.” [The angel in this scene lifted up only one hand, while the angel in Daniel’s report lifted up both of his hands].

- c. The angel who was clothed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, raised both of his hands toward heaven and solemnly pronounced a prophetic fact. Lifting his hands unto heaven is symbolic of taking an oath as to the veracity and certainty of what he is about to say.
- d. What he said was in answer to the question as to the length of time until the “end” was to come. The response here is “a time, times, and a half.” This time factor relates to the period of troubles that lay in the future.
 - 1) “There would be troublous times ahead for the nation and its people; these would be finished at the end of the breaking of the power of the people who had been God’s people” (Hailey, p.247).
 - 2) The “time, times, and half a time is echoed in Revelation 12:14: “And there were given to the woman the two wings of the great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness unto her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent.”
 - 3) “In every instance where three and a half is used, it is used of a time of oppression, opposition, trial, or persecution. This fact leads to the conclusion that, just as seven is the symbolic number for fullness, completeness, or perfection, so three and a half, a broken seven, is the symbolic number for a period of trial, persecution, famine, and oppression. The number is used in each instance symbolically, not literally” (*Revelation*, Hailey, p.48).
- e. Leupold offer these observations:
 - 1) The angel “clothed in linen” apparently possesses information He is, therefore, qualified to interpret even as he is empowered to make revelations. Though the answer corresponds with the question that was asked it is, perhaps, not quite the kind of an answer that Daniel would have been pleased to hear. Men think they would prefer an answer that gives an exact number of years and so precludes all uncertainty. It might be possible that for various reasons such an answer would benefit man least
 - 2) We know from Gen. 14:22 and Deut. 32:40 that since the very earliest days the raising of the hand was a gesture that accompanied the oath. The raising of both hands would signify the most solemn assurance that the words spoken are reliable. In the oath given as an answer God Himself is most appropriately designated as He “that liveth forever.”
 - 3) The first answer informs us that the “end of these wonders” shall be “for” or “after” (Hebrew: *le* temporal) “a time, times, and a half time.” This expression is the same one that is found in 7:25, and it has the same meaning in both passages. In chapter 7 the expression referred to the duration of times of persecution. It has practically the same force in this verse. Therefore the same interpretation applies in this verse
 - 4) The second half of the answer again centers on a helpful thought rather than on the calculation of times and seasons, to know which would profit man but little. Here, too, the answer to a question such as man would be apt to put is given in terms of bigger values than man reckons with. This part of the answer conveys the solemn news that the holy people must pass through the sad experience of having their power shattered. “Shatter,” *nappets*, or “break in pieces” (*A. R. V.*) involves complete demolition of power.
 - 5) Strangely, man is so set on trusting in himself and depending on his own power that, unless that

- power is reduced to a helpless minimum, he will refuse to put his confidence wholly in the good Lord. Only after we have been rendered weak are we capable of becoming truly strong. Israel of Old Testament days had to be reduced to the impotence of the last times of the old covenant before the Savior could come
- 6) We can see now that both halves of the answer cover the same ground. Both announce what must happen before the end comes, the one relates about the seeming success but ultimate collapse of the opposition to God, the other reminds that God's people shall be seemingly weakened in the process, but for their own good.¹
- f. A similar statement is made in Daniel 7:25: "And he shall speak words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High; and he shall think to change the times and the law; and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and half a time."
- 1) "When the two [Dan. 7:25 and 12:7] are compared, it seems that this text referred to the Roman Empire" (Hailey., p.247). The temple at Jerusalem was the focal point of the Jewish people. It held them together at one place. When that great edifice and the city in which it was constructed were destroyed, their power was broken and the people were scattered.
 - a) Daniel 7:25: "And he shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time."
 - b) Daniel 12:7: "And I heard the man clothed in linen, which was upon the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand and his left hand unto heaven, and sware by him that liveth for ever that it shall be for a time, times, and an half; and when he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished."
 - 2) The time of the Roman occupation of Palestine in the prophetic setting Daniel describes, would amount to about three and a half years—from early in 67 A.D. until September of 70 A.D. This is one method of interpreting the prophet's statement.
3. Verses 8-9: "And I heard, but I understood not: then said I, O my Lord, what shall be the end of these things? And he said, Go thy way, Daniel: for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end."
- a. Other Translations.
 - 1) American Standard Version: "And I heard, but I understood not: then said I, O my lord, what shall be the issue of these things? And he said, Go thy way, Daniel; for the words are shut up and sealed till the time of the end."
 - 2) New King James Version: "Although I heard, I did not understand. Then I said, 'My lord, what shall be the end of these things?' And he said, 'Go your way, Daniel, for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end.'"
 - b. We have the reports of the history of those ancient events subsequent to the time of Daniel's present prophecy. He had no way of knowing the details of what lay ahead of his people and of the world of that time. To know the details of upcoming dire circumstances and sufferings would cause great distress and discouragement—perhaps to giving up in despair. Daniel wanted to know more of the details, but he was denied that information.
 - c. He could know little about Alexander the Great, whose coming was still generations in the future. He was kept in the dark about that great man's life and death, and that his empire would be divided into four powerful nations, two of which would bring terrible sufferings upon the Jews. Daniel could not know the details of the greatest nation ever to develop in that long-ago time—the great and terrible

¹ Leupold, H. C. (1949). *Exposition of Daniel* (pp. 539–541). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House.

empire of Rome. In the prophecies of chapter two and chapter seven of his book, Daniel could perceive that the fourth empire would be mighty and harsh; he could not know the details of the terror they would bring to bear on the nation of Israel.

- d. Daniel had been given a sketch of future events, but was not allowed to know more. He was told that the words had been shut up and sealed until the time came for their fulfillment. Compare: “But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end...” (Dan. 12:4).
 - e. “In figurative and symbolic language Revelation takes up where Daniel stops. It (John’s Revelation) was not to be sealed, for the beginning of its fulfillment was at hand (Rev. 22:10)” (Hailey, p.251).
4. Verse 10: “Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried; but the wicked shall do wickedly: and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand. And from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days.”
- a. Other Translations.
 - 1) American Standard Version: “Many shall purify themselves, and make themselves white, and be refined; but the wicked shall do wickedly; and none of the wicked shall understand; but they that are wise shall understand.”
 - 2) New King James Version: “Many shall be purified, made white, and refined, but the wicked shall do wickedly; and none of the wicked shall understand, but the wise shall understand.”
 - b. The angel tells of a time when many would be purified, made white, and be refined. This cleansed condition pertains to the soul. It is pointing to the time of the Messiah when complete purification would be available.
 - 1) Acts 13:38-39: “Be it known unto you therefore, brethren, that through this man is proclaimed unto you remission of sins: and by him every one that believeth is justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.”
 - 2) Hebrews 8:12: “For I will be merciful to their iniquities, And their sins will I remember no more.”
 - 3) John 15:3: “Already ye are clean because of the word which I have spoken unto you.”
 - 4) 1 Peter 1:22-25: “Seeing ye have purified your souls in your obedience to the truth unto unfeigned love of the brethren, love one another from the heart fervently: having been begotten again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, through the word of God, which liveth and abideth. For, All flesh is as grass, And all the glory thereof as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower falleth: But the word of the Lord abideth for ever. And this is the word of good tidings which was preached unto you.”
 - c. Much is said in the Bible about purity, including these statements:
 - 1) Matthew 5:8: “Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.”
 - 2) Hebrews 12:14: “Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord.”
 - 3) 2 Corinthians 7:1: “Having therefore these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.”
 - 4) 1 John 3:3: “And every one that hath this hope set on him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.”
 - d. The purification of which the angel speaks is also described as being made white, a term that is used to describe some one or some thing that is clean. The purified and white individual is also said to be refined. The ore containing gold is heated to high temperature so as to burn away the impurities, thus leaving behind pure gold. Of course, we call this process refining gold.
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- 1) Revelation 3:18: "I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see."
 - 2) Job 23:10: " But he knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold."
 - e. We are told that during the time when certain ones are being purified, the wicked will continue to be and to do wickedly. The wicked are without proper understanding (and will continue in their wickedness); the wise perceive the truth (and will act accordingly).
 - 1) Matthew 7:24-27: "Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock. And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it."
 - 2) 1 Corinthians 1:26-29: "For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: That no flesh should glory in his presence."
 5. Verse 11: "And from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days."
 - a. Other Translations.
 - 1) American Standard Version: "And from the time that the continual burnt-offering shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, there shall be a thousand and two hundred and ninety days."
 - 2) New King James Version: "And from the time that the daily sacrifice is taken away, and the abomination of desolation is set up, there shall be one thousand two hundred and ninety days."
 - b. The difficulty of this passage is manifest, "But if one keeps in mind that the angel whose words Daniel recorded is writing of the time of the fourth world empire, the Roman, and not a continuation of the time of Antiochus, this will facilitate. Neither is he writing of the distant future just prior to the second coming of the Messiah; nor is he writing of a yet future mythical antichrist, but he is writing of the end days of the Jewish nation and its people; this will also help" (Hailey, pp.251f).
 - c. References are made in Daniel to the abomination of which the present verse speaks:
 - 1) Daniel 8:13: "Then I heard one saint speaking, and another saint said unto that certain saint which spake, How long shall be the vision concerning the daily sacrifice, and the transgression of desolation, to give both the sanctuary and the host to be trodden under foot?" [This connects with Antiochus Epiphanes and his evil deeds against the Jewss].
 - 2) Daniel 9:27: "And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate." [This refers to the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans in 70 A.D.].
 - 3) Daniel 11:31: "And arms shall stand on his part, and they shall pollute the sanctuary of strength, and shall take away the daily sacrifice, and they shall place the abomination that maketh desolate." [This connects to the evil work of Antiochus Epiphanes].
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- 4) Daniel 12:11: “And from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days.” [“It appears with reference to Antiochus, but only as a historical reference, and not that the speaker is still in the time bracket of Antiochus” —Hailey, p.252]
- d. Daniel desired to know, “What shall be the issue of these things...(Daniel 12:8).’ Well here it is. Many shall indeed obey the gospel of Christ and be saved, or ‘refined’ as stated here; but there shall continue to be wicked men who shall act wickedly and shall not be able either to understand or comprehend spiritual things in any manner whatever. This little sentence is a picture of the entire dispensation of the Gospel of Christ. The great cleavage of mankind into the two Biblical groups is seen here: the saved and the lost, the good and the bad, the wheat and the chaff, the wise and the foolish, the wheat and the tares, the keepers and the rejects (the parable of the fish-net), those on the right hand and those on the left, etc. etc.” (Coffman). The ultimate end of the unwise, the disobedient, the wicked, the unrefined is sadly depicted in the Bible, with the following two passages being a sample:
- 1) Matthew 13:47-50: “Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind: Which, when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away. So shall it be at the end of the world: the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just, And shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.”
 - 2) Matthew 25:31-46: “When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me. Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: For I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not. Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee? Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me. And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.”
- e. “Many expositors think that verse 36 [Dan. 11] through verse 45 is a continuation of the days and events of Antiochus; but it appears that verse 36 introduced the Roman Empire and its exploits through the present verse (Dan. 12:12) ... In the verse under discussion (Dan. 12:11), the angel said from the time of Antiochus to the breaking in pieces of the holy people, the destruction of Jerusalem, that all things in between ‘shall be finished’ (Dan. 12:7). This included the wars between the kings of the north and south, the oppressions of Antiochus, the war of the Maccabees, and the intervention of Rome; an indefinite period seems to be symbolized by the number, ‘a thousand two hundred and ninety days.’ I know of no significance attached to the specific number, and to the period of time, ‘a time, times and half’ (v. 7), a troublous time for the people of God” (Hailey, pp.252f).
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6. Verse 12: "Blessed is he that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days."
 - a. Other Translations.
 - 1) American Standard Version: "Blessed is he that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days."
 - 2) New King James Version: "Blessed is he who waits, and comes to the one thousand three hundred and thirty-five days."
 - b. "This would be another period of indefinite time, but slightly longer than the former, 'the thousand three hundred and five and thirty' beyond the breaking in pieces, the destruction of Jerusalem and the Jewish nation. The blessing signified for those 'who wait' is not specified, therefore it must be left in the realm of the unrevealed" (Hailey, p.253).
 - c. Several of the many commentators which I have consulted on the passage seem to cast more confusion than light on the verse, except for Hailey, a conservative scholar who does not take heedless leaps into the dark. A guiding principle on such passages and subjects is Deuteronomy 29:29: "The secret things belong unto the LORD our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law."
7. Verse 13: "But go thou thy way till the end be: for thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at the end of the days."
 - a. Other Translations.
 - 1) American Standard Version: "But go thou thy way till the end be; for thou shalt rest, and shalt stand in thy lot, at the end of the days."
 - 2) New King James Version: "But you, go your way till the end; for you shall rest, and will arise to your inheritance at the end of the days."
 - b. "Our studies in Daniel remind us of those done in the Book of Jonah. Both books have come under the most vicious fire of the critics; but it turns out that both afford very rich rewards for the student. Both Daniel and Jonah were approved and endorsed, quoted and made applicable to the ministry and kingdom of Christ by the Lord himself. There is no intelligent reason for rejecting a single line of either book. Each one of them carries its own imprimatur of the Holy Spirit" (Coffman).
 - c. "The final word of comfort and assurance is given to the prophet *The end of the days is the final period*, the consummation. Thus the salvation of Daniel is announced; his part or lot is that of the wise who turn many unto righteousness" (Young, p.264).
8. We can know some things that will be in heaven.
 - a. Beauty will be abundant there.
 - 1) Revelation 21:10-13: "And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, Having the glory of God: and her light *was* like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal; And had a wall great and high, *and* had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written thereon, which are *the names* of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel: On the east three gates; on the north three gates; on the south three gates; and on the west three gates."
 - 2) Revelation 22:1-5: "And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, *was there* the tree of life, which bare twelve *manner of* fruits, *and* yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree *were* for the healing of the nations. And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him: And they shall see his face; and his name *shall be* in their foreheads. And there shall be no night there; and they

- need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever."
- 3) A little child had been born blind. When he was about ten years of age, a surgical procedure gave him the ability to see. When the bandages were removed, he was amazed at the beauty all around him. He asked his mother, "Why didn't you tell me about the beauty of the world?" They was no way for his mother to adequately describe the beauty of nature (because of the limits of language to convey such pictures); it is impossible (because of our finite minds) to grasp the picture of Heaven's beauty if God should describe it to us.
- b. Love will be in heaven in great abundance: "He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love" (1 John 4:8).
- c. Home will be there, for Heaven is the home of the soul: "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if *it were* not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, *there* ye may be also. And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know. Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way? Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (John 14:1-6).
- d. We will have new spiritual bodies in Heaven.
- 1) 1 John 3:2: "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is."
- 2) Compare the metamorphosis of a beautiful butterfly from a homely caterpillar.
- e. We will have rest there.
- 1) 2 Thessalonians 1:6: "Seeing *it is* a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you."
- 2) Hebrews 4:9: "There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God."
- 3) Revelation 14:13: "And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed *are* the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them."
- f. We will have happiness in Heaven.
- 1) Psalms 16:11: "Thou wilt show me the path of life: in thy presence *is* fulness of joy; at thy right hand *there are* pleasures for evermore."
- 2) Revelation 7:13-17: "And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they? And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."
- g. Joy and contentment will be in Heaven: "And so he that had received five talents came and brought other five talents, saying, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me five talents: behold, I have gained beside them five talents more. His lord said unto him, Well done, *thou* good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord. He also that had received two talents came and said, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me two talents: behold,
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I have gained two other talents beside them. His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord" (Matt. 25:20-23).

- h. We will have glory in Heaven: "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time *are* not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us" (Rom. 8:18).
 - i. There will be recognition in Heaven.
 - 1) Matthew 8:11: "And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven." We will recognize these Old Testament worthies, although we never saw them on earth.
 - 2) Matthew 17:1-8: "And after six days Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into an high mountain apart, And was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light. And, behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elias talking with him. Then answered Peter, and said unto Jesus, Lord, it is good for us to be here: if thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias. While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him. And when the disciples heard *it*, they fell on their face, and were sore afraid. And Jesus came and touched them, and said, Arise, and be not afraid. And when they had lifted up their eyes, they saw no man, save Jesus only." The apostles recognized Moses and Elijah, although they had never seen them in the flesh.
 - 3) The rich man, Lazarus, and Abraham retained their identities in eternity (Luke 16:19-31).
 - 4) David implies that he will know his infant son in eternity: "But now he is dead, wherefore should I fast? can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me" (2 Sam. 12:23).
 - 5) Paul and his brethren will be together in eternity, which implies they would recognize each other: "Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present *us* with you" (2 Cor. 4:14).
9. We can know the kind of persons who will be in Heaven.
- a. Those who died in infancy will be there.
 - 1) 2 Samuel 12:23: "But now he is dead, wherefore should I fast? can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me."
 - 2) Matthew 18:3: "And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven."
 - 3) Matthew 19:14: "But Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven."
 - 4) Even those innocent ones who were aborted prior to birth will be present. Also, those who were stillborn or died early in their lives.
 - b. Faithful children of God from all ages will be there.
 - 1) From the Old Testament times, present in Heaven will be Enoch, Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Elijah—and a great host of others.
 - 2) From the New Testament times, present in Heaven will be Stephen, Peter, John, Paul—and a great host of others.
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Appendix One

Nebuchadnezzar, the Mighty King

I. Introduction.

A. Nebuchadnezzar figures prominently in ancient Babylonian history.

1. Nebuchadnezzar was the son of Nabopolassar, the founder of the new Babylonian empire. He was old enough to marry at the time of his father's rebellion against Assyria [625 B.C.], for ancient records show that an alliance between Nabopolassar and the Median king was sealed by the betrothal of Nebuchadnezzar and Amuhia, the daughter of the king of Media [see McClintock-Strong].
2. The name *Nebuchadnezzar* is defined to mean, "Nebo, protect the Crown!" [The object of this study is the second Babylonian king to bear this name; the first reigned about 1125 to 1103 B.C., before Babylon became a great power].
3. Artifacts of King Nebuchadnezzar abound.
 - a. An onyx cameo has been found, bearing this inscription: "In honor of Merodach, his lord, Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, in his lifetime had this made" [Easton's Bible Encyclopedia]
 - b. A clay tablet, now in the British Museum, bears the following inscription: "In the thirty-seventh year of Nebuchadnezzar, king of the country of Babylon, he went to Egypt [Misr] to make war. Amasis, king of Egypt, collected [his army], and marched and spread abroad." Thus were fulfilled the words of the prophet (Jer 46:13-26; Ezek 29:2-20):
 - 1) Jeremiah 46:13-26: "The word that the LORD spake to Jeremiah the prophet, how Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon should come and smite the land of Egypt. Declare ye in Egypt, and publish in Migdol, and publish in Noph and in Tahpanhes: say ye, Stand fast, and prepare thee; for the sword shall devour round about thee. Why are thy valiant men swept away? they stood not, because the LORD did drive them. He made many to fall, yea, one fell upon another: and they said, Arise, and let us go again to our own people, and to the land of our nativity, from the oppressing sword. They did cry there, Pharaoh king of Egypt is but a noise; he hath passed the time appointed. As I live, saith the King, whose name is the LORD of hosts, Surely as Tabor is among the mountains, and as Carmel by the sea, so shall he come. O thou daughter dwelling in Egypt, furnish thyself to go into captivity: for Noph shall be waste and desolate without an inhabitant. Egypt is like a very fair heifer, but destruction cometh; it cometh out of the north. Also her hired men are in the midst of her like fatted bullocks; for they also are turned back, and are fled away together: they did not stand, because the day of their calamity was come upon them, and the time of their visitation. The voice thereof shall go like a serpent; for they shall march with an army, and come against her with axes, as hewers of wood. They shall cut down her forest, saith the LORD, though it cannot be searched; because they are more than the grasshoppers, and are innumerable. The daughter of Egypt shall be confounded; she shall be delivered into the hand of the people of the north. The LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, saith; Behold, I will punish the multitude of No, and Pharaoh, and Egypt, with their gods, and their kings; even Pharaoh, and all them that trust in him: And I will deliver them into the hand of those that seek their lives, and into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, and into the hand of his servants: and afterward it shall be inhabited, as in the days of old, saith the LORD."
 - 2) Ezekiel 29:2-20: "Son of man, set thy face against Pharaoh king of Egypt, and prophesy against him, and against all Egypt: Speak, and say, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I am against thee, Pharaoh king of Egypt, the great dragon that lieth in the midst of his rivers, which hath said, My river is mine own, and I have made it for myself. But I will put hooks in thy jaws, and I will cause the fish of thy rivers to stick unto thy scales, and I will bring thee up out of the midst of thy rivers, and all the fish of thy rivers shall stick unto thy scales. And I will leave thee thrown into the wilderness, thee and all the fish of thy rivers: thou shalt fall upon the open

fields; thou shalt not be brought together, nor gathered: I have given thee for meat to the beasts of the field and to the fowls of the heaven. And all the inhabitants of Egypt shall know that I am the LORD, because they have been a staff of reed to the house of Israel. When they took hold of thee by thy hand, thou didst break, and rend all their shoulder: and when they leaned upon thee, thou brakest, and madest all their loins to be at a stand. Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I will bring a sword upon thee, and cut off man and beast out of thee. And the land of Egypt shall be desolate and waste; and they shall know that I am the LORD: because he hath said, The river is mine, and I have made it. Behold, therefore I am against thee, and against thy rivers, and I will make the land of Egypt utterly waste and desolate, from the tower of Syene even unto the border of Ethiopia. No foot of man shall pass through it, nor foot of beast shall pass through it, neither shall it be inhabited forty years. And I will make the land of Egypt desolate in the midst of the countries that are desolate, and her cities among the cities that are laid waste shall be desolate forty years: and I will scatter the Egyptians among the nations, and will disperse them through the countries. Yet thus saith the Lord GOD; At the end of forty years will I gather the Egyptians from the people whither they were scattered: And I will bring again the captivity of Egypt, and will cause them to return into the land of Pathros, into the land of their habitation; and they shall be there a base kingdom. It shall be the basest of the kingdoms; neither shall it exalt itself any more above the nations: for I will diminish them, that they shall no more rule over the nations. And it shall be no more the confidence of the house of Israel, which bringeth their iniquity to remembrance, when they shall look after them: but they shall know that I am the Lord GOD. And it came to pass in the seven and twentieth year, in the first month, in the first day of the month, the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Son of man, Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon caused his army to serve a great service against Tyrus: every head was made bald, and every shoulder was peeled: yet had he no wages, nor his army, for Tyrus, for the service that he had served against it: Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I will give the land of Egypt unto Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon; and he shall take her multitude, and take her spoil, and take her prey; and it shall be the wages for his army. I have given him the land of Egypt for his labour wherewith he served against it, because they wrought for me, saith the Lord GOD.”

- c. “The sources of our information as to the life of Nebuchadnezzar are about 500 contract tablets dated according to the days, months and years of his reign of 43 years; about 30 building and honorific inscriptions; one historical inscription; and in the books of Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, and Kings. Later sources are Chronicles, Ezra, and the fragments of Berosus, Menander, Megasthenes, Abydenus, and Alexander Polyhistor, largely as cited by Josephus and Eusebius” (ISBE, PC Study Bible).
4. He was a cruel tyrant at times.
- a. When he he conquered Jerusalem in 586 B.C., he treated Zedekiah with extreme cruelty: “So they took the king, and brought him up to the king of Babylon to Riblah; and they gave judgment upon him. And they slew the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes, and put out the eyes of Zedekiah, and bound him with fetters of brass, and carried him to Babylon” (2 Kings 25:6-7).
 - b. He also had two false prophets burned alive: “Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, of Ahab the son of Kolaiah, and of Zedekiah the son of Maaseiah, which prophesy a lie unto you in my name; Behold, I will deliver them into the hand of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon; and he shall slay them before your eyes; And of them shall be taken up a curse by all the captivity of Judah which are in Babylon, saying, The LORD make thee like Zedekiah and like Ahab, whom the king of Babylon roasted in the fire” (Jer. 29:21-22).
 - c. He cast Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego into the fiery furnace (Dan. 3).
 - d. A Jewish website offers this information about his cruelties:
 - 1) Nebuchadnezzar was most merciless toward the conquered people. By his command the exiles on their way to Babylon were not allowed to stop even for a moment, as the king feared that they would pray during the respite granted them and that God would be willing to help them

as soon as they repented (Lam. R. to v. 6; Pesi?. R. 28 [ed. Friedmann, p. 135a]). Nebuchadnezzar did not feel safe until the exiles reached the Euphrates, the boundary-line of Babylon. Then he made a great feast on board his ship, while the princes of Judah lay chained and naked by the river. In order to increase their misery he had rolls of the Torah torn and made into sacks, which, filled with sand, he gave to the captive princes to carry (Pesi?. R. *l.c.* [ed. Friedmann, p. 135a]; Midr. Teh. cxxxvii.; comp. Buber's remark *ad loc.* and Lam. R. v. 13).

- 2) On this occasion Nebuchadnezzar ordered the singers of the Temple to add their music to his feast; but they preferred to bite off their fingers, or even to be killed, rather than to play their sacred music in honor of the Babylonian idols (Pesi?. R. 31 [ed. Friedmann, p. 144a], 28 [136a]; comp. Moses, Children of). He heartlessly drove the captives before him, entirely without clothing, until the inhabitants of Bari induced him to clothe them (Pesi?. R. *l.c.* [ed. Friedmann, p. 135b]).
5. He lived to be about 84 years of age. "After an interval of four, or probably seven years (Daniel 4:16), Nebuchadnezzar's malady left him. As we are told in Scripture that 'his reason returned, and for the glory of his kingdom his honor and brightness returned'; and he 'was established in his kingdom, and excellent majesty was added to him' (Daniel 4:36), so we find in the Standard Inscription that he resumed his great works after a period of suspension, and added fresh 'wonders' in his old age to the marvellous constructions of his manhood. He died in the year B.C. 561, at an advanced age (83 or 84), having reigned forty-three years. A son, Evil-Merodach (q.v.), succeeded him" (McClintock-Strong).

