



# DANIEL

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## INSTRUCTOR BIOGRAPHY

**Instructor:** C. M. (Chuck) Horner

**Biography:**

Chuck was born in 1933. He and his wife Loretta have been married 60 years. They have 3 children, 5 grandchildren and 7 great-grandchildren. He is an alumnus of Drake University in Des Moines, Iowa, where he majored in actuary science and minored in accounting. He graduated from the Bear Valley School of Preaching, Denver, Colorado in 1974. He has served on the administrations of York College and the Bear Valley Bible Institute of Denver. He served both as an instructor and as director in the Southwest School of Biblical Studies in Austin, Texas. In the fall of 1986 he helped start World Video Bible School where he serves as an instructor and trustee.

## DANIEL INTRODUCTION

### I. INSPIRATION.

#### A. Affirmation.

The position taken in this course is that the book of Daniel is inspired of God!

All Scripture is given by inspiration of God,\* and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work (2 Tim 3:16-17).

\*Literally: "God breathed."

#### B. Comments.

1. "Human inventiveness in things spiritual or unscriptural is very limited. It would be difficult probably to invent a new heresy" (Pusey, p. iii).

In other words we, today, have heard about every approach that can be made to discredit what the Bible has said.

2. To speak the truth unmixed is real faithfulness to God as well as true love for men.
  - a. Biblical truth is what creates biblical faith.
  - b. However, "'faith,' of course there cannot be, in one who would explain as human, what our Lord declared to be Divine" (Pusey, p. xi).
3. There are at least three methods liberals use to advance their theories:
  - a. They use different meanings for words instead of what they have been normally been understood to mean.
  - b. They create new or "modern" words or phrases with their own special meanings.
  - c. Obfuscate, obscure or make ambiguous the true meaning of scripture by bringing in thoughts and ideas which:
    - (1) Confuse rather than make clear, and/or
    - (2) Bring in so much information not needed that the original intent is blurred or hidden.

4. “No one can demonstrate, or even affirm, that God could not, if he chose, inspire a prophet to predict in detail the occurrences of the most remote times, and the fall of kingdoms not yet in being” (Barnes, vol. 1, p. 14).

And this is exactly what the book of Daniel does, it predicts the rise and fall of kingdoms which did not, as yet, then exist.

5. There have been many liberal scholars who have taken it upon themselves to try to find flaws in the authorship, dating, historicity, miracles or teachings of this great book. As I studied for this course on Daniel I discovered they had objections, supposed corrections or denials regarding nearly every paragraph in the book. A scholar friend of mine said that “Daniel has spent more time in the critic’s den than he did in the lion’s den.”
6. Liberal teachers “which allowed to every error a chance of having some truth, and claimed in return that each truth should be held liable to contain some error, does, in fact and a necessary consequence, deny the existence of any real truth. ‘Seek, and ye shall find,’ our Lord said; but these make the end of the search, the discovery that nothing certain is to be found, and, under the name of progress, are drifting back to the condition of Heathen skepticism” (Pusey, p. lxi).
7. False views of scripture have had so much success in swaying the minds of people because those of us who do believe in the divine inspiration and truthfulness of scripture have not studied the word of God enough to defend it properly against their lies and assumptions (Hos 4:6).
8. The Old Testament, and specifically the book of Daniel, points to Jesus the Christ (Messiah). Jesus, speaking of the Old Testament, said – “You search the Scriptures for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me (Jn 5:39).

Speaking of the Old Testament one commentator has said – “This is the reason that Christians can never give it up and the reason that it is not authoritative. As road signs are very valuable in directing a person to his destination but are passed by when the destination is reached (Gal 3:24-25), so the OT provides road signs pointing to Christ. But Christ is the goal and the authority. One no longer depends on the witnesses when he has the object of their testimony to examine. The Jews studied the law as an end in itself, but instead of being lifegiving in itself it points away from itself” (Ferguson, Everett; Willis, ed., p. 365).

9. God still speaks to the people of today through what He has spoken in His Bible!

### C. Approach.

If I were to take the time to answer every frivolous objection of detractors this course would be long, boring and unfruitful. Therefore, I have addressed only that which I consider to be the major arguments against the book. The meaning and messages of the book are so important and need to be understood. Therefore, I have concentrated my efforts on an accurate exposition rather than a course of refuting errors.

