

Commentary on Daniel

By

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Author's Introduction

Daniel

As we begin this study I want you to notice the title—“Outline of the book of Daniel the Prophet.” I call attention to the name given to Daniel, because it was given to him by our Lord Jesus Himself in **Matthew 24:15** and in **Mark 13:14**. There we find Him warning His disciples concerning the setting up of “the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the *prophet*”(italics added).

Some critics deny that there was a prophet Daniel. They declare that it is utterly impossible to believe that Daniel lived in the days of Nebuchadnezzar, Darius, and Cyrus, and yet wrote a book which told of all these world empires before any of them, except the first two, had come into existence. Daniel, these learned teachers tell us, was simply a romancer who lived over 200 years later and wrote his so-called prophecies after they had all become history.

As a simple believer, I owe everything for eternity to what the blessed Christ of God accomplished on Calvary's cross. I prefer to accept His testimony, even if it is in opposition to all the wise men of the day. He declared that Daniel was a prophet. He did not speak of Daniel the historian, Daniel the romancer, or Daniel the novelist but Daniel the *prophet*—Daniel the man who had enlightenment by the Spirit of God. Therefore he could speak of the things that were not as though they were. I stand for the full inspiration of all the reputed Word of God, and therefore, of the book of Daniel.

The first chapter of Daniel is introductory, and does not itself have a prophetic character. It pictures, for our instruction, the moral condition needed to understand divine ways and counsels. It emphasizes the need of holiness as a prerequisite to growth in the truth.

Chapters 2-9 are each complete in themselves, giving either actual prophetic instruction or symbolic lessons of a prophetic character. As will be readily observed, all culminate in "the time of the end."

The meaning of this last expression will be made clear by noting the parenthetical period in God's divine plan. It is indicated by the broad space between the two horizontal lines running across the chart, near the center. Everything noted or pictured above the upper horizontal line represents fulfilled prophecy or history already accomplished. The line itself (see the column headed "Chapter 9") is coincident with the cross of Christ. Below the second line we have the "time of the end." This second line represents the close of the present "church-period" at the rapture of the saints or the Lord's coming to the air. Between the two horizontal lines, we have the whole gospel age, or dispensation of the grace of God. During this time He has been pleased to make known the revelation of the mystery of Christ and the church. This mystery was not made known until the rejection and ascension of Christ, followed by the descent of the Holy Spirit to baptize believing Jews and Gentiles into one body. Thus a heavenly people were secured for the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ; they will share His throne as the bride of His heart in the coming age and through eternity.

Now all this was still hidden in the days of Daniel. If the chart were folded so that these two horizontal lines touched, the parenthetical period would be hidden, as was

the mystery in Old Testament times. With this period covered, we have an outline of what was revealed to Daniel. The great image is then seen to be apparently continuous; the ten-horned condition of the beast of chapter 7 immediately follows its first rising up.

Chapters 10-12 form one prophecy. The division into past and future occurs between verses 35 and 36 of chapter 11.

Daniel said very little about Christ's kingdom, as his special theme was "the times of the Gentiles"; but chapters 2, 7, and 12 lead us up to this kingdom, although there is little detail regarding it.

May God be pleased to use this little book to stir up His own people to greater devotion to Himself, a more ardent longing for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together unto Him, and to the arousing of any who are still in their sins.

Chapter One The Key To Spiritual Discernment

Daniel

Henry Allen Ironside

The first chapter of the book of Daniel, as noted on the chart, is introductory. It sets forth the appropriate moral condition of one who desires to be enlightened in the ways and counsels of God. In it we read of a little company of faithful men maintaining a state of separation to God from evil. They remained faithful in a day when everything seemed to be against them, and it appeared as though there was none on earth to whom they could turn for help. These four devoted young men—Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah—set themselves against all the evil of the kingdom of Babylon. They refused to defile themselves; these were the men to whom God could communicate His mind. I believe it is important to dwell on this because in our own day much prophetic study has been taken up by very unspiritual persons. If we are going to get the mind of God in studying the book of Daniel, we must remember that it consists of revelations, deliverances, and visions given to a spiritually-minded man who was separated from the iniquity of his day. If we are to understand it, we also need to be spiritually minded; we need to walk apart from all that is unholy, all that would hinder progress in divine things. We need to remember the words, “Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward” (**2 John 8**).

The truth of God is learned through the conscience; this is why the most brilliant men can read the Bible through

over and over and never hear the voice of God in it at all. It has been said that “what is one man’s meat is another man’s poison.” The very Word of God may become poison to an unspiritual man if he reads it without being in subjection to God—reads it to find difficulties—and arises from its perusal more confirmed in his unbelief than he was when he sat down to consider it. The results are different when the same book is put into the hands of a spiritually-minded person—one who has bowed in God’s presence, acknowledged his lost condition, trusted the Lord Jesus Christ as his Savior, and who is now seeking to live in obedience to God and His Word. That man sits down to the same book and finds it to be food for his soul, building him up in his faith.

If you want enlightenment in divine things, see to it that you walk in the power of an ungrieved Spirit; for “the secret of the Lord is with them that fear him” (**Psalm 25:14**).

In **Daniel 1:1-2** we find the fulfillment of what God had previously declared (through Isaiah, Jeremiah, and other prophets) would soon take place. For years Jehovah had been sending prophets to the backsliding kings of Judah, warning them that the day of His patience had almost run out. Even though Israel had been His chosen people, because of their sin He was going to give them over to the power of their enemies, and the land of Palestine was to lie desolate. Singularly enough, God connects this with their failure to keep the sabbatical year. He had told them when they came into the land that every seventh year must be His. For 490 years they had not kept one sabbatical year. They doubtless thought they would do better by tilling the land annually and that they would be richer as a result of following their own way. God had told them that if they gave every seventh year to Him they would have

abundance in the sixth year to last them until harvest in the eighth year (**Leviticus 25**). They evidently did not believe Him and thought to better themselves by their own efforts. Thus, through covetousness—a sin that is eating away at many of God’s professed people today—the word of the Lord was ignored and His commandment broken.

For 490 years God seemed to be indifferent to this disobedience on their part. He appeared to wink at their sin, but He had taken account of it all. When they thought His law was dead, He sent Jeremiah to tell them that now they must go down to Babylon as captives for seventy years, while the land kept sabbath! They imagined they had cheated God out of seventy years, but He squared the account by giving them into the power of Nebuchadnezzar, king of the Chaldeans, who carried them away to the land of Shinar. They remained there until the seventy years had expired, while the lost sabbaths were being made up.

It is a very common thing for men to forget the claims of God and to suppose that He will never assert Himself. Even saints have been known to fail in this respect. But no one ever prospered who ignored the authority of Jehovah; none can prosper now who forget the obedience due as children to a Father and as redeemed ones to Him who is not only Savior, but Lord. In the world, and even in the church today, we hear a great deal about the rights of the people. But there is One whose rights we do not hear emphasized as often as we should: our Lord Jesus Christ. Men of the world are utterly indifferent to His rights, and saints are only too apt to fall in with the spirit of the times. But a day is fast approaching when God is going to square the account. Men may not be concerned now about what is due to Him, but the day is coming when He is going to awake from His seeming slumber, as He tells us in **Psalms 50**. Then their proud, haughty knees will have to bow, and

their tongues confess that Jesus Christ is Lord of all, to the glory of God the Father, when the once-rejected Savior demonstrates His authority and power. Judah ignored God's rights, and as a result they were sent down to Babylon.

But there was a second and greater reason why God chose to give His heritage over to the power of the Chaldeans. For centuries idolatry had been gaining ground among the Israelites. They had turned away from the living and true God to serve the false gods of the heathen. Babylon was the home of idolatry, so the Jews were sent there so they might learn to loathe the idols they had loved. And we find the lesson was well impressed. Ever since the captivity the Jewish nation, whatever its other sins, has been free from this great evil. Unhappily they are like an empty, swept house, from which the evil spirit of idolatry has been driven. But they refused Messiah when He came in lowly grace, so in the near future a host of wicked spirits will enter the empty house, and the Jews, except a preserved and delivered remnant, will own and worship the "man of sin."

The four youths already mentioned were distinguished among the rest of their captive brethren. They were taken by the king's orders to be trained to administer in state affairs and fitted for positions of trust and confidence. Their names each contain some form of the name of God in Hebrew and indicate their pious ancestry; for in Scripture, names have meanings that often help greatly in elucidating the Holy Spirit's mind on a given subject.

All these young men were devoted to Jehovah, as their names imply. But that did not suit the prince of the eunuchs, into whose charge they were given, so he gave them new names that indicated their subjection to the

Chaldeans. He called Daniel, Belteshazzar and the others, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. These names contain the titles of heathen deities, as though this would force them to be subjects of senseless idols. But these men, although labeled as servants to heathen gods, stood firmly for the God of Israel. They refused to dishonor Him by compliance with a demand that would have rendered them unclean before Him.

The test came. These young men were to eat of the king's meat, which was dedicated to idols and thus abhorrent and defiling to a godly Jew. But the king had given his orders, and it might have seemed as though these Hebrews had no choice in the matter. Many would have argued in this way and said there was no individual responsibility in such a case. Nebuchadnezzar's authority was derived from God. They had only to obey since the Lord Himself had put them under Nebuchadnezzar's power. But Daniel and his young companions did not view it this way. They looked on the king's command as a trial of their faith. Would they keep themselves from the unclean in the land of the idolater? Would they be just as particular about being true to God as if they were in their own land? Would they honor His Word and glorify Him by being subject to that Word, though captives in the country of the oppressor?

They stood the test in a most marked way, as did the apostles in a later day, who said, "We ought to obey God rather than men" (**Acts 5:29**). Daniel asked Melzar, the master of the eunuchs, to give them pulse—vegetables—to eat. Fearing an adverse result on their physical conditions he objected, fearing the king's wrath. But the devoted young men pleaded for an opportunity to prove whether they would not thrive as well on pulse as the rest of the company did on the king's meat. Melzar consented, and

the test showed that at the end of ten days Daniel and his three friends were fatter and fairer than any who were fed with the regulation diet. Therefore, permission was given to continue the same fare; thus they were able to maintain a position of separation from the unclean, even in the very home of idolatry.

All this might have seemed a very trivial matter to many of the Jews. Some who read the account in our day may also consider it all a mere quibble on the part of Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah. But it brings out a principle of great force and beauty that should appeal to every Christian's heart and conscience. The only way to grow in the Lord is by being faithful in little things. He who honors the Lord by conscientious adherence to His Word in what some would call minor details is likely to be exercised about greater things.

I have heard Christians refer to certain precepts in the Scriptures as non-essentials. But we may rest assured there are no non-essentials in our Bibles. "The words of the Lord are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times" (**Psalm 12:6**). When people talk of non-essentials in regard to anything in God's Word, it is well to ask, "Essential or non-essential to what?" Regarding the soul's salvation, undoubtedly the one great essential is faith in His blessed Son; His finished work alone avails to put away sin and procure peace with God. But if it is a question of what is essential to the enjoyment of communion with God—essential to obtaining the Lord's approval at the judgment seat of Christ—then it is well to remember that in everything the believer is sanctified to the obedience of Christ. We should seek to imitate Daniel, who had "purposed in his heart" (**Daniel 1:8**) that he would not defile himself. Paul and Barnabas urged the early Christians "that with purpose of heart they would

cleave unto the Lord” (**Acts 11:23**). This is the only way to be kept from defilement. Anything that defiles the conscience breaks the link of communion with God and hinders our advance in spiritual things. There can be no true progress if this inward monitor is not preserved. “Holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck” (**1 Timothy 1:19**) is a solemn word worthy of being carefully pondered.

These Hebrew young men were given spiritual enlightenment above all the men of their times because of their carefulness in maintaining a good conscience. They had an understanding in divine mysteries that others could not grasp because it remains true in all dispensations that spiritual things “are spiritually discerned” (**1 Corinthians 2:14**). God does not commonly impart His secrets to careless men, but to those who are devoted to His interests. He may, in His sovereignty, use even a Balaam or a Caiaphas to utter divine truth, but such cases are extraordinary. The rule is that “the secret of the Lord is with them that fear him” (**Psalms 25:14**).

It is of serious importance that we bear this principle in mind in these lukewarm Laodicean times. We live in days when everything that once was deemed important is perceived as a matter of indifference. The truth for which many martyrs shed their blood is considered hardly worth being contended for. These are days when the claims of God as set forth in His faithful Word are openly set aside even by those who profess to owe everything to the cross on which the Lord Jesus died. Latitudinarianism is the prevailing order, and few ask with intention to obey, “What saith the scripture?” (**Romans 4:3**) Is it any wonder that a host of false teachings is coming in like a flood, and thousands on every hand are being swept away from their

moorings?

Once good conscience—that is, a conscience controlled by the Word of God in all things—is put away, shipwreck of the faith is almost certain to follow. It is not a question of shipwreck of faith in Christ; but by putting away a good conscience people make shipwreck of *the* faith. The term *the faith* means “the faith of God’s elect” (**Titus 1:1**), the truth He has revealed. Concerning this Paul wrote, “Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience” (**1 Timothy 3:9**). It is the same as that spoken of by Jude, who wrote exhorting believers to “earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints” (**Jude 3**).

It is an axiom proven by experience and supported by Scripture that the only way we can advance in the truth is by maintaining a good conscience. Allow one unjudged thing—that which you know is contrary to the Word of God or is not in line with God’s will for you—to exist in your life and you will soon find your spiritual eyes become darkened; your spiritual susceptibilities will become deadened. No real progress will be made in your soul, but rather a steady decline. Instead there needs to be faithfulness in separation from that which is opposed to the mind of God. When His Word is allowed to sit in judgment on all your ways, you will learn that “the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day” (**Proverbs 4:18**). The Word will illumine each step before you as you take the one already pointed out.

It is written of these four young men that “God gave them knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom: and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams” (1:17). This reminds us of Joseph, who also entered into the secrets of the Lord and who was first characterized by

fidelity to God; God's smile, God's approbation, meant more to him than the approval of any human being. Just as Daniel came "into favour and tender love with the prince of the eunuchs" (9) so Joseph, exhibiting the godliness of his life and the transparency of his nature, came into favor with the keeper of the prison. To crown it all, we find God opening his understanding and giving him wisdom in the interpretation of dreams and visions, as here with Daniel.

What a lesson for us—that purity of heart and faithfulness to God come before enlightenment in divine mysteries! If you attempt to reverse these things, you need not be surprised if you fall into all kinds of error. If you try to put knowledge before heart-purity; if you try to put a grasp of scripture truth before conscientious living in the presence of God, you are almost certain to have a fearful fall awaiting you. The many who have failed in this area should be a warning to us.

Thus on the threshold of this book of types and prophecies we are given a serious reminder of the necessity of holiness. It reminds us that if we want to learn all that God has revealed in subsequent chapters of the book of Daniel we need first to stop and ask ourselves, "Am I personally right with God? Am I seeking to live so as to honor Him in all my ways?" I want to emphasize these solemn questions at the close of this chapter.

If you are out of Christ, I would affectionately remind you of the danger in which you stand. Later we will address the woes and sorrows that await this poor earth. Is it in this world that you have your *all*? You are building your hopes for happiness in a wasting scene! Many prophecies in this book of Daniel have now become history; many other portions will soon be fulfilled. Dear unsaved one, if

you continue in your sins until “the time of the end,”—without God and without hope—your sorrows, your anguish, your bitter woes will be more than tongue can tell. Think of what it will mean for the unsaved to live in this world after the Holy Ghost has been withdrawn; when Christendom has become completely apostate; when the Word of God is no longer preached; when the saints of God have been called home to Heaven; when antichrist’s power will be supreme; and when there will be a famine, not for bread or for water, but for the hearing of the words of the Lord! All this awaits you, and you may soon experience it, if you do not get right with God.

What if the Lord should not come in your day, and His judgments on this guilty world are in His grace deferred for awhile? You must still pass from this life and stand before His righteous throne and your own evil record; then it will be forever too late to find a Savior. Flee now to Him who invites the sinful, the weary, the thirsty, and the lost to find cleansing, rest, refreshment and salvation in Himself. He appeared once “to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself,” and He will soon “appear the second time without sin unto salvation” (**Hebrews 9:26-28**).

In view of all this, may we who are redeemed by His precious blood ever remember this word: “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service” (**Romans 12:1**). Thus we will stand, like Daniel and his friends, apart from the world’s defiling ways.

Chapter Two The Times Of The Gentiles

Daniel

Henry Allen Ironside

The second chapter of Daniel has well been called “the A-B-C of prophecy.” I suppose it contains the most complete, and yet the most simple, prophetic picture that we have in all the Word of God. It is in the form of a dream given to a heathen monarch. Nebuchadnezzar was at this time the ruler of the greater part of the known civilized world and of a great deal of that which was given over to barbarism. We speak of this as a world empire, though in one sense of the word, it was hardly that. There were tribes and nations beyond the outskirts of his dominions that were not subject to Nebuchadnezzar—those on the northern shores of the Mediterranean sea, for instance, and portions of southern Egypt and the regions beyond. But God had given him the title to rule over all nations. This authority was given to Nebuchadnezzar because of the rejection of Israel as God’s kingdom on earth. Had they been faithful to God, had they always been obedient to Him, royalty never would have departed from Judah. But because of their disobedience God gave their glory to the stranger, and dominion passed to the Gentiles in the person of Nebuchadnezzar. This was, in fact, the beginning of the distinctive period designated by the Lord Jesus in **Luke 21:24** as “the times of the Gentiles.” This period will continue until all derived power is overthrown and

Jesus shall reign where'er the sun
Doth his successive journeys run;
His kingdom spread from shore to shore,
Till moons shall wax and wane no more.

Isaac Watts

In the book of Jeremiah, as also in Kings and Chronicles, we read of Nebuchadnezzar coming up against the land of Palestine in the reign of King Jehoiakim. At the time of his first invasion Nebuchadnezzar was not the emperor; his father sat on the throne of the Babylonian dominion, and he was vice-king. But at the beginning of **Daniel 2** we read that he had been reigning alone for two years. The glory of God had departed from Jerusalem, and the people of Judah became captives in the land of Shinar: "By the rivers of Babylon, [they] sat down, yea, [they] wept, when [they] remembered Zion" (**Psalms 137:1**).

Now God was pleased to reveal an outline of His ways to this heathen monarch. We learn from Daniel's address to him that this great king had been concerned about what was coming on the earth. Look at the 29th verse: "As for thee, O king, thy thoughts came into thy mind upon thy bed, what should come to pass hereafter." Nothing could be more natural. Nebuchadnezzar was the most powerful monarch the world had ever known. As he lay on his bed that night, he began to ponder what would come to pass in the future. He knew he could not stay here forever. He would have to pass away as other potentates had done before him. What would follow? It was not unwise for him to consider these things.

All men should be more concerned about what the future has in store. The great business of today seems to be securing wealth and pleasure for the present life; most

people seem utterly indifferent about what is to come to pass afterward. God has not left us in ignorance as to the future. He has given us the prophetic word to shed light on what is to come. If people were willing to seriously read the Bible, in subjection to its holy author, they would find that in it the whole course of human events, right up to the great white throne, has been clearly revealed. Anyone who earnestly desires it, may know the truth of God's ways right on to the end.

Nebuchadnezzar was wiser than many today, for he was concerned about the future. As he lay on his bed he had an impressive dream; but in the morning it had gone from him. He found it impossible to overcome the impression it made on him, yet when he tried to recall what it was he had dreamed, he could not do so. So, according to the custom of his times, he sent for his wise men—the soothsayers, astrologers, and magicians. To them he said, “I have dreamed a dream, but it has gone from my mind; and I want you to tell me my dream, and then tell me the interpretation of it.”

Miserable charlatans that they were, they pleaded the absurdity and impossibility of this request. They declared what was possibly true enough: no king or ruler had ever asked anything so difficult of his wise men. They assured the king that if he would but relate the dream, they would explain its meaning. But Nebuchadnezzar responded that if they had skill enough to interpret dreams, they ought to be able to tell him the dream also. He threatened that if after a limited time they did not accede to his demand, all the wise men in his kingdom would be put to death—which, of course, included Daniel.

When Daniel learned of the decree through Arioch the captain of the guard, he went in and asked

Nebuchadnezzar for a brief respite. Communicating the seriousness of the situation to his three friends, he requested that they seek the face of God regarding the matter and together they made supplication to “the God of heaven.”

I want you to notice that title—“the God of heaven” (2:18). Nothing shows the divine source and verbal inspiration of the Scriptures more clearly than the way in which the names and titles of the deity are used throughout the Bible. Unspiritual and ignorant men have sometimes tried to use the diversity of divine names to show that the Bible speaks of different gods. But all these names and titles are used in a most exact and careful manner. For instance, in the entire Old Testament, *Jehovah* is always used in one particular sense and *Elohim* (God, plural form) in another. When it is the Creator that is brought before us, then we have the Hebrew word *Elohim*, indicating the triune God, now revealed in three persons as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. When referring to God’s covenant with His people and His dealings with the men whom He has made and taken into relationship with Himself, the Scriptures use the name *Jehovah*. It is not only in Genesis, but throughout the Bible, that this holds true.

The expression, “the God of heaven” is used in three books in the Old Testament (Ezra, Nehemiah, and Daniel) and one in the New Testament (Revelation). All refer to almost the same period— when God had scattered His people among the nations because of their sins. He had forsaken His throne at Jerusalem. The glory had gone up to Heaven, and He was no longer called the Lord of the whole earth. He was now “the God of heaven,” and so far as the world is concerned that is still His title. He will never again be owned as the Lord of the whole earth until the millennium.

And so Daniel and his friends entreated the God of Heaven. You will notice that we have three things here: First, prayer—"They would desire mercies of the God of heaven" (18). Then there is divine ministry—"Then was the secret revealed unto Daniel in a night vision." And the result of that was worship—they "blessed the God of heaven" (19). Where God is speaking, it stirs the hearts of His people, and it leads them out in worship and praise back to Himself.

People have very low ideas about worship nowadays; they talk about worshipping God no matter what religious exercise they may be engaged in. But let us remember that even prayer is not worship, and ministry is not worship. Prayer is asking of God; ministry is when God gives something to man. But when man has asked and God has given until the heart overflows in adoration back to God, worship takes place.

My wife and I stood one day looking down on Niagara Falls. How our hearts were stirred as we watched that mighty cataract pouring its tremendous volume of water over the great cliff unceasingly. But soon we noticed that from below a mist or fine spray rose up that actually reached the point where we stood on the ledge above the Falls. I said to my wife, "This is like worship—God's mighty love and grace pouring down on us, and then our love and praise rising up and ascending back to Him, the source of all our blessing."

The Father is seeking worshipers, but people have to be born again before they can worship Him. How can a poor guilty sinner who has never been brought into the family of God be a worshiper in spirit and in truth? We hear often of "public worship"; but the fact of the matter is the public, as such, cannot worship in the Christian sense.

Turning back to Daniel, we see he comes in before the king and tells him that he is able to reveal the secret. He makes it plain that it is not through any superior wisdom of his own that he is able to do this: “there is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets, and maketh known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days” (28). It was of God that this great king was brought to the end of all human resources. If he had been able to remember his dream, he never would have realized that he had to deal with God. He first had to be brought to the end of all human wisdom; he had to learn his own nothingness and ignorance and the nothingness and ignorance of all his wise men. Only then could the matchless wisdom of God be revealed to him. And the same lesson must be learned by us. If we are ever going to learn of God, we have to learn the poverty of our own resources first.

Have you ever noticed where the Lord Jesus Christ was crucified? It was at Golgotha—the place of a skull. If you are saved, you began at the place of a skull. That is not very nice for human pride, for it is the place of death and the end of all human wisdom. You cannot reason it out; all the wise men of the earth cannot teach it to you; you have to be brought to the place of an empty skull—the helplessness of death—where you realize that God is writing confusion on all the wisdom of this world. So this great king had to be brought to the place where he learned that “man’s extremity is God’s opportunity.” It was then that the God of Heaven, through His prophet, revealed to him the dream and its interpretation.

Daniel said:

Thou, O king, sawest, and behold a great image. This great image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee; and the form thereof was terrible. This image’s head was of

fine gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass, His legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay. 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. Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing-floors; 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 (31-35).

At once the king recognized the fact that it was indeed the dream he had forgotten. Daniel then proceeded with the interpretation. The image represented the whole period of the times of the Gentiles. But notice that on the chart the feet of the image have been separated from the legs of iron. The reason for this is that although during the present age the Gentile times are still running on, yet prophecy has to do not with this age. Rather prophecy is dealing with the period that closed at the cross and another brief season that will commence after the church has been caught up to be with the Lord. God's special work in this day of grace is the taking out from among the Gentiles a people to the name of His Son. He is not now dealing with nations as such; He is saving individual souls and, by the baptism of the Holy Spirit, forming them into one body to be the bride of the Lamb in the ages to come.

Daniel showed that the times of the Gentiles began with Nebuchadnezzar. He is declared to be the head of gold of this "man of the earth" (**Psalm 10:18**). It is not that he alone is the fulfillment of this picture, but he represents the Babylonian empire, which began with him and was to close with the downfall of Belshazzar his grandson.

“After thee,” said Daniel, “shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee, and another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth” (2:39). We do not need to go outside of Scripture to find out the names of these empires. In chapter 5:31 we read, “Darius the Median took the kingdom.” In the book of Esther we learn that the Persian rulers ruled over all the earth. Darius is generally supposed to be Cyaxares II, the last king of Media. Some think he was Gobryas, the general who led the assault on Babylon under instructions from Cyaxares and Cyrus the Persian; he united Media and Persia in one great empire. Daniel elsewhere showed us that this Medo-Persian dominion, after existing for several hundred years, would be overthrown by a mighty Grecian warrior. This was fulfilled by Alexander the Great.

A fourth kingdom was to follow. It would 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” (40). This must be that great world power which was in existence at the birth of the Lord Jesus, when “there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed” (**Luke 2:1**). Under this empire our Lord was crucified. After His death it continued to exist for about five hundred years, though eventually divided into two parts, the eastern and western empires. The two legs may be meant to represent this division; though one could hardly insist on this strongly because Rome is represented by the legs of iron from the beginning.

Therefore we do not need secular history to find out what these four great empires are; we find them all in Scripture in the order in which they were revealed to the king of Babylon. All this is confirmed by history and is a remarkable proof of the inspiration of the Bible. At the

time that Nebuchadnezzar dreamed his dream the Persian kingdom did not exist. Persia was but a Babylonian province. A Grecian empire might have seemed an utter impossibility. The Hellenic states were a lot of warring tribes and kingdoms, giving little promise of their future greatness. The city of Rome was just being founded—an insignificant little village on the banks of the Tiber. How did Daniel portray with such accuracy the future history of all these powers if unaided by the Holy Spirit of God?

The metals of which the great image was composed deteriorated from the head to the feet, illustrating the continual decrease in the absolute power and magnificence of each kingdom. Nebuchadnezzar ruled as an unlimited despot. “Whom he would he slew; and whom he would he kept alive” (5:19). The rulers of the succeeding empires had their power more and more circumscribed; until in the last state of the Roman empire we find iron mixed with miry clay, or brittle pottery—speaking of attempted union between imperialism and democracy. Notice also, that the specific gravity of the metals decreases each time. Gold is the heaviest and iron the lightest, while feet of mingled iron and pottery would be lighter than all. No wonder such an image breaks in pieces the moment the Stone falls from Heaven on such feet! Gentile power may seem to be firmly settled on an immovable base; it may appear to be powerful enough to resist every effort aimed at its overthrow; but the hour is coming when the Stone will fall from Heaven, and the whole thing will collapse in a moment.