B. Nebuchadnezzar was the greatest king of Babylonia.

1. This is true in terms of conquest.
 - a. As the commander of armies he was unstoppable. He broke the power of Egypt at the battle of Carchemish and proved to be one of the mightiest monarchs of all time.
 - b. The evidence indicates that he never lost a single battle. What other military commander could have this stated truthfully about him?
2. This is true in terms of construction projects.
 - a. After subjugating Phoenicia and chastening Egypt, Nebuchadnezzar now set himself to rebuild and adorn the city of Babylon (Dan 4:30), and to add to the greatness and prosperity of his kingdom by constructing canals and aqueducts and reservoirs surpassing in grandeur and magnificence everything of the kind mentioned in history (Dan 2:37). He is represented as a "king of kings," ruling over a vast kingdom of many provinces, with a long list of officers and rulers under him, "princes, governors, captains," etc. (3:2,3,27). He may, indeed, be said to have created the mighty empire over which he ruled [McClintock-Strong].
 - b. Nebuchadnezzar is most celebrated for his buildings: the temple of Bel Merodach at Babylon (the Kasr), built with his Syrian spoils (Josephus, Ant. 10:11, section 1); the fortifications of Babylon, three lines of walls 80 ft. broad, 300 ft. high, enclosing 130 square miles; a new palace near his father's which he finished in 15 days, attached to it were his "hanging gardens," a square 400 ft. on each side and 75 ft. high, supported on arched galleries increasing in height from the base to the summit; in these were chambers, one containing the engines for raising the water to the mound; immense stones imitated the surface of the Median mountain, to remind his wife of her native land. The standard inscription ("I completely made strong the defenses of Babylon, may it last forever ... the city which I have glorified," etc.) accords with Berossus' statement, and nine-tenths of the bricks in situ are stamped with Nebuchadnezzar's name.
 - 1) Daniel (Dan 4:30) also records his boast, "is not this great Babylon which I have built by the might of my power and for the honour of my majesty?" Sir H. Rawlinson (Inscr. Assy. and Babyl., 76,77) states that the bricks of 100 different towns about Bagdad all bear the one inscription, "Nebuchadnezzar, son of Nabopolassar, king of Babylon." Abydenus states Nebuchadnezzar made the nahr malcha, "royal river," a branch from the Euphrates, and the Acracanus; also the reservoir above the city Sippara, 90 miles round and 120 ft. deep, with sluices to irrigate the low land; also a quay on the Persian gulf, and the city Teredon on the

Arabian border. The network of irrigation by canals between the Tigris and Euphrates, and on the right bank of the Euphrates to the stony desert, was his work; also the canal still traceable from Hit at the Euphrates, framing 400 miles S.E. to the bay of Grane in the Persian gulf. His system of irrigation made Babylonia a garden, enriching at once the people and himself.

- 2) The long list of various officers in Dan 3:1-3,27, also of diviners forming a hierarchy (Dan 2:48), shows the extent of the organization of the empire, so that the emblem of so vast a polity is "a tree ... the height reaching unto heaven, and the sight to the end of all the earth ... in which was meat for all, under which the beasts ... had shadow and the fowls dwelt in the boughs and all flesh was fed of it" (Dan 4:10-12). In Dan 2:37 he is called "king of kings," i.e. of the various kingdoms wheresoever he turned his arms, Egypt, Nineveh, Arabia, Phoenicia, Tyre. [Fausset's Bible Encyclopedia, PC Study Bible].
3. This is true in his impact on history.
 - a. Nebuchadnezzar was the real genius and builder of Babylon. Of the 70 years of the existence of the Babylonian Empire, he ruled 43 years. The Babylonian Empire lasted something less than one hundred years—from 612 B.C. to 539 B.C. What other great empire built such a lasting reputation in such a short period of time! In 612 B.C., the Babylonians were able to defeat the Assyrians in a memorable battle, thus establishing the new Babylonian Empire.
 - b. "Modern research has shown that Nebuchadnezzar was the greatest monarch that Babylon, or perhaps the East generally, ever produced. He must have possessed an enormous command of human labour, nine-tenths of Babylon itself, and nineteen-twentieths of all the other ruins that in almost countless profusion cover the land, are composed of bricks stamped with his name. He appears to have built or restored almost every city and temple in the whole country. His inscriptions give an elaborate account of the immense works which he constructed in and about Babylon itself, abundantly illustrating the boast, 'Is not this great Babylon which I have built?'" Rawlinson, Hist. Illustrations. [Easton's Bible Dictionary, PC Study Bible formatted electronic database Copyright © 2003 Biblesoft, Inc.].
 - c. He and his kingdom were greater than the two empires which followed him [the Medo-Persian and Grecian Empires]. "This is the dream; and we will tell the interpretation thereof before the king. Thou, O king, art a king of kings: for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory. And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath he given into thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all. Thou art this head of gold. And after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee, and another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth. And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron: forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things: and as iron that breaketh all these, shall it break in pieces and bruise" (Dan. 2:36-40).

II. DISCUSSION.

A. A study of Nebuchadnezzar would be incomplete with a study of Babylon.

1. It contained one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World—The Hanging Gardens.
 - a. "The Hanging Gardens of Babylon, perhaps built by King Nebuchadnezzar II about 600 bc, were a mountainlike series of planted terraces. Ancient historians report that Babylon at that time was dazzling in the splendor of its palace and temple buildings, fortification walls, and paved processional ways. The Hanging Gardens consisted of several tiers of platform terraces built upon arches and extending to a great height. Accounts of their height range from about 24 m (80 ft) to a less reliable estimate of more than 90 m (300 ft). Trees and colorful plants and flowers grew on the terraces, irrigated with water brought up from the Euphrates River. Archaeologists have discovered remains of walls along the Euphrates that may have belonged to the Hanging Gardens" [Encarta © 1993-2003 Microsoft Corporation].
 - b. "The approach to the Garden sloped like a hillside and the several parts of the structure rose from one another tier on tier....On all this, the earth had been piled...and was thickly planted with trees of every kind that, by their great size and other charm, gave pleasure to the beholder....The water

- machines [raised] the water in great abundance from the river, although no one outside could see it” (Diodorus Siculus, circa 90-21 B.C.).
- c. “It was not until the reign of Nabopolassar (625-605 BC) of the Neo-Babylonian dynasty that the Mesopotamian civilization reached its ultimate glory. His son, Nebuchadnezzar II (604-562 BC) is credited for building the legendary Hanging Gardens. It is said that the Gardens were built by Nebuchadnezzar to please his wife or concubine who had been ‘brought up in Media and had a passion for mountain surroundings. While the most descriptive accounts of the Gardens come from Greek historians such as Berossus and Diodorus Siculus, Babylonian records stay silent on the matter. Tablets from the time of Nebuchadnezzar do not have a single reference to the Hanging Gardens, although descriptions of his palace, the city of Babylon, and the walls are found. Even the historians who give detailed descriptions of the Hanging Gardens never saw them. Modern historians argue that when Alexander's soldiers reached the fertile land of Mesopotamia and saw Babylon, they were impressed. When they later returned to their rugged homeland, they had stories to tell about the amazing gardens and palm trees at Mesopotamia. About the palace of Nebuchadnezzar. About the Tower of Babel and the ziggurats....It wasn't until the twentieth century that some of the mysteries surrounding the Hanging Gardens were revealed. Archaeologists are still struggling to gather enough evidence before reaching the final conclusions about the location of the Gardens, their irrigation system, and their true appearance” [Internet].
2. Inscriptions, documents and letters written during the 43 years of his reign (604-562 BC.) give an idea of the power and wealth of Babylon. Here are some interesting facts according to the historian Herodotus (Bk 1, 178-186) about Nebuchadnezzar's Babylon:
 - a. In the form of a square, 14 miles on each side, and of enormous magnitude.
 - b. The brick wall was 56 miles long, 300 feet high, 25 feet thick with another wall 75 feet behind the first wall, and the wall extended 35 feet below the ground.
 - c. 250 towers that were 450 feet high.
 - d. A wide and deep moat that encircled the city.
 - e. The Euphrates River also flowed through the middle of the city. Ferry boats and a 1/2 mi. long bridge with drawbridges closed at night.
 - f. "Hanging Gardens" (one of the wonders of the ancient world) and water was raised from the river by hydraulic pumps.
 - g. Eight massive gates that led to the inner city and 100 brass gates.
 - h. Streets were paved with stone slabs 3 feet square.
 - i. The great Tower (Ziggurat) and 53 temples including the "Great Temple of Marduk." 180 altars to Ishtar.
 - j. Golden image of Baal and the Golden Table (both weighing over 50,000 lbs of solid gold).
 - k. 2 golden lions, a solid gold human figure (18 feet high).
 - l. Nebuchadnezzar's palace was considered to be the most magnificent building ever erected on earth.
 3. Babylon was located on the Euphrates River and is situated in what is now Iraq.
 - a. Babylon's owes its prominence in modern times to the Bible, where this extraordinary city and its king, Nebuchadnezzar, are frequently mentioned. The first Biblical story concerning the city, is the story of the Tower of Babel [Gen. 11]. The Bible also relates the story of the Babylonian captivity of thousands of Jews who were deported to Babylon after Nebuchadnezzar's conquest of Jerusalem in 606 B.C. [Other deportations took place in 597 and 586 B.C.]. The experiences of Israel in Babylonia, reported in the Bible, include Daniel in the Lions' Den, the ordeal of the three young Hebrew men, and Belshazzar's fateful banquet.
 - b. Babylon was a magnificent city, which for almost 2000 years served a prominent role in Near East
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- history. In recent years, efforts have been made to construct a replica of what the city may have looked like in its ancient glory. "Saddam Hussein installed a huge portrait of himself and Nebuchadnezzar at the entrance to the ruins. He also had part of the ruins rebuilt, to the dismay of archaeologists, with his name inscribed on many of the bricks, in imitation of Nebuchadnezzar. One frequent inscription reads: '*This was built by Saddam Hussein, son of Nebuchadnezzar, to glorify Iraq.*' This recalls the ziggurat at Ur, where each individual brick was stamped with 'Ur-Nammu, king of Ur, who built the temple of Nanna.' These bricks became sought after as collectors' items after the downfall of Saddam, and the ruins are no longer being restored to their original state" (Website, *Babylon*).
- c. "The earliest evidence regarding the existence of Babylon dates from over 4000 years ago. The city was then known by various Sumerian names. The name that survived was: Ka-dingir-ra, which means: 'the Gate of God', in translation into Akkadian: Bab-ilim, the name from which the present name of the city originated....At the turn of the 2nd Millennium BC, the city was taken over by the Amorites, one of the nomadic Semitic tribes originating from the Syrian Desert. Their rule brought about the first period of prosperity for the city, with its peak during the reign of king Hammurapi (1722-1686 BC). Having conquered the rulers of neighbouring cities, he was the first king in centuries to rule over the whole of Mesopotamia. Today he is most recognized as the founder of the famous 'Hammurapi Stela' (a standing stone) engraved with the text of one of the first law codices" [Internet website].
4. The city walls of Babylon were so massive as to be invulnerable to attack. The ancient writer, Herodotus, visited Babylon and left behind an impressive description of the city. He says the city was surrounded by great walls that were 350 feet high and 75 feet thick. Jeremiah (51:44,53,58) commented on the greatness of her walls. Herodotus said there were 100 brass gates in the wall; Isaiah (45:2) speaks of her "gates of brass."
 - a. Isaiah 45:2: "I will go before thee, and make the crooked places straight: I will break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron."
 - b. Jeremiah 51:44,53,58: "And I will punish Bel in Babylon, and I will bring forth out of his mouth that which he hath swallowed up: and the nations shall not flow together any more unto him: yea, the wall of Babylon shall fall....Though Babylon should mount up to heaven, and though she should fortify the height of her strength, *yet* from me shall spoilers come unto her, saith the LORD....Thus saith the LORD of hosts; The broad walls of Babylon shall be utterly broken, and her high gates shall be burned with fire; and the people shall labour in vain, and the folk in the fire, and they shall be weary."
 5. The Old Testament predicted the details of the overthrow of mighty Babylon: "And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation: neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there; neither shall the shepherds make their fold there" (Isa. 13:19-20; cf. Jer. 51:24-58).
 - a. Concerning Babylon's overthrow, the Bible offers several explicit prophecies. God would use Cyrus in her overthrow:
 - 1) "That saith of Cyrus, *He is* my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure: even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built; and to the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid" (Isa. 45:28).
 - 2) "Thus saith the LORD to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him; and I will loose the loins of kings, to open before him the two leaved gates; and the gates shall not be shut" (Isa. 45:1).
 - b. Herodotus said the city was built astride the Euphrates River, with the river running under her great walls.
 - 1) God promised to dry up the river: "A drought *is* upon her waters; and they shall be dried up: for it *is* the land of graven images, and they are mad upon *their* idols" (Jer. 50:38).

- 2) Cyrus took Babylon by diverting the river and marching his troops into the city by the river bed. Herodotus said the Babylonians could have still defended the city had they not been engaged in festivities.
- c. Jeremiah speaks of this feast:
- 1) "I have laid a snare for thee, and thou art also taken, O Babylon, and thou wast not aware: thou art found, and also caught, because thou hast striven against the LORD" (50:24).
 - 2) "In their heat I will make their feasts, and I will make them drunken, that they may rejoice, and sleep a perpetual sleep, and not wake, saith the LORD" (51:39).
 - 3) "And I will make drunk her princes, and her wise *men*, her captains, and her rulers, and her mighty men: and they shall sleep a perpetual sleep, and not wake, saith the King, whose name *is* the LORD of hosts" (51:57).
- d. The ultimate result of Babylon's fall is pictured in meticulous detail by the inspired prophets.
- 1) She would sit in the dust: "Come down, and sit in the dust, O virgin daughter of Babylon, sit on the ground: *there is* no throne, O daughter of the Chaldeans: for thou shalt no more be called tender and delicate" (Isa. 47:1). [Note: Babylon is called a *virgin* because this was the first time she had been conquered. Darius later took the city again in 521 B.C., Xerxes in 483 B.C., and Alexander in 331 B.C.].
 - 2) These attacks on Babylon eventually reduced the walls to rubble, destroyed the temple of Belus, and demolished the city itself. Just before the time of Christ, Strabo visited the site and said it was a desert. In the 12th century A.D., another visitor described it as only a ruins, without inhabitants.
 - 3) Daniel 5:1-31: "Belshazzar the king made a great feast to a thousand of his lords, and drank wine before the thousand. Belshazzar, while he tasted the wine, commanded to bring the golden and silver vessels which his father Nebuchadnezzar had taken out of the temple which was in Jerusalem; that the king, and his princes, his wives, and his concubines, might drink therein. Then they brought the golden vessels that were taken out of the temple of the house of God which was at Jerusalem; and the king, and his princes, his wives, and his concubines, drank in them. They drank wine, and praised the gods of gold, and of silver, of brass, of iron, of wood, and of stone. In the same hour came forth fingers of a man's hand, and wrote over against the candlestick upon the plaister of the wall of the king's palace: and the king saw the part of the hand that wrote. Then the king's countenance was changed, and his thoughts troubled him, so that the joints of his loins were loosed, and his knees smote one against another. The king cried aloud to bring in the astrologers, the Chaldeans, and the soothsayers. And the king spake, and said to the wise men of Babylon, Whosoever shall read this writing, and shew me the interpretation thereof, shall be clothed with scarlet, and have a chain of gold about his neck, and shall be the third ruler in the kingdom. Then came in all the king's wise men: but they could not read the writing, nor make known to the king the interpretation thereof. Then was king Belshazzar greatly troubled, and his countenance was changed in him, and his lords were astonished. Now the queen, by reason of the words of the king and his lords, came into the banquet house: and the queen spake and said, O king, live for ever: let not thy thoughts trouble thee, nor let thy countenance be changed: There is a man in thy kingdom, in whom is the spirit of the holy gods; and in the days of thy father light and understanding and wisdom, like the wisdom of the gods, was found in him; whom the king Nebuchadnezzar thy father, the king, I say, thy father, made master of the magicians, astrologers, Chaldeans, and soothsayers; Forasmuch as an excellent spirit, and knowledge, and understanding, interpreting of dreams, and shewing of hard sentences, and dissolving of doubts, were found in the same Daniel, whom the king named Belteshazzar: now let Daniel be called, and he will shew the interpretation. Then was Daniel brought in before the king. And the king spake and said unto Daniel, Art thou that Daniel, which art of the children of the captivity of Judah, whom the king my father brought out of Jewry? I have even heard of thee, that the spirit of the gods is in thee,

and that light and understanding and excellent wisdom is found in thee. And now the wise men, the astrologers, have been brought in before me, that they should read this writing, and make known unto me the interpretation thereof: but they could not shew the interpretation of the thing: And I have heard of thee, that thou canst make interpretations, and dissolve doubts: now if thou canst read the writing, and make known to me the interpretation thereof, thou shalt be clothed with scarlet, and have a chain of gold about thy neck, and shalt be the third ruler in the kingdom. Then Daniel answered and said before the king, Let thy gifts be to thyself, and give thy rewards to another; yet I will read the writing unto the king, and make known to him the interpretation. O thou king, the most high God gave Nebuchadnezzar thy father a kingdom, and majesty, and glory, and honour: And for the majesty that he gave him, all people, nations, and languages, trembled and feared before him: whom he would he slew; and whom he would he kept alive; and whom he would he set up; and whom he would he put down. But when his heart was lifted up, and his mind hardened in pride, he was deposed from his kingly throne, and they took his glory from him: And he was driven from the sons of men; and his heart was made like the beasts, and his dwelling was with the wild asses: they fed him with grass like oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven; till he knew that the most high God ruled in the kingdom of men, and that he appointeth over it whomsoever he will. And thou his son, O Belshazzar, hast not humbled thine heart, though thou knewest all this; But hast lifted up thyself against the Lord of heaven; and they have brought the vessels of his house before thee, and thou, and thy lords, thy wives, and thy concubines, have drunk wine in them; and thou hast praised the gods of silver, and gold, of brass, iron, wood, and stone, which see not, nor hear, nor know: and the God in whose hand thy breath is, and whose are all thy ways, hast thou not glorified: Then was the part of the hand sent from him; and this writing was written. And this is the writing that was written, MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN. This is the interpretation of the thing: MENE; God hath numbered thy kingdom, and finished it. TEKEL; Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting. PERES; Thy kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians. Then commanded Belshazzar, and they clothed Daniel with scarlet, and put a chain of gold about his neck, and made a proclamation concerning him, that he should be the third ruler in the kingdom. In that night was Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans slain. And Darius the Median took the kingdom, being about threescore and two years old.”

e. The description given by Isaiah (13:19-20) is not far-fetched!

B. Nebuchadnezzar’s historical background in Biblical history.

1. Nebuchadnezzar was placed at the head of the Babylonian army, and sent by his father, who was now old and infirm, to engage the Egyptian army of Pharaoh-Necho. The Egyptians recently invaded Syria, defeated Josiah, king of Judah, at Megiddo, and gained control over the area from Egypt to Carchemish on the upper Euphrates.
 - a. 2 Kings 23:29-30: “In his days Pharaohnechoh king of Egypt went up against the king of Assyria to the river Euphrates: and king Josiah went against him; and he slew him at Megiddo, when he had seen him. And his servants carried him in a chariot dead from Megiddo, and brought him to Jerusalem, and buried him in his own sepulchre. And the people of the land took Jehoahaz the son of Josiah, and anointed him, and made him king in his father's stead.”
 - b. “NOW Neco, king of Egypt, raised an army, and marched to the river Euphrates, in order to fight with the Medes and Babylonians, who had overthrown the dominion of the Assyrians, (8) for he had a desire to reign over Asia. Now when he was come to the city Mendes, which belonged to the kingdom of Josiah, he brought an army to hinder him from passing through his own country, in his expedition against the Medes. Now Neco sent a herald to Josiah, and told him that he did not make this expedition against him, but was making haste to Euphrates; and desired that he would not provoke him to fight against him, because he obstructed his march to the place whither he had resolved to go. But Josiah did not admit of this advice of Neco, but put himself into a posture to hinder him from his intended march. I suppose it was fate that pushed him on this conduct, that it might take an occasion against him; for as he was setting his army in array, (9) and

rode about in his chariot, from one wing of his army to another, one of the Egyptians shot an arrow at him, and put an end to his eagerness of fighting; for being sorely wounded, he command a retreat to be sounded for his army, and returned to Jerusalem, and died of that wound; and was magnificently buried in the sepulcher of his fathers, when he had lived thirty-nine years, and of them had reigned thirty-one. But all the people mourned greatly for him, lamenting and grieving on his account many days; and Jeremiah the prophet composed an elegy to lament him, (10) which is extant till tills time also. Moreover, this prophet denounced beforehand the sad calamities that were coming upon the city. He also left behind him in writing a description of that destruction of our nation which has lately happened in our days, and the taking of Babylon; nor was he the only prophet who delivered such predictions beforehand to the multitude, but so did Ezekiel also, who was the first person that wrote, and left behind him in writing two books concerning these events. Now these two prophets were priests by birth, but of them Jeremiah dwelt in Jerusalem, from the thirteenth year of the reign of Josiah, until the city and temple were utterly destroyed. However, as to what befell this prophet, we will relate it in its proper place” (Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, 10,5,1].

2. Necho had held possession of these countries for about three years, when (B.C. 606) Nebuchadnezzar led his army against him, defeated him at Carchemish in a great battle.
 - a. “NOW in the fourth year of the reign of Jehoiakim, one whose name was Nebuchadnezzar took the government over the Babylonians, who at the same time went up with a great army to the city Carchemish, which was at Euphrates, upon a resolution he had taken to fight with Neco king of Egypt, under whom all Syria then was. And when Neco understood the intention of the king of Babylon, and that this expedition was made against him, he did not despise his attempt, but made haste with a great band of men to Euphrates to defend himself from Nebuchadnezzar; and when they had joined battle, he was beaten, and lost many ten thousands [of his soldiers] in the battle. So the king of Babylon passed over Euphrates, and took all Syria, as far as Pelusium, excepting Judea. But when Nebuchadnezzar had already reigned four years, which was the eighth of Jehoiakim's government over the Hebrews, the king of Babylon made an expedition with mighty forces against the Jews, and required tribute of Jehoiakim, and threatened upon his refusal to make war against him. He was affrighted at his threatening, and bought his peace with money, and brought the tribute he was ordered to bring for three years” [Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, 10, 6,1].
 - b. Jeremiah 46:1-12: “The word of the LORD which came to Jeremiah the prophet against the Gentiles; Against Egypt, against the army of Pharaohnecho king of Egypt, which was by the river Euphrates in Carchemish, which Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon smote in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah. Order ye the buckler and shield, and draw near to battle. Harness the horses; and get up, ye horsemen, and stand forth with your helmets; furbish the spears, and put on the brigandines. Wherefore have I seen them dismayed and turned away back? and their mighty ones are beaten down, and are fled apace, and look not back: for fear was round about, saith the LORD. Let not the swift flee away, nor the mighty man escape; they shall stumble, and fall toward the north by the river Euphrates. Who is this that cometh up as a flood, whose waters are moved as the rivers? Egypt riseth up like a flood, and his waters are moved like the rivers; and he saith, I will go up, and will cover the earth; I will destroy the city and the inhabitants thereof. Come up, ye horses; and rage, ye chariots; and let the mighty men come forth; the Ethiopians and the Libyans, that handle the shield; and the Lydians, that handle and bend the bow. For this is the day of the Lord GOD of hosts, a day of vengeance, that he may avenge him of his adversaries: and the sword shall devour, and it shall be satiate and made drunk with their blood: for the Lord GOD of hosts hath a sacrifice in the north country by the river Euphrates. Go up into Gilead, and take balm, O virgin, the daughter of Egypt: in vain shalt thou use many medicines; for thou shalt not be cured. The nations have heard of thy shame, and thy cry hath filled the land: for the mighty man hath stumbled against the mighty, and they are fallen both together.”
 - c. Daniel 1:1-2: “In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah came Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon unto Jerusalem, and besieged it. And the Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his

hand, with part of the vessels of the house of God: which he carried into the land of Shinar to the house of his god; and he brought the vessels into the treasure house of his god.”

3. In the midst of the military operations, word came to Nebuchadnezzar that his father had died. He hastened back to Babylon, accompanied only by a small company of soldiers.
 - a. “I will now relate what hath been written concerning us in the Chaldean histories, which records have a great agreement with our books in oilier things also. Berosus shall be witness to what I say: he was by birth a Chaldean, well known by the learned, on account of his publication of the Chaldean books of astronomy and philosophy among the Greeks. This Berosus, therefore, following the most ancient records of that nation, gives us a history of the deluge of waters that then happened, and of the destruction of mankind thereby, and agrees with Moses's narration thereof. He also gives us an account of that ark wherein Noah, the origin of our race, was preserved, when it was brought to the highest part of the Armenian mountains; after which he gives us a catalogue of the posterity of Noah, and adds the years of their chronology, and at length comes down to Nabolassar, who was king of Babylon, and of the Chaldeans. And when he was relating the acts of this king, he describes to us how he sent his son Nabuchodonosor [Nebuchadnezzar] against Egypt, and against our land, with a great army, upon his being informed that they had revolted from him; and how, by that means, he subdued them all, and set our temple that was at Jerusalem on fire; nay, and removed our people entirely out of their own country, and transferred them to Babylon; when it so happened that our city was desolate during the interval of seventy years, until the days of Cyrus king of Persia. He then says, ‘That this Babylonian king conquered Egypt, and Syria, and Phoenicia, and Arabia, and exceeded in his exploits all that had reigned before him in Babylon and Chaldea.’ A little after which Berosus subjoins what follows in his History of Ancient Times. I will set down Berosus's own accounts, which are these: ‘When Nabolassar, father of Nabuchodonosor, heard that the governor whom he had set over Egypt, and over the parts of Celesyria and Phoenicia, had revolted from him, he was not able to bear it any longer; but committing certain parts of his army to his son Nabuchodonosor, who was then but young, he sent him against the rebel: Nabuchodonosor joined battle with him, and conquered him, and reduced the country under his dominion again. Now it so fell out that his father Nabolassar fell into a distemper at this time, and died in the city of Babylon, after he had reigned twenty-nine years. But as he understood, in a little time, that his father Nabolassar was dead, he set the affairs of Egypt and the other countries in order, and committed the captives he had taken from the Jews, and Phoenicians, and Syrians, and of the nations belonging to Egypt, to some of his friends, that they might conduct that part of the forces that had on heavy armor, with the rest of his baggage, to Babylonia; while he went in haste, having but a few with him, over the desert to Babylon; whither, when he was come, he found the public affairs had been managed by the Chaldeans, and that the principal person among them had preserved the kingdom for him. Accordingly, he now entirely obtained all his father's dominions. He then came, and ordered the captives to be placed as colonies in the most proper places of Babylonia; but for himself, he adorned the temple of Belus, and the other temples, after an elegant manner, out of the spoils he had taken in this war. He also rebuilt the old city, and added another to it on the outside, and so far restored Babylon, that none who should besiege it afterwards might have it in their power to divert the river, so as to facilitate an entrance into it; and this he did by building three walls about the inner city, and three about the outer. Some of these walls he built of burnt brick and bitumen, and some of brick only. So when he had thus fortified the city with walls, after an excellent manner, and had adorned the gates magnificently, he added a new palace to that which his father had dwelt in, and this close by it also, and that more eminent in its height, and in its great splendor. It would perhaps require too long a narration, if any one were to describe it. However, as prodigiously large and as magnificent as it was, it was finished in fifteen days. Now in this palace he erected very high walks, supported by stone pillars, and by planting what was called a pensile paradise, and replenishing it with all sorts of trees, he rendered the prospect an exact resemblance of a mountainous country. This he did to please his queen, because she had been brought up in Media, and was fond of a mountainous situation” [Josephus, *Apion*, Book 1, 19].