## II. AUTHOR:

### A. Daniel:

1. The meaning of his name - "God is Judge" or "God is my Judge."
2. He was from the royal family of king David (1:3,6).
3. He was a captive and taken into Babylonian exile as a young man.
4. The king in Babylon changed his name to Belteshazzar.
5. "Daniel appears to have been instructed in all the wisdom of the Chaldeans, which was at that time greatly superior to the learning of the ancient Egyptians" (Clarke, p. 558).
6. Daniel was not, in the strictest definition of the term, a "prophet."
  - a. He was a statesman in a heathen king's court.
    - (1) Daniel became a statesman within the conquering nations.
    - (2) He never relinquished that work to turn to the Jews as their prophet.
    - (3) His entire training as a youth prepared him to be a statesman.
    - (4) His integrity was so great that he was heard and trusted even by those kings who did not believe in Jehovah as the only God.
    - (5) "God placed Daniel at the heathen court in order that he might declare to successive monarchs that the kingdoms of this world are temporal and fleeting but that the kingdom of God shall endure forever" (Young, p. 19).
  - b. He did not fulfill the function of a mediator between God and men.
  - c. He did not represent Jehovah before the people (Jewish or Gentile).

- (1) Daniel was not sent to the Jews in captivity to serve them as a day-to-day prophet as others were.
- (2) “His message had an import also for his own people. But he was primarily God’s voice to heathen monarchs” (Leupold, p. 20).

B. The entire book is the work of one author as proven by its unity.

1. The first six chapters prepares for the last six chapters and that second part looks back to the first part (Chamberlain).
  - a. Chapters seven and eight develop more fully what was introduced in chapter two – yet seven and eight are not understandable without chapter two.
  - b. Chapters nine through twelve are based on the revelation in chapter two (cf. 2:28; 4:2,7,10 with 7:1-2,15).
2. The historical narratives show Daniel is the same person throughout the book.
3. Both critical and liberal scholars claim the unity of the book (*i.e.* Charles, Driver, Pfeiffer and Rawley).

C. Evidence for Daniel’s authorship:

1. Internal:
  - a. “Though nothing in the first six chapters of the book indicates that the Daniel mentioned in it is the author, yet from chapter 7 onward the following instances occur where both the first person and the name of Daniel are combined: 7:2,15,28; 8:1,15,27; 9:2,22; 10:1,2,7,11,12; 12:5. This fact, coupled with the obvious unity of the book, indicates that Daniel wrote all of it” (Leupold, p. 8).
  - b. The worship of Jehovah is carried out throughout the entire book.
  - c. The godly character of Daniel is maintained throughout.
  - d. The book reflects the Babylonian and Persian eras in which Daniel claims he is living in.

“Persia is the ancient name for the area found in the modern country of Iran, though at its height under the Achaemenid rulers (sixth-fifth centuries B.C.) the Persian Empire also included terri-

ories now found in Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Syria, Turkey, Russia, Iraq, Pakistan, and Afghanistan” (Yamauchi, p. 19).

2. External:

a. Jesus, the Messiah, regarded Daniel as the author.

“If Daniel wrote the book and spoke of coming events which would affect the well-being of mankind, as our Lord said, we should pay serious heed to what the book says. If, however, Daniel did not write the book, and our Lord was mistaken or deliberately allowed us to think that Daniel did write the book, then what warrant have we for believing that the contents of the book are true?” (Young IOT, p. 361).

(1) Jesus explicitly speaks of Daniel in Matthew 24:15 (cf. Dan 9:27; 12:11).

(2) Jesus confirms the genuineness of other prophecies of Daniel –

(a) Matthew 10:23,

(b) Matthew 16:27ff.,

(c) Matthew 19:28,

(d) Matthew 24:30-31,

(e) Matthew 25:31 and

(f) Matthew 26:64.

b. Ezekiel names Daniel and vouches for his godly character and wisdom (Ezek 14:14,20; 28:3).

c. Daniel is willing at all times to stand strong for what he believes and is a true hero of the faith.

D. Objections to Daniel’s authorship:

1. Daniel could not be the author of a book that reports his own death – “Thus Daniel continued until the first year of King Cyrus” (1:21).