This brings us to the last form of the fourth kingdom; for the Roman empire, though at the present in abeyance, has not yet come to its end. The ten toes on the feet of the image represent (as a comparison with the ten horns on the beast in chapter 7 will make plain) ten kings who are

to reign at one time; they will form a confederacy on the ground of the ancient empire. This is something that the world has not seen yet.

Commentators generally tell us that the ten-toed condition of the empire was reached in the fifth and sixth centuries. At that time the barbarians from the north overran the Roman empire, and it was divided into something like ten different kingdoms. A number of different lists have been made of ten kingdoms each, but few writers agree as to the actual divisions. One thing they all seem to have overlooked is that the ten kingdoms are to exist *at one time*, not through a period of several centuries, and all are to form one confederation. There is nothing in the past history of the kingdoms of Europe that answers to this. They were generally warring enemies, each seeking the destruction of others. Therefore we reject this interpretation of the ten toes. What event in the centuries of Rome's decline and fall could possibly answer to the Stone falling from Heaven and the institution of the kingdom of God? And how could it be said that all the dominions represented by the image have been ground to powder, when we see most of them still in existence in some form or other?

Some tell us that the Stone fell from Heaven when the Lord Jesus was born into this world, and that His kingdom has been in existence and spreading through the world ever since. But Daniel says, "In the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom" (2:44); that is, in the days of the ten kings, God's kingdom is to be established. Now the ten-kingdom condition of the empire certainly had not been reached at the incarnation. Rome remained an undivided kingdom for three hundred years after the birth of Christ; for two hundred years more it existed as the Eastern and Western empires. Clearly then,

the birth of the Son of God is not the event here prophesied. Gentile dominion was not overturned and destroyed at that time, nor since then; therefore we look to the future for it.

To attempt to locate the falling of the Stone in the fifth or sixth century is the height of absurdity. In what sense did the God of Heaven then set up a kingdom? That was the very time when the bishop of Rome was struggling for supremacy over the church and the nations. It was followed by a thousand years of darkness: the Word of God was lost to the masses, superstition took the place of faith, iniquity ruled in both civil and ecclesiastical high places, and peace seemed to be taken from the earth. Surely all this is very different from Christ's predicted reign of righteousness and blessing. Evidently then the Stone has not yet fallen from Heaven, though no one knows how soon it will do so.

I desire to trace out a little of what Scripture has to tell us elsewhere about this Stone. It is undoubtedly a figure of the Lord Jesus Christ. **Psalm 118:22** tells us that He would be the Stone rejected by the builders and become the head of the corner; in the New Testament this verse is declared to be prophetic of Christ (**Luke 20:17-18**; **Acts 4:11-12**). When He came to earth He was indeed the Stone rejected by the builders, the rulers of the Jews, but He did not come as the Stone falling from Heaven. That is the way He will come when He returns the second time. He came before to His own, but His own received Him not. He came here as the foundation Stone, the head Stone of the corner, but they who should have owned His claims cried in their unbelief and hatred, "Away with Him; crucify Him; crucify Him!" Now God has taken Him up to Heaven, and in the Father's glory, the eye of faith beholds that exalted Stone. The day is coming when it is going to fall on His

enemies; when it falls, it will grind to powder all Gentile dominion and all those who have rejected the precious grace of God.

In **Isaiah 8:14** Christ is prophetically described as a Stone of stumbling and a Rock of offense, and we are told that many will stumble and fall. Thus it was when He came in lowly grace: “They stumbled at that stumblingstone; as it is written” (**Romans 9:32-33**). The Jews were looking for a great world-monarch and when Christ came in humiliation, Israel nationally stumbled over Him; they were broken and they remain broken to this day. Whenever a Jew walks the streets of a Gentile city it proves the truth of what the Lord Jesus has said, “Whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken” (**Matthew 21:44**). Broken and scattered they have wandered in all the lands of the earth, hardly welcome anywhere, until in these last days God has been turning the hearts of the nations toward them, preparatory to their being taken back to their own land. By and by a remnant will return to the Lord; so **Isaiah 28:16** says, “Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste.” He then goes on depicting Israel’s deliverance at the second appearing of this Stone of salvation. He is described in **Zechariah 3:9** as the Stone engraved with the engraving of a signet, on which will be seven eyes.

But what about the nations in that day? The message of grace has gone out to them and what has been the result? God has been taking out from among them a people for His name, but the mass have deliberately rejected the Christ of God. That rejected Lord Jesus is soon going to fall on them in judgment. Then the rest of His Word will be fulfilled, “On whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder” (**Matthew 21:44**). Israel stumbled over Him, and

they were broken. He is going to fall on the Gentiles in His wrath and indignation. They will be ground to powder and driven away from before His face like the chaff of the summer threshing-floor.

Do you ask, “When is the Stone going to fall?” It will be when the countries once occupied by the Roman empire in Europe make a ten-kingdom coalition, electing one of their number to be their supreme arbiter. In **Daniel 7** he is described as the little horn rising out of the Roman empire. This passage has often been applied to the pope, but we will see it has no application to him at all. In that day the iron of imperial power will be mixed with the brittle pottery of socialism and democracy, but they will not cling together.

Before the ten-kingdomed form of the Roman empire is brought about, the church will have been caught away to Heaven. No believer of the present dispensation will be on the earth when these things are in process of fulfillment. But there may be some who read this who will still be living on this earth in the days of the feet of the image—the last solemn period of the times of the Gentiles. It will be awful to dwell in this world then and to participate in the judgment when the Stone falls from Heaven.

If these words reach one who is still out of Christ, let me warn you faithfully that if you go on rejecting the Lord Jesus a little longer, if you continue to harden your heart, if you “turn away the shoulder,” if you close your ears and shut your eyes to the truth of God, you may be numbered among those left behind when the Lord calls for His redeemed ones to rise to meet Him in the air. Then there will be for you nothing but “a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries” (**Hebrews 10:27**). Think what it will mean to

be thus left for the vengeance of God! If you have not yet heeded the voice of Him who pleads in grace, get down on your face before Him now, I beseech you, and cry as Job cried, “I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes” (42:6). Then remember 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. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation” (**Romans 10:9-10**). Thus shall you be ready to hail His coming with joy, whose return would otherwise mean for you the end of mercy’s day, the sealing of your doom.

Nebuchadnezzar fell on his face and worshiped Daniel; he acknowledged that Daniel’s God was a “God of gods, and a Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets” (**Daniel 2:47**). Yet there is no evidence that his conscience had been reached by the revelation made to him of God’s wisdom and power. He advanced Daniel to a position of trust and confidence, and at his request set Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego over the affairs of the province of Babylon; but he was not yet ready to acknowledge the God of Daniel as *his* God and the only Savior. He was still a god to him, albeit greater than other deities. Nebuchadnezzar was soon to know Him as *the* God who alone rules in the kingdoms of men

Chapter Three The Deliverance Of The Faithful

Daniel

Henry Allen Ironside

In **Daniel 3** we see how little Nebuchadnezzar had learned from the revelation God had made to him. We have already noticed that when Daniel explained the meaning of the dream, Nebuchadnezzar fell down before the prophet and worshiped him. He had many nice things to say to him, and he gave him great rewards; but he was not brought to repentance or humbled in self-judgment before the God who had shown His omniscient power. The king could appreciate the wisdom of Daniel, but he had no heart for the God who had inspired His servant.

Nebuchadnezzar is not alone in that attitude. There are many who have a certain admiration for the ministry and the Word of God, yet remain strangers to the God of these ministers. This was Nebuchadnezzar's condition exactly at this time. For we see that he was not humbled by the revelation made. Instead it led him to exalt himself as one especially favored of Heaven; it magnified his thoughts of the human mind and his own greatness.

This reminds me of a man in the New Testament who was favored with a remarkable revelation. I refer to the apostle Paul, who was caught up to the third Heaven. And Paul, though a child of God and a most devoted servant of Christ in every way, had the same kind of a heart that Nebuchadnezzar had. So in order that he might not be lifted up because of the abundance of the revelations, he was given a thorn in the flesh to remind him of his human weakness (**2 Corinthians 12:1-7**). Thus we are reminded that even divine truth, if not held in fellowship with God, may actually be used to puff one up. Mere knowledge, apart from divine love, puffs up. This is not the case with spiritual discernment, because the very first requisite for spirituality is humility. Spiritual discernment comes from God, and that will not exalt any one. But even scriptural knowledge, if divorced from godliness, will have a deadly effect upon the mind and heart. That was the way it was with Nebuchadnezzar. But in **Daniel 4** we read how he too received a thorn in the flesh and its blessed result.

What is emphasized here is that Nebuchadnezzar was lifted up with pride. He determined to make a great image (probably a replica of the one he had seen in his dream) and call on all men to bow to it. The image was to acclaim the power and glory of man, for it pictured Gentile dominion in independence of God. It was stamped with the same number that distinguished the beast in **Revelation 13**—the number of a man, 666. We also read in **Daniel 3** that the image was sixty cubits high and six cubits broad. Seven is the number that speaks of spiritual completeness. Six seems to tell us of man's greatest efforts to attain to perfection.

The image was made accordingly and set up in the plain of Dura. A command then went forth that at the sounding of a great orchestra, all the peoples, nations, and languages, gathered together from all the various provinces of the

empire, should fall down and worship it. If any refused, they were to be cast into a furnace of fire.

The instruments were to play and the people were to be stirred up by the music. Then they were all to prostrate themselves before the great image that set forth the glory of man.

But there were three in that great company who paid no heed to the king's commandment. Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego refused to bow and malicious spies soon carried the news to the haughty monarch. They said, "There are certain Jews...O king, [who] have not regarded thee: they serve not thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up" (12). In a rage the king sent for the three devoted men. He offered to give them another opportunity to carry out his bidding, otherwise they must suffer the fate reserved for any who would not worship the image. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were not like the time-servers of these degenerate days. They knew God had said, "Thou shalt *not* make thee any graven image...Thou shalt *not* bow down thyself unto them, nor serve them" (**Deuteronomy 5:8-9**, italics added). So these three Hebrews boldly faced the great king and said:

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 (**Daniel 3:16-18**).

Thus they witnessed a good confession; in their God-given strength they boldly stood before the king and all the people as the witnesses of Jehovah's power and glory.

In fury Nebuchadnezzar ordered that the furnace be heated seven times hotter and that his instructions be carried out to the letter. So great was the furnace's heat that it consumed the men who threw them into the flames. Then we read that Nebuchadnezzar rose, came to the furnace, and cried out in amazement: "Did we not cast three men bound into the midst of the fire?...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" (or son of the gods) (24-25). We know well who that fourth one was; so the rendering that we have in the King James version is correct as to the person, whether it is actually what Nebuchadnezzar meant or not. The blessed Son of God was there with His dear servants in their hour of trial. He had said long before, "When thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee" (**Isaiah 43:2**). And every word of God will be fulfilled, for "he is faithful that promised" (**Hebrews 10:23**).

We are not told that anyone but Nebuchadnezzar saw the form of this fourth One. He cried out at once, "Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, ye servants of the most high God, come forth, and come hither." They came out, not having the smell of fire on them; the flame had simply burned away their bonds and left them free men. The result was that Nebuchadnezzar was filled with admiration for the power of the great God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. He made a royal decree, declaring that anyone who would speak anything amiss against their God would be put to death. Yet, as when his dream was interpreted, he did not bow in repentance at the feet of the Lord and acknowledge Him as *his* God. He simply spoke of Him as *their* God and while he admired His greatness and power, he did not worship and serve the Lord Jehovah.

How many people there are in the world just like that! They would not say anything against God our Father nor His Son the Lord Jesus Christ; they have a certain reverence in their hearts for God; they think of Him as their mother's God perhaps, or the God of their fathers. They cannot cry, "My Lord and *my* God," as Thomas did after he saw the print of the nails (**John 20:28**, italics added). So again we are reminded that it is one thing to give assent to the truth of Scripture as to the glory of the triune God; but it is quite another to bow our hearts in His presence, admit to being lost and guilty sinners and trust God's blessed Son as our own deliverer. Nebuchadnezzar acknowledged God's *power*, but he did not admit to God's *claims* on him. He had to pass through a humiliating experience before he would come to that.

But what has all this to do with prophecy? Why did God cause this particular bit of history to be recorded in the book of the prophet Daniel? This would have been something very suitable in a historical or devotional book, but why do we have it here in a prophetic book? For a very good reason indeed. This event, though actual history, is a typical scene picturing the trial and deliverance of a faithful remnant of Daniel's people that is to take place in the time of the end. There will come a day when (like the great image set up by Nebuchadnezzar) what the Lord Jesus calls "the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet," is going to be set up in Jerusalem by the antichrist of the future. See **Matthew 24:15**.

After the church has been caught away to Heaven at the close of this dispensation, the Jews will be deceived into accepting the claims of a blasphemous impostor claiming to be the Messiah. It is he who is going to place the abomination that causes desolation. He will demand that all men worship the image that he sets up; thus the scene of the

plain of Dura will be reenacted. In that day, as in the past, a remnant among the Jews will refuse to believe his claims or to obey his voice. This will be the signal for the breaking out of the great tribulation, “the time of Jacob’s trouble” (**Jeremiah 30:7**). But many of the faithful shall be saved out of it, just as these three Hebrew young men were preserved by God in the midst of, and eventually delivered from, the furnace of fire.

Scripture has not clearly revealed what the abomination of desolation is. It seems to be identified with the image of the beast set up by the false prophet who will cause all men to worship it—all who have not the seal of God (**Revelation 13**). This image of the beast may not be a literal idol; it may be that it refers to some great popular movement. But it seems to be intimately connected with that of which our Lord warned His disciples. At any rate it speaks of a time when men will be called on to acknowledge the power and the authority of that which is Satanic instead of divine, and practically all the world will be brought to own the antichrist as the Messiah.

It is a mistake to suppose that the antichrist is the papacy. We will see in the latter part of **Daniel 11** that he will be a distinct personality; he will be a Jew by birth who will bear rule in the land of Palestine and be accepted by the Jews as their Messiah. He will deny the Father and the Son and be energized and controlled by the devil. In that day apostate Christendom will join with apostate Judaism in declaring allegiance to this monster of iniquity. Even in that day when iniquity will come in like a flood, God will fulfill His promise and lift up a standard against it. He will have His faithful little flock who will dare to stand—like Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego—for the truth that He will have revealed to them. Because of this stand they will become the victims of Satan’s rage and man’s hatred, yet they will be delivered out

of it all to the glory of the God whom they will serve. No weapon that is formed against them will prosper, for the Most High will be their shield and buckler.

Already we see preparations being made for these momentous events. While they are not to take place as long as the church remains on earth, yet even now the land of Palestine is being prepared by God to become once more the home of His earthly people, and the people are being prepared for their land. Think of the changes that have been taking place in the East in the last fifty years! A half century ago a Jew was not allowed to dwell inside the walls of the city of Jerusalem, and there were less than fifty thousand Jews in all Palestine. Now there are more than that number living in Jerusalem itself, and it is estimated that there are nearly three times that number dwelling in the land. The latter rains that God had withdrawn in judgment for many centuries are returning to the land once more. While they have not come every year, yet there has been sufficient rain to encourage agriculturists to such an extent that thousands of acres have been planted as olive groves, vineyards, and fruit farms, and most of these are owned and worked by Jews. Of course all these things are very different from the fulfillment of the prophecies regarding the regathering of the Jews by omnipotent power. But these events show us that things are shaping themselves for the carrying out of the predictions as to the great tribulation, and the events that are to follow in rapid succession.

In the hour of antichrist's dreadful reign it will mean much to be faithful to God and not assent to the abomination of desolation; but grace will be given to the feeble remnant, and they will glorify God in the fires. If such is to be the triumph of saints in a future day, what devotion and faithfulness should characterize us who are so much more highly favored in this present dispensation of the grace of God! Yet how

many there are who fail to stand the test when it comes to maintaining that which God has committed to them! How little most of us know of that spirit of devotion to Christ which led Athanasius of old to reply to the emperor's taunt, "All the world is against you," by the never-to-be-forgotten words, "Then I am against all the world."

It was this spirit that enabled Paul to triumph when he stood before Nero, even though he had to say, "At my first answer no man stood with me." Left alone, he nevertheless bore a faithful witness and "was delivered out of the mouth of the lion" (**2 Timothy 4:16-17**).

What a rebuke these devoted servants of God are to many of us today! How little we know of standing for Christ and His truth, even if we have to stand alone. But how contemptible will our weakness and cowardice appear in that coming day of glory! Rest assured, there will not be a saint then who will regret having suffered for Christ or borne reproach for His name's sake. But there will be thousands who would give worlds, were they theirs to give, if they had been more faithful and devoted while in their place of testing. The time is short. Our day of testimony for an absent Lord will soon be over. Oh, let us not forget that we have

Only one life—'twill soon be past;
Only what's done for Christ will last.

Chapter Four Nebuchadnezzar's Humbling

Daniel

In **Job 33:14-17**, we are told, “God speaketh once, yea twice, yet man perceiveth it not. In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, in slumberings upon the bed, Then he openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instruction, That he may withdraw man from his purpose [or work], and hide pride from man.” This is how God often speaks to men who will not open a Bible to receive the clear revelation of His will. He has many ways of reaching those who seem bent on their own destruction.

In the passage from Job, Elihu goes on to show that when dreams and visions do not avail, God sometimes allows disease to grip the body until the poor sinner is broken in spirit and crushed in heart. Then “He looketh upon men, and if any say, I have sinned, and perverted that which was right, and it profited me not; He will deliver his soul from going into the pit, and his life shall see the light” (**Job 33:27-28**).

The fourth chapter of Daniel is a remarkable example of God’s matchless grace and illustrates most precious the words of Elihu to Job. *The first* time God spoke to Nebuchadnezzar He gave him the dream of the great image of the times of the Gentiles. But the heart of the king was willful, and he continued to go on with his own purpose in his pride and folly. God spoke the *second* time by the marvelous vision of the Son of God in the midst of the fiery furnace, keeping His faithful witnesses from all danger and harm. But again the proud king kept on his way with

unsubject heart and unsubdued will. Now God speaks the *third* time in a most humiliating manner to this great world-ruler.

This stirring fourth chapter of Daniel was written by Nebuchadnezzar himself and preserved and incorporated into the inspired volume. In it we have the interesting account of the means God used to bring this haughty king to the end of himself and lead him to abase Himself before the Majesty in Heaven. In other words, this is Nebuchadnezzar's conversion, and it seems clearly to show that a work of grace took place in his soul before he laid down the scepter entrusted to his hand by Jehovah. The account is also illustrative for in Nebuchadnezzar we see a picture of all Gentile power—its departure from God, its degradation and bestial character, and its final subjugation to God in the time of the end. At that time Christ will return in glory, and all nations will prostrate themselves before Him, owning His righteous and benevolent sway.

Nebuchadnezzar set up in intelligence was the embodiment of authority given from Heaven: "The powers that be are ordained of God" (**Romans 13:1**). But it is written, "Man being in honour abideth not: he is like the beasts that perish" (**Psalms 49:12**). The king's madness clearly illustrates the turning away of the nations from God and the corruption of governments to serve human ends. Has not this been characteristic of the great powers of this world? Instead of kings standing for God and acting as His representatives to maintain justice and judgment in the earth, we find pride, self-will, covetousness, and self-seeking generally controlling them. All this is pictured by the debasement of Nebuchadnezzar when his heart was changed to the heart of a beast, and he was driven out to eat grass like the oxen of the fields.

But the day draws near when God will assert Himself, and all Gentile dominion will come to an end. Then the long-promised King will shine forth in His glorious majesty. The kings of the earth will bring their glory and honor to the new Jerusalem, the heavenly throne-city of the coming kingdom, and the nations will look up as redeemed men and not down as the beasts that perish.

Even in this present age, history teaches us the value of a national recognition of God's moral government. A story is told of a heathen chieftain who came from his distant domain to visit Queen Victoria. One day he asked her if she would tell him the secret of England's progress and greatness. In response, it is said the queen presented him with a Bible saying, "This Book will tell you." Who can doubt that according to the measure in which that Book of books has been believed and loved by any people, God has honored them? And every nation that has welcomed and protected the gospel has been cared for and blessed in a special way.

On the other hand, let there be a national rejection of His Word, and you will find disaster following disaster. This was the case of the French people, who were among the first favored by Him in Reformation times but who drove out the truth He gave them. He who cannot lie has said, "Them that honour me, I will honour, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed" (**1 Samuel 2:30**).

But let us now turn directly to **Daniel 4** for a concrete example of all this. It begins with: "Nebuchadnezzar the king, unto all people, nations, and languages, that dwell in all the earth." This verse touches my heart in a most striking way. I realize that I am reading the personal testimony of one who was in some respects the greatest monarch this world has ever known. I am privileged to have his own account of how he—a proud, self-willed man—was brought to repentance and to the saving knowledge of the God of all grace. For I

gather from this proclamation that a divine work was accomplished in Nebuchadnezzar's soul by God who, in mercy, had revealed Himself to him.

What a wonderful miracle this is! The fact is, every conversion is a miracle—every soul that is saved knows what it is to be dealt with in supernatural power. It is God alone who changes men like this. He picks up a vile, wretched sinner and makes him a holy, happy saint. He works in the drunkard's soul and changes him to a sober, useful member of society. He breaks down the proud and stubborn, and they become meek and lowly. Are not these things miracles? Surely, and they are being enacted all around us. Yet men sneer and say the miraculous never happens in this law-controlled, workaday world of ours! Oh that men might have their eyes opened to see, and their ears to hear, what God in His grace is doing on the basis of His blessed Son's offering for sin on the cross!

"I thought it good," Nebuchadnezzar continued, "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" (2-3). What a splendid confession this is and how different from his previous acknowledgments in chapters 2-3! His conscience has been reached now; he knows God for himself and delights to tell of His signs and wonders wrought toward him! He acknowledges Him now not as *a* god, but as the one true and living God whose kingdom rules over all and will continue forevermore. Nebuchadnezzar's testimony does not refer to the mediatorial kingdom of Christ, but to God's moral government of the universe, which nothing ever alters.

Now I would like to be personal and press some questions home to each reader. Do you have any word of testimony about the signs and wonders that the high God has worked

for you? Have you ever been brought into direct contact with Him, so that you can speak confidently of what He has done for your soul? Have you been humbled by seeing yourself as a lost sinner before Him? Have you taken that place—your only rightful place—and acknowledged that you are unclean and in dire need of sovereign mercy? And do you know what it is to have fled for refuge to the very God against whom you have sinned so grievously and to have found in His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, a hidingplace from the judgment your sins deserved?

I implore you, do not attempt to avoid these questions. If you cannot answer yes to each one, stop and ponder them again; ask yourself if there is any valid reason why you should continue to neglect God's way of salvation and leave your soul in jeopardy. Oh that Nebuchadnezzar's testimony might speak loudly to your heart and conscience if you are still a stranger to the God he had learned to adore. Something very definite had been done for his soul; he delighted to tell of it and to give an answer to every man as to the reason of the hope that was in him.

Before God awakened him, he had been "at rest in [his] house, and flourishing in [his] palace" (4). Think of that! At rest and flourishing while still in his sins and a stranger to God. There is a deceitful rest, a deceitful peace, which lulls many a soul into a false security. To be untroubled is no evidence of safety. To be at peace does not prove that all is well. I once caught hold of a blind man and drew him back just in time to keep him from plunging headlong into an open cellarway. He thought all was well and was in peace of mind as he walked along, yet two more steps and he would have gone down! Be sure that your peace is founded on the blood of Christ shed on the cross; then you will have that peace which is true and lasting. Every other is false and fleeting. The peace of God is that which comes from relying

on the testimony of God and follows the confession of sins that have separated the soul from Him.

Nebuchadnezzar told us how he was aroused from that false security in which he had dwelt for so long. "I saw a dream," he said, "which made me afraid, and the thoughts upon my bed and the visions of my head troubled me" (5). The vision was sent for this very purpose. God saw that he needed to be troubled—he needed to be awakened from his sleep of death. It was grace that thus exercised him. And in some way every soul that is saved has to pass through this period of soul-anxiety and concern. Nebuchadnezzar as before turned to the wrong source for help in his time of difficulty. He called in his magicians, astrologers, Chaldeans, and soothsayers, to whom he narrated his dream; but all to no purpose. They who before could not recall to his mind the dream that had vanished, now cannot interpret this one. But at last Daniel came in and the king turned expectantly to him. He told how he had seen a great tree in the midst of the earth. It grew so strong and tall that the height reached the heavens and the sight of it to the ends of the earth. Clothed with leaves and loaded with fruit, it supplied food 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" (12). But the king had seen a watcher and a holy one come down from Heaven, who cried out saying:

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 (14-17).

This was the dream, and the king anxiously inquired if Daniel, or Belteshazzar, could declare the interpretation of it.

The meaning was evidently clear to Daniel from the first. But we are told that he was astonished for one hour, and his thoughts troubled him. It is plain that Nebuchadnezzar's character had in it much that was noble and admirable, and this appealed to the prophet. He had also been highly favored by the king, and the thought of the solemn judgment that was soon to fall on his royal master saddened him. Nebuchadnezzar must have discerned the anxiety and sorrow in the face of his minister, for he speaks in a way to give him confidence to proceed with the interpretation. He did not want smooth words made up for the occasion. Little though he realized what was coming, he still desired to know the truth. It is a blessed thing for any soul to get to the place where he can say: "Give me God's Word, and let me know it *is* His Word, and I will receive it, no matter how it cuts, and interferes with my most cherished thoughts."

"My lord," answered Daniel, "the dream be to them that hate thee, and the interpretation thereof to thine enemies" (19). He then goes on to explain that the great tree represented Nebuchadnezzar himself, who had been set by God in a special place of prominence in the earth as the head of all peoples and dominions. The cutting down of the tree signified that he was to be humbled to the very lowest depths, even to being driven from among men. His dwelling was to be with the beasts of the field, where he would eat grass as oxen and be wet with the dew of heaven, until seven times had passed over him—until he knew that the Most High rules in the kingdom of men and gives it to whomsoever He will. But

the fact that the stump of the tree was left, indicated that his kingdom would be returned to him after he had known that the heavens ruled. The prophet added a word of faithful counsel; he implored the king to break off his sins by righteousness and his iniquities by showing mercy to the poor, in the hope that the days of his tranquillity might be lengthened. Daniel does not speak here of earning eternal salvation. His advice has to do with God's sovereign rule on earth and Nebuchadnezzar's acknowledgment and subjection to it.

All happened exactly as Daniel had said, for Nebuchadnezzar was still unhumbled though he had listened so respectfully to the words of the prophet. One day, a year later, he was walking in the palace of his kingdom, which evidently overlooked his capital. As he walked he said to himself, "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?" (30) Nebuchadnezzar forgot how he was indebted to the most high God for the position he occupied and the riches and the glory of it; he took all the credit to himself. While the word was in his mouth the decree was spoken by a voice from Heaven saying that the time had come when the dream would be fulfilled. The same hour he lost his reason and became a pitiable spectacle, unfit to associate with others; he was driven from men into the open fields where he became like the beasts that perish. This solemn account is not difficult to believe when we remember the treatment generally given to the insane in the oriental countries. Looked upon as the afflicted of God, they are left to wander at their own will, none interfering nor making them afraid.