- b. It was at this time that Daniel and his companions were brought to Babylon, where they presently grew into favor with Nebuchadnezzar, and became persons of very considerable influence (Daniel 1:3-20). The sacred vessels taken from Jehovah's house were transferred by Nebuchadnezzar to his temple at Babylon (Isaiah 39; 2 Chronicles 36:6-7).
4. "Nebuchadnezzar succeeded his father on the throne of Babylon in 604 BC, and reigned till 561 BC. He probably commanded the armies of Babylon from 609 BC. At any rate, he was at the head of the army which defeated Pharaoh-necho at Carchemish on the Euphrates in 605 BC (see 2 Kings 23:31; 2 Chron 35:20 ff). After having driven Necho out of Asia and settled the affairs of Syria and Palestine, he was suddenly recalled to Babylon by the death of his father. There he seems quietly to have ascended the throne. In the 4th year of Jehoiakim (or 3rd according to the Babylonian manner of reckoning (Dan 1:1)), he came up first against Jerusalem and carried away part of the vessels of the temple and a few captives of noble lineage. Again, in Jehoiakim's 11th year, he captured Jerusalem, put Jehoiakim, its king, into chains, and probably killed him. His successor, Jehoiachin, after a three months' reign, was besieged in Jerusalem, captured, deposed, and carried captive to Babylon, where he remained in captivity 37 years until he was set free by Evil-merodach. In the 9th year of Zedekiah, Nebuchadnezzar made a 4th expedition against Jerusalem which he besieged, captured, and destroyed (see Jer 52). In addition to these wars with Judah, Nebuchadnezzar carried on a long siege of Tyre, lasting 13 years, from his 7th to his 20th year. He had at least three wars with Egypt. The first culminated in the defeat of Necho at Carchemish; the second in the withdrawal of Hophra (Apries) from Palestine in the 1st year of the siege of Jerusalem under Zedekiah; and the third saw the armies of Nebuchadnezzar entering Egypt in triumph and defeating Amasis in Nebuchadnezzar's 37th year. In the numerous building and honorific inscriptions of Nebuchadnezzar he makes no mention by name of his foes or of his battles; but he frequently speaks of foes that he had conquered and of many peoples whom he ruled. Of these peoples he mentions by name the Hittites and others (see Langdon, 148-.51). In the Wady-Brissa inscription, he speaks of a special conquest of Lebanon from some foreign foe who had seized it; but the name of the enemy is not given (from International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia, Electronic Database Copyright (c)1996 by Biblesoft).

C. Nebuchadnezzar's dream in Daniel 2.

1. The dream was so startling and real that the king woke up, but could not recall the details of the dream. He called his magicians, astrologers, and sorcerers to remind him of what he had seen and to reveal the meaning thereof.
 - a. Daniel 2:10: "The Chaldeans answered before the king, and said, There is not a man upon the earth that can show the king's matter: therefore *there is* no king, lord, nor ruler, *that* asked such things at any magician, or astrologer, or Chaldean."
 - b. God revealed the dream and its meaning to Daniel. "Then was the secret revealed unto Daniel in a night vision. Then Daniel blessed the God of heaven" (Dan. 2:19).
2. Daniel came to the king with the information he wanted. "But there is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets, and maketh known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days. Thy dream, and the visions of thy head upon thy bed, are these" (Dan. 2:28).
 - a. In the dream, Nebuchadnezzar saw a great image, very bright and terrible in appearance. Its head was of fine gold, its breast and arms were of silver, its belly and thighs were of brass, and its legs of iron and feet partly of iron and partly of clay.
 - b. A stone smote the image on its feet, breaking it into pieces; the pieces were blown away by the wind; the stone became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth (Dan. 2:31-35).
3. Daniel gave the meaning of the dream (Dan. 2:31-45).
 - a. The golden head of the image represented Nebuchadnezzar and his great Babylonian Empire. "Thou, O king, art a king of kings: for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory. And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath he given into thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all. Thou art this head of gold" (Dan. 2:37-38).

- b. The breast and arms represented another kingdom which would replace Nebuchadnezzar's great empire; it would be inferior to that of Babylonia: "And after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee, and another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth" (Dan. 2:39). The reference to this kingdom is connected to the third, and the descriptive clause apparently applies to both the second and third kingdoms; that is, both would bear rule over all the earth.
 - c. The belly and thighs represented the kingdom which would succeed the second kingdom (Dan. 2:39). This third kingdom would also bear rule over all the earth.
 - d. The legs and feet represented a fourth kingdom. This would be a mighty kingdom, inasmuch as iron breaks other into pieces, but it would be divided: "And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron: forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things: and as iron that breaketh all these, shall it break in pieces and bruise. And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of potters' clay, and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; but there shall be in it of the strength of the iron, forasmuch as thou sawest the iron mixed with miry clay. And as the toes of the feet were part of iron, and part of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong, and partly broken. And whereas thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men: but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay" (Dan. 2:40-43).
4. Having plainly named the first of these four great kingdoms to be that of Babylon, the other three powers are easily identified from history.
- a. Babylon rose to power when it defeated the Assyrians at Nineveh in 612 B.C and the Egyptians in 606 B.C. at Carchemish. It subdued Judah also in 606 B.C. Babylon fell to the combined armies of the Medes and Persians in 539 B.C.
 - b. The Medo-Persian Empire captured Babylon in 539 B.C., taking over its vast empire. They were in turn conquered by the Grecians in 330 B.C., when Alexander the Great invaded the East.
 - c. The Grecian Empire prevailed from 330 B.C. until they were overcome by the Romans in 63 B.C.
 - d. The Roman Empire extended their influence throughout the *civilized* world, conquering nation-after-nation, subjugating the ancient world to their iron rule. The Roman Empire fell into ruin about 476 A.D. [The eastern part of the empire lasted until 1453].
5. In connection with this fourth kingdom (the Roman Empire), Daniel uttered his awesome prophecy of the coming kingdom.
- a. Daniel 2:44: "And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, *but* it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever."
 - b. God promised to establish his kingdom during the days of the Roman kings. If he was true to his word, we may confidently look for the beginning of the kingdom during the span of time between 63 B.C. and 476 A.D., a period of 539 years. The New Testament furnishes ample details to validate the prophecy:
 - 1) Luke 3:1-2: "Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judaea, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip tetrarch of Ituraea and of the region of Trachonitis, and Lysanias the tetrarch of Abilene, Annas and Caiaphas being the high priests, the word of God came unto John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness."
 - 2) Matthew 3:1-2: "In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea, And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."
 - 3) Matthew 4:17: "From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."
 - 4) Matthew 10:7: "And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand."
 - 5) Luke 10:9: "And heal the sick that are therein, and say unto them, The kingdom of God is

come nigh unto you.”

- 6) Matthew 16:16-19: “And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.”
- 7) Colossians 1:13-14: “Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins.”
- 8) Hebrews 12:28: “Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear.”

D. Nebuchadnezzar’s dream in Daniel 4.

1. The dream:

- a. Daniel 4:4-18: “I Nebuchadnezzar was at rest in mine house, and flourishing in my palace: I saw a dream which made me afraid, and the thoughts upon my bed and the visions of my head troubled me. Therefore made I a decree to bring in all the wise men of Babylon before me, that they might make known unto me the interpretation of the dream. Then came in the magicians, the astrologers, the Chaldeans, and the soothsayers: and I told the dream before them; but they did not make known unto me the interpretation thereof. But at the last Daniel came in before me, whose name was Belteshazzar, according to the name of my god, and in whom is the spirit of the holy gods: and before him I told the dream, saying, O Belteshazzar, master of the magicians, because I know that the spirit of the holy gods is in thee, and no secret troubleth thee, tell me the visions of my dream that I have seen, and the interpretation thereof. Thus were the visions of mine head in my bed; I saw, and behold a tree in the midst of the earth, and the height thereof was great. The tree grew, and was strong, and the height thereof reached unto heaven, and the sight thereof to the end of all the earth: The leaves thereof were fair, and the fruit thereof much, and in it was meat for all: the beasts of the field had shadow under it, and the fowls of the heaven dwelt in the boughs thereof, and all flesh was fed of it. I saw in the visions of my head upon my bed, and, behold, a watcher and an holy one came down from heaven; He cried aloud, and said thus, Hew down the tree, and cut off his branches, shake off his leaves, and scatter his fruit: let the beasts get away from under it, and the fowls from his branches: Nevertheless leave the stump of his roots in the earth, even with a band of iron and brass, in the tender grass of the field; and let it be wet with the dew of heaven, and let his portion be with the beasts in the grass of the earth: Let his heart be changed from man’s, and let a beast’s heart be given unto him; and let seven times pass over him. This matter is by the decree of the watchers, and the demand by the word of the holy ones: to the intent that the living may know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will, and setteth up over it the basest of men. This dream I king Nebuchadnezzar have seen. Now thou, O Belteshazzar, declare the interpretation thereof, forasmuch as all the wise men of my kingdom are not able to make known unto me the interpretation: but thou art able; for the spirit of the holy gods is in thee.”
- b. Daniel 4:19-27: “Then Daniel, whose name was Belteshazzar, was astonished for one hour, and his thoughts troubled him. The king spake, and said, Belteshazzar, let not the dream, or the interpretation thereof, trouble thee. Belteshazzar answered and said, My lord, the dream be to them that hate thee, and the interpretation thereof to thine enemies. The tree that thou sawest, which grew, and was strong, whose height reached unto the heaven, and the sight thereof to all the earth; Whose leaves were fair, and the fruit thereof much, and in it was meat for all; under which the beasts of the field dwelt, and upon whose branches the fowls of the heaven had their habitation: It is thou, O king, that art grown and become strong: for thy greatness is grown, and reacheth unto heaven, and thy dominion to the end of the earth. And whereas the king saw a watcher and an holy

one coming down from heaven, and saying, Hew the tree down, and destroy it; yet leave the stump of the roots thereof in the earth, even with a band of iron and brass, in the tender grass of the field; and let it be wet with the dew of heaven, and let his portion be with the beasts of the field, till seven times pass over him; This is the interpretation, O king, and this is the decree of the most High, which is come upon my lord the king: That they shall drive thee from men, and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field, and they shall make thee to eat grass as oxen, and they shall wet thee with the dew of heaven, and seven times shall pass over thee, till thou know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will. And whereas they commanded to leave the stump of the tree roots; thy kingdom shall be sure unto thee, after that thou shalt have known that the heavens do rule. Wherefore, O king, let my counsel be acceptable unto thee, and break off thy sins by righteousness, and thine iniquities by shewing mercy to the poor; if it may be a lengthening of thy tranquillity.”

2. His arrogance was exposed through this dream.
 - a. Daniel 4:28-33: “All this came upon the king Nebuchadnezzar. At the end of twelve months he walked in the palace of the kingdom of Babylon. The king spake, and said, Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty? While the word was in the king's mouth, there fell a voice from heaven, saying, O king Nebuchadnezzar, to thee it is spoken; The kingdom is departed from thee. And they shall drive thee from men, and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field: they shall make thee to eat grass as oxen, and seven times shall pass over thee, until thou know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will. The same hour was the thing fulfilled upon Nebuchadnezzar: and he was driven from men, and did eat grass as oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven, till his hairs were grown like eagles' feathers, and his nails like birds' claws.”
 - b. “He walked in the palace of the kingdom of Babylon, in pomp and pride, pleasing himself with the view of that vast city, which, with all the territories thereunto belonging, was under his command, and he said, either to himself or to those about him, perhaps some foreigners to whom he was showing his kingdom and the glory of it, Is not this great Babylon? Yes, it is great, of vast extent, no less than forty-five miles compass within the walls. It is full of inhabitants, and they are full of wealth. It is a golden city, and that is enough to proclaim it great, Isa 14:4. See the grandeur of the houses, walls, towers, and public edifices. Every thing in Babylon he thinks looks great; ‘and this great Babylon I have built.’
 - 1) “Babylon was built many ages before he was born, but because he fortified and beautified it, and we may suppose much of it was rebuilt during his long and prosperous reign, he boasts that he has built it, as Augustus Caesar boasted concerning Rome, *Lateritiam inveni, marmoream reliqui*—I found it brick, but I left it marble. He boasts that he built it for the house of the kingdom, that is, the metropolis of his empire. This vast city, compared with the countries that belonged to his dominions, was but as one house. He built it with the assistance of his subjects, yet boasts that he did it by the might of his power; he built it for his security and convenience, yet, as if he had no occasion for it, boasts that he built it purely for the honour of his majesty.
 - 2) “Note, Pride and self-conceitedness are sins that most easily beset great men, who have great things in the world. They are apt to take the glory to themselves which is due to God only” [Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible: New Modern Edition, Electronic Database. Copyright (c) 1991 by Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.].
3. His punishment for his arrogance is detailed by the dream.
 - a. Daniel 4:34-35: “And at the end of the days I Nebuchadnezzar lifted up mine eyes unto heaven, and mine understanding returned unto me, and I blessed the most High, and I praised and honoured him that liveth for ever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom is from generation to generation: And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?”

- b. His condition is a medical ailment called *boanthropy*.
- 1) A rare form of insanity, written of in the nineteenth century, in which a man imagines himself to be an ox. Such madness (or at least its diagnosis) is found in the Bible in the book of Daniel, which reports that King Nebuchadnezzar “was driven from men, and did eat grass as oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven.” The same Greek prefix *bo* as in *bovine*, was used in other words, such as *boopic*, “having prominent eyes like an ox” [Internet website].
 - 2) “The particular manifestation of the disease described in the story of Nebuchadnezzar is *Boanatrophy*, where the diseased person believes that he or she is an ox, a cow, or a bull. Roland Kenneth Harrison described a case he observed in the winter of 1946-47 while visiting a mental hospital in England (*Old Testament Introduction* [Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdsman's Publishing Company 1969], pages 1116,1117). The description he provides of this mental patient closely resembles that of Nebuchadnezzar as described in Daniel (4:32,33)” [*King of Kings*, VBS Adult Course, Lambert, 2006].
- c. Quotation from Coffman:
- 1) “The description here of the king's condition during the days of his punishment should not be pressed as to details. They have the general meaning that, The king would be in such a state as to be treated like a beast; he would be removed from his ordinary abode, and become a miserable and neglected outcast.
 - 2) “The nature of the king's strange malady is readily identified by a number of writers as ‘lycanthropy,’ a strange form of insanity in which the victim imagines that he is a beast and adopts a form of behavior appropriate to such a delusion. A dissenting view was quoted by Thomson from a famed British medical doctor, David Yellowlees, of the University of Glasgow: ‘Nebuchadnezzar's illness was not lycanthropy; it was an attack of acute mania, from which he likely recovered, as usually in such attacks, if uncomplicated, in seven months. In its extreme form, acute mania causes victims to exhibit all kinds of degraded habits such as stripping or tearing of clothes, eating filth and garbage of all sorts, wild and violent gesticulations, dangerous assaults, howling noises, and utter disregard of personal decency.’”
 - 3) “This quotation has been included here not from any personal acceptance of it as true, but as a matter of general interest. Our own viewpoint is that, since the visitation upon Nebuchadnezzar was a heaven sent punishment, it might not have been any particular disease with which men are familiar. We simply do not know what it was.
 - 4) “Whatever was the length of time that Nebuchadnezzar was deprived of his throne, the government of Babylon would have been taken care of by a regent. Adam Clarke gives us the name of that regent. ‘Evil-merodach his son was regent during his father's insanity.’
 - 5) “The destructive critics gleefully remark that, “The silence of the inscriptions is inexplicable!’ Such a remark is based on the fact that none of the monuments or inscriptions uncovered from the mud of Mesopotamia have any report of king Nebuchadnezzar's terrible malady. Apparently critics know nothing at all of human rulers. Do they suppose that Senator Ted Kennedy would have a monument erected to his escapade at Chappaquiddick? or that President John Kennedy would have memorialized his sexual escapades in the White House?
 - 6) “How can anyone on earth suppose that Nebuchadnezzar would have erected a monument to his status while in the throes of that awful malady? Despite that, however, the king did publish the decree which we have before us in the historic Book of Daniel; and this writer believes, along with a great many other conservative scholars, that the discoveries in the ancient Babylonian area may yet reveal a copy of this very decree. But if and when that should happen, the enemies of the Word would not stop denying it.”
4. His repentance was forthcoming after the fulfillment of the dream.
- a. Daniel 4:36-37: “At the same time my reason returned unto me; and for the glory of my kingdom, mine honour and brightness returned unto me; and my counsellors and my lords sought unto me;

and I was established in my kingdom, and excellent majesty was added unto me. Now I Nebuchadnezzar praise and extol and honour the King of heaven, all whose works are truth, and his ways judgment: and those that walk in pride he is able to abase.”

- b. “The magnificent change wrought in Nebuchadnezzar as a result of his experiences as recorded in Daniel constituted God's bulwark against any attempted annihilation of the Chosen Race during their Babylonian captivity. It is the relationship that Nebuchadnezzar sustained toward Israel during the fateful years of their captivity that accounts for all of the wonders recorded in Babylon. One may very well believe that without the genuine historical occurrences of just such things as are recorded in Daniel, the Israel of God might have been lost forever. There was no way that God would have tolerated such a disaster. Daniel records the Divine action by which God prevented it” (Coffman).

III. CONCLUSION.

- A. Some lessons to be gleaned from the experiences of Nebuchadnezzar.
1. God has the final word in all matters.
 2. God is always true to his word.
 3. Human achievement has limitations.
 4. Only God can reveal the future.
 5. There is a God in Heaven.
- B. Nebuchadnezzar was an amazingly successful man, but he still needed God.
1. He was the absolute ruler in his kingdom, but he had a Master.
 2. The greatest man on earth is still a lowly offspring of the Almighty.
 3. Mary, the mother of our Lord, is extolled for her virtue and honor, but she needed the cleansing power furnished by the Son of God.
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Appendix Two

For Those Who Want More Information About Babylon

I. Further Details About Babylon.

A. The Following Data is From *Encarta*:

1. Nabopolassar founded the Neo-Babylonian dynasty, and his son Nebuchadnezzar II expanded the kingdom until it became an empire embracing much of southwest Asia. The imperial capital at Babylon was refurbished with new temple and palace buildings, extensive fortification walls and gates, and paved processional ways; it was at that time the largest city of the known world, covering more than 1,000 hectares (some 2,500 acres).
2. The Neo-Babylonian Empire was of short duration. In 539 bc, Cyrus the Great captured Babylon and incorporated Babylonia into the newly founded Persian Empire. Under the Persians, Babylon for a time served as the official residence of the crown prince, until a local revolt in 482 led Xerxes I to raze the temples and ziggurat (temple tower) and to melt down the statue of the patron god Marduk.
3. Alexander the Great captured the city in 330 BC and planned to rebuild it and make it the capital of his vast empire, but he died before he could carry out his plans. After 312 bc, Babylon was for a while used as a capital by the Seleucid dynasty set up by Alexander's successors. When the new capital of Seleucia on the Tigris was founded in the early 3rd century BC, however, most of Babylon's population was moved there. The temples continued in use for a time, but the city became insignificant and almost disappeared before the coming of Islam in the 7th century ad.
4. The topography of Babylon is best known from the occupation levels of the Neo-Babylonian dynasty, as excavated by Robert Koldewey and other German archaeologists just before World War I. At that time the Euphrates divided the city into two unequal parts—the old quarter, with most of the palaces and temples, on the east bank, and the New City on the west bank. A prominent place near the center of the city was occupied by Esagila, the temple of Marduk; just to the north of that was Etemenanki (the ziggurat), a seven-storied edifice sometimes linked in popular legend with the Tower of Babel. A cluster of palaces and fortifications was found at the northwest corner of the old city; the German excavators identified one ruin in this area with the foundations of the Hanging Gardens, one of the Seven Wonders of the World, which, according to tradition, Nebuchadnezzar II built for his Median wife. Nearby was located the Ishtar Gate, with its lions and dragons in brightly colored glazed brick. Through it passed the main Processional Way, the route followed by cultic and political leaders for the New Year's festival ceremonies. Through nine major gates of the massive inner fortification walls passed roads to the principal settlements of Babylonia. [Contributed By: John A. Brinkman, **Microsoft® Encarta® Reference Library 2004**. © 1993-2003 Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved].

B. The Following Article is From the International Standard Bible Dictionary:

1. Babylon was the Greek name of the city written in the cuneiform script of the Babylonians, bab-ili, which means in Sem, "the gate of god." The Hebrews called the country, as well as the city, Babel.... The name in Sumerian ideographs was written Din-tir, which means "life of the forest," and yet ancient etymologists explained it as meaning "place of the seat of life" (shubat balaTe). Ka-ding'irra, which also means "gate of god," was another form of the name in Sumerian. It was also called Su-anna (which is of uncertain meaning) and Uru-azagga, "the holy city."
2. Herodotus, the Greek historian, has given us a picture of Babylon in his day. He says that the city was a great square, 42 miles in circuit. Ctesias makes it 56 miles. This, he writes, was surrounded by a moat or rampart 300 ft. high, and 75 ft. broad. The earliest mention of Babylon is in the time of Sargon I, about 2700 B.C.. That monarch laid the foundations of the temple of Annit, and also those of the temple of Amal. In the time of Dungi we learn that the place was sacked. The city evidently played a very unimportant part in the political history of Babylonia of the early period, for besides these references it is almost unknown until the time of Hammurabi, when its rise brought about a new epoch in the history of Babylonia. The seat of power was then transferred permanently from the

southern states. This resulted in the closing of the political history of the Sumerians. The organization of the empire by Hammurabi, with Babylon as its capital, placed it in a position from which it was never dislodged during the remaining history of Babylonia.

3. The mounds covering the ancient city have frequently been explored, but systematic excavations of the city were not undertaken until 1899, when Koldewey, the German excavator, began to uncover its ancient ruins in a methodical manner....
4. In the northern part of the city there was situated what is called the North Palace on the east side of the Euphrates, which passed through the city. A little distance below this point the Arakhtu canal left the Euphrates, and passing through the southern wall rejoined the river. There was also a Middle and Southern Palace. Near the latter was located the Ishtar gate. The temple E-makh was close to the east side of the gate. Other canals in the city were called Merodach and Libilkhegala. In the southern portion of the city was located the famous temple E-sag-ila....
5. The temple area included an outer, central and inner court. The shrine of Ishtar and Zamama occupied the central court, and the ziggurat the inner court. In the temple proper, the shrine Ekua was located, in which stood the golden image of Marduk. This, the ancient writers say, was 40 ft. high. On the topmost stage there was a shrine dedicated to Marduk. It is assumed that it was 50 ft. long by 70 ft. broad and 50 ft. in height.
6. Nabopolassar rebuilt the temple and its tower. Nebuchadrezzar enlarged and embellished the sanctuary. He raised the tower so that "its head was in the heavens," an expression found in the story of the Tower of Babel in Gen, as well as in many of the building inscriptions....
7. One of the chief works of Nebuchadrezzar was the building of Aiburshabu, the famous procession street of the city, which extended from the Ishtar gate to E-sag-ila. It was a great and magnificent causeway, built higher than the houses. Walls lined it on either side, which were decorated with glazed tiles, portraying lions, life size in relief. The pavement was laid with blocks of stone brought from the mountains. This procession street figured prominently on the New Year's festal day, when the procession of the gods took place.
8. A knowledge of the work Nebuchadrezzar did serves as a fitting commentary to the passage in Dan 4:30: "Is not this great Babylon, which I have built?" He had made the city one of the wonders of the world.
9. The two sieges by Darius Hystaspes and the one by Xerxes destroyed much of the beauty of the city. Alexander desired to make it again a great center and to build an immense fortress in the city; but in the midst of this undertaking he was murdered, while living in the palace of Nebuchadrezzar. The temple, though frequently destroyed, was in existence in the time of the Seleucids, but the city had long since ceased to be of any importance. [ALBERT T. CLAY].

C. The ISBE also gives this information about Babylon:

1. Names by Which the City Was Known: The name of the great capital of ancient Babylonia, the Shinar of Gen 10:10; 14:1, other names of the city being Tin-dir, "seat of life," E (ki), probably an abbreviation of Eridu (ki) "the good city" (=Paradise), Babylonia having seemingly been regarded as the Garden of Eden (PSBA, June 1911, p. 161); and Su-anna, "the high-handed" (meaning, apparently, "high-walled," "hand" and "defense" being interchangeable terms). It is possible that these various names are due to the incorporation of outlying districts as Babylon grew in size.
2. Probable Date of Its Foundation: According to Gen 10:9, the founder of Babylon was Nimrod, but among the Babylonians, it was Merodach who built the city, together with Erech and Niffer (Calneh) and their renowned temples. The date of its foundation is unknown, but it certainly went back to primitive times, and Babylon may even have equaled Niffer in antiquity (the American explorers of that site have estimated that its lowest strata of habitations go back to 8,000 years B.C.). Babylon's late assumption of the position of capital of the country would therefore be due to its rulers not having attained power and influence at an earlier period. Having once acquired that position, however, it retained it to the end, and its great god, Merodach, became the head of the Babylonian pantheon—partly through the influence of Babylon as capital, partly because the city was the center of his

worship, and the place of the great Tower of Babel, concerning which many wonderful things were said.

3. **Its Walls and Gates from Herodotus:** According to Herodotus, the city, which lay in a great plain, was square in its plan and measured 120 furlongs (stadia) each way—480 in all. Each side was therefore about 14 miles long, making a circuit of nearly 56 miles, and an area of nearly 196 square miles. As the space inclosed is so great, and traces of the walls would seem to be wanting, these figures may be regarded as open to question. Around the city, Herodotus says, there was a deep and broad moat full of water, and then came a wall 50 royal cubits thick and 200 cubits high, pierced by 100 gateways with brazen gates and lintels. Reckoning the cubit at 18 $\frac{2}{3}$ inches, this would mean that Babylon's walls were no less than 311 ft. high; and regarding the royal cubit as being equal to 21 inches, their thickness would be something like 87 ft. Notwithstanding that Babylon has been the quarry of the neighboring builders for two millenniums, it is surprising that such extensive masses of brickwork should have disappeared without leaving at least a few recognizable traces.
4. **Its Position, Divisions, Streets, and Temple:** The city was built on both sides of the Euphrates, and at the point where the wall met the river there was a return-wall running along its banks, forming a rampart. The houses of Babylon were of 3 and 4 stories. The roads which ran through the city were straight, and apparently intersected each other at right angles, like the great cities of America. The river-end of each of the streets leading to the river was guarded by a brazen gate. Within the great outer wall was another, not much weaker, but inclosing a smaller space. Each division of the city contained a great building, the one being the king's palace, strongly fortified around, and the other the temple of Zeus Boles—an erection with brazen gates measuring two furlongs each way. Within this sacred precinct was a solid tower measuring a furlong each way, and surmounted by other towers to the number of eight. An ascent ran around these towers, with a stopping-place about the middle where the visitor might rest. Upon the topmost tower a large cell was built, wherein was a couch and a golden table....
5. **The Works of Semiramis and Nitocris:** The hydraulic works of Babylon are attributed by Herodotus to two queens, Semiramis and Nitocris. The former made banks of earth on the plain which were worth seeing, preventing the river from flooding the plain like a sea. The second, Nitocris, altered the channel of the river in such a way that it flowed three times in its course to the village Andericca, and the traveler by water therefore took three days to pass this spot. She also raised the banks of the river, and dug a great lake above Babylon. The place which was dug out she made into a swamp, the object being to retard the course of the river. The many bends and the swamp were on the shortest route to Media, to prevent the Medes from having dealings with her kingdom and learning of her affairs. Other works were a bridge across the Euphrates, and a tomb for herself over the most frequented gate of the city. Both Herodotus and Ctesias were eyewitnesses of the glory of Babylon, though only at the period when it had begun to wane....
6. **Ctesias' Description—the Palaces and Their Decorated Walls:** According to Ctesias, the circuit of the city was not 480, but 360 furlongs—the number of the days in the Babylonian year—and somewhat under 42 miles. The East and West districts were joined by a bridge 5 furlongs or 1,080 yards long, and 30 ft. broad. At each end of the bridge was a royal palace, that on the eastern bank being the more magnificent of the two. This palace was defended by three walls, the outermost being 60 furlongs or 7 miles in circuit; the second, a circular wall, 40 furlongs (4 $\frac{1}{2}$ miles), and the third 20 furlongs 21 ($\frac{1}{2}$ miles). The height of the middle wall was 300 ft., and that of its towers 420 ft., but this was exceeded by the height of the inmost wall. Ctesias states that the walls of the second and third inclosures were of colored brick, showing hunting scenes—the chase of the leopard and the lion, with male and female figures, which he regarded as Ninus and Semiramis. The other palace (that on the West bank) was smaller and less ornate, and was inclosed only by a single wall 30 furlongs (3 $\frac{1}{2}$ miles) in circuit. This also had representations of hunting scenes and bronze statues of Ninus, Semiramis and Jupiter-Belus (Bel-Merodach). Besides the bridge, he states that there was also a tunnel under the river. He seems to speak of the temple of Belus (see BABEL, TOWER OF) as being surmounted by three statues—Bel (Bel-Merodach), 40 ft. high, his mother Rhea (Dawkina, the Dauke of Damascius), and Bel-Merodach's spouse Juno or Beltis (ZP.r-panltum).