“It becomes immediately apparent that the statement concerning the death of Daniel has to be inserted into this passage before it can be found there. The verse in question carries us up to a certain year without asserting that Daniel died in that year” (Leupold, p. 9).

2. A few liberal scholars feel the book is historically inaccurate in 1:1 by stating that the book starts out relating things in the third year of king Jehoiakim's reign. They feel this way because Jeremiah, in the fourth year of Jehoiakim's reign, speaks of the Chaldeans in a manner which shows that they had not yet attacked Jerusalem (Jer 25:1,9; 46:2). Then Jeremiah 25:2 shows that the fourth year of Jehoiakim was the first year of Nebuchadnezzar (Young IOT, p. 364).

The correct solution is to be found in the fact that Daniel reckons the years according to the Babylonian method of dating and Jeremiah according to the Palestinian method of dating (Young IOT, p. 365).

- a. The Babylonian system calls only the first FULL YEAR of the king's rule his "first year of reign."
- b. The year in which the king ascended the throne was not designated his FIRST YEAR – but "the year of the accession to the kingdom."
- c. Therefore, when Daniel speaks of Jehoiakim's "third year" he has reference to the same year as does Jeremiah in mentioning the "fourth year"

This point may be illustrated as follows:

<u>Babylonian / Daniel</u>	<u>Palestinian / Jeremiah</u>
Year of Accession	First Year
First Year	Second Year
Second Year	Third Year
Third Year	Fourth Year

3. In chapter 5, and other places, Belshazzar is called king whereas the last king of the neo-Babylonian empire was Nabonidus, the father of Belshazzar.

History shows that Nabonidus entrusted the rule to his son Belshazzar while he established his own personal dwelling at Tema in Arabia. Technically speaking Belshazzar ruled in a subordinate position to Nabonidus his father. There is no contradiction here.

4. Then others show that Nebuchadnezzar is named as the father of Belshazzar in Daniel 5.

As in the Hebrew language other oriental languages use the word “father” with more than one meaning. Sometimes as the literal father and sometimes a more distant parent (i.e. grandfather, great-great grandfather, etc.).

5. Still others show that in chapter five Belshazzar is quoted as promising to the interpreter of the inscription on the wall a promotion to the status of third ruler in the kingdom (5:16). Why would he promise only the third position, not the second?

Obviously the answer is that Belshazzar himself was the second ruler because his father Nabonidus was still alive (Archer, p. 371).

“Some men seem to forget that our faith is not based on history, and that the Scriptures do not get their validity from confirmation by extant historical documents” (Leupold, p. 26).

6. Again, some liberal scholars feel that because Daniel is not mentioned as active during the reign of every king of Babylon, from Nebuchadnezzar on, the entire book is a fabrication.

“It is to be remembered also, that Daniel was raised to power by the will of Nebuchadnezzar alone, and that the offices which he held were, in part, in consequence of the service which he had rendered that prince; and it is not strange, therefore, that on a change of government, he, with perhaps the other favourites of the former sovereign, should be suffered to retire. We find consequently no mention made of Daniel during the reign of Evil-Merodach, or in the short reign of his successor; we lose sight of him until the reign of Belshazzar, the last king of Babylon, and then he is mentioned only in connection with the closing scene of his life (ch. 5)” (Barnes, vol. 1, p. 4).

“Sir John Chardin, in his MS. Notes of Persia, says that, in his time, on the death of a Shah or king, all the soothsayers and physicians attached to the court were at once dismissed from office; the former because they did not *predict* his death, and the latter because they did not *prevent* it” (Barnes, vol.1, p. 4).

7. Some liberal scholars feel the development of angelology in the book of Daniel is like that of the Maccabean period and therefore written in the 100s B.C.

“If the book of Daniel was written somewhere around 535 B.C., what does it matter if a book written after 150 B.C. has the same type of angelology? Are we so dull as not to be able to see that this allows for the very real assumption that the latter of the two books has an angelology like the first because the author of the second learned it from the first?” (Luepold, p. 25).

“Angelology is a matter of revelation, not philosophy, or empirical science. Consequently, the only way to successfully refute this testimony concerning angels and their actions is to successfully refute the possibility and accuracy of revelation and this particular part of revelation. To smirk at such teaching is to smirk at Jesus, who not only believed in angels but taught plainly about them and had discussions with them” (McGuiggan, p. 63).