In all this we see a picture of Gentile power in its alienation from God and bestial character. Rulers and nations who have trampled the Word of God beneath their feet and despised His mercy and grace, refusing subjection to His

government are guilty of acting in madness! A great tree towering up in independence toward heaven is a symbol frequently used in Scripture to depict the great rulers of this world. Ezekiel used it as a picture of the Assyrian kingdom. In the New Testament it is used by our Lord Jesus Christ as a symbol of the kingdom of Heaven as it has become in the hands of men.

I want to dwell a little on the phrase “seven times shall pass over thee” (32). It has been used to support the “year-day theory,” which has frequently been put forth by a certain school of prophetic teachers. This is a system of interpretation that takes prophetic seasons and times and says: All days are to be understood as years, months as thirty years, and years as periods of three hundred and sixty years. Now “a time” is undoubtedly a year. Seven times then, would be seven years. If the year-day theory is true, it would apply here as well as elsewhere in the Scriptures. But what would seven times three hundred and sixty years mean in this connection? It would amount to two thousand five hundred and twenty years. In that case Nebuchadnezzar’s madness would have gone on until the middle of this century. But if this is ridiculously impossible, then it is folly to attempt to apply the theory elsewhere, as this is distinctly a time-prophecy. In every instance where any of these time-prophecies have already been fulfilled, and are clearly so stated in Scripture, it is evident that days, months, or years, were always fulfilled literally.

For instance, God said of the antediluvians that their days would be one hundred and twenty years (**Genesis 6:3**), and in exactly that length of time the world was overthrown with a flood. Suppose the year-day theory had been held by Noah. He would have calculated that there certainly could be no hurry in building the ark since the flood could not come for at least forty-three thousand two hundred years, or one

hundred and twenty prophetic years of three hundred and sixty literal years each.

God also told Moses that the children of Israel, because of their unbelief, would wander in the wilderness for forty years, according to the number of the days in which they had searched the land (**Numbers 14:33-34**). Now here we might be supposed to have authority for this year-day theory, but on the contrary, we have the very opposite. Days mean days, and years mean years.

In the book of Ezekiel the prophet was told to lie on his left side for three hundred and ninety days, that he might bear the iniquity of the house of Israel. Then he was to lie on his right side forty days to bear the iniquity of the house of Judah; God adds "I have appointed thee each day for a year" (**Ezekiel 4:6**). This passage is often adduced as evidence of the scripturalness of the year-day theory. But surely it gives no cause to reason that wherever times and seasons are specified in the prophetic scriptures the principle of a day signifying a year can be relied on as correct. The great prophecy of the seventy weeks (**Daniel 9**) might appear to support this theory, but as we will see the term *week* does not necessarily refer to seven days at all.

The fact is that all kinds of contradictory systems have been built on this year-day conception. Dates have been set again and again for the second coming of the Lord and the fulfillment of other prophetic events, only to result in disappointment and confusion. It gives occasion to the enemies of the truth to blaspheme when the dates specified have passed away with nothing of importance occurring on them. The whole theory rests on supposing something that God had never revealed.

In the instance before us Daniel declared that the king would be mad until seven times had passed over him. In exactly

seven years Nebuchadnezzar lifted up his eyes, and his reason returned to him. He saw that God had been dealing with him—he learned his lesson. He blessed the most high God and turned to Him in repentance, acknowledging Him as his God. Then he wrote out this account of his conversion, that others might also be humbled before the only true God and bless Him for His mercy.

Thus will it be with the spared nations after the judgments that are to take place in the time of the end. Nebuchadnezzar aptly typifies all Gentile power—haughty, insolent, and Heaven-defying. Forgetting God, the true source of authority and power, it has become like the beasts of the earth. You know something of its course since it crucified the Lord of glory. The nations have been mad—as utterly bereft of all true reason as was the demented king of Babylon. But the day is coming when God, in His grace, is going to end all this and deliver a groaning world from the evils of selfish despotism and national jealousies. Christ’s personal return from Heaven will conclude the long period of Gentile misrule. Creation groans for the hour when the one true King—our Lord Jesus Christ—will be revealed. “In his times he shall shew, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords” (**1 Timothy 6:15**).

The blessed Potentate is the truly happy ruler! The world has never seen a happy potentate in the past. Shakespeare’s line has passed into a proverb, “Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown.” But in the days when our Lord Jesus Christ takes the rod of power and reigns in righteousness, the world, for the first time, will see a *happy* Potentate. Who can measure the happiness of the Son of God when He descends to take the kingdom for which He has waited so long; and He will have His own beloved bride with Him to share His glory! Then “He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied” (**Isaiah 53:11**).

Those will be the days of Heaven on earth when “the time of the singing” (**Song of Solomon 2:12**) will have come, and all redeemed creation will rejoice beneath Immanuel’s rule. Our translators have put in two little words in that verse which do not belong there. They have made it say, “The time of the singing of birds is come.” Oh, how they have weakened it! It should simply read, “The time of the singing is come”—the time when the heavenly saints will be sounding His praises from the glory, and when Israel, blessed on the earth, will rejoice in His lovingkindness. In that day of the gladness of His heart all creation will fall at His feet to worship, and He will joy over them with singing. Then He will show who is that happy and only Potentate. The phrase, “the blessed [happy] ... Potentate” excludes all sorrow and disappointment. That “only Potentate” excludes every other ruler. Many crowns will be on His head. Every other crown will be cast at His feet, and He will reign as King of kings and Lord of lords. That will be a happy day for those who have humbled themselves and who, like Nebuchadnezzar, have acknowledged the righteousness of His dealings with them. Those who have confessed their sins before Him will exclaim with joy when He descends in majesty, “This is our God; we have waited for him” (**Isaiah 25:9**). Of such He will cry with rejoicing, “Gather my saints together unto me; those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice” (**Psalms 50:5**).

Before that day dawns, it is the path of wisdom to “kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little” (**Psalms 2:12**). Have you kissed the Son? Have you bowed in contrition at the feet of the Lord Jesus Christ, trusted Him as your own Savior, and owned Him as your rightful Lord? If you have, you can look up and say with happy confidence, “Come, Lord Jesus” (**Revelation 22:20**). But whether you have or not, the Lord Jesus is coming—coming very soon, and unhappy indeed will be your state for all eternity if He find you in your sins, a stranger to

God and to grace. “Because there is wrath, beware lest he take thee away with his stroke: then a great ransom cannot deliver thee” (**Job 36:18**). That ransom is available now to all who believe in Him. In the day of Christ’s return His precious blood will not be offered for salvation to those who have despised the Spirit of grace and refused to heed the gospel message.

O, do not let the word depart,
And close thine eyes against the light;
Poor sinner, harden not thy heart;
Thou would’st be saved—why not to-night?

The world has nothing new to give,
It has no true, no pure delight;
Look now to Jesus Christ, and live;
Thou would’st be saved—why not to-night?

Our blessed Lord refuses none
Who would to Him their souls unite;
Believe, obey, the work is done;
Thou would’st be saved—why not to-night?

Chapter Five The Overthrow Of Babylon

Daniel

Henry Allen Ironside

Daniel 5 presents to us the final stages of the Babylonian empire—the last solemn scenes in connection with the downfall of the golden head of the image described in **Daniel 2**. We will find in this chapter, as in the previous two chapters, a typical picture of the overthrow of Gentile power. In this instance the illustration deals with the religious character of the Gentile nations as Babylon the great, in the time of the end. The account given of the fall of mystical Babylon in **Revelation 17-18** is evidently based on and intimately connected with what we have here.

The account given by Daniel of the destruction of the proud capital on the Euphrates agrees in large measure with what has been left on record by Herodotus, the so-called “Father of History,” and by other ancient writers. Yet the scripture record is nevertheless challenged by a certain class of modern critics as unreliable. They allege there are discrepancies between the Biblical account and the inscriptions on some of the lately-deciphered monuments. The chief points in question are the title given to Belshazzar, son of Nabonidus, and the identity of Darius the Median.

Belshazzar was reigning jointly with his father at this time and certainly was “king of Babylon,” or “king of the Chaldeans,” in the sense of being prince-regent, with his seat in the imperial city. The title “king” was not applied solely to the supreme monarch in that age. It will be noticed that in chapter 2, when Daniel was honored by Nebuchadnezzar, the great king made him *second* ruler in the kingdom. But in this chapter Belshazzar appoints him to the position of *third*

ruler, as he himself was clearly the second. So there is no discrepancy here, but rather that exactness which is ever found in Holy Scripture.

As to Darius the Median, his name certainly does not appear in the monuments, and Herodotus recorded that Cyrus was in command of the armies that conquered Babylon. But the name Darius presents no real difficulty, as ancient kings are often known by a number of different names. In fact, no two lists of the later Median kings as given by the old historians agree with each other, and the monuments seem to differ from them all. The last king of the Medians was Cyaxares II, who formed an alliance with Cyrus his nephew and led a part of the armies of the confederate kingdoms to battle. His age, as recorded by Herodotus, agrees with that of Darius, as given in **Daniel 5:31**. The two may therefore be identical. On the other hand, some suppose Darius to be the same as Gobryas; according to ancient records, he conducted the siege of Babylon as representative of the allied kings.

The discrepancy in names is no greater than that in the case of Cambyses and Atrodates, both names being applied to the same monarch—one by Xenophon and the other by Nicolas of Damascus. It is a well-known fact that the lists of Median kings given by Ctesias and Herodotus differ in every instance, and the chronologies are hopelessly confusing and contradictory. Yet the rationalist eagerly seizes on any apparent discrepancy between the records left by untrustworthy and often dishonest chroniclers and the account given in the Word of God. The Christian need not fear that history will ever disprove what we have recorded in our Bibles. In this case, Daniel was an eyewitness. He wrote the facts as he saw and knew them. His testimony, apart from the question of divine inspiration, is surely more reliable than that of fawning courtiers or hearsay historians,

whose professed facts are often untrustworthy, highly colored, and opposed to each other.

What especially comes before us in this chapter is the impiety of Gentile power as represented in this rule of Belshazzar. This lack of reverence rose to its full height in the desecration of the vessels that had been carried away from the temple of Jehovah at Jerusalem. God had committed government to the nations, giving the supreme dominion to Nebuchadnezzar; but we find that from the beginning they failed to render to Him the honor and allegiance that were His due. Though Nebuchadnezzar himself was humbled later, his successors, Evil-Merodach, Nabonidus, and his impious son, failed utterly to profit by the lesson their illustrious ancestor had learned at so great a cost to himself. (Neriglissar and Laborosoarchod, who each reigned for a brief season after the death of Evil-Merodach, were not of the royal blood line.)

In all this it is easy to see pictured the whole course of government as entrusted to man. Proud, haughty rulers delight to exploit the fact that “the powers that be are ordained of God,” generally with no thought of seeking His glory or of acting as His representatives on the earth. Rather they use it to establish and augment their own power by claiming the doctrine of “the divine right of kings.”

A little before our chapter opens, Cyrus the Great, king of Persia, had entered into an alliance with his aged uncle Cyaxares II, and the combined kingdoms had subdued various nations to the north and south. They now determined to annex the fast-decaying Babylonian empire to their dominions. Cyrus was evidently the leading spirit in this, though while Cyaxares lived he was given precedence. Cyrus, unknowingly, was “the scourge of the Lord,” as Nebuchadnezzar had been before him. When Israel offended, God used the Chaldeans as His rod of chastening on them.

Now God would use the Medo-Persians for the punishment of the Chaldeans, who had shown themselves insensible to all His mercies to them.

At this time Babylon was the most magnificent and luxurious city in the world—devoted to every vice and the center of idolatry. From the days of Nimrod and the tower of Babel until it was blotted out from under heaven, Babylon was the headquarters for the heathen mysteries. Its walls, supposedly impregnable, were so broad that several chariots could drive abreast on them. The Euphrates ran right through the city, passing under the walls. Of course, the people depended on that river for their support, yet it was destined to become their enemy.

After an unsuccessful siege of many months, the Medo-Persian armies concluded that the only way to force an entrance would be through the riverbed. Accordingly a new channel was dug around the city without the Babylonians being aware of it. This channel connected with a nearby lake. On that very night, when the work of turning the waters of the river out of their course would be finished and the final assault be made, Belshazzar was utterly unconscious of the danger in which the city stood. He was celebrating an impious feast with a thousand of his lords, in honor of the heathen deities. It was not merely a feast that demonstrated the pride of his heart; it bore a far worse character than this. In insult to Jehovah, Belshazzar ordered the golden vessels of the temple in Jerusalem, which had been carried down to Babylon, to be brought for use in their heathen feast. Thus they drank and praised the gods of silver and gold, of brass and of stone, and forgot altogether or blasphemed utterly the God of Heaven. On this crowning act of irreverence, their cup of iniquity being full, God's sudden and sore judgment fell. God never strikes, when He is dealing with nations in judgment, until that moment when the iniquity has reached

its full measure. He could not allow the people of Israel to take possession of the land of Canaan before the days of Moses because “the iniquity of the Amorites [was] not yet full” (**Genesis 15:16**). And so in Babylon’s case, He lingered long. He permitted His people to be slaves to Nebuchadnezzar, his son, and his grandson, as foretold by Jeremiah, until the wickedness of the Chaldeans had reached its height.

At last the fateful moment had struck. Belshazzar stood before his lords with one of the cups from Jerusalem’s destroyed temple in his hand, praising his own vile demon gods. At that moment there came forth, in the full sight of all that multitude, the fingers of a man’s hand writing in letters of fire on the plaster the words of doom, “MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN” (5:25). Doubtless every noble present could decipher the strange words, but none could give their meaning or connection. When it says they could not read the words, it means they could not read them understandingly. God had written them in their own language, but who could make sense of four apparently unrelated terms: “NUMBERED, NUMBERED, WEIGHED, DIVIDING”? All instinctively recognized them as a message from the other world, but who could interpret the decree?

I can see Belshazzar as he stands there with the wine cup in his hand. I can imagine the awful look of terror that comes over his countenance—the deadly pallor that spreads over his face. I see the cup fall from his nerveless hand as he clings to the pillar to support his trembling limbs. The Word of God says “his knees smote one against another” (6). He called in vain, with hollow voice, for the astrologers, the soothsayers, and those learned in Chaldean lore to explain this dreadful portent; but “they could not read the writing, nor make known to the king the interpretation thereof (8). While they were in fearful consternation, the queen mother

came in. She seems to have occupied a place apart from all the wickedness and revelry of that great company. Almost like the representative of another world, she appeared to inform the king of one who can read the writing and give the interpretation of it. She says:

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 (5:11-12).

Belshazzar had been utterly indifferent to the man whom God had used in the days of his grandfather Nebuchadnezzar; but Daniel had gone on in a quiet, humble way, seeking the approbation of the One who is higher than the highest. He was sent for in haste, and as he came in, his very presence was a rebuke to that godless multitude. Belshazzar addressed him in flattering terms and promised him great honors if he would read the writing and show its interpretation. He would be clothed in scarlet, have a chain of gold around his neck, and be the third ruler in the kingdom.

Poor, misguided monarch! How little all his promises would mean when the sun rose the next day! Belshazzar little knew that while these momentous events were taking place in the palace, the waters of the river had been turned aside into the new channel. The armies of the allied kings were coming in underneath the walls in the dry riverbed, undetected because the watchmen of the city, Herodotus wrote, were all

drunk. In the streets, as in the palace, myriads of revelers were spending the night in godless amusement, and unclean orgies were being perpetrated in honor of the pagan gods. The Persian army was upon them before they were aware of their danger.

I suppose Daniel knew nothing of this either, but it makes his words to Belshazzar all the more solemn and serious.

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 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 (17-21).

And now note the fearful indictment of the wretched monarch before whom he stood.

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 they 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 (22-24, italics added).

Daniel did not speak to Belshazzar as he had spoken to Nebuchadnezzar. He could not have the same respect for him that he entertained for his grandfather. When Nebuchadnezzar told his dream of the great tree, Daniel grieved to think of the suffering that he had to pass through; he said, "The dream be to them that hate thee, and the interpretation thereof to thine enemies" (4:19). Tenderly and affectionately he besought him to repent of his evil ways. But he did not talk like that to Belshazzar. He knew the king's doom was sealed, and his day of mercy had gone by. Daniel saw in him only a wretched, impious degenerate, who had sinned against light and knowledge and deserved neither sympathy nor compassion. He realized that Belshazzar had gone steadily on in defiance of the God of Heaven until the hour of his judgment had struck. Nothing now could avert the richly-deserved wrath of the holy One. Faithfully the prophet proceeded to press home on the guilty king his sinfulness and irreverence; then he solemnly went on to read and interpret the message sent from Heaven. Even while he was speaking, the invading hosts were drawing nearer and nearer to the palace gates. But the king and his lords surrounding him were altogether unaware of what had taken place down by the river.

The meaning of the words is thus explained: MENE, "numbered"—"God hath numbered thy kingdom, and finished it" (5:26). Belshazzar's days of probation were passed and gone. The day of his sentence had come.

TEKEL, "weighed"—"Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting" (27). He who had exalted himself in his

pride and folly was found to be “altogether lighter than vanity” (**Psalm 62:9**).

And then note, Daniel said, PERES, “divided,” a form of the same word UPHARSIN which he read from the wall, but implying that the division had already taken place. For instead of saying, “God is dividing thy kingdom,” he declared, “Thy kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians” (28). The blow had already fallen; it was not that God was about to do this, but it had already been accomplished. While Daniel was interpreting, the kingdom had passed to other hands.

But despite all this the foolish and unrepentant king seems to imagine he is still secure. He offered Daniel the worthless honors he had promised, attempting to carry out the pledges made to him as though still in the zenith of his glory. But the awful chronicle of the Holy Spirit is: “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” (30-31). Thus the history of the head of gold had come to a close, and the silver breast and arms had come on the scene.

God’s Word had been fulfilled, and that night Babylon fell, never to rise again. In that destruction, as already intimated, we may see prefigured the overthrow of all Gentile power and dominion in the time of the end. It particularly pictures the end of that evil system designated in the book of the Revelation as “Babylon the great, the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth” (17:5). This is the world-religious system that will be destroyed just prior to the return of the Lord from Heaven.

There are those who teach that some time in the future literal Babylon is going to be restored, to be destroyed again; but a careful reading of **Jeremiah 50-51** will make it clear

that her destruction is to be perpetual. The city is never to be revived for the Most High has visited His judgment on it. But mystical Babylon will reach its climax after the church has been caught away to be with the Lord; the papacy and all her daughters will form one great apostate organization—the refuge of all the various portions of Bible-rejecting Christendom. The Babylon of history was a picture of this mystical Babylon.

Ancient Babylon, as we have seen, was the city of idolatry and the expression of the pride of man's heart, combining religion with self-seeking. Idolatry, properly speaking, began there. That was the place where the great tower was made, where men said, "Let us make us a name" (**Genesis 11:4**). They were not building a tower to escape another possible flood. They wished to create a center around which to rally, that they might make a great name for themselves on the earth. God had told them to scatter abroad, but they were determined not to obey Him. Willfully, they turned from Him to the worship of demons. That was the beginning of heathenism; there they commenced to worship and serve the creature more than the Creator. Every idolatrous system in the world is simply an offshoot of that first parent stem.

And so we find in the mystic Babylon of the last days, the union of all human churches, only to be superseded by the worship of the antichrist. After the body of Christ has been caught away to Heaven the professing world church will enjoy glory for a brief season during which the ten-kingdomed empire will be formed. Then the kings and nations of the earth will sicken of the contemptible sham and become utterly atheist. They will burn the harlot's flesh with fire, destroying forever the great world-church who says in her heart, "I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow" (**Revelation 18:7**).

Some may be asking, “Do you not think that Babylon the great is already in existence?” Yes: Babylon’s description in **Revelation 17** coincides too exactly with history’s record of the papal church to warrant any denial of her identity. What other church has sat upon the seven hills of that great city which ruleth over the kings of the earth? What other church has been for long centuries “drunk with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus”? What other church possessed the power and wealth ascribed to her? And where else will we find a religious organization so delighting in names of blasphemy as she?

But the Roman communion does not alone constitute great Babylon. The harlot has daughters who, like herself, profess to be pledged to the heavenly Bridegroom while committing fornication with the world that rejected Him. “Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God?” (**James 4:4**) Spiritual fornication is, at large, the union of the church and the state. In a more personal sense spiritual fornication is the union of the individual Christian with the world. It is an unholy alliance, opposed to the whole teaching of the New Testament. So if Rome be emphatically the great harlot, the state churches are her offspring; and “As is the mother, so is her daughter” (**Ezekiel 16:44**).

Soon the daughters will be wending their way homeward, back to the arms of their evil mother. We hear much in our times of “the reunion of Christendom” and we need not think of it as the dream of impractical religious enthusiasts. Christendom undoubtedly will be reunited. Everything points to such an issue, and no serious student of the prophetic scriptures can question it for a moment. But when the union comes to pass, it will be a Christless reunion for it will not take place until the body of Christ has been translated. All who are left will have thrown off allegiance to

the Word and Spirit of God and to the Lord Jesus Christ. The apostasy must take place first. Then the man of sin will be revealed.

Christendom's sin is the rejection of the Holy Spirit. With that necessarily comes the rejection of the Scriptures given by the Spirit's moving on the hearts and minds of "holy men of God." Coupled with the denial of the truth of God's Word, the world church will desire recognition as a power in the world, lording its authority over men's consciences. So when the true church is caught away, all the professing systems will doubtless come together in one and proudly exclaim, "Is not this great Babylon that we have built?" Its members will rejoice in a united Christendom—united in rejecting Christ, despising the Holy Spirit, and dishonoring the Word of God! The system will be established on a carnal and Satanic basis. It will last only for a brief season before being overthrown with indignation by the nations; they will resent any religious obligations when the Spirit of life has departed.

This is where we see everything drifting. Babylon's pride will become so insufferable that men will say, "We do not want any church at all; we will destroy the whole thing and get along without it." This is the openly-advocated doctrine of many socialists, and is clearly what that vaunted system of economics is leading up to, although many so-called Christian socialists may not realize it.

God will "put in their hearts to fulfil his will" (**Revelation 17:17**). He can use one evil power to destroy another, as He has often done in the past. He used Persia to destroy Babylon, and yet the Persians were a sinful nation too, overthrown by another power in due time. And so, in the time of the end, a godless government will be used to destroy a Christless church, "for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her" (18:8). Her doom will be as sudden and as overwhelming as was that which fell on the Babylon of Belshazzar.

Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all. And the voice of harpers, and musicians, and of pipers, and trumpeters, shall be heard no more at all in thee; and no craftsmen, of whatsoever craft he be, shall be found any more in thee; and the sound of a millstone shall be heard no more at all in thee; And the light of a candle shall shine no more at all in thee; and the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard no more at all in thee: for thy merchants were the great men of the earth; for by thy sorceries were all nations deceived. And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth (**Revelation 18:21-24**).

Before that hour of the vengeance of God has been reached, the message goes forth, “Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues” (**Revelation 18:4**). He who would be faithful to the Lord is called on to walk apart from all that resembles Babylon: “Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them” (**Ephesians 5:11**). In the first chapter of Genesis we read of God creating a division, dividing the light from the darkness. He desires this division to be maintained always. The devil has been busy ever since creation seeking to mix up the light and the darkness. The man of God is called to walk apart from the darkness as a child of light and of the day (**Ephesians 5:7-8**). May it be so with us for His name’s sake!

And now, before closing this solemn subject, I would address a word of warning to the unsaved. Belshazzar’s great offense was this: Though he knew of God’s dealings with Nebuchadnezzar, he continued in sin, going against light and knowledge. None are so guilty as those who so act. To these the Word comes with awful force, “He, that being often reproved hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed,

and that without remedy” (**Proverbs 29:1**). If you have been familiar with God’s warnings for years, do not dare any longer to defy God to His face by casting His Word behind your back.

You do not know how near you may be to the end of God’s patience with you. He lingers in grace, but He may soon strike in judgment. Your “MENE” may very soon be written on the wall— your days *numbered*—your life finished! “TEKEL” may even now be true for you—you are *weighed* and found wanting!

Weighed in the balance, and wanting,—
Weighed, but no Saviour is there,—
Weighed, but thy soul has been trifling,—
Weighed, and found lighter than air.

And then “PERES” will seal your doom; your opportunities of mercy will be forever gone, your body a corpse, and your soul in Hell! *Divided*—separated from all that is good, from all that is holy— to be lost forever, shut up to a Christless eternity.

O heed now the word of warning and flee for your life to the city of refuge, which is Christ Jesus Himself who says, “Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out” (**John 6:37**).

Chapter Six The Faithful Remnant

Daniel

Henry Allen Ironside

The interesting historical incident in **Daniel 6** portrays what should be comforting for every trusting soul: God's tender care over all who walk uprightly before Him and confide in His love and power. Like the previous events it also has a typical character; it illustrates the peculiarly trying position in which the faithful remnant of Judah will find themselves in the days of the antichrist.

Darius, the satrap of Babylon, was pleased to set a hundred and twenty princes over the kingdom; over these he set three presidents, of whom Daniel was first. The prophet was thus appointed to a position very similar to that of a present day prime minister or secretary of state. Because of his excellent spirit and his faithfulness in administering the affairs of the kingdom, he was preferred above all the other dignitaries. In this exalted office he became, as many in similar circumstances have been, the object of hatred by unprincipled political plotters who sought their own advancement at the expense of his downfall. They tried to find occasion against him, taking it for granted that he was actuated by the same selfish motives as they were. They endeavored in every way to obtain proof of some dereliction of duty on his part, concerning which they might accuse him to the king. But at last they were forced to confess, "We shall

not find any occasion against this Daniel, except we find it against him concerning the law of his God” (5:5).

The cunning plotters, knowing the intensity of Daniel’s religious convictions, put their heads together and drew up a statute. They felt sure that if they could prevail on the king to sign it, this edict would ensure the downfall of his favorite. With this in mind, they came into the presence of the king, pretending great loyalty and zeal for the dignity of his office. They said:

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. 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 (6:6-8).

Their statement was false, for at least one of the presidents, and he the most preferred by the king, had not been consulted in the matter; but it was he whose destruction they desired. Darius, though perhaps generally a good man, like many others, was easily persuaded by the tongue of flattery. Without consulting with his chief minister he signed the decree; this established it as a law unalterable even by royal veto. By the signing of this statute Darius practically put himself into the place that the man of sin will occupy in the last days. He became a type of the antichrist, who “sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God” **(2 Thessalonians 2:4)**.

It is important to realize that there may be a vast difference between what a man is in himself and the place he occupies in Scripture typology. Darius, as a man, was doubtless very

different in character from the coming false Messiah. He was kindly and amiable, and as we know, was afterwards deeply repentant for having permitted himself to act so foolishly. But as the king, making himself an object of worship and denying the liberty of any to offer prayers or adoration to any other god except himself, he fittingly pictures the antichrist.

We see the same principle brought out, for instance, in the case of David. Officially he was one of the most nearly perfect types of Christ that we have in the Old Testament, but as a man he possessed the same faults and committed as serious sins as many others.

After Darius had allowed himself to be flattered into appending the royal seal to the infamous interdict, the plotters doubtless congratulated themselves that Daniel's doom was sealed. His holiness of life was a continual rebuke to their impiety, and his integrity only accentuated their crookedness. As we read of their inability to find anything to accuse him of except in the matter of the Lord his God, we are reminded of **Proverbs 16:7** which tells us that "when a man's ways please the Lord, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him" (or, silent to him); that is, they cannot truthfully allege anything against the man who walks with God.