7. The Temple of Belus and the Hanging Gardens: The celebrated Hanging Gardens he seems to describe as a square of which each side measured 400 ft., rising in terraces, the topmost of which was planted with trees of various kinds. If this was the case, it must have resembled a temple-tower covered with verdure....
 8. Nebuchadrezzar's Account: Among the native accounts of the city, that of Nebuchadrezzar is the best and most instructive. From this record it would seem that there were two principal defensive structures, Imgur-Enlil and Nemitti-Enlil—"Enlil has been gracious" and "Enlil's foundation" respectively. The construction of these, which protected the inner city only, on the eastern and western sides of the Euphrates, he attributes to his father Nabonidus, as well as the digging of the moat, with the two "strong walls" on its banks, and the embankment of the Arabtu canal. He had also lined the Euphrates with quays or embankments—probably the structures to which the Greek writers refer—but he had not finished the work. Within Babylon itself he made a roadway from Du-azaga, the place where the fates were declared, to Aaibur-sabu, Babylon's festival-street, which lay by the gate of Beltis or Mah, for the great New-Year's festival of Merodach and the gods.
 9. Nebuchadrezzar's Architectural Work at Babylon: Nebuchadrezzar, after his accession, completed the two great walls, lined the ditches with brick, and increased the thickness of the two walls which his father had built. He also built a wall, traces of which are apparently extant, on the West side of Babylon (he apparently refers to what may be called the "city," in contradistinction to "greater Babylon"), and raised the level of Aa-ibur-sabu from the "holy gate" to the gate of Nana; together with the gateways (in consequence of the higher level of the pathway) through which it passed. The gates themselves were constructed of cedar overlaid with copper (bronze), most likely in the same manner as the gates of Imgur-Bel (Balawat) in Assyria (reign of Shalmaneser II, circa 850 B.C.). Probably none of Babylon's gates were of solid bronze, notwithstanding the statements of Herodotus; but the thresholds were wholly of that metal, stone being very rare, and perhaps less durable. These gates were guarded by images of bulls and giant serpents or composite dragons of the same metal. Nebuchadrezzar also built a wall on the East bank of the river, 4,000 cubits distant, "high like a mountain," to prevent the approach of an enemy. This wall also had cedar gates covered with copper. An additional defense made by him was an enormous lake, "like unto the broad sea to cross," which was kept in by embankments.
 10. The Royal Palaces: The royal palaces next claimed the great king's attention. The palace in which Nabopolassar had lived, and wherein, in all probability, Nebuchadrezzar had passed his younger days, had suffered from the floods when the river was high. The foundations of this extensive edifice, which extended from the wall called Imgur-Enlil to Libil-hegala, the eastern canal, and from the banks of the Euphrates to Aa-ibur-sabu, the festival-street, were thoroughly repaired with burnt brick and bitumen, and the doorways, which had become too low in consequence of the raising of that street, were raised to a suitable height. He caused the whole to tower aloft, as he has it, "mountainlike" (suggesting a building more than one story high). The roof of this palace was built of cedar, and the doors were of the same wood covered with bronze. Their thresholds, as in other cases, were bronze, and the interior of the palace was decorated with gold, silver, precious stones and other costly material....
 11. Details Concerning the City: Besides Nebuchadrezzar's inscriptions, various other texts give details concerning the topography of Babylon, among them being the contract-tablets, which mention various districts or quarters of the city, such as Te which is within Babylon; the city of Sula which is within Babylon; the new city which is within Babylon, upon the new canal. Within the city were also several Hussetu—perhaps "farms," such as Hussetu sa Iddina-Marduk, "Iddina-Marduk's farm," etc....
 12. Modern Exploration: It is this inner city which has most attracted the attention of explorers, both English and German, and it is on its site that the latter have carried on their systematic excavations. Indeed, it is probable that the houses of the most numerous class of the people—artisans, merchants, workmen, etc.—lay outside the walls to which the Babylonian royal inscriptions refer. It may be supposed that the houses in this district were mainly low buildings of unbaked bricks (of which,
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indeed, portions of the temples and palaces were built), and these would naturally disappear more easily than if they had been built of baked brick. Even when baked, however, the brick-built ruins of Babylonia Assyria have a tendency to disappear, owing to the value which bricks, both baked and unbaked, have for the erection of new houses in the neighborhood. Concerning the extent of the exterior city much doubt naturally exists, but it may well have covered the tract attributed to it.... Nineveh, at the time of its prosperity, also had enormous suburbs (see NINEVEH).

- a. Description of the Ruins—The Eastern Walls: The ruins of Babylon lie between 80 and 90 kilometers (50 miles or less) from Bagdad. The first thing seen on approaching them is the broad high ridge of Babil, which marks the site of the ruins of the Northern Palace. After some time, the ruins of the ancient walls are reached. They are still several yards high, and slope down gently to the plain. Starting to the North of Babil, the wall stretches for about 875 yds. due East, and then runs southwards for another 930 yds., taking at that point a course to the Southeast for about 2 miles 160 yds. (3,300 meters). A wide gap occurs here, after which it runs to the Southwest, and is lost in the open fields at the end of about miles (2 kilometers). "That this is the old city wall," says Weissbach, "there can be no doubt, and the name Sur, 'city-wall,' given it by the Arabs, proves that they have fully recognized its nature." At the northern end it exists in its original extent, the plain out of which it rises being the old bed of the Euphrates, which, in the course of the centuries, has become filled up by the desert sand. At the period of Babylon's glory, the river had a much straighter course than at present, but it reoccupies its old bed about 600 meters (656 yds.) South of Babil, leaving it afterward to make a sharp bend to the West. From the point where the city wall first becomes recognizable on the North to its apparent southernmost extremity is about 3 miles.
- b. The Western Walls: On the West side of the river the traces of the wall are much less, the two angles, with the parts adjoining them, being all that is recognizable. Beginning on the North where the Euphrates has reached its midpoint in its course through the city, it runs westward about 547 yds. (500 meters) West-Southwest, and then, bending almost at a right angle South-Southeast, turns East again toward the Euphrates, but is lost in the plain before reaching the river. The distance of the two angles from each other is about 1 mile, 208 yds. (1,800 meters), and its distance from the Euphrates is at most $\frac{5}{8}$ ths of a mile (1 kilometer). The western portion of the city therefore formed a rectangle with an area of about 1.8 miles, and the eastern quarter, with the projection on the North, $6\frac{1}{4}$ square miles. According to Fried. Delitzsch, the size of Babylon was about the same as Munich or Dresden. This, of course, is an estimate from the extant remains—as has been indicated above, there was probably a large suburban extension beyond the walls, which would account for the enormous size attributed to the city by the ancients.
- c. The Palaces: Among the Arabs, the northern ruin is called Babil, though it is only the remains of a palace. Its present height is 30 meters (98 feet, 5 inches), and its rectangular outline is still easily recognizable. Its sides face the cardinal points, the longest being those of the North and South. This building, which measures 100 meters (109 yds.), was well protected by the city wall on the North and East, the Euphrates protecting it on the West. Continuing to the South, the path at present leads through orchards and palm-groves, beyond which is a rugged tract evidently containing the remains of ancient structures, probably of inconsiderable height. After further palm groves, an enormous ruin is encountered, steep on the East and South, sloping on the North and West. This is the Gasr (Qasr), also called Emjellibeh (Mujellibah), "the overturned," identical with the great palace of Nabopolassar and his son Nebuchadrezzar, referred to so prominently by the latter king in his records. Its longest side skirts the old Euphrates bed, and measures 300 meters (328 yds.). Its surface is very uneven, projections of 15 meters (over 49 ft.) alternating with deep depressions. On the Northwest side enormous walls of exceedingly hard yellow brick still tower to a considerable height. South of this the plain, broken only by a few inconsiderable mounds, extends for a distance of half a kilometer ($\frac{5}{16}$ mile), and terminates on the South with another enormous ruin-mound, called Ishan Amran ibn 'Ali. It measures 600 meters (656 yds.) from North to South, and 400 (437 yds.) from East to West, its average height being 25 meters (82 ft.). About the middle, and close to each other, are two Moslem domed tombs, the first called Ibrahim al-Khalil ("Abraham the Friend" (of God)—probably a late addition to the name of another

- Abraham than the Patriarch), and the other Areran ibn 'Ali, from which the ruin receives its modern name.
- d. The Site of Babylon's Great Tower: Near the South termination of the plain on which the village of Jim-jimeh lies, there is a square depression several yards deep, measuring nearly 100 meters (over 100 yds.) each way. In the middle of this depression, the sides of which do not quite face the cardinal points, there rises, to a height of about 13 ft., a platform of sun-dried brick about 60 meters (197 ft.) each way, its sides being parallel with the outer boundary of the depression. This depression, at present called Sahan, "the dish," is partly filled with foundation-water. Centered in its southern side is a rectangular hollowing-out similarly formed, about 50 meters (164 ft.) long, extending toward the ruin called Areran.
 - e. The Central and Southern Ruins: East of the Qasr and Emjelibeh are several mounds bearing the name of Ehmereh, so called from the principal mound on the Southeast, named Ishan al-Oheimar, "the red ruin," from the color of its bricks. Close to the Southeast corner of the Qasr lies the ruin called Merkes, "the central-point," and to the South of that again is a long and irregularly shaped mound bearing the name of Ishan al-Aswad, "the black ruin." From this enumeration of the principal remains on the site of Babylon, it will be easily seen that public buildings in this, the most ancient quarter of the city, were exceedingly numerous. Indeed, the district was regarded as being of such importance that the surrounding walls were not thought altogether sufficient to protect it, so another seemingly isolated rampart, on the East, was built, running North and South, as an additional protection. The remains on the western side of the river are insignificant, the changed course of the river being in all probability responsible for the destruction of at least some of the buildings.
13. A Walk through Babylon: There is much work to be done before a really complete reconstruction of the oldest quarter of Babylon can be attempted; but something may be said about the sights to be seen when taking a walk through the more interesting portion, which, as we know from Herodotus' narrative, could be visited by strangers, though it is possible that permission had to be obtained beforehand. Entering by the Urash-gate, some distance to the East of the Euphrates, one found oneself in Aa-ibursabu, the Festival-street, which was a continuation of the royal roadway without the inner wall, coming from the South. This street ran alongside the Arahtu canal, on its western bank. After a time, one had the small temple of Ninip on the right (on the other side of the canal), and E-sagila, the great temple of Belus, on the left. This celebrated shrine was dedicated to Merodach and other deities associated with him, notably his spouse Zer-panitum (= Juno), and Nebo, "the teacher," probably as the one who inculcated Merodach's faith. The shrine of Merodach therein, which was called E-kua, is said by Nebuchadrezzar to have been magnificently decorated, and into the temple itself that king had caused to be brought many costly gifts, acquired by him in the lands over which he had dominion. Connected with E-sagila on the Northwest by a causeway and probably a staircase, was the great temple-tower E-temen-an-ki, which, as is indicated above, is not now represented by a tower, but by a depression, the bricks having been employed, it is said, to repair the Hindiyeh canal. This great building was a striking monument of the city, and must have been visible for a considerable distance, its height being something over 300 ft. The stages of which it was composed are thought to have been colored like those of the similar tower laid bare by the French excavations at Khorsabad (DurSarru-ukin) in Assyria. Causeways or streets united this building with Aa-ibur-sabu, the festival-street along which the traveler is supposed to be proceeding. Continuing to the North, the visitor crossed a canal at right angles, named Libilhegalli, "may he (the god) bring fertility," and found himself immediately opposite the royal palace—the extensive building now known as the Qasr. According to Weissbach, its area occupied no less than 4 ½ hectares (rather more than 11 acres) and it was divided, as we know from the inscriptions of Nebuchadrezzar, into two parts, connected by a corridor. The building was richly decorated, as the Babylonians understood such things, the interior walls being lined with enameled brick and other material. Passing along the eastern side of the palace, the visitor came to the Ishtar-gate—a massive doorway faced with enameled brick in Nebuchadrezzar's time, and decorated with colored enameled reliefs of the lion, the bull and the

dragon of Babylon. On the right of this gateway was to be seen the temple of the goddess Nin-mah, Merodach's spouse—a temple of sun-dried brick with traces of white coloring. It was a celebrated shrine of the Babylonians, in the usual architectural style with recessed buttresses, but modest from our modern point of view. Nin-mah was the goddess of reproduction, who, under the name of Aruru, had aided Merodach to create mankind, hence the honor in which she was held by the Babylonians.

- a. The Ishtar-Gate and the "Middle-Palace": The Ishtar-gate was apparently a part of the more ancient fortifications of Babylon, but which portion of the primitive city it enclosed is doubtful. In the time of Nebuchadrezzar it pierced the continuation, as it were, of the wall on the western bank of the river. Passing through this gateway, the visitor saw, on the West, the "middle-palace," an enormous structure, built by Nebuchadrezzar, as he boasts, in 15 days—a statement which seems somewhat of an exaggeration, when we come to consider the massiveness of the walls, some of which have a thickness of several yards. He describes this as having been "a fortress" (*duru*), "mountainlike" (*sadanis*), and on its summit he built an abode for himself—a "great palace," which was joined with his father's palace on the South of the intervening wall. It is possibly this latter which was built in 15 days—not the whole structure, including the fortress. It was raised "high as the forests," and decorated with cedar and all kinds of costly woods, its doors being of palm, cedar, cypress, ebony (?) and ivory, framed in silver and gold, and plated with copper. The thresholds and hinges of its gates were bronze, and the cornice round its top was in (an imitation of) lapis-lazuli. It was a house for men to admire; and it is not improbable that this was the palace upon which he was regarded as having been walking when he referred to "great Babylon," which he had built.
- b. The Festival-Street: But the street *Aa-ibur-sabu*, along which the visitor is conceived to be walking, was also a highly decorated causeway, fitted for the pathway of the great gods. Its width varied from 11 to 22 yds., and it was paved with regularly hewn and fitted natural stones—limestone and a brownish-red stone with white veins—while its walls were provided with a covering of brick enameled in various colors with representations of lions, some of them in relief. The inscriptions which it bore were white on a rich dark-blue ground, also enameled. There were various other streets in Babylon, but these have still to be identified.
- c. The Chamber of the Fates: At the end of the Procession-street, and at right angle to it, was the Merodach canal, which communicated directly with the Euphrates. At this point also, and forming its end-portion, was the Chamber of Fates (*Patak simate*), where, yearly, the oracles were asked and declared. In close connection with this was the Temple of Offerings (*Bit nike*) or festival-house (*Bit akiti*). Concerning these places more information is needed, but it would seem that, before Nebuchadrezzar's time, the Chamber of Fates was simply decorated with silver—he, however, made it glorious with pure gold. It is at this point that the Procession-street is at its widest. The position of the Temple of Offerings is at present uncertain.
- d. The Northern Palace and the Gardens: What may have lain on the other side of the *Arabtu*-canal, which here made a bend to the Northwest, and flowed out of the Euphrates somewhat higher up, is uncertain; but in the extreme North of the city was the palace now represented by the ruin called *Babil*. This was likewise built by Nebuchadrezzar, but it may be doubted whether it was really founded by him. The presence of traces of wells here made *Hormuzd Rassam* think that this was probably the site of the Hanging Gardens, but further exploration is needed to decide the point, though it may be regarded as not unlikely that this identification is correct. In that case it would represent the palace shown in the Assyrian saloon at the British Museum—a building apparently protected by three walls, and adorned with columns resting on the backs of lions in an attitude of walking. On the adjoining slab is a representation of a small building—also with columns—on a hill. A figure of a king sculptured on a stele is seen on the left, with an altar in front of it, showing that divine honors were paid to him. The hill is thickly wooded with trees which may be olives, poplars, etc., and on the right is a series of arches on which other trees are planted. Irrigation channels stretch in a long stream to the left and in shorter streams to the right. As this belongs to the time of *Ashur-bani-apli*, about 650 B.C., and refers to that king's operations against his brother *Samas-sum-ukin*, the king of Babylon, it is clear that something similar to the Hanging Gardens

- existed before the time of Nebuchadrezzar, and therefore, if it was his queen who had them made, before the time of their reputed founder. This would be the point first reached by the Assyrian army when advancing to the attack. Such a park as is represented here with its hills and streams, and thickly planted trees, must have made the palace in the vicinity the pleasantest, in all probability, in all Babylonia, and excited the admiration of every one who visited the sights of the city.
14. **Historical References to Babylonian Buildings:** The architectural history of the city of Babylon has still to be written, but something is already known about it, especially its central point of interest, the great temple E-sagila, wherein Merodach was worshipped. The 5th year of Sumu-la-ila was known as that in which the great fortress of Babylon was built; and his 22nd was that in which a throne of gold and silver was completed and made for Merodach's supreme abode (paramaha). Later on Abil-Sin, in his 17th year, made a throne (?) for Samash of Babylon; and Hammu-rabi, in his 3rd, 12th and 14th years, also made thrones for the gods—Nannar of Babylon (the Moon-god), Zer-panitum, Merodach's consort, and Ishtar of Babylon. Samsuiluna, his son, in his 6th year, placed a "praying statue" in E-sagila before Merodach, followed, in his 8th, by the dedication of some bright-shining object (mace?) of gold and silver, to the god; and on that occasion it is stated that he made E-sagila to shine like the stars of heaven.
 15. **Passing over many other references to kings who adorned the temples of the city, the work done there by Agukakrime (cir 1480 B.C.) may be mentioned.** This ruler, who belonged to the Kassite dynasty, not only brought back the images of Merodach and Zer-panitum to their temple, but also restored the building and its shrine, and made rich offerings thereto. Later on, after the destruction of the city by Sennacherib, his son Esarhaddon, and his grandsons Samas-sum-ukin, king of Babylon, and Ashurbani-apli, king of Assyria, all took part in the restoration of Babylon's temples and palaces. The work of Nabopolassar and Nebuchadrezzar has already been referred to. In 330 B.C. (reign of Alexander the Great), an attempt was made, by the tithes of the pious, to clear away the rubbish around E-sangil (E-sagila), but to all appearance no real restorations were made—or, at least, the stage at which they could have been put in hand was not reached. In the year 269 B.C. Antiochus Soter claims, like Nebuchedrezzar and other Babylonian kings, to have restored the temples E-sagila and E-zida (the latter at Borsippa). Though in late times the temples were more or less dilapidated, the services to all appearance continued to be performed, and may even have gone on until well in the Christian era, Babylonian religion and philosophy being still held in honor as late as the 4th century. The downfall of Babylon as a city began with the founding of Seleucia on the Tigris, in the reign of Seleucus Nicator (after 312 B.C.). The inhabitants of Babylon soon began to migrate to this new site, and the ruined houses and walls of the old capital ultimately became the haunts of robbers and outlaws. It is said that the walls were demolished by later (Seleucid) kings on that account, and it is not improbable that, with the walls, any houses which may have remained habitable were cleared away. Fortunately, the palaces restored by Nebuchadrezzar were too firmly built to be easily demolished, hence their preservation to the present day. **LITERATURE.** — Fried. Delitzsch, *Babel and Bible*. 1903; French H. Weissbach, *Das Stadtbild von Babylon*, 1904; R. Koldeway, *Die Tempel von Babylon und Borsippa*. 1911. [International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia, Electronic Database Copyright © 1996, 2003, 2006 by Biblesoft, Inc. All rights reserved].

Appendix Three

More Information on Magicians, Astrologers, Etc.

- I. Barnes has this to say about the magicians, astrologers, *et al*:
 - A. [Than all the magicians] Greek, [*tous*] [*epaoidous*]. The Greek word means, "those singing to;" then those who propose to heal the sick by singing; then those who practice magical arts or incantations—particularly with the idea of charming with songs; and then those who accomplish anything surpassing human power by mysterious and supernatural means.—Passow. The Hebrew word...occurs only in the following places in the Scriptures, in all of which it is rendered "magicians:"— Gen 41:8,24; Ex 7:11,22; 8:7 (:3),18 (:14),19 (:15); 9:11; Dan. 1:22; 2:2 . From this it appears that it applied only to the magicians in Egypt and in Babylon, and doubtless substantially the same class of persons is referred to. It is found only in the plural number, "perhaps" implying that they formed companies, or that they were always associated together, so that different persons performed different parts in their incantations.
 - B. The word is defined by Gesenius to mean, "Sacred scribes, skilled in the sacred writings or hieroglyphics...a class of Egyptian priests." It is, according to him (Lex.), of Hebrew origin, and is derived from... "stylus"—an instrument of writing...It is not improbable, he suggests, that the Hebrews with these letters imitated a similar Egyptian word. Prof. Stuart (in loc.) says that the word would be correctly translated "pen-men," and supposes that it originally referred to those who were "busied with books and writing, and skilled in them." It is evident that the word is not of Persian origin, since it was used in Egypt long before it occurs in Daniel. A full and very interesting account of the Magians and their religion may be found in Creuzer, "Mythologie und Symbolik," i. pp. 187-234. Herodotus mentions the "Magi" as a distinct people, i. 101.
 - C. The word "Mag" or "Mog" (from the *magoi* of the Greeks, and the "*magi*" of the Romans) means, properly, a "priest;" and at a very early period the names "Chaldeans" and "Magi" were interchangeable, and both were regarded as of the same class.—Creuzer, i. 187, note. They were doubtless, at first, a class of priests among the Medes and Persians, who were employed, among other things, in the search for wisdom; who were connected with pagan oracles; who claimed acquaintance with the will of the gods, and who professed to have the power, therefore, of making known future events, by explaining dreams, visions, preternatural appearances, etc. The Magi formed one of the six tribes into which the Medes were formerly divided (Herodotus, i. 101), but on the downfall of the Median empire they continued to retain at the court of the conqueror a great degree of power and authority. "The learning of the Magi was connected with astrology and enchantment, in which they were so celebrated that their name was applied to all orders of magicians and enchanters."—Anthon, "Class. Dic." These remarks may explain the reason why the word "magician" comes to be applied to this class of men, though we are not to suppose that the persons referred to in Genesis and Exodus, under the appellation of the Hebrew name there given to them...or those found in Babylon, referred to in the passage before us, to whom the same name is applied, were of that class of priests.
 - D. The name "magi," or "magician," was so extended as to embrace "all" who made pretensions to the kind of knowledge for which the magi were distinguished, and hence, came also to be synonymous with the "Chaldeans," who were also celebrated for this. Compare the notes at Dan 2:2. In the passage before us it cannot be determined with certainty, that the persons were of "Magian" origin, though it is possible, as in Dan 2:2, they are distinguished from the Chaldeans. All that is certainly meant is, that they were persons who laid claim to the power of divining into future events; of explaining mysteries; of interpreting dreams; of working by enchantments, etc. (NOTE: The subjoined figure represents a priest or magician with a gazelle, and is taken to be a diviner, one of the four orders of Chaldeans named in Dan 2:2, and the last of the three mentioned in Dan 5:7. From these persons it was the custom of the kings of Assyria to require the interpretation of dreams and the prediction of future events. This is the only perfect piece of sculpture found by Botta in one of the large courts of Khorsabad.)
 - E. [And astrologers]— This word is rendered by the Septuagint, "magians." So also in the Vulgate, "magos." The English word "astrologer" denotes "one who professes to foretell future events by the aspects and situation of the stars." —Webster. The Hebrew word...according to Gesenius, means "enchanters,

magicians." It is derived, probably, from the obsolete root [*'aashap*], "to cover," "to conceal," and refers to those who were devoted to the practice of occult arts, and to the cultivation of recondite and cabalistic sciences. It is supposed by some philologists to have given rise, by dropping the initial 'aleph...to the Greek ... "wise, wise man," and the Persian "sophi," an epithet of equivalent import. See Gesenius on the word, and compare Bush on Dan 2:2. The word is found only in Daniel, Dan 1:20; 2:2,10,27; 4:7 (4); 5:7,11,15, in every instance rendered "astrologer" and "astrologers." There is no evidence, however, that the science of astrology enters into the meaning of the word, or that the persons referred to attempted to practise divination by the aid of the stars. It is to be regretted that the term "astrologer" should have been employed in our translation, as it conveys an intimation which is not found in the original. It is, indeed, in the highest degree probable, that a part of their pretended wisdom consisted in their ability to cast the fates of men by the conjunctions and opposition of the stars, but this is not necessarily implied in the word. Prof. Stuart renders it "enchanters."

Appendix Four

REVELATION 20:1-10—LITERAL OR FIGURATIVE?

A. INTRODUCTION.

1. Are these items discussed in Revelation 20:1-10 literal or figurative?
 - a. The first verse of the book reveals that its contents are largely figurative. The Lord "signified" the information to John. Our English word *signified* comes from the word *sign* coupled with *ified*: "sign-i-fied."
 - b. The Greek word is *semaino* ["signified—Rev. 1:1], which means "to give a sign; to indicate by a sign." The word means that Revelation is a book of signs and symbols, and that everything should not be understood as literal. To see the meaning of the word, look at how it is used in other verses:
 - 1) John 12:32-33: "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me. This he said, **signifying** what death he should die." He indicated by his words that he would be crucified, but he did not say so in plain words.
 - 2) John 18:31-32: "Then said Pilate unto them, Take ye him, and judge him according to your law. The Jews therefore said unto him, It is not lawful for us to put any man to death: That the saying of Jesus might be fulfilled, which he spake, **signifying** what death he should die." The Jews executed criminals by stoning; the Romans crucified them; Jesus would be executed by crucifixion.
 - 3) John 21:18-19: "...When thou wast young, thou girdest thyself, and walkest whither thou wouldest: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not. This spake he, **signifying** by what death he should glorify God..." The Lord **signified** to Peter that he would be martyred.
2. The Book of Revelation is full of symbolic language.
 - a. While the letters to the seven congregations in Asia contain straight-forward instructions, the book is full of symbols.
 - b. The book is therefore full of symbolic language: locusts; horses and horsemen; dragon; beasts; frogs; horns, etc., which are not to be taken as literal language—a mistake that is prominent in the theories of the millennialists.