E. The Apocryphal additions to the book of Daniel.

1. The Song Of The Three Holy Children.
2. The History of Susanna.
3. The History Of The Destruction Of Bel And The Dragon.
4. “Apocryphal” means “hidden” or “secret.” These books were accepted into the canon by some but did not receive universal acceptance because they “did not measure up to all of the requirements needed to be ‘written by God.’”
5. For a full study on how the Bible came to be in its present form watch the course “The Bible: from God to Us” at [school.wvbs.org](http://school.wvbs.org).

### III. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND:

A. Judah has been conquered:

1. This was a great shock to the Jews who firmly believed that the providence of God would never let this happen.
  - a. They believed that such a calamity as the overthrow of God’s city and God’s temple could never take place.
  - b. But, the unexpected had happened!
2. The Assyrians overthrew them thoroughly and then deported thousands of Jews from their homeland. This was a process in which no nation had ever recovered from before.
3. This exile is a period in which the anger of God was directed at His own chosen people.
  - a. When Israel had been brought into existence it was established as a theocracy.
  - b. The people had been warned by Moses of the consequences of sin and

apostasy (Deut 28).

- c. The prophets God sent to the people also warned them of the consequences of sin and apostasy.
  - d. Despite all of this they forsook Jehovah and worshiped other gods.
  - e. In this process they split into two nations:
    - (1) Israel – the ten northern tribes and
    - (2) Judah (along with Benjamin).
  - f. When the sins of the Jewish nation became full God's indignation fell on them and took them off into captivity (Gen 15:15).
4. Nebuchadnezzar sent the captain of his guard, Nebuzaradan, to complete the destruction of Jerusalem and the removal of the people (2 Kgs 25:8-21 cf. 2 Chron 36:17-21). His work included:
- a. Burn the temple (v. 9),
  - b. Burn the palace (v. 9),
  - c. Burn the houses of the great men (v. 9),
  - d. Break down the walls of the city (v. 10),
  - e. Remove the captives (v. 11),
  - f. Leave the poor to take care of the fields (v. 12),
  - g. Take all of the valuables from the temple (vv. 13-17),
  - h. Remove the chief priests (v. 18),
  - i. Remove the king's counselors (v. 19) and
  - j. Remove the men of war (v. 19).
5. "The exile did bring to an end the outward organization of the people as it had been established at Sinai, it also introduced a new period. It introduced a period which may be regarded as transitional and preparatory, for the time of the *Indignation* led to the expectancy of the Messiah's coming" (Young, p. 17).

6. “The evidence is conclusive that the Babylonian and Assyrian captivities caused the Jewish people to be scattered in all directions, so that by NT times there were Jewish communities in every major city and country of the Roman Empire. The captivity served a definite purpose in bringing what Scripture calls “the fullness of time.” Through the Jewish exiles, people throughout North Africa, Western Asia, and Europe became acquainted with monotheism and the OT. In every major city there were synagogues, which served as a good medium for the preaching of the gospel and the establishment of the church” (Kearly, F. Furman, Willis, ed., p.180).

“Not only were thousands carried away to Mesopotamia by the conquering armies, but hundreds, perhaps even thousands more fled Judah on their own accord, seeking safety and solace primarily in Egypt, but elsewhere around the Mediterranean as well. There was, for example, such a community on Elephantine Island in the Nile River at the First Cataract, some five hundred miles south of the delta” (Frank, p. 131).

“It was at this time too, that these people began to be known as ‘Jews.’ At first the term seems to have been applied to those who were of the now fallen kingdom of Judah. But it very soon had a wider application and referred to any and all who were of Hebrew descent” (Frank, p. 131).

7. However, God had not cast off His people. Persecution of His people is still coming, but when the appointed time comes, God will establish His own eternal kingdom (Gal 4:4).

B. World powers were emerging:

1. World power was coming to the world. Great nations were developing the military might with all of the resources necessary to accomplish anything they desired.