When Daniel knew that the writing was signed, there was no evidence of either fear or ostentation. He simply pursued his godly course as though the decree were not in existence. Verse 10 tells us, "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*" (italics added). Notice, it does not say that he opened his windows; on the contrary, it says, "his windows being open." To shut them now would have been cowardice; to open them, if he had previously been in the habit of keeping them closed, would

have been courting persecution— a foolhardy thing, which the child of God is never called on to do.

Daniel remembered the words of Solomon, which he prayed concerning the people of Israel:

If they sin against thee, (for there is no man which sinneth not,) and thou be angry with them, and deliver them over before their enemies, and they carry them away captives unto a land far off or near; Yet if they bethink themselves in the land whither they are carried captive, and turn and pray unto thee in the land of their captivity, saying, We have sinned, we have done amiss, and have dealt wickedly; If they return to thee with all their heart and with all their soul in the land of their captivity, whither they have carried them captives, and pray toward their land, which thou gavest unto their fathers, and toward the city which thou hast chosen, and toward the house which I have built for thy name: Then hear thou from the heavens, even from thy dwelling place, their prayer and their supplications, and maintain their cause, and forgive thy people which have sinned against thee (**2 Chronicles 6:36-39**).

In full accord with Solomon's prayer, Daniel went up into his house three times daily. Kneeling before his windows, opened toward Jerusalem, he offered his prayers and thanksgivings and made his confession to his God. Now he knows that he takes his life in his hand each time he carries out his pious custom, yet he does not shrink for a moment or seek in any way to hide from his enemies the fact that he is a follower of the God of Israel. He kneeled with bowed head facing the direction of the desolated city of Jehovah, Jerusalem, the place where the Lord had set His name. We may be assured that his prayer was no less fervent and his thanksgiving no less real because he knew that malicious spies were waiting to report his conduct to the king; and, according to the unalterable laws of the Medes and Persians,

Darius was bound to carry out its provisions and to enforce on each offender the penalty prescribed.

Having secured the evidence they desired, the conspirators went to the king and made accusation against Daniel. Darius at once realized the mistake he had made, and we are told he “laboured till the going down of the sun to deliver him” (14). But the unhappy ruler found himself helpless in the hands of his crafty advisers. He had to admit the authenticity of the decree and of his signature. He could do nothing except enforce the law. In this we see one great point of difference between the head of gold and the silver breast. Nebuchadnezzar’s word was absolute. No law held him in check: “Whom he would he slew; and whom he would he kept alive” (5:19). But it was otherwise with the Persian rulers. The law of the state had authority even over kings. And in each empire that followed we find imperial power more and more curtailed; the voice of the people made itself heard with ever greater force and intensity until the days of the feet of the image, part of iron and part of brittle pottery—a union of social democracy and imperialism.

Darius found it impossible to evade the statute in the face of his insistent ministers; they demanded that the decree be carried out, and the chief of the presidents be cast into the den of lions. The king seems to have had some sense in his soul of the power of the God of Daniel, for after giving the command, he said to him confidently, “Thy God whom thou servest continually, he will deliver thee” (6:16).

So Daniel was cast in, and Darius had a bad night, tossed between conflicting emotions of hope and fear as to his servant’s fate. Early in the morning he rushed to the mouth of the den, and called in great distress to find out whether Daniel had been destroyed or delivered. “O Daniel, servant of the living God, is thy God, whom thou servest continually, able to deliver thee from the lions?” (20) His anxious query

shows both a measure of confidence in what he must have learned from Daniel as to the omnipotent power of God and his own lack of acquaintance with Him. But, to his joy, he found that Daniel's God was as good as His word; He had preserved the prophet unharmed in the midst of the ravenous beasts. Daniel's reply is noble in its very simplicity: "O king, live for ever," he said. "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" (21-22).

The misguided king is delighted to find that his own wretched blunder had brought no real damage to his minister; at once he commanded him to be taken up out of the den. The law had been complied with fully, and the prophet suffered no harm. Thus was Daniel delivered, "because he believed in his God" (23). What a lesson to tried saints everywhere! "Who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good?" (**1 Peter 3:13**) It may not always please God to deliver *from* the trial, but He will always preserve *in* it and eventually bring His own in peace *out* of it.

The king now commands that Daniel's accusers with all their households be cast into the den. It was a heathenish way of visiting retribution on them, inasmuch as the wives and children were not offenders; however it was quite in keeping with ancient eastern conceptions of justice. The lions broke all their bones in pieces the moment they came to the bottom of the den. Thus was the righteous one delivered out of trouble, while the wicked suffered in his place.

Darius then made a new decree, which was sent to all people, nations, and languages in the Medo-Persian dominions. In the edict he bade men everywhere to 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. 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” (26-27). We may hope that Darius had learned the same lesson that had been taught to Nebuchadnezzar in a very different school, long before. As for Daniel, the record says he prospered in the reign of Darius and in the reign of Cyrus the Persian. How much his influence had to do with the issuing of the decree later on permitting the Jews to return to Jerusalem, we do not know. But there can be little doubt that his voice would be heard by Cyrus regarding the return of the exiles.

To fully understand this portion it is necessary to consider the symbolic character of Daniel’s experience. The whole scene points to a time when Daniel’s people will once more be restored to their land. There will rise up among them one who will magnify himself above all that is called God and will be worshiped; he will sit in the temple of God, displaying himself as god. He will make a decree that prayer and worship will be addressed to him alone and every other god ignored. All this will be considered in its place, when we come to take up the latter part of chapter 11 where we have a vivid description of the antichrist and his times. The common notion that the papacy is the antichrist also will be addressed then. What I especially wish to make clear now is that God’s word has distinctly foretold the regathering of the Jews to Palestine, though at first in unbelief, and that out of the whole company a remnant will be taken up in grace and turned to the Lord. The mass will accept the claims of the willful one, who will pose as their messiah. The remnant however will be distinguished by their unyielding opposition to his decrees, and therefore, as in the case of Daniel in this chapter, will be called upon to pass through a period of severe testing, designated in both Testaments as *the tribulation*. But through the power of God they will eventually

emerge from their trials in triumph, and they will see their enemies suffer the desolation and destruction that they had thought to inflict upon the faithful remnant.

First, in order that it may be made plain that the restoration of Israel, so frequently referred to by the prophets, is yet in the future, I would direct your attention to **Isaiah 11**. You will do well to read the entire chapter at your leisure, though I will here quote but a few verses.

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. And he shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth... And there shall be an highway for the remnant of his people, which shall be left, from Assyria; like as it was to Israel in the day that he came up out of the land of Egypt (**Isaiah 11:11-12,16**).

That this passage has no reference to the return from Babylon in the *past* is evident, for it distinctly tells us that the Lord shall set His hand *the second time* to recover the remnant of His people. The first time was when they came up from the dominions of Cyrus and Artaxerxes, in the days of Ezra and Nehemiah. The second recovery will be when they are brought back, not only from those lands, but from Egypt and all the islands of the sea. *How* they will return is described in **Isaiah 18**. There we learn that some great maritime nation will further the work of restoration by bringing them in many ships from the most distant places to their ancient homeland. "In that time shall the present be brought unto the Lord of hosts of a people scattered and peeled, and from a people terrible from their beginning

hitherto; a nation meted out and trodden under foot, whose land the rivers have spoiled, to the place of the name of the Lord of hosts, the mount Zion” (18:7).

That this return must be carried out in order to fulfill the promises made by God to the fathers should be self-evident. In the book of Jeremiah the Lord corroborates the prophecy of Isaiah by saying, “For, lo, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will bring again the captivity of my people Israel and Judah, saith the Lord: and I will cause them to return to the land that I gave to their fathers, and *they shall possess it*” (**Jeremiah 30:3**, italics added). And this return is still in the future, for in connection with it the pledge is given that when Jacob shall return he “shall be in rest, and be quiet, and none shall make him afraid.” This could hardly be said of the previous return from Babylon; for at no time did they dwell in rest and quietness undisturbed by their enemies, and possess the land. But they are Jehovah’s people, in spite of all their sins; and in His own time He will fulfill to the letter every pledge He has made.

That they will have to pass through a season of severe testing before entering into the promised rest is equally clear, as the same chapter and many other portions of Scripture witness.

For thus saith the Lord: We have heard a voice of trembling, of fear, and not of peace. Ask ye now, and see whether a man doth travail with child? wherefore do I see every man with his hands on his loins, as a woman in travail, and all faces are turned into paleness? 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 (**Jeremiah 30:5-7**).

In **Isaiah 24** we read a fuller description of this time of trouble called the great tribulation. As you read this chapter change the word *earth* to *land*. The first twelve verses picture

the land of Palestine as it will be in those days of distress. Now, notice verses 13-14:

When thus it shall be in the midst of the land among the people, there shall be as the shaking of an olive tree, and as the gleaning grapes when the vintage is done. They shall lift up their voice, they shall sing for the majesty of the Lord, they shall cry aloud from the sea.

Here the remnant is distinguished from the mass. Instead of being overwhelmed with despair because of their sorrows when cast, as it were, into this den of lions, they lift up their voices in song, like Daniel glorifying the God of Heaven. To them will be fulfilled the precious promises of **Isaiah 43**: "I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth; Even every one that is called by my name: for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him" (6-7). These shall be Jehovah's witnesses, testifying to the power and glory of the one true God, when apostate Christendom shall have been given up to the strong delusion to believe the lie of the antichrist.

The prophet Ezekiel, in chapter 36, foretold both their scattering and their regathering. Verse 24 says, "For I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land." The verses that follow show us that at that time they will be cleansed from their filthiness; a new heart and a new spirit will be given them. The Spirit of God within them will cause them to walk in His statutes and keep His judgments. Now I ask any unprejudiced person, Has this ever been fulfilled in the past? When the remnant of Judah returned from Babylon, did they give any evidence of having been as a company regenerated, so that they found delight in the law of the Lord? Was not the opposite true as evidenced by their turning away from

His statutes even in the lifetime of Ezra and his collaborators, and later their crucifixion of the Lord of glory?

The New Testament revelations on this subject show us plainly that their recovery awaits the close of the present dispensation. In our Lord's prophecy concerning the destruction of Jerusalem He said

When ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh... And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all the nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down by the Gentiles, *until* the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled (**Luke 21:20, 24**, italics added).

Jerusalem's rehabilitation awaits, then, the falling of the Stone upon the feet of the Gentile image; for as we have already seen, that will conclude the Gentile times. But now a connected passage in **Romans 11** will show us just where and when to place the turning of the remnant to God. In the 25th verse of that chapter the apostle wrote: "For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits, that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in." Now we are not to confuse the *fulness* of the Gentiles with the *times* of the Gentiles. The latter expression takes in the entire course of Gentile domination in the Holy Land. As long as the Jew is not master in Palestine the times of the Gentiles are running on. But the fullness of the Gentiles, as the context in this chapter makes clear, is an expression referring to spiritual blessing, not national nor temporal. This fullness will have come in when the message of the gospel has accomplished its purpose, and God has completed His present work of taking out from among the Gentiles a people for His name. In other words, the fullness of the Gentiles and the rapture of the church are coincident. Therefore between the fullness of the Gentiles and the close

of the times of the Gentiles there will be a time-period in which the great bulk of prophecy will have its fulfillment. This is the period designated in Daniel "the time of the end." A reference to the chart will help to make clear its proper position. The line running across the chart beneath the parenthetical portion that represents the present age, depicts the fullness of the Gentiles. The line below, immediately above the inscription concerning the kingdom, represents the close of the times of the Gentiles. Between these two lines we have the time of the end; and it is then that the conversion and testing of the remnant will take place.

The later chapters of Zechariah have much to tell us of that time of trouble, and the testimony that will be maintained in it.

And it shall come to pass, that in all the land, saith the Lord, two parts therein shall be cut off and die; but the third shall be left therein. And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people: and they shall say, The Lord is my God (**Zechariah 13:8-9**).

The greater part of the book of Revelation, from chapter four to the end of chapter nineteen, is concerned with the events of this time of the end. The saints seen on earth at that time are not Christians, but Jews who will then be called upon to suffer for the sake of their once-rejected Messiah. I agree that in chapter seven, after the account of the sealed 144,000 out of all the tribes of Israel, we have pictured a great multitude, whom no man can number, of saved Gentiles; but they do not form part of the church, nor do they appear throughout the book as in the place of testimony on earth. They come out of the great tribulation, emerging at last to take their place in the world-kingdom of our God and His Christ. But it is to the Israelite remnant alone that a

place of testimony is given. This remnant will then heed the word of the Lord, search the Scriptures, and learn of their place in the course of time. They will understand that the fullness of the Gentiles has come in, and that God is again taking up His earthly people. I have no doubt that the book of Daniel will show the Israelite remnant where they are, and will lead them to seek the face of God. They will stand for Him when all Christendom and the bulk of their own nation shall have gone into the last great apostasy. Through them a final call will go out to the heathen who have never yet heard the gospel, nor rejected its precious message. The result of that ministry will be the ingathering of the great multitude shown to us in the seventh chapter of Revelation.

I urge each one to search the Scriptures for himself to see whether these things be so.

Chapter Seven Four Great World Empires

Daniel

Henry Allen Ironside

We now enter on the second part of the book of Daniel. In chapter 7 we have a new beginning, as you will readily see by referring to the chart, even though this chapter covers practically the same ground as chapter 2. It takes in the whole course of the times of the Gentiles; it begins with Babylon and ends in the overthrow of all derived authority and the establishment of the kingdom of the Son of man. But the difference between the first and second divisions is this: The first division is chiefly occupied with prophetic history as viewed from man's standpoint; but in the second half of the book we have the same scenes as viewed in God's unsullied light. In the second chapter, when a Gentile king had a vision of the course of world-empire, he saw the image of a man. It was a stately and noble figure that filled him with such admiration that he set up a similar statue to be worshiped as a god. But in this opening chapter of the second division Daniel, the man of God, has a vision of the same empires; he sees them as four ravenous wild beasts, so brutal and monstrous that no actual creatures known to man could adequately describe them.

There is something exceedingly solemn in considering history from God's viewpoint. If you read history as viewed simply by the natural man, you will find that a great deal of space is

given to congratulating humanity on its marvelous exploits. One would suppose that we have now almost reached perfection, so far as human government or political economy is concerned. Civilization and the progress of the race are presumably at the zenith of their glory. But if we read history in the light of holy Scripture, with the Spirit of God illuminating the page, we receive a very different impression. We then begin to realize that the things that are most highly esteemed among men are abominations in the sight of God. When we consider the great rulers of the earth who wield power over the nations, we are reminded of what is written in **Psalms 49:12**, "Man being in honour abideth not: he is like the beasts that perish."

In Daniel's visions he saw the course of each of the empires represented by these wild beasts. That is, each wild beast pictures the leading features in the history of the empire that it represents. For instance, the whole course of Babylon is depicted by the winged lion, which afterward had its wings plucked, a man's heart given to it, and was made to stand erect on its feet. Then the whole course of Medo-Persia is pictured in the vision of the bear with three ribs in its mouth, which lifted itself up on one side. The entire history of the Grecian empire and its four-fold division is set forth in the four-headed and winged leopard. And the course of the Roman empire right on down to the time of the end (a condition which has not yet been reached) is depicted in the dreadful and terrible beast, with the great iron teeth and the ten horns. It is important to see this. Some take it for granted that, as the Roman empire has passed off the scene, all that is connected with this Roman beast is gone too. They think it has no further interest for us who live in the gospel dispensation, but the contrary is true.

But now, look at the 17th verse for a moment. There the four beasts are said to be "four kings, which shall arise out of the

earth.” The context makes it plain, however, that the angel did not mean four individual kings; in prophetic scripture the term *king* is very frequently used for *kingdom*. In verse 23 we read, “The fourth beast shall be the fourth *kingdom* upon the earth;” necessarily the principle applies to all. Though, I would have you notice that in connection with each of them, one king comes out prominently. In each case but the last, the prominent king is the one under whom the kingdom first attains the dignity of a great world power. Thus Nebuchadnezzar comes before us as the one who stands distinctively for Babylon; he was told in chapter 2, “Thou art this head of gold” (38). But the winged lion represents both the glory and debasement of the Chaldean empire. Its wings were plucked, it lost its lion heart and was given instead the weak heart of a man. Cyrus the Great is the leading figure when we think of Medo-Persia. It was he who destroyed the chief cities of Babylon, symbolized by the three ribs in the mouth of the bear. The leopard clearly suggests Alexander the Great, the four wings speaking of the incredible swiftness of his conquests. The four heads depict the fourfold division of his dominions made among his leading generals after his death. But no great potentate in the past epitomizes in himself the Roman authority. We look to the future for one to arise who will do this—“the beast” described in **Revelation 13**. He will obtain sway over Europe just prior to the establishment of the kingdom of the Son of man, when all authority, power, and glory will be headed up in our Lord Jesus Christ.

Though these kingdoms are successive in their rising, one does not necessarily completely destroy the other. The four great monarchies, with their characteristic features, are to run on in some form until Jesus comes. Until the dawning of that glorious morning without clouds, this world will never be free from strife and bloodshed, pestilence and misgovernment. Scripture shows us that all these things are

going to continue; evil in the professing church will increase and abound until the long-awaited hour of the establishment of the liberty of the glory.

Sometimes people say, "I do not see how you can charitably desire the Son of God to come back the second time if it is really true that when He returns the day of grace will be over for those who have rejected His Word." But we know that the only hope of this poor world is the return of the true King. Matters will never be put right on earth until they are put right by judgment. The preaching of the gospel is never going to establish the kingdom; nor did God intend that it should. After nineteen hundred years of gospel preaching, there are far more heathen in the world than there were when the Lord Jesus Christ appeared the first time. Those who are really Christians are just a little handful compared with the multitude that do not know God. The gospel is not God's way of bringing in the kingdom and converting the world. This will be brought about only through judgment. While we shrink from the awful thought of what is coming on this poor world, we realize it is the only way to receive the blessing creation is groaning for; so we cry, "Come, Lord Jesus" for we know that He is the only hope for its deliverance. Every conflict between nations, every class struggle, every cruelty that is inflicted on the weak and defenseless—all these things lead us to cry, "Come, Lord Jesus." For when He comes, He is going to put an end to it all; when He comes, He is going to dry the tears of the oppressed; when He comes, He is going to give men a righteous rule, as Daniel saw pictured in the last of these visions. First, the four brutal world kingdoms must run their course. Then, on the utter breakdown of power in the hands of man, the world kingdom of the Christ of God is to be set up and righteousness will cover the earth as the waters cover the sea. But we may rest assured that our Lord will not come while there is one soul out of Christ who is still anxious to be saved.

Notice that the first three beasts are passed over in the interpretation given to Daniel. It has to do almost entirely with the dreadful fourth beast, for this beast was to be in control both at the first and second advent of our Lord.

But I now desire to notice the whole chapter a little more carefully. It was in the first year of Belshazzar, king of Babylon, that Daniel had a dream and visions came to him as he was lying on his bed. He saw the four winds of the heavens churning up the great sea. The great sea was of course the Mediterranean; it is well known that every one of the empires described in the prophecy borders on the shores of the great sea. The kingdom of Babylon embraced the shores that stretched along the eastern and southeastern edge of the Mediterranean; Medo-Persia did the same; while Greece also took in the northeastern shores; and the Roman empire completely surrounded the sea. Hence the name *Mediterranean* meaning “midst of the earth.” That was the sea Daniel was looking on in his vision, and in a very literal sense every one of these empires seems to spring up from the great sea.

Revelation—a book that dovetails prophetically with the book of Daniel—gives us a mystical interpretation of the sea. In **Revelation 17:15** we read, “He saith unto me, The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues.” Isaiah also tells us that the wicked are like the troubled sea when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt (**Isaiah 57:20**). So we are clearly justified in interpreting the sea as a picture of the troubled nations. In other words, out of the unsettled state of the nations surrounding the Mediterranean sea these great empires will arise.

The four winds striving on the sea would indicate providential agencies working on the minds of the people. You will find the figure of the winds also used in that way in

the book of Revelation. Of course, though men little realize it, all the great movements of the nations are in accordance with the actings of God's providence. Thus, in a very real sense, as someone has aptly said, "All history is His story." No matter what movements are going on among men, God is above them all. He may be hidden behind the scenes, but as shown so clearly in the book of Esther, He is moving all the scenes that He is behind.

When the human race lapsed into idolatry after the flood, God committed the promises of eternal glory to Abraham. But when Abraham's seed violated the covenant, God set Nebuchadnezzar over all nations. However he also failed, though forced to acknowledge the power and mercy of God at last. In the rise of Babylon we see the providence of God working among the nations to take away royalty from Judah because of their sins.

In his vision Daniel saw four great beasts, all different from one another, coming up from the sea. The first was like a lion and had eagles' wings—speaking of majesty, ferocity, and swiftness. It was in a marvelously short space of time that Babylon subdued all the surrounding nations and brought them beneath its sway. But as Daniel looked he saw the wings plucked and the beast lifted up from the earth; it was made to stand on the feet as a man and a man's heart was given to it. Thus indicating that all progress was at an end and majesty had departed, for one can scarcely think of anything more awkward and ungainly than a lion standing this way. The man's heart given to the lion symbolizes the weakness of Babylon displayed in Belshazzar. In fact, after Nebuchadnezzar's death, declension at once set in and continued until the days when the Medes and Persians wrested the kingdom from his inglorious grandson. When this vision was given to Daniel, the last stage of the lion had almost been reached; Belshazzar was already reigning.

In the second instance Daniel saw a beast like a bear come up from the sea, and it raised itself up on one side. It had three ribs between its teeth and a voice said, "Arise, devour much flesh" (5). It was after the decay of the Babylonian empire that the Medo-Persian union was consummated. At first Media was stronger, but it soon became evident that the Persians were to have the superior place. Thus the bear raised itself up on one side. The three ribs between the teeth indicate that it had already destroyed its prey. It had destroyed the Babylonian lion; the three ribs might stand for the three chief cities of the Chaldean empire—Babylon, Ecbatana, and Borsippa, which were all taken by the united armies of Cyrus and Cyaxares. The command to arise and devour much flesh indicates the extreme cruelties often practiced by the Persians and the wide extent of their conquests.

The third beast had the appearance of a leopard, with four wings of a fowl on its back and with four heads. The leopard's appearance demonstrates a synopsis of the history of the Grecian empire. Over three hundred years before Christ, Alexander the Great, as he is now known, was born as heir to Philip of Macedon. This was but one of the small kingdoms of Greece; but after Alexander's accession to the throne, Macedon, and through it all Greece, took a place in the affairs of the world that it had never taken before. Alexander welded together the Grecian states and Asiatic kingdoms of the west, and then turned eastward, where he met and subdued the haughty Persians completely. He caused himself to be proclaimed emperor of the world and had divine honors paid him. But his glory was short-lived for he died in his early thirties as a result of licentious living and debauchery. Shortly after his death his dominions were divided among his four leading generals. The marvelous progress of Alexander—even greater than that of Nebuchadnezzar—is indicated in the vision; the beast that

stood for Babylon had *two* wings, while the Grecian leopard had *four*.

There is an interesting story related by Josephus. After the conquest of Tyre, Alexander was marching through Syria with his armies headed toward Jerusalem, which he intended to destroy. The high priest and his companions robed themselves in their priestly garments and marched in solemn procession out of the city to meet the conqueror. Alexander is said to have recognized the high priest as one whom he had seen in a vision. From his hand he received a copy of the book of Daniel, in which the prophecies concerning himself were pointed out. Because of what was written there he accepted the submission of the Jews, granted them religious toleration, and left their city unharmed. While we have no means of deciding the truth or falsity of this story, we can readily see that it is not at all unlikely.

As Daniel's vision continues the fourth beast is described:

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. 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 a man, and a mouth speaking great things (7-8).

In its turn, the Grecian empire was overthrown and, about half a century before Christ, Rome became the mistress of the world. The very birth of the Lord Jesus in Bethlehem was brought about, humanly speaking, by a decree going forth from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be taxed

(registered for a census). This brought Mary and her husband Joseph to the city of David, foretold by the prophet as the birthplace of Him “whose goings forth have been of old, from everlasting” (**Micah 5:2**). On the chart, I have represented this beast as having a composite character, for I take it that it correlates to the beast described in **Revelation 13**. It has the head of a lion, the body of a leopard, and the feet of a bear; thus including in itself the chief features of all the kingdoms pictured by the other beasts. It was the boast of the Romans that they never destroyed a civilization when they conquered the people; they took from it everything of merit and combining all into one, produced the greatest civilization the world had ever known.

The course of this last beast has not yet been fully run. In the book of Revelation it is described as having seven heads, one of which was wounded to death and afterwards healed. The seven heads are said to be seven kings or forms of government. In John’s day, five had already passed away and the sixth, or imperial form, was then in existence. The seventh had not yet come, nor has it appeared up to the present time. It will have its fulfillment in the union of imperialism and democracy, which we have already seen is to take place in the time of the end. But as the interpretation of this vision is given farther on in the chapter, we will not go into it now.

Daniel next saw thrones set up. You will notice that the King James version says: “The thrones were *cast down*” (7:9, italics added). This is the literal rendering of the Chaldean expression that implies the casting down of rugs and cushions to be used as an oriental divan-throne. But the English translation would seem to imply the *destruction* of thrones; so it is better rendered “set up.” He continued:

And the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne

was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened (9-10).

Daniel then saw that because of the blasphemous words of the little horn, the last beast was slain and his body destroyed and given to the burning flame. The other beasts had not been dealt with so summarily. They had their dominion taken away, but their life was prolonged; this agrees with what we know as to their history.

The Son of man is then seen coming with the clouds of heaven to the Ancient of days who gives 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” (14). This completes the vision; the interpretation follows.

Daniel was deeply exercised in spirit over all that he had seen, but an angel seems to have been standing by, and Daniel asked for understanding as to “the truth of all this” (16). The angel told him that the four beasts represent four kings or kingdoms, as we have already seen; but “the saints of the most High [places] shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever” (18). But Daniel desired fuller information as to the meaning of the fourth beast and especially of the little horn “that had eyes, and a mouth that spake very great things, whose look was more stout than his fellows”; who rooted up three of the ten horns, and who “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 [places]; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom” (20-22). The angel explained that ten kings will arise out of the fourth

kingdom—clearly at one time. From among these another will arise after them who will be different from the first and will subdue three of them. He will be characterized by blaspheming the name of the Most High. The little horn can be none other than the beast of **Revelation 13** and 17. He will persecute the saints of the most high places—the remnant-saints, of whom Scripture has much to say in connection with the last days. In **Daniel 9** we read that he will confirm a covenant with the Jews for seven years, but will violate his covenant in the midst of the specified period. As stated here, he will “think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time” (25); that is, he will be the persecutor of the Jewish remnant for the last three and a half years of the time of the end. But at the expiration of that time, the Lord Himself will return from Heaven, and the beast’s dominion will be taken away; he himself, as we learn in **Revelation 19**, will be cast alive into the lake of fire.

Then “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” (27). Thus will be brought in that everlasting kingdom for which the groaning earth has been waiting so long.

I am quite aware that there are many interpreters who think they see in the little horn, as in the king of **Daniel 11:36**, the papacy, which pretended to universal dominion after the downfall of the Roman empire. But the little horn is not to rise up until after that empire has reached its ten-kingdom condition, and we have already observed that this condition has never existed in the past. At no time after the dismemberment of the Roman empire, did ten kingdoms formed from its fragments unite in one. And then it is also important to remember that the papacy existed before the

break-up of the empire; therefore the pope, instead of rising up on the head of the beast after all the other horns had obtained their strength, came up before the ten horns existed at all. This is clearly contrary to what is stated in Daniel concerning the blaspheming little horn. And it is further to be observed that the little horn is wielding supreme power on earth at the coming of the Son of man to set up His kingdom; whereas it is evident that the papacy has not been supreme, nor indeed recognized as a world power for many years.