B. DISCUSSION.

1. The general beliefs of millennialists are necessary to our study of Revelation 20.
 - a. The following are points generally believed by millennialists:
 - 1) They think Christ will come first in what they call "The Rapture." At this time the righteous dead will be resurrected and the living saints will be changed from mortal into immortal bodies; all of these will meet the Lord in the air where they will remain in his keeping for 7 years. This is a perverted view of 1 Thessalonians 4.
 - 2) They think the marriage feast of the Lamb (Rev. 19) will then occur during which time the "Great Tribulation" will occur on earth. This "great tribulation" is a "great perversion" of Matthew 24:21.
 - 3) After the wedding feast, millennialists think Christ will return to earth with the resurrected and changed saints to establish an earthly kingdom, that Christ will sit on the literal throne of David, and reign for 1000 years from Jerusalem. This 1000-year reign is called "The Millennium." They think this will come 7 years after the "Rapture." This is a perverted interpretation of Revelation 20.
 - 4) Some think that all the Jews will be converted and returned to Palestine during the tribulation period. This is a perverted interpretation of Romans 11:26.
 - 5) Old Testament worship will be restored during the millennium and life on earth will be one of perfection in which the lamb and lion will dwell in peace. The devil will be bound during this

- reign so that he cannot interfere. This is a gross perversion of many Bible truths.
- 6) Toward the end of the millennium, Satan will be loosed for a short while during which time he will gather all those on earth who are forced to serve Christ contrary to their will. This contradicts the notion that Satan is bound: if he was bound (they think he will be bound utterly), how could anyone be tempted to try to serve Christ hypocritically? This is a misguided view of Revelation 20.
 - 7) Satan will lead a strong insurrection against Christ, but will be defeated. The millennium will end following the battle; the wicked dead will be raised and be brought before the "Great White Throne" for judgment. This contradicts the Bible passages which show that both the righteous and wicked dead will be raised on the same occasion (John 5:28-29).
- b. Several resurrections are called for by the theory: one for the righteous at the rapture; another for those who become believers between the rapture and the millennium; another for those who are converted and die during the millennium; and another for the wicked at the end of the millennium. Depending on the brand of millennialists, there are said to be four or more resurrections, and from two to seven judgments. The Bible teaches that there will be one resurrection (Acts 24:15; John 5:28-29) and one Judgment (Heb. 9:27; Matt. 25:31-46; 2 Cor. 5:10):
- 1) Matthew 25:31-46: "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth *his* sheep from the goats: And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: For I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, and fed *thee*? or thirsty, and gave *thee* drink? When saw we thee a stranger, and took *thee* in? or naked, and clothed *thee*? Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done *it* unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done *it* unto me. Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: For I was an hungered, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not. Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee? Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did *it* not to one of the least of these, ye did *it* not to me. And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal."
 - 2) John 5:28-29: "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."
 - 3) Acts 24:15: "And have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust."
 - 4) 2 Corinthians 5:10: "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things *done* in *his* body, according to that he hath done, whether *it be* good or bad."
 - 5) Hebrews 9:27: "And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment."
2. Revelation 20 is the passage upon which all of the millennial theories rest.
- a. But none of the Bible writers (including John who wrote Revelation) mentions anything at all about a 1000-year reign of Christ on earth.
 - 1) The theorists take the 1000 years of the chapter as literal, but it can be shown that it is a symbolic number. To the premillennialist, everything in the Bible must be filtered through the demands of

- the theory, a theory that rests on a very shaky foundation.
- 2) The last several chapters of Revelation place an emphasis on Christ's triumph over his enemies. The three enemies of Christ and his church are Satan, the two beasts and the harlot. The harlot (also called "Babylon"—representative of Rome) is defeated in Revelation 18; the beast and the false prophet (Rome and paganism) are defeated in Revelation 19; and Satan is defeated in Revelation 20.
- b. Revelation 20:1-3: "And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season."
- 1) Some writers say the angel of this passage is Christ; but he does not appear anywhere else in the book as an angel. In Revelation, the angels are servants of Christ. He is presented as the Lamb of God and the King of kings. This angel's identity is not of primary importance; what he does is the point of emphasis. He had the key to the bottomless pit (abyss) and a great chain with which to bind Satan. He laid hold on the devil, bound him a thousand years (with the chain), cast him into the bottomless pit, shut him up, and set a seal upon the abyss. (This angel may be the same angel of Revelation 9:1-3).
 - 2) The key to the abyss is not literal, but symbolizes authority and power to do the job at hand. The "keys of the kingdom" given the apostles (Matt. 16:19; 18:18; 19:28; Acts 2) represented the authority and power for them to receive, deliver, confirm, and record, the gospel. These keys were figurative; the key to the abyss is figurative because no literal key could lock or unlock a spiritual "prison."
 - a) Matthew 16:18-19: "And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."
 - b) Matthew 18:18: "Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."
 - c) Matthew 19:28: "And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel."
 - d) Acts 2 details the first use of these "keys" (when Jews and proselytes were converted) and in Acts 10 (where the first Gentiles were converted).
- c. The bottomless pit (abyss) is not literal for no such thing could exist as a pit without a bottom. The ASV translates the word as "abyss."
- 1) This was the place the demons in the swine dreaded (Luke 8:31) but which was their appointed place (2 Pet. 2:4). Between his death and resurrection, Christ was in the abyss (Rom. 10:7; the KJV has "deep," the ASV has "abyss"). Abyss (bottomless pit) is a reference to "hades." Luke 16:19-31—the historical report of the fates of a wicked rich man and godly Lazarus.
 - a) Luke 8:31: "And they besought him that he would not command them to go out into the deep."
 - b) Romans 10:7: "Or, Who shall descend into the deep? that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead."
 - c) 2 Peter 2:4: "For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast *them* down to hell, and delivered *them* into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment."
 - 2) The abyss was sealed in order to place a limit on the devil, not for the purpose of punishment; the punishment would come later in verse 10. The tomb of Jesus was sealed to prevent anyone from entering and taking the body (Matt. 27:66). The sealing up of Satan in the abyss was symbolic of

the limitations placed on him: "that he should deceive the nations no more." The sealing and binding was to be for a thousand years.

- 3) The great chain was not a literal chain, for Satan, a spirit being, cannot be bound with a physical chain. The chain is no more literal than are the key and the pit (this "pit" is the hadean realm, not a hole in the ground).
- d. Satan is identified by four terms which give a vivid description of his nature.
- 1) He is called the devil, a word which means "accuser" or "slanderer."
 - 2) He is called Satan, a term which means "adversary."
 - 3) He is called that old serpent, which identifies him with the tempter of Eve (Gen. 3:1-6; 2 Cor. 11:3).
 - 4) He is called the dragon, which illustrates his strength and ferocity. "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world" (I Pet. 5:8-9).
- e. The thousand years is used symbolically as are many other numbers in Revelation. It represents a complete but undetermined length of time; a full period of time. Satan will be restricted for the full amount of time determined by God. The number "thousand" is used in this very sense many times in the Bible.
- 1) Deuteronomy 7:9: "Know therefore that the Lord thy God, he is God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love him and keep his commandments to a thousand generations." This does not mean that God will be true and merciful to the obedient only for a literal 1000 generations, but rather for all the time and for every such generation.
 - 2) Job 9:3: "If he [man] will contend with him [God], he cannot answer him one of a thousand." This does not mean that on the 1001st attempt that man can answer God. "If there be a messenger with him, an interpreter, one among a thousand, to show unto man his uprightness" (Job. 33:23).
 - 3) Psalm 50:10: "For every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills." This does not mean that God owns only the cattle on a literal 1000 hills, but that he owns them all wherever they may be.
 - 4) Psalm 90:4: "For a thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night." "Thousand" is used to represent the lack of effect the passing of time has on God. God does not change though a thousand years (or many thousands of years) pass. Peter shows in 2 Peter 3:8-9 that God's promises are not affected by the passing of a thousand years (or any other number of years).
 - 5) Ecclesiastes 6:1-6: "There is an evil which I have seen under the sun, and it *is* common among men: A man to whom God hath given riches, wealth, and honour, so that he wanteth nothing for his soul of all that he desireth, yet God giveth him not power to eat thereof, but a stranger eateth it: this *is* vanity, and it *is* an evil disease. If a man beget an hundred *children*, and live many years, so that the days of his years be many, and his soul be not filled with good, and also *that* he have no burial; I say, *that* an untimely birth *is* better than he. For he cometh in with vanity, and departeth in darkness, and his name shall be covered with darkness. Moreover he hath not seen the sun, nor known *any thing*: this hath more rest than the other. Yea, though he live a thousand years twice *told*, yet hath he seen no good: do not all go to one place?"
 - 6) Ecclesiastes 7:28: "Which yet my soul seeketh, but I find not: one man among a thousand have I found; but a woman among all those have I not found."
 - 7) Revelation 5:11: "And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands."

3. The binding of Satan.

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- a. Satan is to be bound for a thousand years; that is, he is to be restricted for a long and undetermined period of time, a time span the length of which only God knows. During this period of time God will limit the activities of Satan, but this binding does not necessarily mean that he will be utterly helpless.
- 1) Jesus was bound, yet he could still walk and talk (John 18:12-13). The same Greek word is used to describe the binding of Jesus and Satan.
 - 2) This word is used literally in Acts 22:5, and figuratively in Romans 7:2 and 1 Corinthians 7:39, 7:27 to describe the binding of husband and wife together in marriage. We limit a dog's movement by tying it up, but he still can bark and move to the extent the rope permits. The Devil is bound today but he still has power to act.
 - 3) Passages:
 - a) John 18:12-13: "Then the band and the captain and officers of the Jews took Jesus, and bound him, And led him away to Annas first; for he was father in law to Caiaphas, which was the high priest that same year."
 - b) Acts 22:5: "As also the high priest doth bear me witness, and all the estate of the elders: from whom also I received letters unto the brethren, and went to Damascus, to bring them which were there bound unto Jerusalem, for to be punished."
 - c) Romans 7:2: "For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to *her* husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of *her* husband."
 - d) 1 Corinthians 7:27: "Art thou bound unto a wife? seek not to be loosed. Art thou loosed from a wife? seek not a wife."
 - e) 1 Corinthians 7:39: "The wife is bound by the law as long as her husband liveth; but if her husband be dead, she is at liberty to be married to whom she will; only in the Lord."
- b. When the Lord came, and for some years afterward, Satan had power to overcome his victims by sending evil spirits (demons) to take control of them. The victim had little or no choice (Mark 9:14-29; Luke 9:37-43). Miraculous powers were necessary to cast out these demons. When the miraculous work of the first century was completed, the demons were all cast out.
- 1) Since then, Satan has not had the power to overwhelm a man against the man's will. In this sense, he is "bound" today.
 - a) Matthew 12:29: "Or else how can one enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he first bind the strong man? and then he will spoil his house." Mark 3:27: "No man can enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he will first bind the strong man; and then he will spoil his house."
 - b) Mark 9:14-29: "And when he came to *his* disciples, he saw a great multitude about them, and the scribes questioning with them. And straightway all the people, when they beheld him, were greatly amazed, and running to *him* saluted him. And he asked the scribes, What question ye with them? And one of the multitude answered and said, Master, I have brought unto thee my son, which hath a dumb spirit; And wheresoever he taketh him, he tearth him: and he foameth, and gnasheth with his teeth, and pineth away: and I spake to thy disciples that they should cast him out; and they could not. He answereth him, and saith, O faithless generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? bring him unto me. And they brought him unto him: and when he saw him, straightway the spirit tare him; and he fell on the ground, and wallowed foaming. And he asked his father, How long is it ago since this came unto him? And he said, Of a child. And oftentimes it hath cast him into the fire, and into the waters, to destroy him: but if thou canst do any thing, have compassion on us, and help us. Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things *are* possible to him that believeth. And straightway the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief. When Jesus saw that the people came running together, he rebuked the foul spirit, saying unto him, *Thou* dumb and deaf spirit, I charge thee, come out of him, and enter no more into him. And *the spirit* cried, and rent him sore, and came out of him: and he was as one dead;
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insomuch that many said, He is dead. But Jesus took him by the hand, and lifted him up; and he arose. And when he was come into the house, his disciples asked him privately, Why could not we cast him out? And he said unto them, This kind can come forth by nothing, but by prayer and fasting."

- c) Luke 9:37-43: "And it came to pass, that on the next day, when they were come down from the hill, much people met him. And, behold, a man of the company cried out, saying, Master, I beseech thee, look upon my son: for he is mine only child. And, lo, a spirit taketh him, and he suddenly crieth out; and it teareth him that he foameth again, and bruising him hardly departeth from him. And I besought thy disciples to cast him out; and they could not. And Jesus answering said, O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you, and suffer you? Bring thy son hither. And as he was yet a coming, the devil threw him down, and tare *him*. And Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit, and healed the child, and delivered him again to his father. And they were all amazed at the mighty power of God. But while they wondered every one at all things which Jesus did, he said unto his disciples."
 - d) Luke 10:17-18: "And the seventy returned again with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name. And he said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven."
 - e) John 12:31: "Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out."
 - f) Ephesians 4:8: "Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men." Colossians 2:15: "*And* having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it."
 - g) Hebrews 2:14-15: "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage."
 - h) 1 John 3:8: "He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil."
 - i) Revelation 1:18: "I *am* he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death."
- c. During the first century and until the Roman Empire began to be weakened, paganism reigned supreme in the world. Pagans worshipped idols of all sorts; this was the pre-eminent religion and was followed by nearly everyone on earth. With the great success of the gospel, paganism declined and was rejected by many. Satan had controlled the nations through false religion for a long time.
- 1) He used his power over the nations (which he exercised through the perversions of paganism and sin) to bring severe persecution against God's people. The back of paganism was broken when the Empire fell. Thus, Satan is "bound" also in the sense that he no longer controls the nations to the extent of being able to bring their full power against the church in persecutions as he once did.
 - 2) Since the gospel was given, mankind has been given the option of receiving the actual forgiveness of sin. The Mosaic Law could not provide this cleansing; human systems cannot give it. But since Christ died for us, he can offer this genuine blessing. When we obey the gospel and continue to walk in its light, we have continual cleansing (1 John 1:7). In this sense, Satan no longer has control over us; he is "bound."
- a) Matthew 26:28: "For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins."
 - b) 1 Peter 1:18-19: "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, *as* silver and gold, from your vain conversation *received* by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot."
 - c) 1 Peter 1:22-23: "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit

unto unfeigned love of the brethren, *see that ye* love one another with a pure heart fervently: Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever."

- d) Revelation 1:5: "And from Jesus Christ, *who is* the faithful witness, *and* the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood."
- d. He has power over us personally today only to the extent we allow. We have the power to resist the devil and cause him to flee from us: "Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you" (Jas. 4:7; cf. 1 Pet. 5:8-9). His power today lies in his trickery and deceit (2 Cor. 11:3,13-15; Eph. 6:11). Picture a man-eating tiger on the loose. If you are inside a strong building you are safe; you endanger your life by leaving the house.
- 1) 2 Corinthians 11:3: "But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ."
 - 2) 2 Corinthians 11:13-15: "For such *are* false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore *it is* no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works."
 - 3) Ephesians 5:11: "And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove *them*."
- e. Satan is to be loosed for a little season at some future time after his being bound. His confinement to the abyss (the Tartarus of Hades—2 Pet. 2:4; Luke 16:19-31) is not final. He is to be loosed for a short time, we know not when. Homer Hailey gave this summary of some significant events in Revelation:
- 1) The holy city was to be trodden under foot 42 months (11:2).
 - 2) The 2 witnesses were to prophesy under persecution 1260 days (11:3).
 - 3) The radiant woman was to be protected in the wilderness 1260 days (12:6,14).
 - 4) The beast with authority to persecute and blaspheme would do his unholy work for 42 months (13:5; cf. Dan. 7:25).
 - 5) This period of time [42 months and 1260 days are equal] was the same for each of the above events, and was interpreted to be the period of Roman persecution. In two previous visions God told the saints under the altar that they should rest for a little time until other saints were martyred, and after his casting down, Satan would know he had but a short time (12:12).
 - 6) The time period (3 and one half years, the little time of the martyrs, and the devil's short time) are the same and are now fulfilled. The Roman persecution as it backed paganism is at an end; the devil is cast into the abyss, no longer to deceive the nations as once he did; the saints' death for the Word of God is avenged and vindicated as they now sit upon thrones, reigning with Christ (verses 4-6). This leads to the conclusion that the thousand years symbolizes the period of victory beginning with Constantine, when Roman persecution ended, and continuing until some time before the Lord's return when Satan will be loosed from his present restraint. (Homer Hailey, *Commentary on Revelation*, p.392).
4. Revelation 20:4-6.
- a. Revelation 20:4-6: "And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and *I saw* the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received *his* mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This *is* the first resurrection. Blessed and holy *is* he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years." The picture John

gives us here is one of victory for the martyrs. It would offer much consolation and encouragement to the beleaguered saints to whom the book was initially intended.

- b. "And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and *I saw* the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received *his* mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years" (vs. 4). John saw thrones and those who sat thereon; the ones on the thrones were those who had been beheaded for the Lord's cause; they had not received the mark of the beast and had not worshipped the beast.
- c. Judgment was given unto them. The reference is probably to the vindication and vengeance which came as a result of the confinement of the devil. In Revelation 18:20, judgment was meted out against the harlot, which vindicated the saints. In chapter 19, this was also true with reference to the beast and false prophet.
- d. To those who wish to take this passage as literal, some problems arise: only those who had been beheaded sat on the thrones. And if the 1000 years is literal, then the "reigning" and "living" are also literal. "They lived AND reigned with Christ a thousand years." Taken literally, when the thousand years are over, they will cease to reign AND cease TO LIVE! What proves too much, proves nothing.
 - 1) Notice that John did not see bodies on the throne—he saw souls. (The ASV indicates that two groups were on the thrones: those which had been beheaded and those who had not worshipped the beast; the KJV indicates only one group).
 - 2) These were reigning WITH Christ. The passage does not tell where the reigning occurred. It does not say that the reign is a literal, earthly reign. We are not included in this passage. However, all faithful Christians "reign in life" by Christ (Rom. 5:17). But John is seeing a vision which shows the martyred/persecuted saints of that age in a victorious scene; this was to give them hope. Since they were victorious, so shall all faithful saints triumph. Those who overcome (remain faithful even unto death, Rev. 2:10) will be given the privilege by Christ to "sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne" (Rev. 3:21).

C. CONCLUSION.

1. In summary:

- a. The 1,000 years are not to be taken as literal. The only reason so many people think of it as literal is because they have set their affections on things below, not on heaven.
 - b. The battle of verses 7-10 is not literal. Gog and Magog represent evil forces which oppose the Lord and his people.
 - 1) 2 Corinthians 10:4-5: "For the weapons of our warfare *are* not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds; Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ."
 - 2) Ephesians 6:10-17: "Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high *places*. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God."
- ### 2. Essential parts of the millennial theory are absent from Revelation 20.
- a. Nothing is said in the passage about the Second Coming of Christ.
 - b. No bodily resurrection is mentioned.

- c. The reign of Christ on earth is not named.
 - d. The literal throne of David is unnamed.
 - e. You and I are not named: "They" lived and reigned with Christ.
 - f. The passage does not place Christ on earth.
 - g. Jerusalem and Palestine are not mentioned.
3. What could an earthly kingdom give us that we do not now have?
- a. Passages:
 - 1) Ephesians 1:3: "Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly *places* in Christ."
 - 2) Ephesians 5:23-27: "For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so *let* the wives *be* to their own husbands in every thing. Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish."
 - 3) Philippians 3:20-21: "For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself."
 - 4) Colossians 1:13-14: "Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated *us* into the kingdom of his dear Son: In whom we have redemption through his blood, *even* the forgiveness of sins."
 - b. God is our Father, and Christ is our Savior—and our prophet, priest and king.
 - c. We have forgiveness of sins and the promise of eternal life.
 - d. We belong to his church, the bride of Christ, and will be taken home to glory.
 - e. We have citizenship in Christ's spiritual kingdom, with all its blessings.
 - f. We have security against our most deadly enemies: Satan, death, and hell.
 - g. Our real citizenship is in heaven.
4. What we need is to be ready when the Lord returns.
- a. Matthew 24:42: "Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come."
 - b. 1 Thessalonians 4:16-18: "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive *and* remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words."
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Appendix Five

Josephus' Report of Jerusalem's Demise

A. Josephus gives us this information about Jerusalem's troubles during the siege by the Romans:

1. SO now Titus's banks were advanced a great way, notwithstanding his soldiers had been very much distressed from the wall. He then sent a party of horsemen, and ordered they should lay ambushes for those that went out into the valleys to gather food. Some of these were indeed fighting men, who were not contented with what they got by rapine; but the greater part of them were poor people, who were deterred from deserting by the concern they were under for their own relations; for they could not hope to escape away, together with their wives and children, without the knowledge of the seditious; nor could they think of leaving these relations to be slain by the robbers on their account; nay, the severity of the famine made them bold in thus going out; so nothing remained but that, when they were concealed from the robbers, they should be taken by the enemy; and when they were going to be taken, they were forced to defend themselves for fear of being punished; as after they had fought, they thought it too late to make any supplications for mercy; so they were first whipped, and then tormented with all sorts of tortures, before they died, and were then crucified before the wall of the city.
2. This miserable procedure made Titus greatly to pity them, while they caught every day five hundred Jews; nay, some days they caught more: yet it did not appear to be safe for him to let those that were taken by force go their way, and to set a guard over so many he saw would be to make such as great deal them useless to him. The main reason why he did not forbid that cruelty was this, that he hoped the Jews might perhaps yield at that sight, out of fear lest they might themselves afterwards be liable to the same cruel treatment. So the soldiers, out of the wrath and hatred they bore the Jews, nailed those they caught, one after one way, and another after another, to the crosses, by way of jest, when their multitude was so great, that room was wanting for the crosses, and crosses wanting for the bodies.
3. But so far were the seditious from repenting at this sad sight, that, on the contrary, they made the rest of the multitude believe otherwise; for they brought the relations of those that had deserted upon the wall, with such of the populace as were very eager to go over upon the security offered them, and showed them what miseries those underwent who fled to the Romans; and told them that those who were caught were supplicants to them, and not such as were taken prisoners. This sight kept many of those within the city who were so eager to desert, till the truth was known; yet did some of them run away immediately as unto certain punishment, esteeming death from their enemies to be a quiet departure, if compared with that by famine.
4. So Titus commanded that the hands of many of those that were caught should be cut off, that they might not be thought deserters, and might be credited on account of the calamity they were under, and sent them in to John and Simon, with this exhortation, that they would now at length leave off [their madness], and not force him to destroy the city, whereby they would have those advantages of repentance, even in their utmost distress, that they would preserve their own lives, and so find a city of their own, and that temple which was their peculiar. He then went round about the banks that were cast up, and hastened them, in order to show that his words should in no long time be followed by his deeds.
5. In answer to which the seditious cast reproaches upon Caesar himself, and upon his father also, and cried out, with a loud voice, that they contemned death, and did well in preferring it before slavery; that they would do all the mischief to the Romans they could while they had breath in them; and that for their own city, since they were, as he said, to be destroyed, they had no concern about it, and that the world itself was a better temple to God than this. That yet this temple would be preserved by him that inhabited therein, whom they still had for their assistant in this war, and did therefore laugh at all his threatenings, which would come to nothing, because the conclusion of the whole depended upon God only. These words were mixed with reproaches, and with them they made a mighty clamor. [Wars of the Jews, V, XI, 1-2, PC Study Bible formatted electronic database Copyright © 2003, 2006 by Biblesoft, Inc. All rights reserved].

B. These arguments prevailed with the commanders.

1. So Titus gave orders that the army should be distributed to their several shares of this work; and indeed

there now came upon the soldiers a certain divine fury, so that they did not only part the whole wall that was to be built among them, nor did only one legion strive with another, but the lesser divisions of the army did the same; insomuch that each soldier was ambitious to please his decurion, each decurion his centurion, each centurion his tribune, and the ambition of the tribunes was to please their superior commanders, while Caesar himself took notice of and rewarded the like contention in those commanders; for he went round about the works many times every day, and took a view of what was done.

- a. Titus began the wall from the camp of the Assyrians, where his own camp was pitched, and drew it down to the lower parts of Cenopolis; thence it went along the valley of Cedron, to the Mount of Olives; it then bent towards the south, and encompassed the mountain as far as the rock called Peristereon, and that other hill which lies next it, and is over the valley which reaches to Siloam; whence it bended again to the west, and went down to the valley of the Fountain, beyond which it went up again at the monument of Ananus the high priest, and encompassing that mountain where Pompey had formerly pitched his camp, it returned back to the north side of the city, and was carried on as far as a certain village called "The House of the Erebinthi;" after which it encompassed Herod's monument, and there, on the east, was joined to Titus's own camp, where it began. Now the length of this wall was forty furlongs, one only abated.
 - b. Now at this wall without were erected thirteen places to keep garrison in, whose circumferences, put together, amounted to ten furlongs; the whole was completed in three days; so that what would naturally have required some months was done in so short an interval as is incredible. When Titus had therefore encompassed the city with this wall, and put garrisons into proper places, he went round the wall, at the first watch of the night, and observed how the guard was kept; the second watch he allotted to Alexander; the commanders of legions took the third watch. They also cast lots among themselves who should be upon the watch in the night time, and who should go all night long round the spaces that were interposed between the garrisons. [Josephus, V, XIII, 4-5].
 - c. So all hope of escaping was now cut off from the Jews, together with their liberty of going out of the city. Then did the famine widen its progress, and devoured the people by whole houses and families; the upper rooms were full of women and children that were dying by famine, and the lanes of the city were full of the dead bodies of the aged; the children also and the young men wandered about the market-places like shadows, all swelled with the famine, and fell down dead, wheresoever their misery seized them. As for burying them, those that were sick themselves were not able to do it; and those that were hearty and well were deterred from doing it by the great multitude of those dead bodies, and by the uncertainty there was how soon they should die themselves; for many died as they were burying others, and many went to their coffins before that fatal hour was come. Nor was there any lamentations made under these calamities, nor were heard any mournful complaints; but the famine confounded all natural passions; for those who were just going to die looked upon those that were gone to rest before them with dry eyes and open mouths.
 - d. A deep silence also, and a kind of deadly night, had seized upon the city; while yet the robbers were still more terrible than these miseries were themselves; for they brake open those houses which were no other than graves of dead bodies, and plundered them of what they had; and carrying off the coverings of their bodies, went out laughing, and tried the points of their swords in their dead bodies; and, in order to prove what metal they were made of they thrust some of those through that still lay alive upon the ground; but for those that entreated them to lend them their right hand and their sword to despatch them, they were too proud to grant their requests, and left them to be consumed by the famine.
2. Now every one of these died with their eyes fixed upon the temple, and left the seditious alive behind them. Now the seditious at first gave orders that the dead should be buried out of the public treasury, as not enduring the stench of their dead bodies. But afterwards, when they could not do that, they had them cast down from the walls into the valleys beneath. [Josephus: Wars of the Jews, 5, XII, 2-3, PC Study Bible].
 3. Hereupon some of the deserters, having no other way, leaped down from the wall immediately, while others of them went out of the city with stones, as if they would fight them; but thereupon they fled away
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to the Romans. But here a worse fate accompanied these than what they had found within the city; and they met with a quicker despatch from the too great abundance they had among the Romans, than they could have done from the famine among the Jews; for when they came first to the Romans, they were puffed up by the famine, and swelled like men in a dropsy; after which they all on the sudden overfilled those bodies that were before empty, and so burst asunder, excepting such only as were skillful enough to restrain their appetites, and by degrees took in their food into bodies unaccustomed thereto.