Assyria had become a great power in the Middle East. But, at her demise her place “was quickly filled by Babylon who for some time had been asserting her independence. She had joined with the Scythians and the Medes to bring an end to Nineveh in 612 B.C. and then proceeded to checkmate Egyptian ambitions of expansion by defeating Necho at Carchemish in 605 B.C.” (Lewis, p. 73).

“Assyrian monarchs seemed to be obsessed with the ideas that their god Ashur demanded universal obeisance, even if this had to be exacted by the most cruel methods. They are never daunted by the difficulties of terrain. Pity towards the vanquished enemy seldom enters into consideration. They follow a systematic policy of terror, and glory themselves in burning cities, flaying the most recalcitrant enemies, cutting off their heads by the thousands, deporting women and children

or burning them with the ruins of their city. This policy of terror and cruelty is interpreted by the Assyrians as a service rendered to their gods and particular to Ashur, the god of thunder” (Schwantes, p. 118).

“Dependent on plunder for its very life, Assyria would collapse Economically should the war machine stop its gruesome work” (Schwantes, p. 119).

“In July of 612 B.C., under a combined attack of Medes and Chaldeans, the venerable city of Nineveh fell . . . Nineveh, Kalah and all important cities were razed to the ground never to be inhabited again. Such was the hatred which Assyria had engendered in all its neighbors, that nothing short of total obliteration could expiate it” (Schwantes, p. 133).

2. One world power would follow another – Babylon was replaced by Medo-Persia, Medo-Persia by the Greeks and the Greeks by the Romans.
3. “These nations would now be faced more directly with the claims of the true God. Through the prophecies which Daniel uttered they would learn that no empire of human origin is eternal, for empire would succeed empire. They would learn also that no empire is of world wide domination, for they would see rebellion after rebellion, nation rising against nation. And above all they would behold the vanity of the idols and the superiority of the God of Israel” (Young, p. 17).

“Ancient peoples thought of battles among nations as reflecting a parallel warfare among the gods. The nation with the strongest god would be expected to win. When Jerusalem was destroyed it would have been natural to conclude that Marduk, the god of Babylon, had proved himself stronger than the God of Israel. The very vessels from the Lord’s house in Jerusalem became trophies of victory in Marduk’s shrine in Babylon” (Pfeiffer, p. 418).

“Through the affliction of captivity, Israel would be prepared for a brighter future: ‘There is hope for your future, says the Lord, and your children shall come back to their own country’ (Jer 31:17)” (Pfeiffer, p. 420).

4. “It was necessary to show that the God of Israel was the true and living God, who possessed objective metaphysical existence, before Whom the gods of the heathen were vain, empty delusions, not having objective reality. Consequently, during the exile, more stress is placed upon relations concerning the future than on the performance of miracles as such. These mighty miracles are recorded in the book of Daniel; the episode of the fiery furnace, the handwriting on the wall and the deliverance from the den of lions. These are sufficient to establish the omnipotence of the LORD. But

several revelations concerning the future are given in order that the nations might see that the God of Israel is the God in whose hand are held the sovereign dispositions of the affairs of men” (Young, p. 18).

5. Except for a short time under the Maccabees Israel never was to be a free nation again. Israel from this time on is a small inferior nation under some foreign nation’s power.
6. However, all of God’s promises for a savior were invested in Israel. Even the faithful had to be asking – “Were these promises no longer valid?” Could God, under these circumstances, actually keep His promises? The prophecy of Daniel is going to reassure them that indeed His promises are going to be kept and that He can fulfill His promises through them!

### C. What was Babylon like?

1. “The city was surrounded by 60 miles of wall, 300 feet high, 80 feet thick, submerged underground 35 feet (in order to keep enemies from tunneling under). The Euphrates river split the city in the middle. The temple of Bel contained a golden image and golden table which weighed more than 25 tons. It had 53 temples and 180 altars and some 4,000 gods.

“The Greek historian Herodotus, who wrote a century and a half after Nebuchadnezzar, described the city as a vast square, 480 stades (55¼ miles) in circumference, surrounded by a huge moat of running water, beyond which were ramparts two hundred cubits high and fifty cubits broad! Herodotus tells us that the streets were arranged at right angles, a fact verified by Koldewey, the excavator of Babylon. The Euphrates was walled both sides as it made its course through the city, a series of gates providing the inhabitants of Babylon to the river” (Pfeiffer, pp. 427-428).