In the Revelation, the papal church is represented by the scarlet woman riding the beast. But in the time of the end, the ten horns are to unite in seeking and carrying out her destruction. Notice carefully that in **Revelation 17:12-13**, it is written: "And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings *one hour with the beast*. These have one mind and shall give their power and strength unto the beast" (italics added). Whereas, in the sixteenth verse we learn that their power will be used for the destruction of Babylon the great: "And the ten horns which thou sawest, [and] the beast, these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire." Thus it should be plain to any careful reader that the little horn of Daniel is the Roman beast of Revelation. He will be acknowledged by the ten kingdoms as supreme arbiter of Europe in the coming day of tribulation. He will be permitted to prosper and to persecute the faithful remnant of Israel, after the church has been translated to Heaven. His power will continue until the appearing of the Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints for the destruction of those who have refused His Word.

The great bulk of prophecy has to do with the events of this brief season called the time of the end. The present age is

one never referred to in the Old Testament, except in the most general way; for the calling out of the church was a mystery hidden in God throughout all past ages and only revealed in this dispensation for the obedience of faith. The church may now be completed at any moment. Then the next great event will be the descent of the Lord in the air and the translation of His bride, this preparing the way for the things that are coming on the earth.

In the last verse of our chapter, Daniel wrote that he kept these things in his heart. May we do the same. Surely as Christians, nothing will help us understand our present place and portion so well as to have a clear apprehension of the place that Israel and the nations have in the mind of God, as revealed in His Word. In the present age we should consider it a happy privilege to pass through this world as strangers and pilgrims, sharing with Christ in His rejection. For us, this is the time to suffer for righteousness' sake—the time to rejoice if accounted worthy to endure shame for His name's sake. The glory is coming when He returns to take His great power and reign. Until then may we “go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach” (**Hebrews 13:13**).

O unsaved one, you too should ponder these things in your heart so that you are not blinded by the false and deceitful glare of the tinselled glory of this world. It is all doomed to pass away, and your lot will be unhappy if you have no interests in a more secure world. “The things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal” (**2 Corinthians 4:18**). See to it, I plead with you, that you are numbered among those who have part in the everlasting kingdom so soon to succeed all the passing dominions of this world. God in grace has given His Son to die for your salvation, but remember that it is written: “As it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: So Christ

was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation” (**Hebrews 9:27**). If you would welcome with joy His promised advent, you must know Him now as Savior. Otherwise His return to this earth to reign would find you numbered among His enemies, to be destroyed from before His face

Chapter Eight The Grecian Little Horn

Daniel

Henry Allen Ironside

In beginning this chapter I call your attention to a most interesting fact regarding the structure of the book of Daniel. It was originally written in two languages. The first chapter and verses 1-3 of chapter 2 are in Hebrew. But from 2:4 to the end of chapter 7, the language employed is Chaldean, or Aramaic. The balance of the book is in Hebrew. There seems to be a very simple and yet significant reason for this. The first section was for the special help and encouragement of the faithful among the scattered Jews, so it was written in their own language. But in the second section, God is tracing out the course of the times of the Gentiles. He led Daniel to write the record of it in the popular language of the day so the Chaldeans might read it and profit from it.

The portion of the book of Daniel beginning with the eighth chapter and going on to the end concerns the Jews in a very special way, so it was written in Hebrew, as was the first part. It is of importance to see the different applications of each of these sections. God has nothing to say about the course of the church of this dispensation either in Daniel or elsewhere in the prophetic books. He is giving us the truth both in regard to Judah and Israel and to the Gentiles as such. If we fail to observe this our apprehension of Scripture will be in confusion. The principle is a simple one, but if kept in mind will aid greatly to a proper understanding of the Word of God. When in the prophetic books we read of Judah, or Zion, or

Jerusalem, we are not to suppose the church is meant. Judah means Judah, Zion means Zion, Jerusalem means Jerusalem, Israel means Israel, and the Gentiles have no part in what is written concerning these. The church, which is the body of Christ, is something very different. There are three, not merely two, classes of people in the world today—all contemplated in Scripture. “Give none offence,” says the apostle Paul, “neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God” (**1 Corinthians 10:32**). These are the three classes. If the various passages of Scripture referring to each are rightly divided and not all mixed up together in the mind of the reader, he will get a proper understanding of what is commonly called dispensational truth. It is nothing more nor less than giving to each dispensation, or period of God’s special dealings with men, the portions that apply particularly to each.

In studying the Chaldean part of Daniel (2:4-7:28) we have noticed how the omniscient God has traced for us the course of the great empires of this world. We have had outlined for our learning their rise, progress, decline, and fall, emphasizing the truth that “righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people” (**Proverbs 14:34**). All this was written in the language spoken by the Gentiles at that time. But now we are to be largely occupied with that race long-despised and hated, but ever watched over by Jehovah—His covenant people of old, beloved for the fathers’ sakes, no matter how great their failure and sin. That is why the last part of the book is written in Hebrew. It is true that we will still read of some of these world powers (we are largely occupied with two of them in this chapter), but this is only to clear the ground for better understanding of God’s plan for the future of the Jewish nation.

A careful study of the book of Revelation will show you that it is very similar in structure to the book of Daniel. The first

part (**Revelation 1-3**) is devoted to the prophetic history of the church. From chapter 4 to 11:18 we see the judgments that are to fall on apostate Christendom and the powers connected with it. Their history is traced right on down to the end, closing with “the time of the dead that they should be judged.” But the Lord had said to John, “Thou must prophesy again” (10:11), so he begins to take things up once more from the 12th chapter on, but it is all connected with God’s earthly people, the nation of Israel. Thus the first part of Revelation has chiefly to do with the course of the world as such; it turns the divine searchlight on the great movements among the nations. But the second half has to do with the same people (the Jews) that we have before us in the last part of Daniel. As remarked in the previous chapter, the one book dovetails into the other. Daniel cannot be understood apart from the book of the Revelation; and Revelation itself is in many places only intelligible because of what had previously been made known to the prophet in Babylon. Let us remember then that our present chapter is the first of the Hebrew section; the previous chapters were in Aramaic and especially concerned the Gentiles.

Daniel 8:1 shows us that two years elapsed between the visions of chapter 7 and 8. In the third year of the reign of King Belshazzar Daniel was given the vision of the ram and the he-goat. Either physically, or in spirit, he was in the palace in the province of Elam by the river Ulai. Elam was the ancient name of the highlands east of Babylon, stretching from India to the Persian Gulf. It was in this very region that Cyrus was to obtain his first great victories. It was fitting that in his vision Daniel should be in the land soon to be completely dominated by the Persians because that which he saw had largely to do with Persia in her early triumphs and subsequent defeat.

He tells us that he lifted up his 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 (3-4).

In verse 15 we have the interpreting angel drawing near, whose mission it was to explain the meaning of the vision. We will notice each part separately, connecting it with the interpretation given. In verses 19-20, the angel says: "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. The ram which thou sawest having two horns are the kings of Media and Persia." Thus we are not left to form our own judgment as to what the ram might represent. We are distinctly told by the angel that the ram stands for the same dominion as the breast and arms of silver in Nebuchadnezzar's great image and the bear that was lifted up on one side in the previous vision. It is as though God would give us symbol after symbol to impress on our minds the events to follow one another on the earth prior to the establishment of the kingdom of His Son. The fact that we are given three symbolic images to teach us this lesson reminds us that "a three-fold cord is not quickly broken" (**Ecclesiastes 4:12**).

Remember that when Daniel had the vision Babylon was still the supreme power, though already in its decline. But Daniel was given this revelation as to the ram of Persia when no human mind could possibly have predicted the place it was to take in the affairs of men. It is rather interesting to know that, according to standard authorities, the ram was the symbol of Persia; a picture of one was carried on her banners before her armies. The two horns, the higher of which came

up last, clearly connect with the bear lifting itself up on one side. They illustrate the fact that the Medo-Persian empire was composed of two nations—the ancient and venerable kingdom of Media and the then modern kingdom of Persia. Later, after the confederation, Persia became by far the more powerful of the two; thus the horn that came up last was higher. Daniel saw this ram pushing westward, northward, and southward; this indicates exactly the course of Persian conquest. The armies of Cyrus did not turn eastward to conquer those barbarous tribes, but pressed toward the Mediterranean and Black seas, and the Persian Gulf. They continued their conquests until all western Asia and Egypt were subject to them.

While Daniel was considering what the ram could mean, he saw a he-goat come from the west and cross the face of the whole earth. It ran so swiftly that it did not touch the ground. This goat had a notable horn between his eyes. He came to the ram that had the two horns and charged him in the fury of his power. Daniel vividly described the terrific onslaught:

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 (7).

Again we do not need to try to discern the meaning of the vision; God Himself has revealed it through His angel. The interpretation is given in verse 21: “The rough goat is the king of Grecia: and the great horn that is between his eyes is the first king.”

At the time that Daniel prophesied, Greece consisted of a number of independent and often warring states, yet bound together by ancestral ties. It remained for Alexander in,

commonly called the Great, the remarkably gifted son of Philip of Macedon, to consolidate these separate kingdoms into one loyal, united power destined to rule the world for a season. The vision in **Daniel 8**, as all those in the book, exactly agrees with later history. I do not want to occupy you too much with history; a knowledge of human records is certainly not necessary to enable one to understand the Word of God. On the other hand nothing is gained by ignorance; faith is confirmed and God is glorified when we see how the wonderful exactness of His holy Word is witnessed to by the annals of uninspired men.

The first thing of note I would have you observe is this: the he-goat came from the west. According to history, we know that an altogether new thing appeared in the rise and progress of Alexander the Great. Previous to that time, power had always risen up in the east and reached out toward the west. The East was the cradle of the human race, and the most ancient civilizations existed there. The nations of the East thought of all the rest of the world, especially the distant lands of the west, as “barbarians,” for whom they entertained a haughty contempt. But the he-goat came from the despised west with great anger. In great passion, he did not touch the ground in the swiftness and the fury of his onslaught. This is a fitting symbol of the whirlwind campaign of the army of the west headed by its intrepid commander. The overrunning of Asia by Alexander was not merely to gratify his ambition for world empire; it was also to pay off old scores. The Greeks had never forgotten the disgrace and shame of earlier Persian conquests. Nor could they forgive the Persians for their unsuccessful attack, under Xerxes, on the Hellenic states. For years they had brooded over these things and had nursed the desire for a bloody and triumphant revenge; at last they realized that the time had come to gratify their passion. Therefore, it was with more than usual alacrity that they sprang to arms at Alexander’s

beck and call. They rushed on the Persian hosts in angry mood, eager to settle up these old scores and execute vengeance on their ancient enemies. So Daniel saw the he-goat moved with anger, and charging the ram in the fury of his power. By this terrific attack, the ram was cast to the ground and his two horns broken. All this was fulfilled when Alexander met the armies of the last Darius and completely defeated them. By this he became ruler of the world.

But Daniel continued: "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" (8). In the interpretation, the angel explained that the great horn was the first king of Grecia; then he says: "Now that being broken, whereas four stood up for it, four kingdoms shall stand up out of the nation, but not in his power" (22). Alexander's day of power was brief; his early death testified to his inability to control his appetites and passions. Thus the great horn was broken.

None of his own house succeeded Alexander. After his untimely decease, his dominions were divided among his four leading generals: Ptolemy, who was acknowledged as king of Egypt and the adjacent countries; Seleucas, who took Syria and Asia Minor; Lysimachus, who had the sovereignty of Thrace (modern-day Turkey) and the contiguous territory; and Cassander, to whom fell Macedonia and all Greece. Thus was the empire divided and there was never again a masterhand commanding until the Roman conquest in the last century before Christ.

Two of these divisions occupy a large place in prophecy; but Scripture never again deals with Thrace, and only once directly with Greece (**Zechariah 9:13**). But Syria and Egypt are the powers known in the book of Daniel as the "king of the north" and the "king of the south." Unless otherwise specified, directions in Scripture are always to be understood

as having Jerusalem as a center; so, when the Bible speaks of the north and the south, it is north or south of Jerusalem. Unless this is kept in mind, one may easily become confused. Up until fifty years before the coming of the Lord Jesus, Syria and Egypt existed as independent powers, with the land of Palestine between them. The Holy Land thus became a veritable battleground for the opposing armies, and was torn by dissension for over two hundred years. The wretched history of those two centuries of horror is given us prophetically in **Daniel 11**. We will take them up in detail when we come to consider that portion of the book.

The chief reason for introducing all this was that we might be enlightened in regard to one who is to play a very important part in the time of the end; he is destined to arise out of the Syrian division of Alexander's empire. For the present and ever since the Roman conquest, the goat with the four horns has been apparently destroyed. But just as the Roman empire is to be revived in the last days, so we learn that two of the four horns of the divided Grecian dominion will reappear on the prophetic map in that time of trial. Out of one of them that little horn will arise who will be the bitter enemy of the returned Jews in that day.

And out of one of them came forth a little horn, which waxed exceeding great, toward the south, and toward the east, and toward the pleasant land. And it waxed great, even to the host of heaven; and it cast down some of the host and of the stars to the ground, and stamped upon them. Yea, he magnified himself even to the prince of the host, and by him the daily sacrifice was taken away, and the place of his sanctuary was cast down. And 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 (8:9-12).

I do not question for a moment that all this has had a fulfillment in the atrocities of that monster of wickedness, Antiochus Epiphanes. His persecutions of the Jews and desecration of the temple are described in these verses. But a comparison with the interpretation of the vision makes it equally clear to my mind that there remains another and more complete fulfillment yet to take place.

Many confuse the little horn here spoken of with the little horn of chapter seven. But we have already noticed that he who rises up in the western ten-horned kingdom is the same as the beast of **Revelation 13** and 17. He is a Roman, not a Grecian offshoot. In this chapter of Daniel we see one arising out of the old kingdom of Seleucas—a king of the north, not of the west. Antiochus in his bloodthirsty career was the type of one who will be Jerusalem's bitter enemy in the time of the Lord's indignation. For centuries the Turks were in possession of the lands once dominated by Seleucas. The future king of the north will in all likelihood be the fierce leader of whatever power controls Turkey in Asia at that time.

The Roman little horn will be an apostate Christian in league with the personal antichrist; he will take unbelieving Israel under his wing so long as it suits his purposes. The Grecian little horn is likely an utter infidel, the successor to Mohammed, motivated by inveterate hatred to the Jews, and probably the bitter foe of the future emperor of the west. The angel tells Daniel:

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 (8:23-25).

It is evident that much that is written in these verses cannot possibly apply to Antiochus. He answers quite fully to the *vision*, but he does not meet the requirements of the *interpretation*. In the first place, the prophecy is to have its complete accomplishment “when the transgressors are come to the full.” This expression might refer to the ripening of iniquity in ancient Syria except that the kingdom was not destroyed on the death of Epiphanes; it would have been if its sins had reached the limit set by the moral Governor of the universe. It seems far more likely that the expression refers to the time of the end, when the whole world will be ripe for the judgment of God.

This interpretation also agrees with the angel’s words, “I will make thee know what shall be in the last end of the indignation” (19); this is undoubtedly the end of the times of the Gentiles. In that time, then, this predicted little horn will stand as a man of great intelligence and diplomacy; but we read that “his power shall be mighty, but not by his own power” (24). Now these words could hardly be applied to the “little horn” of the past; he reigned as an independent monarch, prosecuting his purposes as his own will dictated, until in measure thwarted by the interference of Rome. But there is a leader who occupies a large place in prophecy; he is called “the Assyrian” by Isaiah and will be Israel’s enemy in the last days. He will be destroyed by the personal appearance of the Lord Jesus Christ. Isaiah connects Israel’s blessing and restoration with his downfall. He seems clearly to be the same as the little horn depicted here, for he too apparently relies on some other ally. The power that will back him is prophesied of in **Ezekiel 38**. Then again the little horn is to stand up against the Prince of princes and be

broken without hands. The Prince of princes can be none other than the Messiah; consequently these words were not fulfilled in the life and death of Antiochus. But they point us on to the time of the end, when Messiah Himself will appear in person on behalf of oppressed Israel and will overthrow the Assyrian.

What is said of the little horn as an individual is largely applicable to the Ottoman empire as a whole. Fierce and relentless, it has ever been the enemy of Judaism, and has existed for centuries, not because of any inherent power of its own, but because of the jealousies of the nations of Europe. Were the Turk driven out of Constantinople, all Europe would be thrown into war, each great power anxious to possess the dominions over which the Crescent now floats. Hence the abominable horrors of Armenian and Jewish massacres are permitted by civilized and so-called Christian nations because they do not dare to interfere, lest by so doing they jeopardize the peace of the world. (Editor's note: This was written before World War I began. See the Preface.) It is said of the little horn that he shall cause craft to prosper, and by peace shall destroy many. This too has been characteristic of the "unspeakable Turk," especially in his dealings with the Jews. The monotheism of Islam naturally appeals to the Jew; and the false prophet himself made marked advances to the seed of Israel, hoping thereby to win them over to Islam. But behind all the fair words and goodly promises of the sultans, the poison and the sword have ever lurked. The little horn of the latter times will embody in himself the spirit of the Ottoman empire.

But we have not yet finished with the vision. Daniel said:

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 (13-14).

The word for days is really “evening-mornings” and refers, not to lengthened periods, but clearly and distinctly to twenty-four-hour days. It is a time-prophecy that has to do with the defilement of the temple by Antiochus. From the time that he polluted the sanctuary by sacrificing a sow on the altar and setting up a statue of Jupiter in the holiest of all, twenty-three hundred literal days elapsed until it was again purified and dedicated to the service of Jehovah. As if to warn us of the danger of allegorizing this period, the angel said to Daniel, “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” (26).

It was the failure to apprehend this that led the Millerites into their great blunder in the early part of the last century. The same error has blinded their successors, the Seventh-Day Adventists and resulted in the blasphemous sanctuary-theory which they hold. According to them, the Lord Jesus never entered the holiest until a.d. 1844, being twenty-three hundred year-days from the time when Cyrus issued the decree to build the temple. But it is all utterly unsupported by Scripture. The twenty-three hundred days have long since been fulfilled in the history of Daniel’s people, the Jews. It was literally fulfilled after the desecration of the holy places by the Syrian tyrant. There is no hint that there remains another twenty-three hundred days to be fulfilled in the future, though the characters of the little horn of the vision and the last great Assyrian of **Isaiah 14:24-27**, are so very much alike. The latter will undoubtedly be a man of great ability, but cunning, crafty, and deceitful—a worthy successor to the Ottoman rulers of the past. But he is to be broken in Immanuel’s land, and all his army will be

destroyed on the mountains of Israel, when he dares to stand up against the Prince of princes. This Prince will come forth in glorious majesty for the deliverance of the faithful remnant whose hearts will cling to Jehovah in that dreadful time of Jacob's trouble. Already we can see events shaping themselves for the fulfillment of these things. The end cannot be far off. "Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame" (**Revelation 16:15**).

The effect of the vision on Daniel was that he fainted and was sick several days. "Afterward," he said, "I rose up, and did the king's business; and I was astonished at the vision, but none understood it" (27). The centuries since have borne witness to the truth of much of it, and the days to come will demonstrate the rest. May our hearts be so impressed by these things that we too are deeply exercised before God about them. May we be found in a very real sense doing the King's business while we wait for His personal return from Heaven!

Nor would I close without once more warning the Christless to flee from the wrath to come. The black and ominous clouds of doom are gathering over this poor world. Soon the lightning of wrath, the thunder of judgment, and the storm of vengeance will break forth. How unspeakably sad will be your condition if exposed to the full fury of the tempest of divine indignation without Christ and without refuge! Trust Him now while grace is offered to each sinful soul; else "What wilt thou say when he shall punish thee?" (**Jeremiah 13:21**)

Chapter Nine The Seventy Weeks

Daniel

Henry Allen Ironside

The main feature of **Daniel 9** is the great prophecy of the seventy weeks. Sir Edward Denny, a noted prophetic student of the last century, commonly called this “The backbone of prophecy.” This title seems well given, for if the seventy weeks are misunderstood, then an effort must be made to bend all the other prophetic scriptures into accord with that misinterpretation. But if we have a correct understanding of the teaching of this chapter, we can then see readily how all prophecy falls right into place without any forcing, for it is all intimately connected with this greatest of time-prophecies.

We will first note what led up to the giving of this special revelation. Daniel was himself a student of the prophetic Word. He realized deep in his own soul, though the words had not yet been written, that “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, thoroughly furnished unto all good works” (**2 Timothy 3:16**). So in the opening verses we see this devoted man, in the first year of the reign of Darius, bending over the prophetic word in the Holy Scriptures. He did not have the complete Bible as we have, but he valued what he had and searched diligently. In fact the last book that had been added to the Bible was that of Ezekiel. We do not know for certain that this ever came into his hands, but

we do know from the opening verses of **Daniel 9** that he had the book of Jeremiah. As he studied it carefully, he noticed that twice in that book it was written that God would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem.

As Daniel looked back over his captivity he reckoned the years he had spent in the court of Nebuchadnezzar, then the days that had followed during the period of Babylon's difficulties, succeeded by the triumph of the Medes and Persians. As he counted it all up he evidently realized that the seventy years must have very nearly run out. Therefore, the day of the deliverance of the Jews must have drawn very near. He could probably look back over almost seven decades himself, for he had been carried away as a captive in the reign of Jehoiakim when he was a boy, and he had become an old man.

We find that the study of prophecy exercised the heart and the conscience of Daniel; he was not merely interested in it from an intellectual standpoint. The mere computing of times and seasons could not satisfy this devout man of God. When he learned that the time had almost drawn near for the people of Judah to be restored to their land, it stirred him to the very depths of his soul and brought him down to his knees. He might have said, "If it is God's purpose to restore His people, He will carry that purpose out, whatever their condition, and I need not concern myself about this matter." But Daniel realized that when God is about to work, He begins by exercising His people that they may be restored in soul if they have wandered from Him; then they would be blessed through self-judgment and humiliation before God.

We will be blessed if the study of the book of Daniel has the same effect on us that the study of the book of Jeremiah had on Daniel. If not, I fear it will have a hardening effect and leave us in a worse condition than when we began. The things God has been bringing before us should cause us to

bow before Him and cry, “O Lord God, we have sinned, we have much reason to be before Thee in confession and brokenness, because of the failure of Thy people, the church of which we form a part.” If they have this effect on us and in us, it will be indeed for God’s glory and our blessing.

We have serious cause to be on our knees before God when we think of all the failure and the sin that has marred our testimony. We will not feel much like finding fault with others if we fall before God concerning our own shame in all this. Sometimes I hear people criticizing other denominations and Christians, while glorying in their own position and utterly ignoring their true state. How little such persons enter into the thoughts and feelings that filled the heart of Daniel and brought confession from his lips. Notice that he does not begin by accusing the Jews who had acted so badly in the past, nor his contemporaries at that solemn moment in Israel’s history. Rather he sets his face to seek Jehovah in prayer and supplication with fasting and sackcloth and ashes—the outward expression of deep and heartfelt repentance. We are told that he prayed to the Lord his God and made his confession. He said, “*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*” (5-6, italics added). He acknowledged the righteousness of God in the judgment that had come on Daniel’s people; yet he dared to appeal to the mercies and forgiveness of the Lord his God, though Israel had so grievously rebelled against Him. In all His dealings with them, God had confirmed His own words and demonstrated the faithfulness of His testimony through Moses His servant.

How much we may learn from all this! When we look around and see the failure in the church, let us not be content to

pass our judgment on them. Let us not lift up our hearts in spiritual pride and say, “Thank God, we are not as others.” But let us remember that we too are part of that church which has failed. We cannot dissociate ourselves from other Christians; we have to take our place with them, bow our heads in the presence of God, and admit that we have sinned. If we would remember this, it would cure us of railing against the people of God who have less light than we have, or think that we have.

I remember the dear servant of God, Paul J. Loizeaux, writing to me a number of years ago from a place where he was laboring in the gospel: “Prejudice is very strong here, and I regret to have to feel that in large measure our own dear brethren are to blame for much of it. In times past they have spent so much time stoning what, no doubt, very much deserved to be stoned, but which we have no authority to stone.” God has not raised us up to go around stoning His people. We have not been appointed to be the censors of Christendom. He has said: “Who art thou that judgest another man’s servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth” (**Romans 14:4**).

Let us be diligent in pursuing individual holiness and faithfulness to God and concerned about corporate righteousness and freedom from unholy associations. But let us not seek to sit in judgment on our fellow Christians who may not happen to see eye to eye with us; their love for the Lord Jesus and faithfulness to what they believe might be an example well worthy of our imitation. Let us rather take Daniel’s place of self-abasement and repentance in the presence of God and throw our arms of love and faith about all His dear people and say: “O God, we,”—not *they*,—“*we* have sinned and done this evil in Thy sight.” When we are in that place of meekness we can count on His blessing and can look to Him expectantly for a measure of recovery. It is

this humility that shines out so beautifully in Daniel. He identified himself, though a man of unusual faithfulness (perhaps the most devoted man of his generation), with his failed and failing nation.

In simplicity and faith Daniel then looked up to God, beseeching Him to turn away His anger and His fury from Jerusalem and to cause His face to shine on the desolate sanctuary. Note the earnestness and pathos of verses 18-19 with which he concludes his touching petition:

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.

Prayer of such a character could not fail to be answered. While he was speaking and making his confession, the angel Gabriel, “being caused to fly swiftly, touched [him] about the time of the evening oblation” (21) —that is at the time when the smoking sacrifice, pointing on to the offering of our Lord Jesus Christ, would have been ascending to God had Jerusalem not been in ruins. Gabriel declared that he had been sent to give Daniel skill and understanding in regard to the times, foreknown by God, of Israel’s blessing. I quote his message in full and ask you to note carefully every word.

Seventy weeks are determined [or, cut off] 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 [or, the Holy of Holies]. 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 [or, the strait, or narrow times]. And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself [or, and shall have nothing]: 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 [or, until the end shall be war and desolations as 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 [or, upon the wing of abominations shall come one who maketh desolate], even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate [or desolator] (24-27).

In considering this prophecy in detail, it is important to notice that the time period of seventy weeks clearly refers to years. Daniel had been learning from the Scriptures that the Lord would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem. But in answer to his prayer God made known to him that in seventy weeks, or sevens of years, all prophecy in connection with His people Israel will be fulfilled. The word here rendered *weeks* does not necessarily mean weeks of days; it is a generic term (like our word *dozen*) for a *heptad*, meaning a series of seven and may be applied to whatever subject is under consideration. On the chart I have used the word *heptad*, which is the equivalent of *weeks*, in order to avoid confusion of terms.

It is also important to notice that these seventy sevens or 490 years are cut off from the entire period of time for the Jews and the holy city of Jerusalem. Therefore the seventy weeks are *only running on while there is a remnant in Jerusalem acknowledged by God as His people.*

This brings me to a third point, which many have not noticed: the cycle of the seventy weeks is divided into three parts. You can see this clearly by referring to the chart. First we have seven sevens, or 49 years. This is the period called the strait or narrow times in which the city and the walls of Jerusalem were rebuilt. The second part of the cycle consists of sixty-two weeks, or 434 years, after which Messiah was to be cut off and have nothing. This leaves one week, or seven years, yet to be fulfilled. This period cannot be fulfilled until there is again a remnant of Judah, acknowledged by God as His people, in the city of Jerusalem.