4. Yet did another plague seize upon those that were thus preserved; for there was found among the Syrian deserters a certain person who was caught gathering pieces of gold out of the excrements of the Jews' bellies; for the deserters used to swallow such pieces of gold, as we told you before, when they came out, and for these did the seditious search them all; for there was a great quantity of gold in the city, insomuch that as much was now sold [in the Roman camp] for twelve Attic [drams], as was sold before for twenty-five. But when this contrivance was discovered in one instance, the fame of it filled their several camps, that the deserters came to them full of gold. So the multitude of the Arabians, with the Syrians, cut up those that came as supplicants, and searched their bellies. Nor does it seem to me that any misery befell the Jews that was more terrible than this, since in one night's time about two thousand of these deserters were thus dissected.
5. When Titus came to the knowledge of this wicked practice, he had like to have surrounded those that had been guilty of it with his horse, and have shot them dead; and he had done it, had not their number been so very great, and those that were liable to this punishment would have been manifold more than those whom they had slain. However, he called together the commanders of the auxiliary troops he had with him, as well as the commanders of the Roman legions, (for some of his own soldiers had been also guilty herein, as he had been informed,) and had great indignation against both sorts of them, and said to them, "What! have any of my own soldiers done such things as this out of the uncertain hope of gain, without regarding their own weapons, which are made of silver and gold?"
6. Moreover, do the Arabians and Syrians now first of all begin to govern themselves as they please, and to indulge their appetites in a foreign war, and then, out of their barbarity in murdering men, and out of their hatred to the Jews, get it ascribed to the Romans?" for this infamous practice was said to be spread among some of his own soldiers also. Titus then threatened that he would put such men to death, if any of them were discovered to be so insolent as to do so again; moreover, he gave it in charge to the legions, that they should make a search after such as were suspected, and should bring them to him. But it appeared that the love of money was too hard for all their dread of punishment, and a vehement desire of gain is natural to men, and no passion is so venturesome as covetousness; otherwise such passions have certain bounds, and are subordinate to fear.
7. But in reality it was God who condemned the whole nation, and turned every course that was taken for their preservation to their destruction. This, therefore, which was forbidden by Caesar under such a threatening, was ventured upon privately against the deserters, and these barbarians would go out still, and meet those that ran away before any saw them, and looking about them to see that no Roman spied them, they dissected them, and pulled this polluted money out of their bowels; which money was still found in a few of them, while yet a great many were destroyed by the bare hope there was of thus getting by them, which miserable treatment made many that were deserting to return back again into the city. [Josephus: Wars of the Jews, 5, VII, 4-5].
 - a. THUS did the miseries of Jerusalem grow worse and worse every day, and the seditious were still more irritated by the calamities they were under, even while the famine preyed upon themselves, after it had preyed upon the people.
 - b. And indeed the multitude of carcasses that lay in heaps one upon another was a horrible sight, and produced a pestilential stench, which was a hindrance to those that would make sallies out of the city, and fight the enemy: but as those were to go in battle-array, who had been already used to ten thousand murders, and must tread upon those dead bodies as they marched along, so were not they terrified, nor did they pity men as they marched over them; nor did they deem this affront offered to the deceased to be any ill omen to themselves; but as they had their right hands already polluted with the murders of their own countrymen, and in that condition ran out to fight with foreigners, they seem to me to

have cast a reproach upon God himself, as if he were too slow in punishing them; for the war was not now gone on with as if they had any hope of victory; for they gloried after a brutish manner in that despair of deliverance they were already in.

- c. And now the Romans, although they were greatly distressed in getting together their materials, raised their banks in one and twenty days, after they had cut down all the trees that were in the country that adjoined to the city, and that for ninety furlongs round about, as I have already related. And truly the very view itself of the country was a melancholy thing; for those places which were before adorned with trees and pleasant gardens were now become a desolate country every way, and its trees were all cut down: nor could any foreigner that had formerly seen Judea and the most beautiful suburbs of the city, and now saw it as a desert, but lament and mourn sadly at so great a change: for the war had laid all the signs of beauty quite waste: nor if any one that had known the place before, had come on a sudden to it now, would he have known it again; but though he were at the city itself, yet would he have inquired for it notwithstanding. [VI, I, 1: Josephus: Wars of the Jews, PC Study Bible formatted electronic database Copyright © 2003, 2006 by Biblesoft, Inc. All rights reserved].
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Appendix 6

The Anti-Christ and the Tribulation

A. INTRODUCTION.

1. The coming of Antichrist and the Tribulation occur next in the millennial scheme.
 - a. At the beginning of the tribulation period, the theory has Israel being established in Palestine again and the Roman Empire resurrected.
 - b. The Russians will invade Palestine from the north, but will be defeated by Christ's miraculous power.
 - c. The theory has the temple being rebuilt in Jerusalem, and all the old rites and ceremonies again being practiced.
 - d. After the rapture but before the Russian invasion a man will arise in the Western world who will make a 7-year treaty with Israel. This treaty will cause the Jews to "relax their guard, paving the way for the Russian invasion and the fulfillment of Ezekiel 38 and 39" (DeHaan, pp.11f).
 - e. Half-way through the treaty, this prince (the Antichrist), will break the pact, and initiate a horrible persecution on all those who refuse to reverence him as God. The antichrist is thought to be identical to the "man of sin" of 2 Thessalonians 2.
 - 1) Antichrist will set up camp on Mount Olivet during his attempts to destroy the 144,000 faithful Jews (cf. Rev. 14:1-5). With his great armies he will try to defeat God's plans (cf. Rev. 16:13,14,16; DeHaan, pp.12f).
 - 2) The greatest battle of all time will be fought at Megiddo, the Battle of Armageddon, between Christ and Antichrist. (cf. Zech. 14:3,9; Rev. 19:20). Antichrist will be destroyed.
2. DeHaan offers some information about the Antichrist.
 - a. "The Bible gives him a number of names. In 2 Thessalonians 2, Paul referred to him as the man of sin, the son of perdition, and the lawless one. John spoke of him as Antichrist and the beast. He is the king mentioned in Daniel 11:36. So remember, after the church, the body of Christ, has been removed from the earth to meet the Lord in the air, and before the outpouring of God's wrath, Antichrist will be revealed. He will present himself as the enemy of God and of His Son...(2 Thessalonians 2:8-10)" (pp.26f).
 - b. There is no evidence that shows the "man of sin" of 2 Thessalonians is identical to antichrist. This person is shown by Paul to have a distinctive religious appearance and claim, and that he would be manifested in connection to the great apostasy Paul predicted. The man of sin is most likely the Roman papacy.

B. DISCUSSION.

1. The Bible's information about the antichrist is found in only four verses.
 - a. The millennial speculations regarding the antichrist are so extensive it may surprise some to learn that the term is used only five times in the Scriptures; all of these are in four verses in the writings of John
 - 1) 1 John 2:18: "Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time."
 - 2) 1 John 2:22: "Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son."
 - 3) 1 John 4:3: "And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that *spirit* of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world."
 - 4) 2 John 7: "For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist."
 - b. Premillennial writers shy away from discussing these verses—and for good reason: the information

given by John does not fit their theory!

- 1) The Bible does not picture the *antichrist* as some diabolical dictator of the late 20th century. In fact, John states that "even now are there many antichrists" (1 John 2:18). Instead of one Antichrist, John shows that there were many of them, and they were operating openly during his time.
- 2) John describes the antichrists as being those who deny that Jesus is the Christ (1 John 2:22). Further, "Every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: ~~da~~ this is that spirit of antichrist..." (1 John 4:3). He identified the antichrist as those deceivers who "confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist" (2 John 7).
- 3) John was not seeing a political leader in our time when he spoke of antichrists.

2. The truth about antichrist.

- a. Wayne Jackson showed that *antichrist* is a general word which John used to describe the spirit of unbelief and rebellion that revealed itself in times past and is in evidence now ("Bible Light," July-August, 1988, p.3):
 - 1) Atheism is antichrist for it denies the existence of the Father and the deity of his Son.
 - a) Luke 10:16: "He that heareth you heareth me; and he that despiseth you despiseth me; and he that despiseth me despiseth him that sent me."
 - b) 1 John 2:22: "Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son."
 - 2) The Docetist, of the late 1st century, were antichrists in that they denied that Jesus actually became flesh. "Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that *spirit* of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world" (1 John 4:2-3).
 - 3) The ancient Gnostics were antichrists (as are their modern counterparts, the Watchtower Witnesses) in repudiating the deity of the Lord Jesus.
 - a) John 1:1: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."
 - b) John 20:28: "And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God."
 - 4) The old Saballian sects, together with the so-called "oneness" groups of today, are antichrist for they refuse to distinguish between "the Father and the Son" (1 John 2:22) as separate Persons within the Godhead.
- b. Those who have usurped the prerogatives of deity by claiming to **be** God, or his **personal representative**, are likewise antichrist. Such characters as "Father Divine," Jim Jones of the Peoples' Temple, and the Roman papacy fall into this category.
- c. In the final analysis, **any person** who deliberately rejects the authority of the Son of God, thus suggesting, as in the parable of the pounds, "...We will not have this man [Christ] reign over us" (Luke 19:14), is of the spirit of the antichrist.

3. The Millennialism view of the Tribulation.

- a. The tribulation in millennial thinking is a seven-year period of time in which antichrist brings terrible persecution upon the earth.
- b. Seven years is determined in the following manner (Hal Lindsey, *There's A New World Coming*, pp.100-111): It is developed from Daniel 9:24-27. Daniel mentioned a period of 70 weeks, which are interpreted to represent 490 years (1 day = 1 year; 1 week = 7 years: 7 x 70 = 490 years). The beginning of this 490-year span of time is said to have been when the Persian king permitted the Jews to return to Palestine (445 B.C.). From that time to the very time when Jesus was crucified was 483 years. It is claimed that God then stopped the "time-clock," keeping in reserve the remaining seven

years until the beginning of the tribulation period.

- c. Millennialists claim that the span of time from the death of Christ to the start of the tribulation (which immediately follows the rapture) has been assigned to the Jews and Gentiles who obey the gospel (i.e., the "church age").
 - d. Revelation 4 is said to be a prophetic description of the rapture, with John being used to represent the entire body of saved individuals. Revelation 6 is said to be a prophetic picture of the troubles to come on mankind during the tribulation. Revelation 7 is said to be descriptive of how God will use 144,000 Jews to evangelize the world during the seven years of tribulation.
 - 1) In Revelation 6, the vision of the white horse is said to represent the Antichrist. The red horse vision supposedly represents a period of three and one-half years of "pseudo-peace" (prior to Antichrist breaking his treaty with Israel).
 - 2) The black horse vision is said to represent a period of economic catastrophe.
 - 3) Finally, the pale horse vision represents a time of "death on a massive scale."
4. Biblical truth about the tribulation.
- a. The primary passage employed to advance the tribulation theory is Matthew 24:15-22: "When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:) Then let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains: Let him which is on the housetop not come down to take any thing out of his house: Neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes. And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days! But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day: For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened." An examination of this text shows that the destruction of Jerusalem (which occurred in A.D. 70 by the Roman army) is under consideration by the Lord in his remarks, not some "end-time" event. An examination of the passage gives us the following information.
 - b. Verse 15: "When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand)." The abomination of desolation is described in such vivid detail that it would be clearly recognized when it appeared: the approach of the Roman army: "And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. Then let them which are in Judaea flee to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and let not them that are in the countries enter thereinto. For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled. But woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck, in those days! for there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people. And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled" (Luke 21:20-24). The information which follows would be useful only if the saints quickly recognized the specific sign the Lord had just given, coupled with the general signs of the previous verses. All these signs would have been seen before "the end" (24:6,13,14) that is being predicted. The Lord has now given the disciples a means of identifying ahead of time the "great tribulation" of verse 21, so they could escape Jerusalem. This sign (vs 15) is not a universal sign, but one which could only be locally observable. If reference is to the second coming, there would be no need for the flight commanded.
 - c. Verse 16: "Then let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains." This command never applied to anyone who did not live in Judea; it was limited to a particular place, people, situation, and time. The Christians in and around Jerusalem were to flee to the mountains since there they would find greater safety from the invading Roman army. Millennialists ignore these verses when discussing their theory. The statements of verses 16-20 simply will not fit into the millennial theory! At the Lord's return, the saints will rise to meet him in the air (1 Thess. 4:16-17). There will be no need, no time, and no way for anyone to flee to the mountains at **that end**. The mountains had many caves in which

to take shelter, and passing through the mountains, escape to other regions could be effected. The instructions of these verses do not fit the so-called "second stage" of the Second Coming, for that will be the time when the Lord return to establish an earthly kingdom (according to millennial theory). There would be no need for flight; it would be a time of triumph for the saints, not terror.

- d. Verse 17: "Let him which is on the housetop not come down to take any thing out of his house." The houses of Palestine were so-constructed that one could walk on the roofs, and even from roof to roof. The roof was a place where one could take advantage of the evening breezes during the summer, and have the sun's warmth during the colder times. If one was on the roof when the Roman army appeared, he was not to take the time to enter his house to get clothing or provisions; he would not have sufficient time. He could escape from the city by walking from roof to roof, at least for a distance, thus avoiding the jammed streets and turmoil below. He must trust the Lord for the necessities of life as the journey was made. Modern houses are not constructed as in that day; the situation does not fit our time.
- e. Verse 18: "Neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes." Those addressed are the Lord's people. If the "rapture" theory were true, they would not need to go back to their houses for clothes, and there would be no reason for them to flee. They would suddenly be whisked away from the earth to meet the Lord in the air. If this is the end of time, there would be no need to flee for there would be no place to go (2 Pet. 3:10). This passage is describing a local event, directly affecting only those who lived in Judea when the Roman army approached to lay siege to the city. There is no such thing as the "rapture" taught in the Scriptures! Farmers of that time would take to the fields only such clothing as were necessary. If the Romans came while they were working their crops, they were to quickly leave the area, trusting God to provide for their necessities, for they would not have time to go home and make proper preparations.
- f. Verses 19-20: "And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days! But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day." They were to pray that the day of their flight be on a weekday and in a time of good weather. The flight would be hard on those who had small children and women who were pregnant.
 - 1) If they had to flee during winter time, even greater hardships would be met—travel would be difficult in cold and rain.
 - 2) If it were on the Sabbath, they would have trouble getting out of the city since the gates of the city were closed on those occasions. The Jews could even be expected to offer hindrance to their escape since they still enforced the rules limiting travel on the Sabbath. This detail shows that the time period involved was when the Sabbath would have been a problem for the Christians. But Sabbath-keeping was officially removed when Jesus died on the cross (Col. 2:14-17; Rom. 7:1-7). Today, even those who claim to observe the Sabbath do not enforce it on others and even they do not observe the limitations which were followed by the ancient Jews. A Sabbath day's journey was only about a half mile. Thus, this detail removes the event described from our day and places it squarely in the first century. Compare: "And it came to pass, that when the gates of Jerusalem began to be dark before the sabbath, I commanded that the gates should be shut, and charged that they should not be opened till after the sabbath: and *some* of my servants set I at the gates, *that* there should no burden be brought in on the sabbath day" (Neh. 13:19).
 - 3) At least part of their prayers was answered, for the city fell during the summer (September). The siege began when many Jews were attending the feasts.
 - 4) We are told that all the Christians escaped from Jerusalem, fleeing to Pella, which was about 100 miles away. When the Romans temporarily withdrew, the rest of the saints were able to escape. The Romans returned, laid siege to the city from April to about September, when the city fell. The Lord had promised in Luke 21:18 that the saints would be preserved, provided they followed his directions: "But there shall not an hair of your head perish."
- g. Verse 21: "For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be." "For *in* those days shall be affliction, such as was not from the beginning

of the creation which God created unto this time, neither shall be" (Mark 13:19). "But woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck, in those days! for there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people. And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled" (Luke 21:23-24). Notice that the time when this great tribulation was to occur is the same as when the abomination of desolation came and when the saints were to flee from Judea and Jerusalem. We know that this great tribulation is not something that is to occur at the end of time because of the information preceding this verse and by the limiting statement of verse 34. There is no reason for taking the statement of verse 21 as a figure of speech. Jesus said plainly that the suffering of that time would be unparalleled in history. It had greater suffering than that which was experienced during Noah's flood (those people died quickly, in a relatively painless way); it was greater than when God destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah (their death was not preceded with any long period of agony); it was greater than the suffering felt by those who died in either of the Atomic explosions in Japan (for those mostly died instantly). In fact, when the record of Josephus is consulted, we have much reason to understand it literally. He reports that:

- 1) 1,100,000 Jews died at Jerusalem during the siege and fighting, and another 97,000 were captured and placed in slavery. How foolish the Jewish bravado of Matthew 27:25: "His blood be on up, and on our children."
 - 2) Women ate their own babies, men broke into houses and took food from the mouths of children, and neighbor robbed neighbor for the food they had.
 - 3) Rich Jews swallowed their gold, and deserted to the Romans, hoping to get away with some of their wealth. When the soldiers discovered the scheme, they began killing those who surrendered, ripping open their bodies in search of coins. Thousands died in this fashion, two thousand in only one night.
 - 4) Many were beaten and tortured by the Roman soldiers; thousands were crucified in various bodily positions—as jests. This was done until all of the wood had been used as crosses, and even places to erect crosses were filled!
 - 5) By actual count, 115,880 bodies were carried through one gate in three months; there were 600,000 in all thus disposed of. When the bodies could no longer be thrown outside the city, they were stored in large houses within the city.
 - 6) Thousands of the captives were later forced to fight beasts and each other in arenas; this for the enjoyment of spectators.
 - 7) Jerusalem was overthrown and the temple was utterly destroyed—Matthew 14:2 was literally fulfilled. When the Romans broke into the city, Josephus said, "...They slew whomsoever they found, without distinction, and burned the houses and all the people who had fled into them; and when they entered for the sake of plunder, they found whole families of dead persons, and houses full of carcasses destroyed by famine, then they came out with their hands empty. And though they thus pitied the dead, they had not the same emotion for the living, but killed all they met, whereby they filled the lanes with dead bodies. The whole city ran with blood, insomuch that many things which were burning were extinguished by the blood" (Wars, Book VI, chap. 8,5; chap. 9,3). He also reports that the city fell to the Romans on the same day that it had fallen to Nebuchadnezzar in 606 B.C.
- h. "And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened" (vs. 22). God mercifully shortened the tribulation. "But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or *as* a thief, or *as* an evildoer, or as a busybody in other men's matters. Yet if *any man suffer* as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf. For the time *is come* that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if *it first begin* at us, what shall the end *be* of them that obey not the gospel of God? And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear? Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls *to him* in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator" (1 Peter 4:15-19).

- 1) "History records that Titus determined to reduce Jerusalem by famine, a long and destructive mode of conquest, and for this purpose he surrounded it with a wall and ditch. After completing his preparation for this attack on the city, he received news from Rome which urged him to hasten to Rome. He changed his plan and pressed the city by assault, that he might return to Rome, where his presence was greatly needed; hence, 'those days had been shortened.' The overruling providence of God shortened these days 'for the elect's sake.' 'The elect' has reference to the Christians who were among the Jews at that time. This elect group were to be preserved in order that the gospel might be handed down to future ages" (H. Leo Boles, *Commentary on Matthew*, pp.466f).
 - 2) Titus, the Roman general, acknowledged that the speedy overthrow of Jerusalem was to be attributed to the power of God: "We have certainly had God for our assistant in this war and it was no other than God who ejected the Jews out of these fortifications, for what could the hands of men, or any machines, do toward overthrowing these towers?" (Quoted by Kik, p.120).
 - 3) "As it is Jewish flesh alone whose sufferings are the subject of discourse, this passage means that but for the shortening of those days no Jewish flesh would be saved; and it follows that the elect, for whose sake those days were to be shortened were the elect Jews, or Jewish Christians. The Romans made no distinction between believing and unbelieving Jews, but slaughtered all alike. The only safety for Christian Jews, then, was in flight, and even this might not have saved them but for the providence by which those days were 'shortened'" (J.W. McGarvey, *Commentary on Matthew and Mark*, p.208).
5. The word *tribulation* is found 25 times in the Bible.
- a. Four of these are in the Old Testament and 21 are in the New Testament. In none of these instances is the word used in connection with a seven-year period of intense suffering toward the end of time.
 - 1) The word is used in Deuteronomy 4:30, Judges 10:14, and 1 Samuel 10:19 to describe sufferings Israel would face or had faced in ancient times. In 1 Samuel 26:24 it is used in reference to David's sufferings.
 - 2) The word is used in Matthew 13:21, John 16:33, Acts 14:22, Romans 5:3, 8:35, 12:12, 2 Corinthians 1:4, 7:4, Ephesians 3:13, 1 Thessalonians 3:4, and 2 Thessalonians 1:4 concerning Christian sufferings.
 - 3) In Romans 2:9, 2 Thessalonians 1:6, and Revelation 2:22 it describes the fate of the wicked.
 - 4) In Revelation 1:9, 2:9, 2:10, and 7:14 it describes earthly troubles of saints on earth.
 - 5) It also occurs 3 times in Matthew 24:21, 29, and Mark 13:24 (cf. vs. 19) where it describes the suffering in connection with the overthrow of Jerusalem in A.D. 70.
 - b. Four passages are used by millennialists in support of their tribulation theory: Matthew 24:21; Mark 13:24 (19); Jeremiah 30:7; Daniel 12:1. The first two are parallel, and refer to 1st century events, as we have already seen. The second two refer to what Old Testament Israel suffered in ancient days. None speaks of *The Tribulation* of the millennialists.
 - 1) Jeremiah 30:7: "Alas! for that day *is* great, so that none *is* like it: it *is* even the time of Jacob's trouble; but he shall be saved out of it."
 - 2) Daniel 12:1: "And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation *even* to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book."
 - 3) Matthew 24:21: "For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be."
 - 4) Mark 13:19,24: "For *in* those days shall be affliction, such as was not from the beginning of the creation which God created unto this time, neither shall be....But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light."

Appendix 7

The Behistun Rock, an Open Door to the past

Max R. Miller

The Behistun Rock looms above a spring-fed pool of water on the old carven road from Ecbatana to Babylon. The rock is really the last peak (3,800 feet high) of a long, narrow range of mountains that skirt the Plains of Keneanshah on the East. The name Behistun Rock is derived from the village of Besitun located at its foot. High upon the face of the rock, perhaps five hundred feet above the level of the Plain, Darius I carved a large relief panel of human figures accompanied with columns of inscriptions. Travelers have known the presence of this mysterious scene for centuries. Many have sought but were unable to identify the figures.

It was described by one as “a city situated on a hill, where there is a pillar and statue of Semiramis, a mythical Assyria goddess.” Ibn Hawkal, Arabian geographer of the tenth century, A. D., supposed the scene represented “a school house with master and the boys; in the schoolmaster’s hand is an instrument like a strap wherewith to beat.” Another, in the nineteenth century, thought that a winged figure of the monument was a cross, and that Darius and his officers and prisoners were the Twelve Apostles. Ker Porter identified the minor figures as “representatives of the Ten Tribes” standing before a “King of Assyria and of the Medes.” He surmised the one with the “dunce cap” was of the priestly tribe of Levi.

The Persian Empire was consolidated by Cyrus the Great. His son, Cambyses, followed him to the throne. Following Cambyses, an imposter claimed rightful title to the throne as a son of Cyrus—Smerdis (Skunka) by name. This Pseudo-Smerdis controlled the throne, ruling with power. At length, some of the principal nobles, convinced of the imposture, counseled together and discussed the measure proper to be adopted under the circumstances. However, nothing was done until the arrival at the Capitol of a personage felt by all to be the proper leader of the nation in the existing crisis. This was Darius I, or Darius the Great (522-486 B.C.), the son of Hystaspes. He was a prince of the blood royal, who stood in the direct line of succession, failing the issue of Cyrus. He was about thirty-eight years of age, a seasoned warrior and at a time in life suited for vigorous enterprises.

In the first years of his reign, he proved himself worthy of the crown by crushing rebellions that broke out in many parts of the wide realm of Persia. Elam, Babylonia, Media and Armenia revolted. A new false Smerdis arose. Darius fought nineteen battles to quell these agitations. From the Caucasus to the Indus “his armies had no stain on their glory,” Aeschylus wrote. Darius then recorded for future ages the successes of his first years with the inscription on the lofty rock on the upper course of the River Choaspes. The inscription dates from approximately 516-515 B.C., the fifth or sixth year of his reign.

The early nineteenth century was the beginning of the scientific study of archaeology. The Rosetta Stone had been discovered in 1798 and Champollion (1790-1832) was able to decipher it before his early death. His achievement formally opened up the science of Egyptology. Scholars were now able to read Egyptian monumental inscriptions and reliefs from that time to the present. Egyptological studies have gone steadily forward. In Mesopotamia a similar situation developed in the decipherment of the Behistun Rock and the beginning of Assyriology.

There was a great deal of scientific inquiry among the English before the nineteenth century. There developed more than casual interest in the tales recently authenticated by scholars who traveled the ancient lands of Mesopotamia. It was an important turning point when the East India Company ordered their resident in Basrah to obtain specimens of inscribed brick that were discovered at Babylon. Specimens were sent, carefully packed, to London. These, with a small case of antiquities, for the moment, represented all the known remains of Babylon and Assyria. They were the forerunners of the many hundreds of tons of antiquities, which were to reach Europe during the following century.

Claudius Rich, an English Archaeologist, and a few other European travelers, had seen and endeavored to copy some of the inscriptions, particularly those in the vicinity of Persepolis at the Tomb of Cyrus. Attention was

directed to the inscriptions at Behistun. Investigation revealed the inscriptions were trilingual. The same cuneiform text was repeated in three different languages, the old Persian, Elamite and Babylonian. The Rosetta Stone with its parallel inscriptions in Greek and Egyptian hieroglyphs served as a clue for the decipherment of the Pharaonic pictographs. Now, the trilingual inscriptions in Persia were to fulfill something of the same role in deciphering the languages of the Behistun Monument.

Notable among these early archaeologists was an Englishman named Henry Creswicke Rawlinson (1810-1895). At the age of seventeen Rawlinson departed England for India. Aboard ship was a fellow-passenger, Sir John Malcomb, a soldier, diplomat and Oriental scholar of distinction. Lord Roberts suggests in an introduction to Rawlinson's biography, "It was, without doubt, an enormous advantage to the lad of seventeen to be so closely associated with the 'Historian of Persia,' whose tales of his battles with the Mahrattas and his experiences among the Persians probably fired Rawlinson's youthful imagination and gave that bent to his tastes which resulted in his subsequent choice of a career."