“Nabopolassar had already begun the rebuilding of Babylon, but it was left to Nebuchadnezzar to pursue the work in earnest” (Pfeiffer, p. 428).

2. “The king’s palace was perhaps the most magnificent building ever erected in antiquity. It was protected itself by 4 succeeding walls plus moats and other defense mechanisms.
3. “The hanging gardens, built by Nebuchadnezzar for one of his homesick queens, consisted of several tiers of arches, each holding up a solid platform 400 feet square upon which would be planted trees, shrubs, flowers, gardens of all kinds. These platform gardens were watered by hydraulic pumps pumping water upward from one level to another.
4. “Their society and culture was what would be expected from a pagan

empire – sensual, luxurious, indulgent, cruel, proud and powerful” (this section “C” primarily from Butler, pp. 44-45).

5. “The climate in these regions is extremely forbidding, with hot and dusty summers and severe winters . . . The topographical features that separated enclaves of populations contributed to the variety and even disunity of the population in ancient times and do so even today” (Yamauchi, pp. 22-23).
6. Nebuchadnezzar – “No non-Jewish monarch occupies more space in the Bible than does Nebuchadnezzar, whose chief role is that of the exiler of Judah in 597 B.C. and again in 586 B.C.

“His name appears in the Bible more than ninety times in the alternate spellings Nebuchadnezzar (II Kings 24:1; etc.) and Nebuchadrezzar (Jer 43:10 ff.; etc.)” (Lewis, p. 76).

7. Nabopolassar (625-605 B.C.) was king of Babylon. Nebuchadnezzar was his son (crown prince), as well as one of his generals. Nabopolassar sent Nebuchadnezzar to gain control of Syria before Pharaoh Neco II could consolidate his claim to the region. In 605 B.C. Nebuchadnezzar defeated the Egyptian army at Carchemish on the elbow of the Euphrates and then won a second victory over them at Hamath. This gave the Babylonians control over Syria, Palestine and all the area to the border of Egypt (Schwantes, p. 134).
8. “In 597 B.C. he stormed Jerusalem, carried King Joachin and his mother as hostages, and set Zedekiah on the throne. When nine years later Zedekiah revolted relying on the support of Pharaoh Hophra, the Babylonian army returned, and after a siege of eighteen months Jerusalem fell. Thus in 586 B.C. the kingdom of Judah came to its end” (Schwantes, p. 137).
9. Nebuchadnezzar ruled Babylonia for forty-three years. He was still the king when he died.
10. The Babylonian Empire reached its zenith under Nebuchadnezzar and, twenty-three years after his death, its capital city fell before Cyrus of Anshan, the founder of the Persian Empire” (Pfeiffer, p. 454).
11. Successive kings of Babylonia.
  - a. Evil-Merodach (Amel Marduk, 562-560 B.C.) – not mentioned in scripture:
    - (1) Son and successor to Nebuchadnezzar on the throne of Babylon, in the first year of his reign he freed Jehoiachin, king of Judah, from prison (II Kings 25:27-30; Jer 52:31-34) . . . His name means man

of Marduk (Lewis, p. 85).

- (2) He was assassinated during the second year of his reign by Neriglissar (or Nergalsharezer), his sister's husband (Pfeiffer, p. 454).

b. Nergalsharezer (559-556 B.C.) – not mentioned in scripture:

- (1) "Called Neriglissar in the Greek accounts, son of a private citizen Belsum-iskun, was son-in-law of Nebuchadnezzar and succeeded to the throne of Babylon for four years following the death of Awel-Marduk" (Lewis, p. 86).
- (2) No wars are recorded while he ruled and there was prosperity under his reign . . . he died of natural causes (Pfeiffer, p. 455).

c. Nabonidus / Belshazzar (co-regency, 556-539):

- (1) Nabonidus is the father of Belshazzar. However, in the book of Daniel Nebuchadnezzar is called the father of Belshazzar. There are, of course, various theories how this could be. It appears there is reason to conjecture that Nabonidus married Nitocris, daughter of Nebuchadnezzar, and that she is the mother of Belshazzar. If this is so then Belshazzar was the grandson of Nebuchadnezzar (Lewis, p. 90).