A cycle of 490 years had closed in the Babylonian captivity. Now, God said He was about to give them another period of the same length, at the end of which things would be different. Notice how much was to be accomplished before this period would close: Their transgression would be finished; an end made of sins; reconciliation, or properly, atonement would be made for iniquity; everlasting righteousness, the millennial kingdom, brought in; vision and prophecy all sealed up because fulfilled; and the Holy of Holies anointed in the future temple at Jerusalem. It is very evident that there is a great deal here that has never yet been accomplished, consequently the 490 years have not yet been completed.

But can we tell definitely when the seventy weeks began? Yes, look at verse 25: "Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and build Jerusalem, unto the Messiah the Prince, shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks." "The going forth of the commandment to restore and build Jerusalem" is given to us in **Nehemiah 2**, and there can be no question about the dates. The edict was given in the month Nisan, in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes the king, a year well known to historians as 445b.c. Observe the commandment that went

forth in the days of Cyrus as recorded in **Ezra 1**. That edict is clearly not the starting point referred to in Daniel because it only had to do with the rebuilding of the house of God at Jerusalem, that is the temple of Zerubbabel. There is nothing said there about rebuilding the city or the wall. It is therefore the order of Artaxerxes that the angel mentioned as the true starting point.

From the time of this decree to the coming of Messiah the Prince, seven weeks and sixty-two weeks were to elapse, making sixty-nine weeks in all, or 483 years. **The 49** years (seven weeks) are distinguished from the rest because in them the city and the wall were rebuilt. This distinction also directs our attention to the fact that the 490 years are divided into three series and do not necessarily run on in direct chronological order. The sixty-two weeks immediately followed the completion of the seven weeks. But God distinctly separates the sixty-two weeks from the seven that went before; just as the last week, or seven years, is separated from all that preceded.

Able chronologists have shown that the crucifixion of the Lord Jesus Christ occurred immediately after the expiration of 483 prophetic years, of 360 days each, from the time of Artaxerxes' order. By reference to the other time-prophecies of this book it will become evident that this is the true method of computation. The time, times, and the dividing of time of **Daniel 7:25** and 12:7 (representing exactly three and a half years, as is evident by a comparison with the seven times in which Nebuchadnezzar was driven out from among men) are clearly identical with the 1260 days of the Apocalypse (**Revelation 11-12**).

At the expiration of the sixty-nine weeks, therefore, the Messiah for whom Israel had waited so long had actually come only to be cut off and rejected by the very people who should have hailed His advent with joy. Up to this time, the

great prophetic clock had been ticking out the years one after another in fulfillment of what we have in this chapter. But with the crucifixion of the Lord Jesus Christ the great clock stopped, and there has not been another tick from it since. It will not begin again until a coming day, when a remnant of Jews in their own land are ready to acknowledge the claims of God's Christ. Because of Jerusalem's rejection of her Prince, He has rejected them; He prophesied before He died that their city and temple would be thrown down and not one stone left on another. This is also foretold in **Daniel 9:26**: "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." These words briefly describe the history of Palestine from the coming of the Roman armies under Titus to the present time. Jerusalem, and Palestine as a whole, have been trodden down of all nations and will be, "until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled" (**Luke 21:24**).

Observe that it is not said in verse twenty-six that the prince will come at that time. In fact it is distinctly stated that the city will not be destroyed by the coming prince, but by his people. The prince is that dreadful character yet to arrive on the scene; he will arrogate to himself supreme power in the days of the ten kingdom period of the Roman empire, which we have seen is still in the future. In other words, he is emphatically the beast of Revelation chapters 13:1 and 17:3.

The beast is the one who becomes prominent in **Daniel 9:27**. He will confirm a covenant with the many for one week. The seventieth week will begin when the Jewish people are restored in unbelief to their land and city and among them is found a faithful remnant that will acknowledge their sin and seek Jehovah's face. The many, that is the apostate mass of the people, will enter into covenant relations with the prince whose people formerly were the instruments of the

destruction of their city. That is, this great blasphemous Roman leader will guarantee protection and freedom of religious worship to them for seven years, in return they will promise allegiance to him as their sovereign. In the middle of the week (that is, after three and a half years) he will violate his part of the covenant and cause the sacrifices and offerings to Jehovah to cease. Idolatry of the most dreadful kind will be forced on them. The direct result of which will be to distinguish the remnant from the mass and bring in the great tribulation which will continue for forty-two months—"a time, times, and half a time," or 1260 days.

The last clause we may read either as we have it in the King James version as "that determined shall be poured upon the desolate," or, as others read it, "the desolator." That which God has determined will be poured out on poor desolate Judah because of their rejection of their rightful King and Savior. Then, when their cup has been filled to the brim by the dreadful persecutions of the beast and antichrist, these arch-enemies of God and His people will be punished with everlasting destruction. We have their doom clearly foretold in **Revelation 19:20**: "And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone." In **Revelation 20:10** they are shown in the lake of fire a thousand years later when the devil, the instigator of all iniquity, will be cast into the same fiery pit, "where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever."

It is clear therefore that this last week of the seventy has not yet been fulfilled. If it had been, the Jews in their land would be a holy people, their temple anointed for divine service, their transgressions finished, and the years of their

mourning ended. But God only counts time with Israel while they are owned as His people in the land of Palestine. All the years of their subjection to Gentile rule are viewed as wasted. In this present age of their rejection, God is taking out from among the Gentiles a people in the name of the Lord Jesus—the church, which will be His body and His bride for all eternity. When this great work is over He “will build again the tabernacle of David, that is fallen down” (**Acts 15:16**) and commence once more to fulfill Old Testament prophecy from the point reached at the cross of Christ. The Lord Jesus gave us the history of Palestine in one pregnant sentence when He said there shall be “wars and rumours of wars... but the end is not yet” (**Matthew 24:6**). This is characteristic of the entire dispensation and will be until the end. When will that end be? When the seventieth week begins, and God once more takes up the nation of Israel and begins to fulfill the promises made through the prophets. He will touch the pendulum of that great prophetic clock, as it were, and set it once more ticking off the years preparatory to ushering in the glorious kingdom of the Son of man when Jerusalem will become the capital city of the world, and Palestine again will be the garden of the Lord.

Before closing I briefly mention a rather peculiar interpretation which is frequently given to **Daniel 9:27**. It is said that the Lord Jesus is Himself to be “the prince that shall come” who confirms the covenant for one week. His own crucifixion is supposed to be the event which caused the sacrifice and oblation to cease. But this interpretation will not stand either chronologically or doctrinally when examined in the light of other Scriptures. With whom did the Lord Jesus ever confirm a covenant for seven years? His precious blood is called “the blood of the everlasting covenant,” not a covenant for one week of years. We may rest assured it is not Messiah, but the blasphemous prince who is yet to come who will fulfill what is predicted in this verse.

How near this world may be to entering all these things no man can say, but it is wise to learn from the prophetic scriptures and turn now to Him who alone can save. Own Him as Redeemer and Lord and be certain of being caught up to meet Him when He comes in the clouds, before the time comes for His righteous judgment to be poured out on this poor world.

Chapter Ten The Angelic World

Daniel

Henry Allen Ironside

The last great prophecy, or revelation, made known to Daniel is detailed for us in chapters 10-12. It is the most detailed of all the prophecies given in the book. It commences with Daniel's day and culminates in the ushering in of the kingdom.

It is important to notice that here, as elsewhere in the prophetic Scriptures, it is distinctively Daniel's people who are in view (see verse 14). We will find nothing here, nor elsewhere in the Old Testament, about the church of the present dispensation. Misunderstanding this point has caused much confusion in the interpretation of prophecy.

We see from **Ezra 1:1** and from **Daniel 10:1** that two years had elapsed between the time that King Cyrus gave permission to the Jews to return to Jerusalem and the time that Daniel had this vision. He himself was not one of those who returned. He was in a position requiring his attendance to the king, and was an aged man, probably about ninety years old. We see him waiting quietly for the time when he was to leave the world behind, in which he had seen so many changes and upheavals. But his heart was concerned about the remnant of his nation who had gone up to the place of Jehovah's name. We find him in deep grief, deep sorrow of heart—that sorrow of heart which perhaps only those know who, as Daniel, share in the true condition of God's people. Even those who had gone up to Jerusalem failed from the

very beginning in carrying out the mind of God fully. They went up with a measure of enthusiasm and were gathered back to their holy city in ruin, but slothfulness and indifference to God's glory soon began to eat away at them. Alliances were formed with the strangers surrounding Jerusalem, so that God received very little glory from their returning to the place of His temple and altar.

No doubt Daniel knew and felt all this and his heart was grieved over it. He knew too that those who went up were very few compared with those who remained at ease in the land where their bondage had given place to indifferent toleration. As we see in the book of Esther, they seemed quite content with the measure of liberty they enjoyed; they apparently had no heart for that which had so large a place in the mind of Daniel. He is found bowed before God in deep grief, mourning "three full weeks" (perhaps better translated, "weeks of days;" it confirms that to which I called your attention in the previous chapter, regarding the use of the word *week*). During this time of his mourning he tasted no pleasant bread, flesh, or wine, neither anointed himself at all, until the three whole weeks were fulfilled.

At the end of that time, he was by the great river Hiddekel. Looking up, he saw a certain man clothed in linen, whose loins were girded with fine gold. His body is described as being like the beryl, his face as the appearance of lightning, and his eyes as lamps of fire. His arms and his feet were like polished brass and the voice of his words like the voice of a multitude. The description brings to our minds that portrait of the glorified Lord Himself as given in the first chapter of Revelation. It seems evident that this messenger who appeared to Daniel was not really a theophany, but a created angel, because he required the help of Michael in his conflict. When Daniel beheld him, the men who were with him fled to hide themselves; they did not see the vision, but a great

quaking fell on them. Left alone in the presence of this majestic being, the prophet's strength was turned into weakness. He was on the ground as one in a deep sleep, yet he heard the voice of the angel. A hand was stretched forth that touched him and set him on his knees, though he still had to support himself with the palms of his hands. Then the messenger spoke, saying, "O Daniel, a man greatly beloved, understand the words that I speak unto thee, and stand upright: for unto thee am I now sent" (11). At this the prophet stood up trembling.

The angel then said:

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 (12-13).

We get a remarkable insight here into the unseen world and the conflict even now being carried on in heavenly places. And may we not find here also the reason why many of our prayers do not seem to be answered when and as we would desire to have them? For three whole weeks Daniel had been before God in earnest supplication; he prayed, he besought, he interceded on behalf of his people, yet no answer had come. Had Daniel ceased praying, he might have given up the object of his prayers and declared that God turned a deaf ear to his petitions. But the angel told him that at the very beginning of his supplication he had been sent from the very throne of God to reveal to Daniel that which would rest his mind in regard to God's purpose and the final blessing of His people. But for twenty-one days this angel had been fighting his way through the fiends of the upper air. The prince of the kingdom of Persia (not Cyrus himself, but evidently an evil

angel delegated by Satan to seek to influence the hearts of the Persian kings against the people of God) had prevented this holy angel of the Lord for twenty-one days. Nor could the divinely sent messenger prevail until Michael, here called “one of the chief princes,” and in the New Testament “the archangel,” came to help him.

I grant you that all this is very mysterious. It is something altogether outside of the sphere of human cognizance. We know nothing whatever about the conflicts continuously being carried on in the unseen world except what we can learn from our Bibles. But this much is clear: Here was a man who was praying earnestly on earth, and God had heard that prayer in Heaven. In answer to it He sent an angel, but for three weeks that angel was hindered from reaching Daniel. That hindrance was in the unseen world and by such a power that the archangel himself was needed to overcome it.

I would like to bring a few other Scriptures to your attention that deal with this solemn subject. In the first chapters of the book of Job we find the sons of God presenting themselves before the Lord, and we are told that Satan came also. The sons of God are clearly an order of angelic ministers engaged in carrying out the will of God in connection with this world: He “maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire...Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?” (**Hebrews 1:7,14**) Satan, the foul leader of the evil hosts, walks unabashed among these sons of God. He acts as one who has no fear of rebuke in that company. He comes before the throne of God as the great adversary and accuser of the brethren; he accused Job to the very face of God, and desired to test Job’s faith. The Lord did not deny his demand, but delivered Job into his hands—for Job’s own good, as we know. So we gather from this Scripture that God

is able to use even the devil to carry out His own purposes for the blessing of His children. He has not been outwitted by Satan but uses him all through this present time.

In **Luke 22:31** we read Jesus' words to the apostle Peter: "Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat." The devil is the sifter of God's wheat. The Lord wants His wheat sifted; He does not want a lot of chaff. But when the devil is used to sift God's wheat and His children are put into the devil's sieve, not one grain of the wheat is lost; the devil is simply used by God for the separation of the chaff from the wheat. Do not despair then if, like Job and like Peter, you are put into the devil's sieve. It is God Himself who is letting you be sifted like that. He has seen the chaff in your life, and He wants the real to be separated from the false. But I directed your attention to these Scriptures that all might see that good and evil angels alike have direct access to the presence of God.

In **2 Chronicles 18** we have the account of an alliance entered into by Ahab and Jehoshaphat. Ahab was a wicked king, the ruler of the ten tribes. Jehoshaphat was in large measure a man of God; but unhappily he was a man who could not say no. He was of too yielding a character for his own good and the good of the kingdom of Judah over which he ruled. At Ahab's request he had promised to go out to battle to help him against his enemies, but he desired also to consult a prophet of the Lord. Ahab brought in a host of the prophets of Baal who all predicted a glorious victory. This did not satisfy Jehoshaphat, so Micaiah, a prophet of Jehovah imprisoned for his faithfulness, was brought from his dungeon to declare the mind of the Lord. When he came, the king of Israel said, "Shall we go... to battle?" And Micaiah replied ironically, Oh yes, "Go ye up, and prosper, and they shall be delivered into your hand" (14). But the king detected the tone of irony in his voice, and Ahab adjured him to tell

him the truth. At that Micaiah drew aside, as it were, the veil from the other world and declared that he had seen a multitude of spirits surrounding the throne of God. One of these, in obedience to the divine permission, had been sent forth to become a lying spirit in the mouth of Ahab's prophets to seduce the wretched idolatrous king to his destruction. Here again we see the same thing that is brought before us in the book of Job—angels, both good and evil, having access to Heaven.

In the third chapter of Zechariah we have a beautiful picture depicting the same lesson. Joshua the high priest, the representative of the whole nation of Israel, stood before the Lord clothed in filthy garments—a picture of one chosen of God and yet defiled by sin. An adversary is there to accuse him, but the angel of Jehovah is standing by. Who is that mystic angel of Jehovah? It is He of whom Jehovah said, "My name is in him" (**Exodus 23:21**). He illustrates the Lord Jesus Himself, the messenger of the covenant. What did Jehovah say when Satan attempted to accuse? "The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan;...is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?" (**Zechariah 3:2**)

This brings out two things: first, there is God's sovereign electing grace, and then there is redemption. That is why God could recognize and own the remnant of Israel in spite of their failures. Jehovah's answer to Satan was, "I have chosen him." For "the gifts and calling of God are without repentance." But this is based on redemption; He said to those who stood by, "Take away the filthy garments from him." And to Joshua He said, "Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment" (4). The presence of the angel of the covenant points on to the cross. At the cross the covenant would be ratified in His precious blood; He became man to suffer death and cleanse from all iniquity those whom He redeemed

to Himself. Thus we have full redemption, and the brand plucked out of the fire.

Now let us link this with that important passage in **Revelation 12**. Remember that it speaks of something that is still future.

There was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night (7-10).

This gives us the end of Satan's place as the accuser with access to Heaven. He is driven out by the same Michael who came to the assistance of the angel who spoke to Daniel in our chapter. This event will take place in the midst of the seventieth week as described in **Daniel 9**. After that no foul spirit will ever have access to the presence of God.

Ephesians 6:11-12 is a passage of great importance: "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 [wicked spirits in heavenly places]" (literal translation). The Christian's foes are these wicked spirits; like the prince of the kingdom of Persia, they are ruling the hearts of men in these days of darkness. We are warned against their wiles. The great business of Satan at the present time is to seek to deceive the people of God with things that seem to be in

accordance with His mind but which are really deceitful imitations.

When Joshua and the people of Israel entered the land of Canaan, God told them to utterly destroy all the nations that dwelt in it. But the Gibeonites, filled with terror, sent an ambassage to Joshua, pretending to have come from a long distance. By means of their moldy bread, ragged clothes, and worn shoes, they deceived the leaders of Israel into entering into a league with them. Thus the Israelites were misled by not being on their guard against the wiles of the Canaanites. We too will be deceived by the strategies of our great adversary if we are not careful to continuously ask counsel of the Lord. In **Ephesians 6** we are told that our warfare is with the world rulers of this darkness. Who are these world rulers? They are not the kings, prime ministers, or presidents of this world. These great and often good men have to do with the temporal government of this world; they are the powers that be, ordained of God. Yet they may be like the little figures on the chessboard in the hands of the *real* world rulers of this darkness.

In **Daniel 10** we learn that the prince of the kingdom of Persia who withstood the angel of the Lord twenty-one days was one of the world rulers of this darkness. The prince of Grecia of verse 20 was another one seeking to influence the hearts of the Grecian rulers against the will of God. On the other hand, notice what Michael is called in the last verse. He is designated as “Michael *your* prince”; in chapter 12:1 he is called “the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people.” Michael the archangel seems to have special care for the people of Israel. Thus, while evil angels were seeking Israel’s ruin, Michael and his hosts of benevolent angels were protecting their interests.

You will remember how efforts were being made at that very time to thwart God’s purposes concerning the Jews.

Sanballat and his companions sought in every way they could to hinder the progress of the work of the Lord at Jerusalem (**Nehemiah 4**). What was happening on earth was evidently intimately connected with, in fact the result of, what was going on in the upper air. Satan is called the prince of the power of the air; his angelic subordinates and God's holy angels were warring in connection with the attempt to carry out that which God Himself had planned for His earthly people.

Perhaps the chief of all the world rulers of this darkness is described in **Ezekiel 28:11-18**. The first ten verses of the chapter concern the prince of Tyre. But from the eleventh verse on we have a very different being, one who is clearly superhuman, designated as the king of Tyre. Of him Ezekiel says:

Thus saith the Lord God; Thou sealest up the sum, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty. Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God; every precious stone was thy covering, the sardius, topaz, and the diamond, the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the emerald, and the carbuncle, and gold: the workmanship of thy tabrets and of thy pipes was prepared in thee in the day that thou wast created. Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth; and I have set thee so: thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire. Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee. By the multitude of thy merchandise they have filled the midst of thee with violence, and thou hast sinned: therefore I will cast thee as profane out of the mountain of God: and I will destroy thee, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire. Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness: I will cast

thee to the ground, I will lay thee before kings, that they may behold thee.

Was all this true of any earthly king of Tyre? Surely not. But it was true of the great prince, the unseen ruler, who was leading the kingdom of Tyre to its doom. How readily rulers and nations obey the orders of these malignant spirits; having lost Heaven for themselves, they now seem to find their delight in contriving the ruin of mankind! God in His grace is seeking man's blessing and has given His Word and Spirit to guide in paths of righteousness and peace. He has sent forth hosts of unfallen elect angels to influence leaders to prefer justice and holiness to unrighteousness and iniquity. Yet the heart of man is so perverse that in his natural state he is ever ready to be led by the devil.

In the present age our conflict as Christians is said to be with *principalities* and *powers* who are not of flesh and blood. This makes it evident that there are degrees in rank among angels, whether fallen or unfallen, as there are in human armies. The special effort of these organized hosts of Hell is now to deceive the people of God by replacing Christ and His truth with other things that would keep God's people from receiving their blessing. Coupled with this is the effort to hinder exercised souls from coming to the knowledge of the truth at all by imitating that which is of God. Those who seem about to obey the truth are turned aside into the devious mazes of error.

Have you noticed how every precious truth of Scripture has its Satanic counterfeit? It has been so from the very beginning. Scarcely was the glorious gospel of grace proclaimed when the devil introduced men secretly among the assemblies of God whose object was to turn that very grace into lasciviousness. The apostle taught that the Christian was not under law, but grace; the antinomian was almost at his heels to cry, "Let us do evil, that good may

come.” It is the same in our day. Let the precious truth of the indwelling and gifts of the Holy Spirit be declared, and Satan will follow with false gifts and another spirit, leading even earnest souls into the wildest fanaticism. Let the truth of new birth be insisted on, and the devil will raise up teachers after his own heart to tell men that being born again means simply “rising out of the self-life into the spiritual, reaching out after the higher ideals, seeking to make that which is highest, noblest and best of ourselves; thus saving ourselves by character” (a quotation from a New Theology sermon).

Again, let one begin to preach about the blessed truth of the rapture of the church and the Lord’s return, and you will have the wicked spirits in heavenly places poisoning men’s minds with unscriptural and false conceptions about this solemn and important theme. The second advent then becomes a byword in the minds of some intelligent people and they become sick and tired of the whole thing. But these are just the wiles of the devil against which the believer is warned; we need to be on our guard, remembering the admonition, “Prove all things; hold fast that which is good” (**1 Thessalonians 5:21**).

Thank God, the hosts of the upper air are not all malevolent. You remember at the siege of Dothan, in answer to the prayer of Elisha, the Lord opened the eyes of the prophet’s servant and he saw the mountains round about full of fiery chariots (**2 Kings 6:17**). “The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him” (**Psalms 34:7**). O beloved, we too need opened eyes! Then we would see the angelic host camping around us for our protection and watching over us for good. Thus we would fight on with new courage, clad in the whole armor of God, knowing that the gates of Hell will not prevail against Christ’s church.

In closing this solemn subject, let me say a word to the unsaved. These wicked spirits of which I have been speaking

are determined on your soul's damnation. They will use every effort known to hinder your salvation and to seal your doom. How much then you need to learn the lesson that in yourself you have no strength or power; you are a poor, weak, easily-deceived soul led by Satan and imposed on by his wicked hosts. Only One can deliver you from your dreadful foes; that One is the blessed Lord Jesus Christ who died on the cross "that through death he might destroy [render powerless, or annul] 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" (**Hebrews 2:14-15**). Call on Him and be delivered from the fearful and superhuman enemies who desire your eternal ruin, for it is written that "whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."

Let us now, after this long parenthesis, turn back to **Daniel 10**. In the fourteenth verse the angel tells Daniel that he had come to make him understand what should befall the Jews in the latter days. At this Daniel set his face toward the ground and became dumb. Another angel then drew near and touched his lips. At that point Daniel spoke aloud and said to the glorious being who stood before him, "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" (16-17). The ministering angel touched him again and strengthened him; he told Daniel not to fear but to be strong. At this Daniel asked the revealing angel to continue. He told him that he must return to fight with the prince of Persia, and that when he had gone the prince of Greece would come. But first he was commissioned to show Daniel "that which is noted in the scripture of truth" (21). This is clearly a record kept, not on earth, but in Heaven. The omniscient God has outlined the events to occur in the kingdoms of men long

before they come to pass on earth. This revelation is given to us in **Daniel 11**.

“In the volume of the book” it was written of the eternal Son of God, “I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart” (**Psalms 40:7-8**). Just as every step of Christ’s journey from the throne of the universe down to the cross of Calvary and back to the throne, even to the ages of ages, was foreknown from before the foundation of the world, so God has foreseen all that is to transpire on this planet in the affairs of men. In the “Scripture of truth” recorded in Heaven all is ever before His eyes; let Satan and evil men rage as they will, He “worketh all things after the counsel of his own will” (**Ephesians 1:11**).

The Christian heart may surely rest and rejoice in the knowledge that at all times,

God sits as sovereign on His throne, And ruleth all things well!

Chapter Eleven A Warning To God's People

Daniel

Part One: The Wars Of The Ptolemies And The Seleucids

In taking up the first part of **Daniel 11** (verses 1-35), I want to emphasize again the words of the apostle Paul that “all scripture is given by inspiration of God and is *profitable*” (**2 Timothy 3:16**, italics added). For in seeking to expand this particular portion I will need to deal almost entirely with a period in history covering about 200 years in connection with the wars that desolated the land of Palestine after the death of Alexander the Great. This may seem very dry and unspiritual to some, but the subject demands this kind of treatment to be made clear. I feel sure if this history is carefully noted it will help many see as never before the absolute unerring precision of God’s holy Word.

We have been given a record that was first made in Heaven; God intended us to study it and to understand it, or He would not have included it in the volume of Scripture. In order to understand it we must take some pains, for it is a portion of the Word that we cannot clearly comprehend unless we take the trouble to investigate and see how it has been fulfilled. For those who decry the

study of historical and other subjects in connection with the Word of God, I would mention again the pregnant sentence that “All history is His story.” Surely the man of God can gain much by observing how remarkably history confirms prophecy and sets its seal on the divine inspiration of the Bible. The Holy Spirit never condemns our acquiring the knowledge of this world. It is the *wisdom* of this world that is set aside as untrustworthy and causing strife and speculation. We are warned against human philosophy, against the reasoning of the human mind uninstructed by divine illumination. But we are not warned against the acquisition of true knowledge if we couple it with the fear of God and the love of the Spirit.

God does not put a premium on ignorance. Some Christians are most short-sighted, narrow-minded, and bigoted; they are intolerant of the opinions of others or of anything outside their own range of vision. Undoubtedly the best cure for this very unchristlike spirit is to spend more time with the blessed Lord Himself. But to this may well be added a helpful, broadening knowledge of facts and events, especially in connection with Scripture.

The angel who had appeared to Daniel told him that in the first year of Darius the Mede, after Babylon’s overthrow, he had stood to strengthen him. In the second verse of **Daniel 11**, he began, as it were, to unroll the scroll of the Scripture of 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.” We saw in chapter ten that this vision was given to Daniel in the third year of Cyrus. The first of the three kings who were to follow was his son Cambyzes; he was succeeded, not by his own son Smerdis, but by a wretched impostor generally called Pseudo-Smerdis. He looked very much like the son of

Cambyses, and by trickery he had himself proclaimed emperor and reigned in the name of Smerdis. Darius Hystaspes succeeded him, and he in turn was succeeded by Xerxes the Great.

This Xerxes was not the last king of Persia, nor is that stated here, though at first sight it might seem to be implied. But he was the fourth and as prophesied, “far richer than they all.” He stirred up Asia against the realm of Greece, and with an immense army of over two and a half million (if we can trust the computation of the historians of those days), he crossed the Hellespont and invaded Greece. But the very size of his army defeated his own purpose, and his soldiers were driven back into Asia. The Grecians never forgave this insult to their race. They nursed the desire for vengeance until the days of Alexander the Great, who is the “mighty king” referred to in verse 3.

There is quite an interval between verses 4 and 5; it is passed over in silence in order to connect the invasion of Alexander with the effort of Xerxes to conquer Greece. After Alexander had established his authority over all Greece, he determined to continue into Asia with the special object of wiping out the former disgrace. He met the forces of Darius Codomanus, utterly defeated them, and laid hold of all the Persian dominion. But he passed away very shortly afterwards in a drunken revel. He died in the very prime of his life, a wretched victim of ill living. This fulfilled the word, “And when he shall stand up, his kingdom shall be broken.”