In 1835, Rawlinson was transferred to Kermanshah, Persia (within twenty-two miles of the rock), to reorganize and discipline the Shah's troops so as to restore them to that state of efficiency to which they had formally attained under the supervision of British officers. Rawlinson possessed great physical strength and stamina. On one occasion, when it was necessary to warn the British Ambassador at Teheran of dangers of the Russian agent at Hermit, Rawlinson rode seven hundred fifty miles in one hundred fifty consecutive hours. This was indicative of his determination to accomplish that which he set out to do. He worked on the translation of the message for a decade before he was able to publish it in the Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society.

Soon after his arrival in Kermanshah he began to survey the rock. He was soon aware that in a space approximately twenty-five by fifty feet carved on the rock "worth more to history than any equal space in Asia," he was dealing not with one language, but with three, in the twelve hundred lines of inscriptions which he copied. The threefold Persian, Elamite and Babylonian—were written in cuneiform characters. Knowing modern Persian, Rawlinson was able to decipher the old Persian cuneiform. He centered his attention on the personal names—Darius, Xerxes and Hystaspes—much as the decipherment of the Rosetta Stone had been done in the demotic Egyptian portion of that monument.

On Rawlinson's examination of the face of the rock he found that the whole prepared area (about twelve hundred square feet) had been carefully smoothed and the unsound portion of the stone replaced with better material, embedded in lead. After this, the whole face had received a high polish which could only have been accomplished by mechanical means. After the figures and inscriptions had been cut, it was coated with a coat of hard, siliceous varnish to protect it. A mystery out of ancient times: How did they polish the face of the rock? What kind of "machinery" was used?

In 1835 Rawlinson began copying the Persian and Elamite inscriptions, without the help of ladders or ropes, simply by climbing down to the ledge beneath the panel. However, the intentional inaccessibility of the location chosen by Darius for the sculptures made the area to be reached in this way very small. In Rawlinson's return visits in later years, ropes and ladders had to be used to read the more remote panels. Even so, Babylonian inscriptions remained inaccessible until 1847, when a chance circumstance enabled Rawlinson to obtain "squeezes." He says:

At length, however, a wild Kurdish boy, who had come from a distance, volunteered to make the attempt, and I promised him considerable award if he succeeded, . . . so that it cannot be approached by any of the ordinary means of climbing. The boy's first move was to squeeze himself up a cleft in the rock a short distance to the left of the projecting mass. When he had ascended some distance above it, he drove a wooden peg firmly into the cleft, fastened a rope to this, and then endeavored to swing himself across to another cleft at some distance on the other side; but in this he failed owing to the projection of the rock. It then only remained for him to cross over the cleft by hanging on by his toes and fingers to the slight inequalities on the bare precipice, and in this he succeeded, passing over a distance of twenty feet of almost smooth perpendicular rock in a manner which to a looker-on appeared quite miraculous. When he reached the second cleft, the real difficulties were over. He had brought a rope with him attached to the first peg, and now, driving in a second, he was able to swing himself right over the projecting mass of rock. Here with a short ladder he formed a swinging seat, like a painter's cradle, and

fixed upon this seat, he took under my direction the paper cast of the Babylonian translation of the records of Darius.

The sculptured panel represents Darius himself, standing in judgment upon nine rebel chiefs. At the end of the row, the king is treading underfoot a figure representing the usurper, Smerdis, while two attendants, standing behind, and the god Ahuramazda in his winged disk complete the group.

The linguistic achievement deciphering the Behistun inscription, as great a feat of ancient philology and history as the discovery of radio, television or atomic fission in the realm of physics in our modern day, was an important event archaeologically. This event was destined to resurrect vanished nations of antiquity from the vast cemetery of the Tigris-Euphrates Valley, the grave of Earth's most ancient civilization, in which they have lain for millennia. Now enabled to read the innumerable inscribed clay tablets dug out of the mounds of buried cities, the scholar can reconstruct the story of the ancient past, make it live again and shed its light on the message and meaning of the Old Testament.

The magnitude of the discovery of deciphering cuneiform is increasing with every decade. Assyriology has become an important branch of research in every great university. The excavations of the last century, moreover, have brought to light great libraries of cuneiform literature. At Nineveh, two great libraries were unearthed which contained thousands of clay tablets. The library of Ashurbanipal (669-626 B. C.) containing some twenty-thousand tablets and constituting the main body of recovered literature dealing with the civilization of ancient Mesopotamia, its culture and achievements, provides a great mass of material illustrating innumerable aspects of Old Testament history. Understanding of those histories and cultures helps one relate to and understand the role God's people Israel had to these great nations of the past.

Among the tablets unearthed and sent to the British Museum from the royal palace and library of Ashurbanipal discovered at Nineveh by Howard Rassam in 1853, were Assyrian copies of the Babylonian creation and flood stories. The identification and decipherment of these particular tablets by George Smith in 1872 produced an archaeological sensation; but cuneiform literature was to prove a more far-reaching arm of biblical studies than even the most sanguine optimists of the day dared hope.

Not only in Babylonia, but elsewhere as well, large bodies of cuneiform literature were to be uncovered. The much-publicized Amarna Letters from Egypt, discovered in 1886 at Tell-el-Amarna, about 200 miles south of modern Cairo, furnishes examples. In its great library have been recovered hundreds of clay tablets in Akkadian cuneiform, the lingua franca of the day. These represent diplomatic correspondence of petty princes in Palestine in the fourteenth century B. C. with the Egyptian court at Amarna. Other important bodies of cuneiform literature have been retrieved from Boghaz-Reui and Kamsh in Asia Minor, from Susa in Elam (Code of Hammurabi), from Mari on the Middle Euphrates, from Ras Shamra and from other sites within and without Babylonia.



Darius the Great's, Behistun Inscription

The Behistun Inscription, carved into a cliff side, gives the same text in three languages, telling the story of King Darius' conquests, with the names of twenty-three provinces subject to him. It is illustrated by life-sized carved images of King Darius with other figures in attendance.

The Behistun Inscription (also Bisitun or Bisutun, نوتس ب in modern Persian; in Old Persian is Bagastana the meaning is "the god's place or land") is to cuneiform what the Rosetta Stone is to Egyptian hieroglyphs: The document most crucial in the deciphering of a previously lost script. It is located in the Kermanshah Province of Iran, and contains three versions of the same text, written in three different cuneiform script languages: Old Persian, Elamite, and Babylonian.

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Darius the Great's, Behistun Inscription

In Antiquity, Bagastâna/Behistun, which means 'place where the gods dwell', was the name of a village and a remarkable, isolated rock outcrop along the road that connected the capitals of Babylonia and Media, and Ecbatana (modern Hamadan). Many travelers passed along this place, so it was the logical place for the Persian king Darius I (Darius the Great - 522-486) to proclaim his military victories.

The famous Behistun inscription was engraved on a cliff about 100 meters off the ground. Darius tells us how the supreme god Ahuramazda choose him to dethrone an usurper named Gaumâta, how he set out to quell several revolts, and how he defeated his foreign enemies

Darius the Great's, Behistun Inscription

Trilingual inscription on the face of a gorge beneath the panel of sculptures in 5 Columns.

1. (1.1-3.) I am Darius the Great King, King of Kings, King in Persia, King of countries, son of Hystaspes, grandson of Arsames, an Achaemenian.
 2. (1.3-6.) Darius the King says: My father was Hystaspes; Hystaspes' father was Arsames; Arsames' father was Ariaramnes; Ariaramnes' father was Teispes; Teispes' father was Achaemenes.
 3. (1.6-8.) Darius the King says: For this reason we are called Achaemenians. From long ago we have been noble. From long ago our family had been kings.
 4. (1.8-11.) Darius the King says: there were 8 of our family who were kings before me; I am the ninth; 9 in succession we have been kings.
 5. (1.11-2.) Darius the King says: By the favor of Ahuramazda I am King; Ahuramazda bestowed the kingdom upon me.
 6. (1.12-7.) Darius the King says: These are the countries which came to me; by the favor of Ahuramazda I was king of them: Persia, Elam, Babylonia, Assyria, Arabia, Egypt, (those) who are beside the sea, Sardis, Ionia, Media, Armenia, Cappadocia, Parthia, Drangiana, Aria, Chorasmia, Bactria, Sogdiana, Gandara, Scythia, Sattagydia, Arachosia, Maka: in all, 23 provinces.
 7. (1.17-20.) Darius the King says: These are the countries which came to me; by the favor of Ahuramazda they were my subjects; they bore tribute to me; what was said to them by me either by night or by day, that was done.
 8. (1.20-4.) Darius the King says: Within these countries, the man who was loyal, him I rewarded well; (him) who was evil, him I punished well; by the favor of Ahuramazda these countries showed respect toward my law; as was said to them by me, thus was it done.
 9. (1.24-26.) Darius the King says: Ahuramazda bestowed the kingdom upon me; Ahuramazda bore me aid until I got possession of this kingdom; by the favor of Ahuramazda I hold this kingdom.
 10. (1.26-35.) Darius the King says: This is what was done by me after I became king. A son of Cyrus, Cambyses by name, of our family -- he was king here of that Cambyses there was a brother, Smerdis by name, having the same mother and the same father as Cambyses. Afterwards, Cambyses slew that Smerdis. When Cambyses slew Smerdis, it did not become known to the people that Smerdis had been slain. Afterwards, Cambyses went to Egypt. When Cambyses had gone off to Egypt, after that the people became evil. After that the Lie waxed great in the country, both in Persia and in Media and in the other provinces.
 11. (1.35-43.) Darius the King says: Afterwards, there was one man, a Magian, named Gaumata; he rose up from Paishiyavada. A mountain named Arakadri -- from there 14 days of the month Viyakhna were past when he rose up. He lied to the people thus: "I am Smerdis, the son of Cyrus, brother of Cambyses." After that, all the people became rebellious from Cambyses, (and) went over to him, both Persia and Media and the other provinces. He seized the kingdom; of the month Garmapada 9 days were past, then he seized the kingdom. After that, Cambyses died by his own hand.
 12. (1.43-8.) Darius the King says: This kingdom which Gaumata the Magian took away from Cambyses, this kingdom from long ago had belonged to our family. After that, Gaumata the Magian took (it) from Cambyses; he took to himself both Persia and Media and the other provinces, he made (them) his own possession, he became king.
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13. (1.48-61.) Darius the King says: There was not a man, neither a Persian nor a Mede nor anyone of our family, who might make that Gaumata the Magian deprived of the kingdom. The people feared him greatly, (thinking that) he would slay in numbers the people who previously had known Smerdis; for this reason he would slay the people, "lest they know me, that I am not Smerdis the son of Cyrus." Nobody dared say anything about Gaumata the Magian, until I came. After that I sought help of Ahuramazda; Ahuramazda bore me aid; of the month Bagayadi 10 days were past, then I with a few men slew that Gaumata the Magian, and those who were his foremost followers. A fortress named Sikayauvati, a district named Nisaya, in Media -- here I slew him. I took the kingdom from him. By the favor of Ahuramazda I became king; Ahuramazda bestowed the kingdom upon me.

14. (1.61-71.) Darius the King says: The kingdom which had been taken away from our family, that I put in its Place; I reestablished it on its foundation. As before, so I made the sanctuaries which Gaumata the Magian destroyed. I restored to the people the pastures and the herds, the household slaves and the houses which Gaumata the Magian took away from them. I reestablished the people on its foundation, both Persia and Media and the other provinces. As before, so I brought back what had been taken away. By the favor of Ahuramazda this I did: I strove until I reestablished our royal house on its foundation as (it was) before. So I strove, by the favor of Ahuramazda, so that Gaumata the Magian did not remove our royal house.

15. (1.71-2.) Darius the King says: This is what I did after I became king.

16. (1.72-81.) Darius the King says: When I had slain Gaumata the Magian, afterwards one man, named Asina, son of Upadarma -- he rose up in Elam. To the people he said thus: "I am king in Elam." Afterwards the Elamites became rebellious, (and) went over to that Asina; he became king in Elam. And one man, a Babylonian, named Nidintu-Bel, son of Ainaira -- he rose up in Babylon; thus he deceived the people: "I am Nebuchadrezzar the son of Nabonidus." Afterwards the Babylonian people all went over to that Nidintu-Bel; Babylonia became rebellious; he seized the kingdom in Babylon.

17. (1.81-3). Darius the King says: After that I sent (a message) to Elam. This Acina was led to me bound; I slew him.

18. (1.83-90). Darius the King says: After that I went off to Babylon, against that Nidintu-Bel who called himself Nebuchadrezzar. The army of Nidintu-Bel held the Tigris; there it took its stand, and on account of the waters (the Tigris) was unfordable. Thereupon (some of) my army I supported on (inflated) skins, others I made camel-borne, for others I brought horses. Ahuramazda bore me aid; by the favor of Ahuramazda we got across the Tigris. There I smote that army of Nidintu-Bel exceedingly; of the month Asiyadiya 26 days were past, then we fought the battle.

19. (1.90-6). Darius the King says: After that I went off to Babylon. When I had not arrived at Babylon, a town named Zazana, beside the Euphrates -- there this Nidintu-Bel who called himself Nebuchadrezzar came with an army against me, to deliver battle. Thereupon we Joined battle; Ahuramazda bore me aid; by the favor of Ahuramazda I smote that army of Nidintu-Bel exceedingly. The rest was thrown into the water, (and) the water carried it away. Of the month Anamaka 2 days were past, then we fought the battle.

20. (2.1-5.) Darius the King says: After that, Nidintu-Bel with a few horsemen fled; he went off to Babylon. Thereupon I went to Babylon. By the favor of Ahuramazda both I seized Babylon and I took that Nidintu-Bel prisoner. After that, I slew that Nidintu-Bel at Babylon.

21. (2.5-8.) Darius the King says: While I was in Babylon, these are the provinces which became rebellious from me: Persia, Elam, Media, Assyria, Egypt, Parthia, Margiana, Sattagydia, Scythia.

22. (2.8-11.) Darius the King says: One man, named Martiya, son of Cincikhri -- a town named Kuganaka, in Persia -- there he abode. He rose up in Elam; to the people thus he said, "I am Imanish, king in Elam."

23. (2.11-3.) Darius the King says: At that time I was near Elam. Thereupon the Elamites were afraid of me; they seized that Martiya who was their chief, and slew him.

24. (2.13-7.) Darius the King says: One man, named Phraortes, a Median -- he rose up in Media. To the people thus he said, "I am Khshathrita, of the family of Cyaxares." Thereafter the Median army which (was) in the

palace, became rebellious from me, (and) went over to that Phraortem. He became king in Media.

25. (2.18-29.) Darius the King says: The Persian and Median army which was with me, this was a small (force). Thereupon I sent forth an army. A Persian named Hydarnes, my subject -- I made him chief of them; I said to them thus: "Go forth, smite that Median army which does not call itself mine!" Thereupon this Hydarnes with the army marched off. When he arrived in Media, a town named Maru, in Media -- there he joined battle with the Medes. He who was chief among the Medes, he at that time was not there. Ahuramazda bore me aid; by the favor of Ahuramazda my army smote that rebellious army exceedingly. Of the month Anamaka 27 days were past, then the battle was fought by them. Thereafter this army of mine, a district named Kampanda, in Media -- there it waited for me until I arrived in Media.

26. (2.29-37.) Darius the King says: An Armenian named Dadarshi, my subject -- I sent him forth to Armenia. I said to him: "Go forth, that rebellious army which does not call itself mine, that do you smite!" Thereupon Dadarshi marched off. When he arrived in Armenia, thereafter the rebels assembled (and) came out against Dadarshi to join battle. A place named Zuzahya, in Armenia -- there they joined battle. Ahuramazda bore me aid; by the favor of Ahuramazda my army smote that rebellious army exceedingly; of the month Thuravahara 8 days were past, then the battle was fought by them.

27. (2.37-42.) Darius the King says: Again a second time the rebels assembled (and) came out against Dadarshi to join battle. A stronghold named Tigra, in Armenia -- there they joined battle. Ahuramazda bore me aid; by the favor of Ahuramazda my army smote that rebellious army exceedingly; of the month Thuravahara 18 days were past, then the battle was fought by them.

28. (2.42-9.) Darius the King says: Again a third time the rebels assembled (and) came out against Dadarshi to join battle. A fortress named Uyama, in Armenia -- there they joined battle. Ahuramazda bore me aid; by the favor of Ahuramazda my army smote that rebellious army exceedingly; of the month Thairgarci 9 days were past, then the battle was fought by them. Thereafter Dadarshi waited for me until I arrived in Media.

29. (2.49-57.) Darius the King says: Thereafter a Persian named Vaumisa, my subject-him I sent forth to Armenia. Thus I said to him: "Go forth; the rebellious army which does not call itself mine -- smite them!" Thereupon Vaumisa marched off. When he arrived in Armenia, then the rebels assembled (and) came out against Vaumisa to join battle. A district named Izala, in Assyria -- there they joined battle. Ahuramazda bore me aid; by the favor of Ahuramazda my army smote that rebellious army exceedingly; of the month Anamaka 15 days were past, then the battle was fought by them.

30. (2.57-63.) Darius the King says: Again a second time the rebels assembled (and) came out against Vaumisa to join battle. A district named Autiyara, in Armenia -- there they joined battle. Ahuramazda bore me aid; by the favor of Ahuramazda my army smote that rebellious army exceedingly; on the last day of the month Thuravaharâthen the battle was fought by them. After that, Vaumisa waited for me in Armenia until I arrived in Media.

31. (2.64-70.) Darius the King says: Thereafter I went away from Babylon (and) arrived in Media. When I arrived in Media, a town named Kunduru, in Media -- there this Phraortes who called himself king in Media came with an army against me to join battle. Thereafter we joined battle. Ahuramazda bore me aid; by the favor of Ahuramazda that army of Phraortes I smote exceedingly; of the month Adukanaisha 25 days were past, then we fought the battle.

32. (2.70-8.) Darius the King says: Thereafter this Phraortes with a few horsemen fled; a district named Raga, in Media -- along there he went off. Thereafter I sent an army in pursuit; Phraortes, seized, was led to me. I cut off his nose and ears and tongue, and put out one eye; he was kept bound at my palace entrance, all the people saw him. Afterward I impaled him at Ecbatana; and the men who were his foremost followers, those at Ecbatana within the fortress I (flayed and) hung out (their hides, stuffed with straw).

33. (2.78-91.) Darius the King says: One man named Cisantakhma, a Sagartian -- he became rebellious to me; thus he said to the people, "I am king in Sagartia, of the family of Cyaxares." Thereupon I sent off a Persian and Median army; a Mede named Takhmaspada, my subject -- I made him chief of them. I said to them thus: "Go forth; the hostile army which shall not call itself mine, and smite them!" Thereupon Takhmaspada with the army

went off; he joined battle with Cisantakhma. Ahuramazda bore me aid; by the favor of Ahuramazda my army smote that rebellious army and took Cisantakhma prisoner, (and) led him to me. Afterwards I cut off both his nose and ears, and put out one eye, he was kept bound at my palace entrance, all the people saw him. Afterwards I impaled him at Arbela.

34. (2.91-2.) Darius the King says: This is what was done by me in Media.

35. (2.92-8.) Darius the King says: Parthia and Hyrcania became rebellious from me, called themselves (adherents) of Phraortes. Hystaspes my father -- he was in Parthia; him the people abandoned, became rebellious. Thereupon Hystaspes went forth with the army which was faithful to him. A town named Vishpauzati, in Parthia -- there he joined battle with the Parthians. Ahuramazda bore me aid; by the favor of Ahuramazda Hystaspes smote that rebellious army exceedingly; of the month Viyakhna 22 days were past -- then the battle was fought by them.

36. (3.1-9.) Darius the King says: After that I sent forth a Persian army to Hystaspes, from Raga. When this army came to Hystaspes, thereupon Hystaspes took that army (and) marched out. A town by name Patigrabana, in Parthia - there he joined battle with the rebels. Ahuramazda bore me aid; by the favor of Ahuramazda Hystaspes smote that rebellious army exceedingly; of the month Garmapada 1 day was past -- then the battle was fought by them.

37. (3.9-10.) Darius the King says: After that the province became mine. This is what was done by me in Parthia.

38. (3.10-9.) Darius the King says: A province named Margiana -- it became rebellious to me. One man named Frada, a Margian -- him they made chief. Thereupon I sent forth against him a Persian named Dadarshi, my subject, satrap in Bactria. Thus I said to him: "Go forth, smite that army which does not call itself mine!" After that, Dadarshi marched out with the army; he joined battle with the Margians. Ahuramazda bore me aid; by the favor of Ahuramazda my army smote that rebellious army exceedingly; of the month Asiyadiya 23 days were past -- then the battle was fought by them.

39. (3.19-21.) Darius the King says: After that the province became mine. This is what was done by me in Bactria.

40. (3.21-8.) Darius the King says: One man named Vahyazdata -- a town named Tarava, a district named Yautiya, in Persia -- there he abode. He made the second uprising in Persia. To the people he said thus: "I am Smerdis, the son of Cyrus." Thereupon the Persian army which (was) in the palace, (having come) from Anshan previously -- it became rebellious from me, went over to that Vahyazdata. He became king in Persia.

41. (3.28-40.) Darius the King says: Thereupon I sent forth the Persian and Median army which was by me. A Persian named Artavardiya, my subject -- I made him chief of them. The rest of the Persian army went forth behind me to Media. Thereupon Artavardiya with his army went forth to Persia. When he arrived in Persia, a town named Rakha, in Persia -- there this Vahyazdata who called himself Smerdis came with his army against Artavardiya, to join battle. Thereupon they joined battle. Ahuramazda bore me aid; by the favor of Ahuramazda my army smote that army of Vahyazdata exceedingly; of the month Thuravahara 12 days were past -- then the battle was fought by them.

42. (3.40-9.) Darius the King says: After that, this Vahyazdata with a few horsemen fled; he went off to Paishiyauvada. From there he got an army; later he came against Artavardiya to join battle. A mountain named Parga -- there they joined battle. Ahuramazda bore me aid; by the favor of Ahuramazda my army smote that army of Vahyasdata exceedingly; of the month Garmapada 5 days were past -- then the battle was fought by them, and that Vahyazdata they took prisoner, and those who were his foremost followers they captured.

43. (3.49-52.) Darius the King says: After that I took that Vahyazdata and those who were his foremost followers -- a town named Uvadaicaya, in Persia -- there I impaled them.

44. (3.52-3.) Darius the King says: This is what was done by me in Persia.

45. (3.54-64.) The King says: This Vahyazdata who called himself Smerdis had sent an army to Arachosia -- a Persian named Vivana, my subject, satrap in Arachosia -- against him; and he had made one man their chief. Thus he said to them: "Go forth; smite Vivana and that army which calls itself King Darius's!" Thereupon this

army marched off, which Vahyazdata had sent forth against Vivana to join battle. A fortress named Kapishakani -- there they joined battle. Ahuramazda bore me aid; by the favor of Ahuramazda my army smote that rebellious army exceedingly; of the month Anamaka 13 days were past -- then the battle was fought by them.

46. (3.64-9.) Darius the King says: Again later the rebels assembled (and) came out against Vivana to join battle. A district named Gandutava -- there they joined battle. Ahuramazda bore me aid; by the favor of Ahuramazda my army smote that rebellious army exceedingly; of the month Viyakhna 7 days were past -- then the battle was fought by them.

47. (3.69-75.) Darius the King says: After that, this man who was the chief of that army which Vahyazdata had sent forth against Vivana -- he fled with a few horsemen (and) got away. A fortress named Arshada, in Arachosia -- past that he went. Afterwards Vivana with his army went off in pursuit of them; there he took him prisoner and the men who were his foremost followers, (and) slew (them).

48. (3.75-6.) Darius the King says: After that the province became mine. This is what was done by me in Arachosia.

49. (3.76-83.) Darius the King says: While I was in Persia and Media, again a second time the Babylonians became rebellious from me. One man named Arkha, an Armenian, son of Haldita -- he rose up in Babylon. A district named Dubala -- from there he thus lied to the people: "I am Nebuchadrezzar the son of Nabonidus." Thereupon the Babylonian people became rebellious from me, (and) went over to that Arkha. He seized Babylon; he became king in Babylon.

50. (3.83-92.) Darius the King says: Thereupon I sent forth an army to Babylon. A Persian named Intaphernes, my subject -- him I made chief of them. Thus I said to them: "Go forth; that Babylonian army smite, which shall not call itself mine!" Thereupon Intaphernes with the army marched off to Babylon. Ahuramazda bore me aid; by the favor of Ahuramazda Intaphernes smote the Babylonians and led them in bonds; of the month Varkazana 22 days were past -- then that Arkha who falsely called himself Nebuchadrezzar and the men who were his foremost followers he took prisoner. I issued an order: this Arkha and the men who were his foremost followers were impaled at Babylon.

51. (4.1-2.) Darius the King says: This is what was done by me in Babylon.

52. (4.2-31.) Darius the King says: This is what I did by the favor of Ahuramazda in one and the same year after that I became king. 19 battles I fought; by the favor of Ahuramazda I smote them and took prisoner 9 kings. One was named Gaumata, a Magian; lied and said, "I am Smerdis, the son of Cyrus;" he made Persia rebellious. One, named Asina, an Elamite; lied and said, "I am king in Elam;" he made Elam rebellious to me. One, named Nidintu-Bel, a Babylonian; lied and said, "I am Nebuchadrezzar, the son of Nabonidus; he made Babylon rebellious. One, named Martiya, a Persian; lied and said, "I am Imanish, king in Elam;" he made Elam rebellious. One, named Phraortes, a Mede; lied and said, "I am Khshathrita, of the family of Cyaxares;" he made Media rebellious. One named Cisantakhma, a Sagartian; lied and said, "I am king in Sagartia, of the family of Cyaxares;" he made Sagartia rebellious. One, named Frada, a Margian; lied and said, "I am king in Margiana;" he made Margiana rebellious. One, named Vahyazdata, a Persian; lied and said, "I am Smerdis, the son of Cyrus;" he made Persia rebellious. One, named Arkha, an Armenian; lied and said: "I am Nebuchadrezzar, the son of Nabonidus;" he made Babylon rebellious.

53. (4.31-2.) Darius the King says: These 9 kings I took prisoner within these battles.

54. (4.33-6.) Darius the King says: These are the provinces which became rebellious. The Lie (druj) made them rebellious, so that these (men) deceived the people. Afterwards Ahuramazda put them into my hand; as was my desire, so I did to them.

55. (4.36-40.). Darius the King says: You who shall be king hereafter, protect yourself vigorously from the Lie; the man who shall be a Lie-follower, him do you punish well, if thus you shall think, "May my country be secure!"

56. (4.40-3.) Darius the King says: This is what I did; by the favor of Ahuramazda, in one and the same year I did (it). You who shall hereafter read this inscription let that which has been done by me convince you; do not

think it a lie.

57. (4.13-5.) Darius the King says: I turn myself quickly to Ahuramazda, that this (is) true, not false, (which) I did in one and the same year.

58. (4.45-50.) Darius the King says: By the favor of Ahuramazda and of me much else was done; that has not been inscribed in this inscription; for this reason it has not been inscribed, lest whoso shall hereafter read this inscription, to him what has been done by me seem excessive, (and) it not convince him, (but) he think it false.

59. (4.50-2.) Darius the King says: Those who were the former kings, as long as they lived, by them was not done thus as by the favor of Ahuramazda was done by me in one and the same year.