Verse 4 goes on to tell us that it “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.” Now all

this was fulfilled to the letter. Alexander had two sons, Hercules and Alexander, but one was killed before and the other after their father's death. His kingdom was then divided, as God had said it would be. Thus the great world empire that Alexander had established at such a tremendous cost was broken into warring fragments; none of them ever attained the splendor or power of his kingdom. After the battle of Ipsus in 301 B.C., his dominions were parceled out among four of his generals, as we saw in chapters 7-8. From this point on, our chapter only deals with two of them and their successors: namely Ptolemy Lagus, ruler of Egypt and Seleucas, Satrap of Syria. The angel had told Daniel he was going to show him what would happen to *his people* (10:14). The other two kingdoms had no place in connection with Israel or their land.

Verses 5-35 describe the wars of the Seleucids and the Ptolemies for about two centuries. These rulers are called respectively the king of the North and the king of the South—the directions are relative to the land of Palestine, which in God's eye is the center of the earth. "When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel. For the Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance" (**Deuteronomy 32:8-9**).

It will almost be necessary to take up **Daniel 11:5-35** verse by verse. I pray that it may impress every heart with the absolute perfection of the Holy Scriptures and their correctness down to the smallest detail. The king of the South mentioned in verse 5 was Ptolemy Lagus. The expression "one of his princes" may refer to the fact that Ptolemy was one of Alexander's princes; or, as others judge more likely, it means that Seleucas Nicator, governor of

Syria, at first was subject to Ptolemy, who was stronger and had the greatest dominion of the four into which the empire had been divided. But on the death of Lagus, when Ptolemy Soter succeeded him, conditions were reversed.

The dominion of Seleucas was enlarged by the annexation of Babylon, Media, and the surrounding nations. He threw off his allegiance to Egypt and ruled independently. Naturally, this brought about a state of warfare and enmity between the two kingdoms but as we read in verse 6, “in the end of years they shall join themselves together.” This was in the reign of Nicator’s grandson Antiochus Theos who arranged a treaty of peace with Ptolemy Philadelphus. The treaty was confirmed by the king of the South’s daughter, Berenice being given in marriage to Antiochus, who divorced his own wife Laodice for this purpose. But God had declared that “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” (6). All this was fulfilled as predicted. Laodice managed to stir up her friends against the king; as a result Berenice and all her attendants were put to death. Antiochus then reinstated his divorced queen, who shortly afterwards poisoned him and had her son Seleucas Callinicus crowned in his place.

“Out of a branch of her roots”—that is, from Berenice’s family, one was to stand up in his place for office; he would come with an army into the fortress of the king of the North and prevail against him (verse 7). This refers to her brother Ptolemy Euergetes, who forced his way across the land of Palestine with a mighty army, spreading desolation everywhere. He was actuated by the desire to avenge the murder of his sister and to wipe out the dishonor inflicted on Egypt. He was completely successful,

utterly defeating Callinicus and reaping an immense spoil. But news of a sedition in Egypt caused him to hurry back, carrying with him an immense number of captives with “their gods, with their princes, and with their precious vessels of silver and of gold” (8). He did not return to Syria, and Callinicus himself died shortly afterwards by a fall from his horse. Ptolemy reigned four years longer, thus continuing “more years than the king of the north” (8).

In the tenth verse the sons of Callinicus are contemplated. These are known in history as Seleucus Ceraunus and Antiochus the Great. They assembled a great force to inflict retribution on the Egyptians. But Ceraunus died in less than two years, leaving his brother sole ruler. He was one of the most notable kings of those days and lost no time in pressing an Egyptian invasion. He led an army of seventy-five thousand against the hereditary foes of his house. But he proved no match for the indolent and despised king of the South, Ptolemy Philopator, who could barely be dragged away from his pleasures and follies to lead an army against the invaders. At the battle of Raphia, he defeated Antiochus with great slaughter and reconquered all the land that had previously been wrested from him. He put Antiochus under tribute and returned to Egypt crowned with military glory. But like another Alexander, he then gave himself up to wickedness and licentiousness. Upon a revolt occurring soon after in Syria, Ptolemy Philopator concluded an ignoble peace with Antiochus, because he was too depraved and indolent to follow up his victories. After his death, Egypt sank lower than it had been for years. All this is briefly sketched in verses 11-12.

With the succession to the throne of Philopator’s son Ptolemy Epiphanes, a mere child, Antiochus the Great formed an alliance with Philip the Third of Macedon. He

also sought to rally the Jews to his standard. The faithful among them refused to serve in his army; but the apostates, “the robbers of thy people,” (14) readily entered into covenant with him and proved a very great help on a number of occasions. With his united armies he besieged the Egyptian garrison left in Jerusalem and put it to the sword. He defeated Scopias the Egyptian general at Paneas, who fled to the fenced city of Sidon but was there destroyed. The Egyptian armies, sent to deliver Paneas, were likewise routed, and Antiochus found himself completely supreme. On his return from the Egyptian wars, he entered into “the glorious land”—that is Palestine. There, because of the help rendered by his Jewish troops, he bestowed on the people many evidences of his favor. The last clause of verse 16 should read, “which by his hand shall be perfected.” It refers undoubtedly to the fact that in his time Palestine became a more peaceful and fruitful country than it had been for half a century.

Verse 17 was fulfilled in Antiochus’ effort to undermine the remaining influence and power of Ptolemy Epiphanes by giving him his daughter Cleopatra in marriage. He had previously charged her that she should, after her marriage, act for her father’s interests in everything. But it was written, “she shall not stand on his side, neither be for him” (17). Cleopatra proved a faithful wife to Epiphanes, supporting him against her father, who was naturally disappointed that his well-laid plans had completely miscarried.

Antiochus determined now to extend the glory of his dominions by conquering Greece. First the isles of the Aegean sea were subjugated to his sway, and then he crossed over with his armies into Greece. At that point a most unexpected event took place. The iron kingdom (the Roman empire) was at this time just beginning to make its

presence felt. It was destined to be the fourth and last on earth, before the establishment of the kingdom of the Son of man. The Grecians had entered into an alliance with the Romans, so they at once notified their powerful allies of the danger to which they were exposed. The Roman senate commissioned Lucius Scipio Asiaticus to go to their relief with an army of tried warriors. He met Antiochus in battle and utterly defeated him, and on the most ignominious terms sent him back to his home. Scipio is undoubtedly "the prince" or as some versions render it, "commander," referred to in verse 18. Thus Antiochus, humbled and in deep distress, turned his face toward "the fort of his own land," but according to the Scripture of truth, he was "to stumble and fall and not be found" (19). This was fulfilled when, in his need and desperation, he attempted with a band of soldiers to plunder the temple of Jupiter at Elymais. He and his warriors were slain by the infuriated populace, incensed at what they considered a grave act of sacrilege.

In verse 20 we read, "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." This was the son of Antiochus, Seleucus Philopator. In desperate need of money owing to the wretched condition in which his father had left the kingdom, he sent Heliodorus to plunder the temple of Jehovah at Jerusalem. Upon his return with the booty, Heliodorus treacherously assassinated his master after he had reigned twelve years; this was only a "few days" as compared with the long reign of Antiochus which extended to nearly forty years.

In verses 21-35, we read a profile of the fearful monster who has well been called the "antichrist of the Old Testament," because of his unfailing hatred of the people and worship of Jehovah. He is the one described in

chapter 8 as the infamous and blasphemous “little horn” that sprang out of one of the four horns on the head of the Grecian goat. His name is cursed to this day by all Jews in every land. He was called by his fawning courtiers Antiochus *Epiphanes*— that is, “the splendid or magnificent.” But someone of his day changed one letter of his name and called him Antiochus *Epimanes*, meaning “the mad man,” because of his wild pranks and almost insane follies and brutalities. He was stirred with such hatred against the Jews and their religion that there was no atrocity too great for this wretched king to perpetrate. He is well described as a vile person who came in peaceably and obtained the kingdom by flatteries. At the beginning he made a league both with the Jews and with Ptolemy Philometer, but he proved false to each as God had declared he would (22-24). I assume that “the prince of the covenant” in Israel was a title given here to the high priest. It is a notorious fact that Epiphanes degraded the office by selling the high priesthood to the vilest man to be found among the apostate part of the Jewish people.

In accordance with verse 25, he “stirred up his power and his courage against the king of the south with a great army.” The king of the South, Philometer, came against him to battle “with a very great and mighty army,” but was unable to stand because of the treachery of his own sons and household servants who betrayed him to Antiochus. This fulfilled verse 26: “Yea, they that feed of the portion of his meat shall destroy him, and his army shall overflow: and many shall fall down slain.” Professing great magnanimity, Antiochus proposed a truce, and the two kings met “at one table.” There they made promises which they never intended to keep, thus “speaking lies” (27).

Angered by the exultation of the Jews who had heard that he had been slain in Egypt, Antiochus marched his armies

against Jerusalem. He inflicted on them all the horrors of a siege and sack, sparing neither age, sex, nor condition. In their desperation the Jews appealed to the Romans, who had intervened before on behalf of the Grecians; they requested their assistance in what was to them a life and death struggle for their religion and their liberty. Marching against the Maccabees, Antiochus was met by Popilius Loenus and the other Roman envoys at the head of an army. Popilius demanded that Antiochus at once cease his interference with the Jews, bind himself to accept the decree of the Roman senate, keep the peace, and acknowledge Rome's authority. Epiphanes asked for time to consider the terms proposed for his acceptance. But Popilius drew a circle around Antiochus with his sword or staff and demanded that he decide before he stepped out of the ring. Having no alternative, he submitted, evidently with no intention of keeping the pledges he made. The "ships of Chittim" (30), refer to the Roman galleys sent in response to the pitiful plea of the Jews.

After the Romans had gone, Antiochus perjured his allegiance and turned once more on the devoted sons of Israel, "having indignation against the holy covenant." Certain traitorous Jews, described as "them that forsake the holy covenant," (30) formed a league with him and betrayed their own compatriots to the tyrant who hated them. He set up a statue of Jupiter Olympus, whom he identified with himself, in the temple at Jerusalem. He sacrificed a sow on the altar and put a stop to the oblations to Jehovah, declaring that he alone should be an object of worship. The faithful of Judah, horrified beyond measure at his unspeakable sacrilege, took up arms against him, led by the heroic family of the Maccabees and were slaughtered by thousands.

This was the placing of "the abomination that maketh

desolate,” predicted in verse 31, in connection with the pollution of the sanctuary and the taking away of the daily sacrifice. **The 2300** days of **Daniel 8** commenced with this act of desecration by Antiochus. At the end of that period, the sanctuary was cleansed and sacrifices to Jehovah reinstituted.

Verses 32-35 describe the conditions prevailing among the Jews in that awful time of suffering, never to be paralleled until the great tribulation of the last days. In fact they picture the whole history of the people of Judah from the time when they were joined to the Roman empire right on to the time of the end, or the seventieth week of which we have already spoken.

The last chapter of Daniel reveals another abomination of desolation. This was also spoken of by our Lord Jesus Christ, when He was on earth, as still to come in the future (**Matthew 24**). We will read of that abomination in the last chapter.

In concluding this historical outline of the wars of the kings of the North and the South, I would emphasize that prophecy is only history prewritten. In this instance, even in the most minute details, history is seen to be prophecy fulfilled. It is terrible presumption to refuse to heed the solemn lessons of such a record and deliberately reject the testimony of the inspired Word of God. Even the natural mind, if at all unbiased and unwilling to learn, must be impressed by this remarkable correspondence between history and prophecy; it should lead any truly honest soul to exclaim, “God spake all these words!”

Remember that He who spoke *these* words is the God who has inspired all Scripture. He will hold all men responsible to accept the testimony He gives them, or be eternally banished from His holy presence if they persist in rebelling

against His authority and refusing His Word. That Word is given to you now to warn you of your danger and point the way to salvation. That Word will be opened on the day of judgment; if you appear there unsaved, you must be judged according to what is written there. In the ages to come, when the redeemed look back over their pathway here on earth, they will exclaim like Israel in the land of Canaan, "There hath not failed one word of all his good promise" (**1 Kings 8:56**); so each lost soul will cry out in bitter anguish, "Not one word has failed of all that God declared in regard to the doom of the impenitent and the Christ rejecter!"

It is important to deal with God on the basis of the atoning work of His blessed Son, in order to know Him as your own personal Savior. May those of you who have no hope and are without God in the world, be aroused by the study of the book of Daniel to see the danger in which you stand. You need to turn to Him, who once in infinite grace gave Himself for our sins on Calvary's cross of shame.

The Maccabees, in the days of Antiochus, were called the hammers of God, and God has asked, "Is not my word like as a fire? saith the Lord; and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?" (**Jeremiah 23:29**) Preaching the gospel is just like hammering away at hard hearts. Sadly there is little response! I heard of a traveling man who used to go to a town where there were many factories and foundries. In that town scores of immense steel hammers were pounding away continuously. The noise was deafening and this gentleman found it impossible to sleep in that town, for the noise sounded day and night. The people of the town were so thoroughly used to it that they could sleep through it all. But one night something went wrong with the power plant, and all the hammers stopped. At once the whole town woke up. What awakened them? It

was the unusual quiet and stillness after years of deafening sound.

Beloved friends, the day is drawing near when God's hammers will all cease their pounding. Soon gospel days will have ended and the message of love and grace, which you have refused so long, will have ceased. Then there will indeed be a great awakening—an awakening when it is too late to be saved.

The kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man [will] hide themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; And [say] to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand? (**Revelation 6:16-17**)

But no hiding place will avail in that day. God will no longer be dealing in grace, but in stern intrinsic justice with those who have not received the love of the truth that they might be saved. Their heart-rending cry will be, "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved" (**Jeremiah 8:20**).

O dear unsaved one, weigh these things well and trifle no longer with the question of the eternal destiny of your precious soul still unsettled. If you continue to reject the Spirit of grace, "what wilt thou say when he shall punish thee?" (**Jeremiah 13:21**)

Part Two: The Antichrist

Between **Daniel 11:35** and 36 there is an interval of many centuries. The history of the kings of the North and South is now closed. Another dreadful character, of whom

Antiochus Epiphanes was merely a forerunner, or type, is at once introduced—the willful king, the great personal antichrist of the last days.

“Ye have heard,” said the apostle John, “that antichrist shall come” (**1 John 2:18**). He at once goes on to say that already there are many antichrists. But he distinguishes clearly between these lesser forerunners of the final apostasy and the future impious personage. He is so frequently mentioned in prophecy as the very incarnation of lawlessness and blasphemy, but only in 1 John is he distinctly called by name.

I suppose there are very few prophetic teachers, of any Scriptural discernment, who question the application of the present passage to antichrist. The only question would be as to his identity; a great many different solutions of the problem have been proposed. According to many, Antiochus Epiphanes fulfilled in himself all that is here predicted of the willful king. Others, recognizing the interval between verses 35 and 36, consider this passage parallel to **Revelation 13** and apply it to the emperor Nero, the first Roman persecutor of the Christians. To many, Simon Magus, the impostor of **Acts 8**, was the antichrist. Some Romanist doctors applied the passage to Mohammed, the false prophet of Arabia; while many Protestant interpreters from Luther’s day to the present, have found in these words a description of the papacy. There are others—and their judgment seems to me to be the correct one—who hold that none of these characters fully meet the requirements of the case; consequently the antichrist is still to arise in the future and will only come upon the scene in the time of the end.

In this section I hope to make clear my reasons for rejecting the hypothesis that the papacy, while evidently

anti-christian in character, is *the* antichrist. For now I will simply endeavor to bring out what seems to me to be the clear teaching of the passage.

First, in order to understand the part to be played by antichrist in the world's great crisis, I will attempt to point out the various leaders who are to occupy prominent positions in the coming day. We have already seen that in the latter times, when the transgressors are come to the height of their power, the Roman empire is to be revived in a ten-kingdomed condition (**Daniel 7**). Ten European powers are to be united in one federation. To bring this about there will be a union of socialistic and imperialistic policies. One of these ten kings will become arbiter of Europe. This chief ruler is the one in **Revelation 13:1-8** and other portions, emphatically called "the beast." In the seventh chapter of Daniel he is seen as the little horn of the West. In the time of the end this little horn, the beast, will have his seat in Rome. He will be utterly infidel, throwing off all pretension to the fear of God, and will set himself up as the only god worthy of adoration. Apostate Christendom will pay universal homage to him after the destruction of the great anti-church, "Babylon the great, the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth" (**Revelation 17:5**). This worship will evidently not only be the acknowledgment that deity dwells in this man, it also will be the recognition of the blasphemous tenet that God and man are one (a tenet presently accepted by Christian Science, and the New Age). The beast will be the embodiment of intellectual force and brilliancy, the peerless coming man for whom the nations have been waiting so long. Like Napoleon Bonaparte, he will dazzle the nations by his almost superhuman abilities and unparalleled success. To him men will gladly grant the title Napoleon arrogated to himself, "The Man of Destiny."

In the east, as we saw in chapter 8, another power will for a time dispute the preeminence of the beast. This will be the little horn of Asia. The last Gentile ruler of the lands now dominated by Turkey will be the one in whom this prophecy is fulfilled. He is in no sense to be confused with the little horn of the seventh chapter who arises out of the Roman empire. The little horn of the eighth chapter will arise from one of the divisions of the empire of Alexander the Great. He is identified, I believe, with the Assyrian of **Isaiah 10:24-25** and will be the special enemy of the Jews in the time of the end. In Isaiah we read, after the prophecy of the return of the remnant to their land:

Therefore thus saith the Lord God of hosts, O my people that dwellest in Zion, be not afraid of the Assyrian: he shall smite thee with a rod, and shall lift up his staff against thee, after the manner of Egypt. For yet a very little while, and the indignation shall cease, and mine anger in their destruction.

We get the manner of this destruction in **Isaiah 14:24-25**:

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: That I will break the Assyrian in my land, and upon my mountains tread him under foot: then shall his yoke depart from off them, and his burden depart from off their shoulders.

It is not to any past destruction of Assyria that these words refer; for this defeat is to take place after the restoration of Israel to Palestine in the last days. It will be God's settlement of the so-called Eastern question.

We learned that this little horn will stand up in great wrath against the Jews, "but not in his own power." He is evidently to have the backing of some more powerful

nation, who for selfish purposes will aid him in his nefarious effort to destroy the people of God in that day. In **Ezekiel 38-39** we find, I have no doubt, a full account of the power referred to. There we read of “Gog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal.” Scholars generally are agreed that in place of “chief prince,” we should read, “prince of Rosh”; and there can hardly be any question that Rosh means Russia. “Gog, the prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal,” will evidently be the last czar of all the Russias. Some suppose Meshech and Tubal to be identical with Moscow and Tobolsk, the ancient European and Asiatic capitals of the Slav empire. It would seem that this ruler will join with the Turkish sultan in opposing the pretensions of the beast. We can already see events in Europe tending to this. There will be a western and an eastern confederation, and Palestine will be the bone of contention between them.

A fourth figure, destined to attract considerable attention in the crisis will be the king of the South, a future ruler of an apparently independent Egypt. Though he will oppose the antichrist, he will act in conjunction with the beast in opposition to his hereditary enemies the Turks.

In the book of the Revelation the apostle speaks of the drying up of the Euphrates, “that the way of the kings of the east [or, from the sunrising] might be prepared” (**Revelation 16:12**). The drying up of the Euphrates would seem to imply the breaking up of the Turkish power; for as the Nile stands for Egypt, so does the Euphrates for the Ottoman empire. “The kings of the sunrising” may very well be a descriptive term referring to the nations of the Far East.

If we are thus far correct in our effort to forecast from Scripture the principals in the last great drama of Gentile

dominion, we have located an emperor-king of the West, a king of the North, a king of the South, and an alliance of kings of the East, all of whose armies will be marching down upon Palestine at about the same time. Jehovah's land will be the battle-ground for the fearful Armageddon conflict. Thus Palestine will be exposed to all the horrors and ravages incident to the last premillennial war. It is for this time of horror, little as they realize it, that the Jews from eastern and southern Europe are now returning in large numbers to their ancient home. They are going back that their forefathers' awful prayer may be fully answered, "His blood be on us, and on our children" (**Matthew 27:25**). Poor misguided people—the nation of the wandering foot—they fancy that at last a refuge is being provided for them where they will be safe from persecution and secure from danger; but they are really preparing unwittingly for the wine-press of the wrath of God, from which blood shall flow to the horses' bridles for one thousand six hundred furlongs—the whole actual length of Palestine (**Revelation 14:18-20**).

After the church has been called away to Heaven, there will arise in the city of Jerusalem a man who will present himself to the Jews as the messiah long promised through the prophets. The apostate part of the nation will at once acknowledge his claims; they will say of him, "This is indeed the messiah for whom we have waited so long; this is the one of whom our Scriptures speak." I judge he will be largely instrumental, in the beginning, in securing them concessions from the Turkish government, that they may be established in their land. Afterwards he will form a league with the Roman beast, establishing a covenant between him and the nation for seven years, guaranteeing his protection and the integrity of the new Jewish state. Such was the program outlined by the great Zionist leader Zangwill. The Jewish agitator, Max Nordau, said some

time ago, “We are ready to own any man as our messiah who will establish us again in the land of our fathers.”

This will be, I doubt not, exactly what will take place in the coming day. Some great Jew—perhaps he is living now—is going to come to the front who will have much to do in bringing about this restoration. He will be acknowledged by the western powers as political head of Palestine. He is “the king” of **Daniel 11:36-39**:

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. 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.

I now desire to show why the antichrist will be a Jew living in the land of Palestine; his seat will be in Jerusalem, and he will be acknowledged by the nation of Israel as their messiah. In doing so I wish to show why the Roman Catholic pope cannot be the one prophesied of here; no pope has ever fulfilled these necessary qualifications, nor is it likely that one ever will. In the first place, it is important to notice that the name antichrist means simply the false messiah; he is the one to whom our Lord Jesus Christ referred when He said, “I am come in my Father’s name, and ye receive me not: if another shall come in his

own name, him ye will receive” (**John 5:43**). The antichrist then *is to be received by the Jews*. Has this ever been the case with the popes? Is there any apparent possibility that the Jewish people will ever acknowledge the papacy (which has existed for long centuries) as their messiah, the hope of their nation? Messiah was promised to the Jews. To them He came in grace, only to be rejected. When the false messiah comes they will accept *his* claims and hail his advent with joy.

You should not imply from this that only Israel will be deceived by him. From the second chapter of 2 Thessalonians (a passage we shall be considering later on), it is plain that apostate Christendom will also fall into his snare. The Roman beast will be the civil ruler of the West, while antichrist will be the religious ruler. The power behind both will be “that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan” (**Revelation 20:2**). This will be the anti-trinity—Satan, the beast, and the false prophet (20:10). All the nations of the earth will be deceived by them.

The Jews have never owned the pope as messiah. No pope has made a seven-years’ covenant with them. Nor has any pope had his throne in Jerusalem or dwelt in the land of Palestine. So it seems clear that there is practically nothing in Scripture to identify the papacy with the antichrist. Do not misunderstand and think that I am defending the papacy. I believe it to be an evil thing, but it is not *the* antichrist.

When antichrist comes he is to do according to his will and to exalt himself and magnify himself above every god. These gods are undoubtedly the idols of the heathen. But he is also to “speak marvellous things against the God of gods.. neither shall he regard the God of his fathers” (**Daniel 11:36-37**). Now I submit that only in the wildest

hyperbole can such words be applied to the worst of the popes. It is true that some have permitted themselves to be addressed most blasphemously. It is true that a Jesuit writer even dared to speak of “our Lord God the pope.” It is likewise true that the pope has been said to have an intimacy with the Father in which even the Lord Jesus Christ does not share. This is based on the Lord’s words to Peter concerning his confession: “Flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven” (**Matthew 16:17**). From this, the Jesuits argue that the “first pope” (Peter) had special illuminations and secrets with the Father in which the Son did not share. They have declared that the same privilege belongs to his successors; so they believe it is safer in some cases to go to the pope than to Christ!

All these things are blasphemous and must make every truly devout soul shrink from such teaching. But when the last great antichrist arises it will be even worse than this. The pope, at least, has never claimed to be above every god. His very title disproves this. He is called the vicegerent of Christ; he takes the place of being, in a very special sense, God’s representative on the earth. It will be otherwise with the antichrist. He refuses to own *any* God. He comes in his own name and utterly denies “the God of his fathers.” What are we to understand by this last expression? It must mean that he is a Jew and that his fathers after the flesh were Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Such is the invariable use of the expression in the Old Testament. I take it as evidence that the antichrist is by birth a Jew, but a Jew who has apostatized from the God of his fathers. How could any but a Jew impose on his nation as being the messiah? It is clearly predicted in their Scriptures that the hope of Israel is to spring from the favored nation.

We are also told, in verse 37, that he will not regard the desire of women, nor any god; he will magnify himself above all. Now it seems evident that “the desire of women” refers to the fact that every Jewish woman hoped that it might be the will of God that through her the Messiah would be born into the world. He was emphatically the desire of women. Antichrist utterly disregards Him, pretending to be himself the predicted one.

But there is a god whom he acknowledges, though evidently a merely natural and human personage. He will “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” (38). This god can be none other than the little horn, the Roman beast. As we have seen, antichrist will turn to him for assistance and support. On his part, the beast will acknowledge and increase the glory of this civil head of the empire, causing him “to rule over many” who might not otherwise have accepted his authority. He and the antichrist will divide the land of Palestine for gain. I maintain that it is utterly incongruous to attempt to apply all this to the pope; but taken in its natural meaning, all is plain and simple.

From verse 40 to the end of the chapter we have a graphic account of the beginning of the conflict of the last days. The king of the South marches against Jerusalem, and the king of the North comes down like a whirlwind with a vast army and navy. He will enter the glorious land and adjacent countries, except the lands anciently occupied by Edom, Moab, and Ammon. He is triumphant everywhere at first. Egypt is unable to stand against his victorious armies, and he asserts his sway over the land of the Pharaohs, and Libya, and Ethiopia. But alarmed by news from the East and the North, he turns back with great fury to meet the powers—doubtless of the beast and the kings

from the sunrising. But on the mountains of Israel between the seas he comes to his end, and none can help him. Thus the last king of the North, the eastern little horn, is finally destroyed. We do not read here of antichrist's destruction. That is given to us in **Revelation 19:20**.

Before closing, I wish to note several other Scriptures that add to our knowledge of the false messiah. In **Zechariah 11**, after the prophet, personifying the Lord Jesus as the Good Shepherd, is priced at thirty pieces of silver, Zechariah is told to take the instruments of a foolish shepherd.

For, lo, [says God] I will raise up a shepherd *in the land*, which shall not visit those that be cut off, neither shall seek the young one, nor heal that that is broken, nor feed that that standeth still: but he shall eat the flesh of the fat, and tear their claws in pieces. Woe to the idol shepherd that leaveth the flock! the sword shall be upon his arm, and upon his right eye: his arm shall be clean dried up, and his right eye shall be utterly darkened (16-17, italics added).

This idol shepherd is clearly the same as the willful king of **Daniel 11**. He is to be raised up *in the land*—an expression that can refer only to the land of Palestine. He is, beyond a doubt, the one to whom the Lord Jesus was referring in **John 5:43**. The true Shepherd, who came in the name of the Father, had been rejected, but the Jews would receive the false shepherd who comes in his own name.

Let us now turn our attention to **Revelation 13**. In the first half of the chapter we have the description of the Roman beast. But, beginning with verse 11, we read of another beast coming up out of the earth, or land; he had

two horns like a lamb, and he spoke as a dragon. That is, he looks like and presents himself as the Lamb of God, but his speech is that of the great deceiver of souls. He exercises all the power of the first beast before him, demanding that all worship the first beast. He even does great wonders in order that men may acknowledge the claims of the beast; he makes “fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men,” to deceive them. He sets up the abomination of desolation, causing men to make an image to the beast, which all must worship on pain of death. All this is in perfect harmony with what we have learned as to the mutual relationship of the beast and antichrist in the book of Daniel. The lamb-like beast comes up from the earth. He is in the land, and his placing the abomination that causes desolation is the signal given by the Lord Jesus for the faithful remnant to flee from Jerusalem.

The signs and wonders with which he deceives the world are also mentioned in **2 Thessalonians 2**. When laboring in Thessalonica, the apostle told the Thessalonian Christians that before the day of the Lord would come, Christ Himself would descend into the air, and all His saints would be caught up to meet Him (**1 Thessalonians 4:16-17**). But it would seem that a report had been spread among them that the day of the Lord had already come, and Paul wrote a second letter to correct this error. He encouraged them not to be shaken in their minds, nor fearful in regard to this. He told them that day could not come until the apostasy had first taken place and the man of sin been revealed, “the son of perdition; Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God” (**2 Thessalonians 2:3-4**).

He goes on to speak of a hinderer, who at the present time is holding back the floodtide of evil (2:6-7). That hinderer is the presence of the Holy Ghost in the church on earth. At the rapture of the saints, when all the redeemed are caught up to meet the Lord in the air, the Holy Spirit will have returned to Heaven.

Then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness (8-12).

How perfectly this fits in with the testimony we have been examining in other parts of the Word of God! While the church is on earth the mystery of lawlessness is already working, but the full revelation of evil cannot take place while Christians are in this world. When that time comes we will be above it all, having been caught up to meet the Lord in the air.

The mystery of lawlessness and the many antichrists of **1 John 2:18** are intimately connected. So here we have a point of agreement with persons who think that the papacy is the antichrist. We disagree with them only as to the use of the article. The papal system is *an* antichrist; this is true of every system that turns souls away from the truth concerning Christ and His work as the only ground of salvation. Christian Science is an antichrist; Mormonism is another; and so with Spiritism and a host

of other ancient and modern cults and fads. The crowning evil of them all is perhaps what is now known as liberal theology, heralded from a thousand pulpits by men who glory in their freedom from subjection to the Word of God. They do not hesitate to brand the Scriptures as a collection of myths and fables, untrustworthy, and less to be relied on than their own vapid utterances. Every little while some one who has been supposed to be an orthodox Christian preacher comes out with the declaration that he has discovered the unreliability of this or that book of the Bible. His reckless assertions are received with delight by congregations of Christless, unconverted professors, who are glad to be absolved from allegiance to a book whose teachings prick their consciences while they live for themselves in this world.

If the day ever came that a man who had actually known the Lord Jesus as his own Savior and had enjoyed communion with Him was forced by irresistible evidence to believe that the Bible was not true and the precious gospel story an unreliable tradition of men, do you know what would happen to that man? His heart would be broken. He would never be found among the shallow, empty religionists of the day, who can complacently acquiesce to the teachings of the so-called higher critics and liberal preachers. He would be found weeping with Mary and exclaiming in deepest grief, "They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him" (**John 20:13**).

But it is very different for false professors who drink in so greedily the infidelity that Christless preachers proclaim. What has the rejection of the truth of Scripture done for these men? When they thought the Bible true, it served as a check on their lawless desires and appetites. They chafed under its restraints. But when they threw the

doctrine of the inspiration of Scripture out the window, they were never so happy in all their lives!

I assure you beloved, people who really know Christ would feel very differently about having to give up the precious Word of God through which He was revealed to their souls. They are acquainted with the divine *Person*, the Son of the living God. The others had but a *theory*, which they are thankful enough to be rid of.

Those who preach these false gospels are the many antichrists of the present dispensation. When the lawless one himself is revealed, they will be the first to acknowledge his impious claims. They will be deceived by the strong delusion sent from God so that all who did not receive the love of the truth might be judged.

Already it would seem as though that strong delusion were beginning. I know nothing sadder than the awful power of these evil things that are spreading through Christendom, eating out the very life of the church like a moral or religious cancer. How seldom you see a soul brought back from the awful abyss of cults! The reason is plain: there is a Satanic power working in them all that gains absolute control over those who have heard the gospel of God only to refuse and reject it. But, thank God, there are those to whom the words of the apostle apply: "But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth" (**2 Thessalonians 2:13**).

God grant that each one that reads these words may be found as a child of God, born of the Holy Spirit and of the Word, filled with joy in the knowledge of peace made and

Christ on the cross.

Chapter Twelve The Time Of The End

Daniel

Henry Allen Ironside

This final chapter is intimately connected with the activity of the previous chapter. “At that time”—that is, at the time of the rise of the antichrist and the overthrow of the Assyrian or king of the North—“shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy [Daniel’s] people” (1). There is very likely a close connection here with what we have recorded in **Revelation 12**. There John sees war in Heaven. The dragon and his angels fight to maintain their place in the upper air where they may have access to the presence of God so that Satan, the accuser of **Zechariah 3**, may still resist the Jews—a remnant of whom will have turned to the Lord. But the time having come when God will act openly on their behalf, Michael and his angels are sent to expel the Satanic hosts from Heaven. Defeated above, the devil turns to vent his wrath on the remnant, the seed of the woman; this is Israel, who is seen in the beginning of the chapter and “from whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came.” He and His church, together represented in the man child, will have been caught up to God and to His throne; there will no longer be found on earth anyone rightfully bearing the name of Christian. But the fullness of the Gentiles having come in, the Jews will be grafted back into their own olive tree; to them will be committed the testimony for the time of the end. All the malice of the devil will be directed against this remnant—“And there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time” (**Daniel 12:1**). At that time Daniel’s people

will be delivered, not all who were Jews by natural birth, but “every one that shall be found written in the book.” These are they whose names are written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, for them the earthly kingdom has been prepared.

Tested by the proclamation of the everlasting gospel on the one hand and the placing of the abomination that causes desolation on the other, there will be a national and religious awakening by those who have been spiritually asleep for so long. The second verse does not, I believe, speak of an actual physical resurrection, but rather of a moral and national one: “Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.” It is the same kind of language that is used both in **Isaiah 26:12-19** and **Ezekiel 37** to describe Israel’s national and spiritual revival. For centuries they have been sleeping in the dust of the earth, buried among the Gentiles. Their awakening will have taken place at last. For some it will be to everlasting life and blessing in the glorious kingdom of the Son of man soon to be established; for the apostates it will be to everlasting shame and contempt because of their submission to the beast and the anti-christ.

Then the wise (that is, the teachers among the remnant, the same class who are referred to in the latter part of verse 10) will “shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever” (3). While these words refer primarily to the faithful of Judah in that day, we also may find encouragement and cheer in them. “He that winneth souls is wise” (**Proverbs 11:30**); or as the Revised version puts it, “He that is wise winneth souls.” May ours be the wisdom that leads us to walk so as to commend the gospel of Christ to all with whom we come in contact; may we indeed be winners of souls, turning many to righteousness.

Daniel was told to shut up the words and seal the book, even to the time of the end. This is in marked contrast with the message of the angel to the apostle John at the close of the book of Revelation: “And he saith unto me, Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book: for the time is at hand” (**Revelation 22:10**). The present age or church period is looked at as being but a moment, so to speak, in the ways of God. Messiah having come and been rejected by Israel, the next thing in prophetic order is the time of the end. If this dispensation continues a little longer, it is only an evidence of God’s long-suffering to sinners; He is not willing that any should perish, but that all should turn to Him and live (**2 Peter 3:9**).

Throughout the New Testament, the end is always looked on as having drawn near; therefore, through the book of Revelation, the seal is removed, as it were, from the book of Daniel, and the latter prophecy is found to be the key to the former. **Daniel 12:4** closes with the statement that “many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased.” Could anything more aptly depict the chief characteristics of these last days? Men seem to have a mania for traveling from place to place, and human inventions of all kinds are pressed into service to accelerate and make comfortable those who run to and fro. Coupled with this we have the ever-widening diffusion of the media, so that knowledge of all kinds is increased. May we not see in these things an evidence that we have almost reached the special prophetic period called the “time of the end”?

From the fifth verse to the end of our chapter we seem to have an appendix. The writing of the “scripture of truth,” which the angel began to unfold in the beginning of chapter 11, was concluded in **Daniel 12:4**. What follows gives additional light as to times and seasons. The awe-inspiring being described in chapter 10 is still with Daniel, but two

other angels appear on the scene also, one standing on each bank of the river. One of these speaks to the man clothed in linen and asks: "How long shall it be to the end of these wonders?" (6) He is evidently referring to the great tribulation and he inquires its actual duration. The answer is given with great solemnity that it will 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" (7). This agrees with the times given in 7:25, during which the little horn was to be permitted to speak great things against the Most High and try to change times and laws. At the expiration of this time judgment would fall and the little horn's dominion be taken away. This is of course the premillennial warrior-judgment described in **Revelation 19**. The angel's declaration that "when he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished," refers undoubtedly to this little horn's violent persecution of the remnant; it will be followed by the revelation of Messiah.

Daniel heard but did not understand (8). Through the book of Revelation God has now unfolded all this, in order that we may more fully understand His ways. The prophet was told to go his way, "for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end" (9). In that time, "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" (10).

Two other time-prophecies complete the book. We know from other passages that the great tribulation commences when the daily sacrifice is taken away and the abomination that causes desolation is set up, as foretold in verse 11. This is the verse, not 11:31, to which our Lord referred in His great prophecy in **Matthew 24**. We have seen that the tribulation is to last "for a time, times, and an half," equivalent to three

and a half years or twelve hundred and sixty days. But in **Daniel 12:11** we learn that from the beginning of this tribulation, there will be a thousand two hundred and ninety days. The extra thirty days will doubtless be devoted to the purging out of the kingdom of all things that offend and do iniquity. But the Lord will appear on behalf of the remnant and for the destruction of the beast and antichrist at the end of the twelve hundred and sixty days. An even longer period is given in verse twelve: “Blessed is he that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days.” Some have suggested that this would carry on the time to the celebration of the first millennial feast of tabernacles (**Zechariah 14:16-21**). At any rate it clearly points us on to the full establishment of the kingdom in power and glory.

Until then Daniel is told to go his way, but the promise is given him, “Thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at the end of the days” (13). It is not likely that the prophet lived very much longer, as he would be past ninety years, perhaps almost a century old. Soon he was called from a scene in which he had lived to see many of his own prophecies fulfilled. His life began in the land of Judah. He died an exile, though honored and respected, in the land of the stranger. He held positions of trust and confidence under Nebuchadnezzar, Darius, and possibly Cyrus. He saw the rise and fall of Babylon—the head of gold and the lion with eagle’s wings. He beheld the sudden rise and accession to supreme power of the silver breast and arms—the ferocious bear that raised itself up on one side. During its season of domination he passed away to rest, not in unconscious sleep, but in Abraham’s bosom. There he will wait with all the faithful until the voice of Michael the archangel is heard, at the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him; for it is written of Old Testament saints that “they without us should not be made perfect” (**Hebrews**

11:40). Answering the assembling-shout of the Lord in that hour of triumph, Daniel's body will rise from its unknown grave in glory and incorruption. He will take his place with Him for whose sake he had borne reproach so often in his life of faithful devotion to God. Thus he will stand in his lot in the place appointed him, after all his works have been shown at the judgment seat of Christ.

He will behold the rise and destruction of the last beast, dreadful and terrible in its ten-horned condition. Daniel will see the once-rejected Stone fall from Heaven in judgment on the feet of the image of "the man of the earth"; he will see the Son of man coming, as "a Lamb that looked as though it had been offered in sacrifice" (**Revelation 5:6**, Weymouth's translation). The Lamb will receive from the hands of the Ancient of days the seven-sealed scroll of the title deeds to this world. Among that holy number of crowned priests who prostrate themselves at His feet, none will join more loudly or more understanding[^] in the song of redemption and glory than the one-time captive who "purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself (**Daniel 1:8**). When the King of kings rides forth, clothed in a robe dipped in blood, Daniel will follow in his train as an intelligent witness of all God's ways in judgment, concerning which he once heard but understood not. In the kingdom of glory to follow, Daniel who had stood before kings, will stand in the presence of the Prince of the kings of the earth in the lot appointed him.

And in that day, all who have esteemed the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of earth—all who have been content to suffer for righteousness' sake—all who have witnessed the good confession—will reign in life with Him who was the arch-sufferer on earth, the most misunderstood of all that noble race "of whom the world was not worthy" (**Hebrews 11:38**).

These things are all written in “the Scripture of truth.” The day of their fulfillment is near. The Judge stands at the door. Soon the mighty and glorious miracle that will close up this age of grace and introduce the coming hour of trial will be performed by omnipotent power. I refer to the resurrection of the dead in Christ and the translation of the living saints. Not one will be left behind; God has ordained that, just as the flood of old could not take place until Noah and all his household were safe in the ark, so not one seal of the book to be taken by the Lamb can be broken, not a trumpet blown, not a vial of wrath poured out, until all the redeemed of this dispensation with all the saints of the past are safely gathered around the Lord in Heaven.

Each believer may truthfully use the solemnly precious words of Dr. Bonar as his own:

I murmur not that now a stranger
I pass along the smiling earth;
I know the snare, I dread the danger,
I hate the haunts, I shun the mirth.

My hopes are passing upward, onward,
And with my hopes my heart has gone;
Mine eye is turning skyward, sunward,
Where glory lightens round yon throne.

My spirit seeks its dwelling yonder;
And faith foredates the joyful day,
When these old skies shall cease to sunder
The one dear love-linked family.

To light, unchanging and eternal,
From mists that sadden this bleak waste,
To scenes that smile, forever vernal,
From winter's blackening leaf I haste.

Earth, what a sorrow lies before thee!
None like it in the shadowy past;
The sharpest throe that ever tore thee,—
Even though the briefest and the last.

I see the fair moon veil her lustre,
I see the sackcloth of the sun;
The shrouding of each starry cluster,
The three-fold woe of earth begun.

I see the shadow of its sunset;
And wrapt in these the Avenger's form;
I see the Armageddon-onset;
But I shall be above the storm.

There comes the moaning and the sighing,
There comes the hot tear's heavy fall,
The thousand agonies of dying;
But I shall be beyond them all.

The great tribulation cannot begin while the members of Christ's body are still on the earth, for the Lord says to the church of this dispensation: "Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth" (**Revelation 3:10**). This applies to all Christians, for one who does not endure patiently is not His.

The earthly history of the church will end when "the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and 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" (**1 Thessalonians 4:16-17**). We will be with Him forever.

On our departure to Heaven the great clock of prophecy will again begin ticking off the times and seasons. A remnant from the people of Israel will be born again; gathered out from the mass, they will become the Lord's witnesses on earth in the time of the end. Mr. A. E. Booth has likened the course of time to a railroad track. Sometimes I have traveled on the railway on an ordinary train, with local stops to be made according to schedule. But a special or express has been sent out behind us, and we have been shunted on to a side track until the limited express has gone by. Then the signals direct us to once more get on to the mainline and complete our regular course. Israel may be likened to the local train, running along through the course of the years according to prophecy. But when Messiah appeared and they rejected Him and crucified the Lord of glory (at the expiration of the 69 weeks of **Daniel 9**), they were turned off on the side track. They have been waiting there ever since, while the special of the dispensation of the grace of God—the limited church-express—has been going by. When it has passed on and left the main track clear, God is going to give the signal, and the old Jewish local train will take to the track again. It will fulfill the balance of its schedule according to the seventieth week of the prophecy referred to above, and in fact all the prophecies that have to do with the time of the end.

Those of us who are saved by God's sovereign grace are on the church-express; we are to be a heavenly people throughout the millennium and to all eternity. Israel after the flesh are the earthly people, but they have forfeited all title to blessing through disobedience. Still God is determined to carry out His Word to give them a place of special privilege on the earth. He will renew a remnant of them by His Holy Spirit and His Word and will cleanse them from all filthiness and acknowledge them as His own once more. They will have their inheritance here on the earth, but

the church and the Old Testament saints will have theirs in Heaven.

So all these dates—the times and the seasons that we have in Daniel and Revelation—have nothing to do with this present period, while the church-express is going by. They are part of the official schedule for the Jewish local train and will direct its movements when the limited church-train has passed on to glory. There is no timetable issued for the church-express; no one can say when it will get by. But I feel very certain that if you want to get aboard, you will have to do so soon, for everything points to a change of dispensations shortly. None are aboard that train except those who have been cleansed from their sins by the precious blood of Christ and sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise. Are you certain that you are numbered among them? Do you know that you have been born from above and now possess life eternal? You cannot afford to be uncertain in regard to these things. They are too momentous, too solemn and serious for you to go on from day to day hoping everything will turn out all right in the end. In reality, everything in your life is all wrong if you are out of Christ—a stranger to the grace of God. What folly to trifle with matters of such grave importance trembling in the balance!

If you are unsaved, yet desirous of becoming a Christian, listen to the message of my Lord. He says: “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*. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation” (**Romans 10:9-10**, italics added). Let me link this with a verse in John’s first Epistle: “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1:9). Observe carefully that in these two Scriptures there are two confessions God is calling

on every soul to make: first confess your sins to God; then confess your Savior to men. Is it not simple? As a poor lost sinner you are invited to come to the God you have sinned against, admitting your guilt in His holy presence. When you come, He promises full forgiveness based on the finished work of His beloved Son, who bore the very sins you confess on the cross; in your place He endured the judgment due your sins. Believing this—resting on the testimony of the unchanging Word of God—you can turn to your old friends and former companions and say: “I now own the Lord Jesus Christ as my Savior, and my Lord!” And He declares, “Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven” (**Matthew 10:32**). Think of it: Confess Christ here, and He will confess you there; deny Him here, and He will deny you there!

Hasten to make the two confessions that will give you the right to say: “He hath clothed me with the garments of salvation” (**Isaiah 61:10**). Then, when Daniel stands in his lot at the end of the days, you too will stand in your lot among the redeemed company who will follow the Lamb wherever He goes. But if you persist in refusing Christ—if you go on denying His name—and die in your sins, you will have to stand in your lot before His judgment throne; you will hear the words of doom: “I know you not. Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels” (**Matthew 25:12,41**). What awful words! Oh that they may never be spoken to you!

With this I close these studies in the book of Daniel. We have seen how wonderfully prophecy has been corroborated by human historical records of the past. Surely it has impressed us with the fact that not one word that God has spoken will ever fall to the ground. “He will not call back His

words.” All that is written will be fulfilled regarding Israel and the church—God’s people and the nations—and each individual soul, whether saved or lost. “Heaven and earth shall pass away,” declared the Lord Jesus, “but my words shall not pass away” (**Matthew 24:35**). To keep His Word is to live. To refuse it is to die eternally! Let not Satan persuade any that God will be better than His Word; He will fulfill it to the letter, though man may think otherwise and hope for mercy apart from Christ.

The man may think that all is well,
And every fear be calmed:
He lives,—he dies,—he wakes in hell,—
Not only doomed, but damned.

To the Christian, the book of Daniel is a precious and soul-stirring record of the love and care of our gracious God. He always watches over and blesses His own no matter how dark the night. He has given us the sure word of prophecy as a light shining in the gloom until the day dawns and the Daystar arises in our hearts.

Appendix Questions And Objections Answered

Daniel

Henry Allen Ironside

A multitude of questions and objections were handed to the author and answered or replied to when lecturing on this book. A selection of those that might pose difficulties to others has been made here, together with abbreviated notes of the answers given. Only those bearing directly on the themes treated in Daniel have been preserved.

1. Is it the antichrist or the Roman little horn who will make the seven-years covenant with the Jews?

In a sense, both; for while the little horn is “the prince that shall come” of chapter 9, the antichrist will be the representative head of the Jewish nation. They “shall divide the land for gain [or, at a price]” (11:39). The covenant would seem to be made between them, the antichrist acting on behalf of “the many”—a term applied to apostate Judah. Just as “the counsel [or covenant] of peace” is between the Father and the Son (**Zechariah 6:13**), so “the covenant of death” will be sealed by the beast and the false prophet.

2. Was the placing of the Roman eagles (in the siege of Titus) on the walls of Jerusalem the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel and referred to by our Lord?

No. The setting up of the abomination that causes desolation is the beginning of the great tribulation, and that does not begin until antichrist is raised up by Satan to impersonate the Messiah.

3. The Seventh-day Adventists teach that “the cleansing of the sanctuary” refers to Christ’s entering the holiest of all in Heaven at the end of 2300 year-days in 1844 to cleanse it. Is this the correct explanation of the passage?

It is a perversion of Scripture and blasphemous beyond expression as the Adventist sanctuary-theory makes Satan to be the sin-bearer, and thus the real savior of the penitent! Could anything be more horrible?

Scripture plainly teaches that our Lord “when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high” (**Hebrews 1:3**). Of necessity this implies His immediate entrance into the holiest, for the throne of God is there. “We have such a high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; A minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man” (**Hebrews 8:1-2**). There on God’s throne in the holiest He has been sitting, not since 1844, but ever since His ascension. Because He is there and the veil removed, believers are able to enter there in spirit too: “Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus... Let us draw near” (10:19, 22). Think of our being invited to draw near and enter into the holiest, and the Son, our great High Priest, Himself shut out until 1844!

The sanctuary contemplated by Daniel is earthly, and the prophecy was fulfilled in 2300 days after Antiochus Epiphanes polluted it by setting up a statue of Jupiter Olympus in the holiest (see comments on **Daniel 8:14**).

4. Does “He shall...think to change times and laws” (7:25) refer to the pope, who changed the sabbath from Saturday, the seventh day, to Sunday, the first day?

As noted in Chapter 7, there is no reference to the pope in the passage. The pope did not change the sabbath. He simply acknowledged the special place given to the Lord’s day. The sabbath is and always has been the seventh day and will be kept as such in the millennium.

The Lord’s day is something very different. It belongs to the present dispensation and commemorates the resurrection of our Savior on the first day of the week. If under law, we are bound to observe the seventh day—the sabbath; but if under grace, we should gladly devote the first day of the week to the worship and service of the Lord.

5. Why is the name of the great king of Babylon spelled Nebuchadnezzar in Daniel, but sometimes Nebuchadrezzar in Jeremiah?

Ancient, as also modern, names were adapted to the speech of the various countries. Nebuchadnezzar seems to be the Hebraic form of the name. The monuments spell it with an “r” in place of an “n” as in parts of Jeremiah.

6. Will you give the exact dates for the computation of the 69 weeks of years that are supposed to have culminated in the cross of Christ?

The Scripture says, “*After* threescore and two weeks [together with the seven previously mentioned] shall Messiah be cut off (9:26, italics added). Just how soon after is not told us, but able chronologists have shown that 69 sevens of years of 360 days each had passed before Christ died. The clearest explanation of the times seems to be that given by Sir Robert Anderson in “The Coming Prince.” He calculated that exactly 483 prophetic years had elapsed on the day that

Christ rode into Jerusalem as the King predicted by Zechariah.

7. Why is Belshazzar called *son* and Nebuchadnezzar his *father* if they were not so intimately connected (Daniel 5)?

Because in the Semitic languages *son* is commonly used for *descendant* and *father* for *ancestor*. Thus the Israelites are sons of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. In the same way the kings of Judah are called *sons of David*, though many generations may have intervened.

8. Does Ezekiel 45:19-20 refer to the cleansing of the Heavenly sanctuary at the end of the 2300 year-days, as in Daniel 8?

See reply to Question 3. The sanctuary of Ezekiel, as the entire context makes plain, is the millennial temple, to be built in the midst of the land of Palestine and hallowed for divine service in the time of the kingdom. From chapter 40 to the end of the book, we read Ezekiel's description of this temple and its position and the position of the tribes of Israel to the north and south of it. The verses referred to in the question speak of the special dedication service when the temple will be ready for the renewal of the priestly service and the memorial sacrifices to be observed in the coming age by the earthly people—very much, I judge, as the Lord's supper is observed among Christians.

9. Do you not think that Christ is to reign in Heaven instead of on or over the earth?

No. Heaven is never said to be a sphere of Christ's kingdom. The heavens rule over the earth, but we do not read of saints reigning in Heaven. When the Bible speaks of reigning with Christ, it implies controlling something that must be kept down. A king in a kingdom implies there is something to be

repressed. People talk about the saints reigning in Heaven, but Scripture never so speaks. The saints are equal in Heaven: all are children with the Father. But in the kingdom one may have a greater place than another, as the kingdom has to do with rewards for service in this life.

Notice how Scripture puts it. In the present age the Lord Jesus says, “Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness’ sake” (**Matthew 5:10**). In our age Christ is not openly reigning; He is rejected and we are called on to suffer with Him, because Satan is the god of this age. “If we suffer [with Him], we shall also reign with him” (**2 Timothy 2:12**). This is not the time of His power; He is not reigning now and so righteousness suffers.

In the millennium, or kingdom-period, we read, “A king shall reign in righteousness.” In that day righteousness will not suffer, it will *reign*—that is, all evil will be kept down. But it is evident that there will be evil still. At the end of the millennium Satan comes up from the bottomless pit and finds a great host ready to follow him; this shows that there will be many in the millennium who will be simply kept under by the power of the King—such as those that have not been regenerated. People in the millennium will need to be born again just as much as they do now.

When we come to the new heavens and the new earth, does righteousness reign then? No; we read, “We.. .look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein *dwelleth* righteousness” (**2 Peter 3:13**, italics added. Read also **Revelation 21**.) The kingdom will be delivered up to the Father; God will dwell with His people; righteousness will dwell in the new heavens and the new earth; there will never be an enemy throughout eternity to lift up his head against God. Of course, the kingdom of God is forever and ever. That is, He will never surrender His throne or be superseded by any other.

10. Might not Daniel have avoided being cast into the den of lions if he had acted according to [Matthew 6:6](#) in making his prayer three times a day? Would he not then have avoided giving offense?

The prophet acted according to the dispensation in which he lived. The words of the Lord Jesus in [Matthew 6:6](#) have a different application and are a rebuke to hypocritical pretenders to a holiness they do not possess. In [1 Kings 8](#), note Solomon's prayer. He requested mercies of the Lord for His people when driven out of their land if they should pray "toward this place." Daniel acted accordingly and evidently with divine approval.

11. Does [Daniel 7](#) go on to "the day of God" of [2 Peter 3](#)? What is the difference between the day of the Lord and the day of God?

It is the bringing in of the kingdom, or the day of the Lord, that is contemplated in [Daniel 7](#). The day of God is the eternal state. In [2 Peter 3](#), the two are seen overlapping, as it were, in the last great conflagration; it is the close of the one and the beginning of the other.

12. Is the seventieth week identical with the great tribulation?

The seventieth week will be a period of tribulation for all earth-dwellers; but it is the last half of the week, or 1260 days, that is called "the tribulation, the great one." This will be the season of antichrist's power and the beast's war on the remnant.

13. Will Daniel and the rest of the Old Testament saints be raised with the saints of this dispensation at the time of the rapture of [1 Thessalonians 4](#)?

The word is plain—“Christ the firstfruits; afterward *they that are Christ’s* at his coming” (**1 Corinthians 15:23**, emphasis added). This includes all saints from Abel to the end of the present age.

14. Will Old Testament saints be manifested with the church at the judgment seat of Christ?

Surely; how else could Daniel stand in his lot at the time of the end (**Daniel 12:13**)?

“Prove all things; hold fast that which is good” (**1 Thessalonians 5:21**).