60. (4.52-6.) Darius the King says: Now let that which has been done by me convince you; thus to the people impart, do not conceal it: if this record you shall not conceal, (but) tell it to the people, may Ahuramazda be a friend to you, and may family be to you in abundance, and may you live long!

61. (4.57-9.) Darius the King says: If this record you shall conceal, (and) not tell it to the people, may Ahuramazda be a smiter to you, and may family not be to you!

62. (4.59-61.) Darius the King says: This which I did, in one and the same year by the favor of Ahuramazda I did; Ahuramazda bore me aid, and the other gods who are.

63. (4.61-7.) Darius the King says: For this reason Ahuramazda bore aid, and the other gods who are, because I was not hostile, I was not a Lie-follower, I was not a doer of wrong -- neither I nor my family. According to righteousness I conducted myself. Neither to the weak nor to the powerful did I do wrong. The man who cooperated with my house, him I rewarded well; whoso did injury, him I punished well.

64. (4.67-9.) Darius the King says: You who shall be king hereafter, the man who shall be a Lie-follower or who shall be a doer of wrong -- to them do not be a friend, (but) punish them well.

65. (4.69-72.) Darius the King says: You who shall thereafter behold this inscription which I have inscribed, or these sculptures, do not destroy them, (but) thence onward protect them, as long as you shall be in good strength!

66. (4.72-6.) Darius the King says: If you shall behold this inscription or these sculptures, (and) shall not destroy them and shall protect them as long as to you there is strength, may Ahuramazda be a friend to you, and may family be to you in abundance, and may you live long, and what you shall do, that may Ahuramazda make successful for you!

67. (4.76-80.) Darius the King says: If you shall behold this inscription or these sculptures, (and) shall destroy them and shall not protect them as long as to you there is strength, may Ahuramazda be a smiter to you, and may family not be to you, and what you shall do, that for you may Ahuramazda utterly destroy!

68. (4.80-6.) Darius the King says: These are the men who were there at the time when I slew Gaumata the Magian who called himself Smerdis; at that time these men cooperated as my followers: Intaphernes by name, son of Vayaspara, a Persian; Otanes by name, son of Thukhra, a Persian; Gobryas by name, son of Mardonius, a Persian; Hydarnes by name, son of Bagabigna, a Persian; Megabyzus by name, son of Datuvahya, a Persian; Ardumanish by name, son of Vahauka, a Persian.

69. (4.86-8.) Darius the King says: You who shall be king hereafter, protect well the family of these men.

70. (4.88-92.) Darius the King says: By the favor of Ahuramazda this is the inscription which I made. Besides, it was in Aryan, and on clay tablets and on parchment it was composed. Besides, a sculptured figure of myself I made. Besides, I made my lineage. And it was inscribed and was read off before me. Afterwards this inscription I sent off everywhere among the provinces. The people unitedly worked upon it.

71. (5.1-14.) Darius the King says: This is what I did in both the second and the third year after I became king. A province named Elam became rebellious. One man named Atamaita, an Elamite -- they made him chief. Thereupon I sent forth an army. One man named Gobryas, a Persian, my subject -- I made him chief of them. After that, Gobryas with the army marched off to Elam; he joined battle with the Elamites. Thereupon Gobryas smote and crushed the Elamites, and captured the chief of them; he led him to me, and I killed him. After that the province became mine.

72. (5.14-7.) Darius the King says: Those Elamites were faithless and by them Ahuramazda was not worshipped. I worshipped Ahuramazda; by the favor of Ahuramazda, as was my desire, thus I did to them.

73. (5.18-20.) Darius the King says: Whoso shall worship Ahuramazda, divine blessing will be upon him, both (while) living and (when) dead.

74. (5.20-30.) Darius the King says: Afterwards with an army I went off to Scythia, after the Scythians who wear the pointed cap. These Scythians went from me. When I arrived at the sea, beyond it then with all my army I crossed. Afterwards, I smote the Scythians exceedingly; another (leader) I took captive; this one was led bound to me, and I slew him. The chief of them, by name Skunkha -- him they seized and led to me. Then I made another their chief, as was my desire. After that, the province became mine.

75. (5.30-3.) Darius the King says: Those Scythians... (= DB 5.15-7).

76. (5.33-6.) . . . (= DB 5.18-20).

Other Persian Inscriptions.

Ariaramnes at Hamadan.

Slightly incomplete text on gold tablet.

1. (1-4). Ariaramnes, the Great King, King of Kings, King in Persia, son of Teispes the King, grandson of Achaemenes.

2. (4-9). Ariaramnes the King says: This country Persia which I hold, which is possessed of good horses, of good men, the Great God Ahuramazda bestowed it upon me. By the favor of Ahuramazda I am king in this country.

3. (9-11). Ariaramnes the King says: May Ahuramazda bear me aid.

Arsames at Hamadan.

OP text on gold tablet, lower right corner missing.

1. (1-4). Arsames, the Great King, King of Kings, King (in) Persia, son (of) Ariaramnes the King, an Achaemenian.

2. (5-14). Arsames the King says: Ahuramazda, great god, the greatest of gods, made me king. He bestowed on me the land Persia, with good people, with good horses. By the favor of Ahuramazda I hold this land. May Ahuramazda protect me, and my royal house, and may he protect this land which I hold.

DARIUS, PERSEPOLIS D. (DPd)

OP only on south retaining wall of palace.

1. (1-5.) Great Ahuramazda, the greatest of gods -- he created Darius the King, he bestowed on him the kingdom; by the favor of Ahuramazda Darius is King.

2. (5-12.) Darius the King says: This country Persia which Ahuramazda bestowed upon me, good, possessed of good horses, possessed of good men -- by the favor of Ahuramazda and of me, Darius the King, does not feel fear of (any) other.

3. (12-24.) Darius the King says: May Ahuramazda bear me aid, with the gods of the royal house; and may Ahuramazda protect this country from a (hostile) army, from famine, from the Lie! Upon this country may there not come an army, nor famine, nor the Lie; this I pray as a boon from Ahuramazda together with the gods of the royal house. This boon may Ahuramazda together with the gods of the royal house give to me!

DARIUS, PERSEPOLIS E. (DPe)

OP only on south retaining wall of palace.

1. (1-5.) I am Darius the Great King, King of Kings, King of many countries, son of Hystaspes, an Achaemenian.

2. (5-18.) Darius the King says: By the favor of Ahuramazda these are the countries which I got into my possession along with this Persian folk, which felt fear of me (and) bore me tribute: Elam, Media, Babylonia, Arabia, Assyria, Egypt, Armenia, Cappadocia, Sardis, Ionians who are of the mainland and (those) who are by

the sea, and countries which are across the sea; Sagartia, Parthia, Drangiana, Aria, Bactria, Sogdiana, Chorasmia, Sattagydia, Arachosia, Sind, Gandara, Seythians, Maka.

3. (18-24.) Darius the King says: If you shall think thus, "May I not feel fear of (any) other," protect this Persian people; if the Persian people shall be protected, thereafter for the longest while happiness unbroken -- this will by Ahura come down upon this royal house.

DARIUS, PERSEPOLIS H. (DPh)

Trilingual on gold and silver plates.

1. (1-3.) Darius the Great King, King of Kings, King of countries, son of Hystaspes, an Achaemenian.
2. (3-10.) Darius the King says: This is the kingdom which I hold, from the Scythians who are beyond Sogdiana, thence to Ethiopia; from Sind thence to Sardis -- which Ahuramazda the greatest of the gods bestowed upon me. May Ahuramazda protect me, and my royal house.

THE INSCRIPTIONS OF NAQSH-I-RUSTAM.

Inscriptions on south face of steep ridge north of Persepolis

1. (1-8.) A great god is Ahuramazda, who created this earth, who created yonder sky, who created man, who created happiness for man, who made Darius king, one king of many, one lord of many.
2. (8-15.) I am Darius the Great King, King of Kings, King of countries containing all kinds of men, King in this great earth far and wide, son of Hystaspes, an Achaemenian, a Persian, son of a Persian, an Aryan, having Aryan lineage.
3. (15-30.) Darius the King says: By the favor of Ahuramazda these are the countries which I seized outside of Persia; I ruled over them; they bore tribute to me; what was said to them by me, that they did; my law -- that held them firm; Media, Elam, Parthia, Aria, Bactria, Sogdiana, Chorasmia, Drangiana, Arachosia, Sattagydia, Gandara, Sind, Amyrgian Scythians, Scythians with pointed caps, Babylonia, Assyria, Arabia, Egypt, Armenia, Cappadocia, Sardis, Ionia, Scythians who are across the sea, Skudra, petasos-wearing Ionians, Libyans, Ethiopians, men of Maka, Carians.
4. (30-47.) Darius the King says: Ahuramazda, when he saw this earth in commotion, thereafter bestowed it upon me, made me king; I am king. By the favor of Ahuramazda I put it down in its place; what I said to them, that they did, as was my desire. If now you shall think that "How many are the countries which King Darius held?" look at the sculptures (of those) who bear the throne, then shall you know, then shall it become known to you: the spear of a Persian man has gone forth far; then shall it become known to you: a Persian man has delivered battle far indeed from Persia.
5. (47-55.) Darius the King says: This which has been done, all that by the will of Ahuramazda I did. Ahuramazda bore me aid, until I did the work. May Ahuramazda protect me from harm, and my royal house, and this land: this I pray of Ahuramazda, this may Ahuramazda give to me!
6. (56-60.) O man, that which is the command of Ahuramazda, let this not seem repugnant to you; do not leave the right path; do not rise in rebellion!

DARIUS, NAQSH-I-RUSTAM B. (DNb)

7. (1-5.) A great god is Ahuramazda, who created this excellent work which is seen, who created happiness for man, who bestowed wisdom and activity upon Darius the King.
- 8a. (5-11.) Darius the King says: By the favor of Ahuramazda I am of such a sort that I am a friend to right, I am not a friend to wrong. It is not my desire that the weak man should have wrong done to him by the mighty; nor is that my desire, that the mighty man should have wrong done to him by the weak.
- 8b. (11-5.) What is right, that is my desire. I am not a friend to the man who is a Lie-follower. I am not hot-tempered. What things develop in my anger, I hold firmly under control by my thinking power. I am firmly ruling over my own (impulses).
- 8c. (16-21.) The man who cooperates, him according to his cooperative action, him thus do I reward. Who does

harm, him according to the damage thus I punish. It is not my desire that a man should do harm; nor indeed is that my desire, if he should do harm, he should not be punished.

8d. (21-4.) What a man says against a man, that does not convince me, until he satisfies the Ordinance of Good Regulations.

8e. (24-7.) What a man does or performs (for me) according to his (natural) powers, (therewith) I am satisfied, and my pleasure is abundant, and I am well satisfied.

8f. (27-31.) Of such a sort is my understanding and my command: when what has been done by me you shall see or hear of, both in the palace and in the warcamp, this is my activity over and above my thinking power and my understanding.

8g. (31-40.) This indeed is my activity: inasmuch as my body has the strength, as battle-fighter I am a good battle fighter. Once let there be seen with understanding in the place (of battle), what I see (to be) rebellious, what I see (to be) not (rebellious); both with understanding and with command then am I first to think with action, when I see a rebel as well as when I see a not-(rebel).

8h. (40-45.) Trained am I both with hands and with feet. As a horseman I am a good horseman. As a Bowman I am a good Bowman both afoot and on horseback. As a spearman I am a good spear-man both afoot and on horseback.

8i. (45-9.) And the (physical) skillfulnesses which Ahuramazda has bestowed upon me and I have had the strength to use them -- by the favor of Ahuramazda what has been done by me, I have done with these skillfulnesses which Ahuramazda has bestowed upon me.

9a. (50-5.) O menial, vigorously make you known of what sort I am, and of what sort my skillfulnesses, and of what sort my superiority. Let not that seem false to you, which has been heard by thy ears. That do you hear, which is communicated to you.

9b. (55-60.) O menial, let that not be made (to seem) false to you, which has been done by me. That do you behold, which [has been inscribed]. Let not the laws [be disobeyed] by you. Let not [anyone] be untrained [in obedience]. [O menial], let not the king (feel himself obliged to) inflict punishment (?) [for wrong-doing (?) on the dwellers (in the land) (?)].

DARIUS, SUSA E. (DSe)

10 OP fragments representing several copies.

1. (1-7.) ... (= DNa 1-8).

2. (7-14.) ... (= DNa 8-15).

3. (14-30.) ... (= DNa 15-24), men of Maka, ... (= DNa 24-8), Ionians, (those) who are by the sea and (those) who are across the sea, Skudra, Libyans, Ethiopians, Carians.

4. (30-41.) Darius the King says: Much which was ill-done, that I made good. Provinces were in commotion; one man was smiting the other. The following I brought about by the favor of Ahuramazda, that the one does not smite the other at all, each one is in his place. My law -- of that they feel fear, so that the stronger does not smite nor destroy the weak.

5. (41-9.) Darius the King says: By the favor of Ahuramazda, much handiwork which previously had been put out of its place, that I put in its place. A town named ..., (its) wall fallen from age, before this unrepaired -- I built another wall (to serve) from that time into the future.

6. (49-52.) Darius the King says: May Ahuramazda together with the gods protect me, and my royal house, and what has been inscribed by me.

DARIUS, SUSA F. (DSf)

Fragments of many copies on clay and marble tablets, and on glazed tiles of the frieze of the great hall.

1. (1-5.) ... (= DNa 1-8).

2. (5-8.) ... (= DSd 1-2).

3a. (8-12.) Darius the King says: Ahuramazda, the greatest of the gods -- he created me; he made me king; he bestowed upon me this kingdom, great, possessed of good horses, possessed of good men.

3h. (12-5.) By the favor of Ahuramazda my father Hystaspes and Arsames my grandfather -- these both were living when Ahuramazda made me king in this earth.

3c. (15-8.) To Ahuramazda thus was the desire: he chose me as (his) man in all the earth; he made me king in all the earth.

3d. (18-22.) I worshipped Ahuramazda. Ahuramazda bore me aid. What was by me commanded to do, that he made successful for me. What I did, all by the favor of Ahuramazda I did.

3e. (22-7.) This palace which I built at Susa, from afar its ornamentation was brought. Downward the earth was dug, until I reached rock in the earth. When the excavation had been made, then rubble was packed down, some 40 cubits in depth, another (part) 20 cubits in depth. On that rubble the palace was constructed.

3f. (28-30.) And that the earth was dug downward, and that the rubble was packed down, and that the sun-dried brick was molded, the Babylonian people -- it did (these tasks).

3g. (30-5.) The cedar timber, this -- a mountain named Lebanon -- from there was brought. The Assyrian people, it brought it to Babylon; from Babylon the Carians and the Ionians brought it to Susa. The yakâ-timber was brought from Gandara and from Carmania.

3h. (35-40.) The gold was brought from Sardis and from Bactria, which here was wrought. The precious stone lapis lazuli and carnelian which was wrought here, this was brought from Sogdiana. The precious stone turquoise, this was brought from Chorasmia, which was wrought here.

3i. (40-5.) The silver and the ebony were brought from Egypt. The ornamentation with which the wall was adorned, that from Ionia was brought. The ivory which was wrought here, was brought from Ethiopia and from Sind and from Arachosia.

3j. (45-9.) The stone columns which were here wrought, a village named Abiradu, in Elam -- from there were brought. The stone-cutters who wrought the stone, those were Ionians and Sardians.

3k. (49-55.) The goldsmiths who wrought the gold, those were Medes and Egyptians. The men who wrought the wood, those were Sardians and Egyptians. The men who wrought the baked brick, those were Babylonians. The men who adorned the wall, those were Medes and Egyptians.

4. (55-8.) Darius the King says: At Susa a very excellent (work) was ordered, a very excellent (work) was (brought to completion). Me may Ahuramazda protect, and Hystaspes my father, and my country.

DARIUS, SUEZ C. (DZc)

1. (1-4.) ... (= DNa 1-6, with one change of order); who upon Darius the King ... (= Dsf 11-2).

2. (4-7.) ... (=Dna 8-13).

3. (7-12.) Darius the King says: I am a Persian; from Persia I seized Egypt; I gave order to dig this canal from a river named Nile which flows in Egypt, to the sea which goes from Persia. Afterward this canal was dug thus as I had ordered, and ships went from Egypt through this canal to Persia thus as was my desire.

XERXES, PERSEPOLIS H. (XPh)

The Daiva Inscription: Trilingual, on stone tablets, 2 copies.

1. (1-6.) ... (= XPa 1-6).

2. (6-13.) ... (=XPa 6-11, DNa 13-5).

3. (13-28.) Xerxes the King says: By the favor of Ahuramazda these are the countries of which I was king ... (= DNa 18-22); Media, Elam, Arachosia, Armenia, Drangiana, Parthia, Aria, Bactria, Sogdiana, Chorasmia, Babylonia, Assyria, Sattagydia, Sardis, Egypt, Ionians, those who dwell by the sea and those who dwell across the sea, men of Maka, Arabia, Gandara, Sind, Cappadocia, Dahae, Amyrgian Scythians, Pointed-Cap Scythians,

Skudra, men of Akaufaka, Libyans, Carians, Ethiopians.

4a. (28-35.) Xerxes the King says: When that I became king, there is among these countries which are inscribed above (one which) was in commotion. Afterwards Ahuramazda bore me aid; by the favor of Ahuramazda I smote that country and put it down in its place.

4b. (35-41.) And among these countries there was (a place) where previously false gods [[Daevas]] were worshipped. Afterwards, by the favor of Ahuramazda, I destroyed that sanctuary of the demons, and I made proclamation, "The demons shall not be worshipped!" Where previously the demons were worshipped, there I worshipped Ahuramazda and Arta [[Asha]] reverent(ly).

4c. (41-6.) And there was other (business) that had been done ill; that I made good. That which I did, all I did by the favor of Ahuramazda. Ahuramazda bore me aid, until I completed the work.

4d. (46-56.) Thou who (shall be) hereafter, if you shall think, "Happy may I be when living, and when dead may I be blessed," have respect for that law which Ahuramazda has established; worship Ahuramazda and Arta reverent(ly). The man who has respect for that law which Ahuramazda has established, and worships Ahuramazda and Arta reverent(ly), he both becomes happy while living, and becomes blessed when dead.

5. (56-60.) Xerxes the King says: ... (= DNa 51-5).

ARTAXERXES II, SUSA A. (A2Sa)

Trilingual on bases of 4 columns.

Artaxerxes the Great King, King of Kings, King of Countries, King in this earth, son of Darius the King, of Darius (who was) son of Artaxerxes the King, of Artaxerxes (who was) son of Xerxes the King, of Xerxes (who was) son of Darius the King, of Darius (who was) son of Hystaspes, an Achaemenian, says: This palace Darius my great-great-grandfather built; later under Artaxerxes my grandfather it was burned; by the favor of Ahuramazda, Anahita, and Mithra, this palace I built. May Ahuramazda, Anahita, and Mithra protect me from all evil, and that which I have built may they not shatter nor harm.

- 1 The inscription
- 2 Depiction in history
- 3 Translation efforts
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- 6 References
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Successive work by Georg Friedrich Grotefend, Henry Rawlinson, and others resulted in translation of the text by the mid-nineteenth century. Their efforts enabled many other cuneiform texts, preserved but undeciphered for centuries, to be translated, revealing much about the most ancient civilizations of human history. This is a significant step in the advancement of human knowledge and the understanding of ourselves and our past, and serves as an essential foundation for a better future.

The inscription

The text of the inscription is a statement by Darius I of Persia, written three times in three different scripts and languages: two languages side by side, Old Persian and Elamite, and Babylonian above them. The inscription described his accession in the face of the usurper Smerdis of Persia, and Darius' subsequent successful wars and suppressions of rebellion. Darius ruled the Persian Empire from 521 B.C.E. to 486 B.C.E., and some time around 515 B.C.E., he arranged for the inscription to be made. It was inscribed on a cliff near the modern town of Bisistun, in the foothills of the Zagros Mountains of Iran, just as one reaches them from the Kermanshah Plain.

Modern day picture of the inscription.

The inscription is approximately 15 meters high by 25 meters wide, and 100 meters up a limestone cliff from an ancient road connecting the capitals of Babylonia and Media (Babylon and Ecbatana). The site itself is extremely inaccessible, as the mountainside was removed to make the inscription more visible after its completion.

The Old Persian text contains 414 lines in five columns; the Elamite text includes 593 lines in eight columns and the Babylonian text is in 112 lines. The inscription was illustrated by a life-sized bas-relief of Darius, holding a bow as a sign of kingship, with his left foot on the chest of a figure lying on his back before him. The prostrate figure is reputed to be the pretender Gaumata. Darius is attended to the left by two servants, and ten one-meter figures stand to the right, with hands tied and rope around their necks, representing conquered peoples. Faravahar floats above, giving his blessing to the king. One figure appears to have been added after the others were completed, as was (oddly enough) Darius' beard, which is a separate block of stone attached with iron pins and lead.

It is believed that Darius placed the inscription in an inaccessible position to make it tamper-resistant. Readability took second place to this demand: The text is completely illegible from ground level. The Persian king did not account for the creation of a pool of water at the bottom of the cliff, which brought increased human traffic to the area, leading to considerable damage being caused to some of the figures.

Depiction in history

The first historical mention of the inscription is by the Greek Ctesias of Cnidus, who noted its existence some time around 400 B.C.E., and mentions a well and a garden beneath the inscription dedicated by Queen Semiramis of Babylon to Zeus (the Greek analogue of Ahura Mazda). Tacitus also mentions it and includes a description of some of the long-lost ancillary monuments at the base of the cliff, including an altar to Hercules. What has been recovered of them, including a statue dedicated in 148 B.C.E., is consistent with Tacitus' description. Diodorus also writes of "Bagistanon" and claims it was inscribed by Queen Semiramis.

After the fall of the Persian Empire and its successors, and the loss of cuneiform writing, the nature of the inscription was forgotten and fanciful origins became the norm. For centuries, instead of being attributed to Darius—one of the first Persian kings—it was believed to be from the reign of Chosroes II of Persia—one of the last.

The transcription kept its wondrous aura, however, and a legend arose found in the book of Chosroes and Shirin that states that Farhad, a lover of Chosroes' wife, Shirin, was the one who moved half the mountain away as this was part of his punishment for his transgression. He died, but was also credited with being the source of a tree with fruit that will cure the sick. It is unknown, however, if anyone has been cured in the pool at the inscription.

Column 1 (DB I 1-15), sketch by Friedrich von Spiegel (1881)

The inscription was noted by an Arab traveler, Ibn Hawqal, in the mid-900s, who interpreted the figures as a teacher punishing his pupils. It was not until 1598, when the Englishman Robert Sherley saw the inscription during a diplomatic mission to Persia on behalf of Austria, that the inscription first came to the attention of western European scholars. His party came to the conclusion that it was a picture of the ascension of Jesus with an inscription in Greek.

Biblical misinterpretations by Europeans were rife for the next two centuries. French General Gardanne thought it showed Christ and his twelve apostles, and Sir Robert Ker Porter thought it represented the twelve tribes of Israel and Shalmaneser of Assyria.

Translation efforts

Italian explorer Pietro della Valle visited the inscription in the course of a pilgrimage around 1621, and German surveyor Carsten Niebuhr visited it around 1764, while exploring Arabia and the middle east for Frederick V of Denmark, publishing a copy of the inscription in the account of his journeys in 1777. Niebuhr's transcriptions were used by Georg Friedrich Grotefend and others in their efforts to decipher the Old Persian cuneiform script. Grotefend had deciphered ten of the 37 symbols of Old Persian by 1802.

Transcription of a part of the Behistun inscription

In 1835, Sir Henry Rawlinson, a British army officer training the army of the Shah of Iran, began studying the

inscription in earnest. As the town of Bisistun's name was anglicized as "Behistun" at this time, the monument became known as the "Behistun Inscription." Despite its inaccessibility, Rawlinson was able to scale the cliff and copy the Old Persian inscription. The Elamite was across a chasm, and the Babylonian four meters above; both were beyond easy reach and were left for later.

Armed with the Persian text, and with about a third of the syllabary made available to him by the work of Grotefend, Rawlinson set to work on deciphering the text. Fortunately, the first section of this text contained a list of Persian kings identical to that found in Herodotus, and by matching the names and the characters, Rawlinson was able to crack the form of cuneiform used for Old Persian by 1838, and present his results to the Royal Asiatic Society in London and the Société Asiatique in Paris.

Next came the remaining two texts. After a stretch of service in Afghanistan, Rawlinson returned in 1843. Using planks he crossed the gap between the Old Persian text and the Elamite, and copied the Elamite text. He was then able to find an enterprising local boy to climb up a crack in the cliff and rig ropes across the Babylonian writing, so that papier-mâché casts of it could be taken. Rawlinson set to work and translated the Babylonian writing and language, working independently of Edward Hincks, Julius Oppert and William Henry Fox Talbot, who also contributed to the decipherment; Edwin Norris and others were the first to do the same for the Elamite. As three of the primary languages of Mesopotamia, and three variations of the cuneiform script, these decipherments were one of the keys to putting Assyriology on a modern footing.

Translation

The monument tells of the ancient glory of Persia when she was the supreme power in the world, before Darius was defeated by the Greeks in 490 B.C.E. at Marathon.

The English translation of the text begins with the genealogy of Darius, traced direct to Achaemenes, and then refers to the reign of Cambyses, who had preceded Darius, the murder of Smerdis (the brother of Cambyses), and the revolt of the Persians during the absence of Cambyses on his campaign in Egypt. At this moment, Gaumata, also called "the great pretender" and the Magian, seized his opportunity. He declared himself to be Smerdis, the son of Cyrus, with a claim to the throne. Cambyses hastened homeward, but died on the way, and Gaumata, as the Babylonian contract tablets show, held sway for a brief period.

It was Darius, the son of Hystaspes, who challenged the usurper, and with a small force, slew him and took the throne. Revolts broke out in many of the provinces, and the first years of Darius were spent in subduing them. Nidintu-Bel seized Babylon, claiming to be Nebuchadnezzar; Martiya headed a revolution in Susiana: In Media, Phraortes gave himself out to be Khshathritha, of the family of Cyaxares, and led another revolt. These were all dealt with successfully, and all these unfortunate "pretenders" are to be seen on the sculptured panel above the inscription. The king stands with his arm raised and his foot on Gaumata; behind him are his generals or satraps. Before him, roped one to another, come the recalcitrant chiefs in the following order: Atrina, the first Susian pretender; Nidintu-Bel, of Babylon; Fravartish (Phraortes), of Media; Martiza, the second Susian pretender; Citrantakhma, of Sagartia; Vahyazdata, the second pseudo-Smerdis; Arakha, the second Babylonian pretender; Frada, of Margiana; and afterwards, even though it destroyed part of the Susian inscription, Skunkha, the Scythian, in his high peaked hat was added.

Later work

Later expeditions, in 1904, sponsored by the British Museum and led by Leonard William King and Reginald Campbell Thompson and in 1948, by George G. Cameron of the University of Michigan, obtained photographs, casts, and more accurate transcriptions of the texts, including passages that were not copied by Rawlinson. It also became apparent that rainwater had dissolved some areas of the limestone in which the text is inscribed, while leaving new deposits of limestone over other areas, covering the text.

The monument suffered some damage from soldiers using it for target practice during World War II. Later, Iranian archaeologists began undertaking conservation works. The site became a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2006.

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