"Son," and "father" are sometimes used in ancient literature for remote kinship (cf. 1 Kgs 15:11; 2 Kgs 14:3; 18:3; Isa 51:2; Gen 28:13; 2 Sam 9:7).

- (2) Nabonidus was not a warrior, but a man of peaceful pursuits.
- (3) Belshazzar was co-regent with Nabonidus from the third year of his reign. Nabonidus never abdicated his throne, but for all practical purposes Belshazzar served as king (Pfeiffer, pp. 458-459).

Belshazzar was not a very strong king.

#### D. Babylonian Religion.

1. The religion which the Jews of the Exile found in Babylon had roots which went back over two thousand years. The ancient Sumerian city-states were theoretically under the protection of patron deities. Semitic invaders brought a new set of gods into southern Mesopotamia. Sumerians, Semites, and other settlers were polytheistic and did not object to incorporating new gods and goddesses into their religious scheme. When

alliances were made, or conquests achieved, the gods of the city-states were subject to new classifications.

2. Assyrian kings did battle in the name of Asshur, and Babylonian rulers looked to Marduk as their guide and protector.
3. The deities were classified according to sex and marital status and genealogies, or, more strictly, theogonies were arranged.

The goddess Ishtar was considered primarily the wife of either Asshur or Marduk, or with whichever god a city-state considered as supreme.

The scribe of the gods was Nabu (Nebo) who was also the son of Marduk. Nebuchadnezzar's name means "Nebo has established the boundary" and this name expresses faith in Nebo the great god of Babylon.

4. The second great god was Bel (or Baal), which means "Lord." He was supposedly the ruler of earth.
5. The third was known as Enki (Ea) who ruled the waters upon which the terrestrial world floated.
6. Later, a second generation triad arose which supplanted the older deities –
  - a. Sin, the moon god.
  - b. Shamash, the sun god (son of Sin).
  - c. Adad, the storm god.
7. In Babylon the king served as both high priest and civil ruler. He performed sacrifices and determined the religious life of his subjects.
  - a. Since the king could not perform the religious duties of all the gods and temples he appointed substitute priests to do the routine daily duties.
  - b. There were other priestly functions of a specialized nature which required special training.

The tasks of divination, interpreting dreams or otherwise determining the will of the gods was entrusted to these specialists.

Special note on Babylonian astrology – it was different from the astrology developed in medieval times.

Babylonian astrologers noted the direction of the winds, the color of the stars, and the occultation of planets and eclipses.

The information provided by these astrologers was used in agriculture as well as matters of national policy.

8. The book of Daniel makes it clear that diviners were expected to be able to interpret anything, and they formed an important element in the king's court.

(Section "D" based on Pfeiffer, pp. 443-449.)

#### E. Attitudes of the exiled Jews.

1. "The Jews in Exile were permitted to form colonies in which their communal life could continue" (Pfeiffer, p. 421).

"Life during the exile was highly diversified. Although most Jews doubtless practiced agriculture as a means of livelihood, some ultimately entered business . . . Other Jews became trusted men in government. The Zoroastrian Persians looked with favor on the monotheistic Jews whose lives were lived on a plane much higher than that of most Persian subjects" (Pfeiffer, p. 426).

2. The first years were years of false hopefulness. The early exiles were confident that conditions would soon change and they would return to their land. Because Jehovah's temple was still standing in Jerusalem they believed the physical kingdom would be reinstated.
3. There were years of hopelessness. When the temple was destroyed in 586 B.C. it seemed to many as if Jehovah had completely forsaken His people.
4. There came a season of revived hopefulness. There were those who availed themselves of the opportunity to return to their country (and those who did so in spirit but because of position or age were not able to [e.g. Daniel], hope stirred anew in their hearts that God was faithful and had yet greater things in store for His people).
5. A time of indifference and assimilation also set in. The countries they were exiled to became home to them. They inter-married with the people of the lands and adopted their religions. [This section (2-5) adapted from William Hendriksen as referred to by Butler, p. 11].

#### F. Uniqueness of Daniel.

1. His age at the time of his capture and deportation is impossible to determine with accuracy, but it is not improbable that it was somewhere about

twelve or fifteen years of age (Clarke, p. 2).

2. Daniel was chosen with several other Hebrew youth to learn to serve in the king's palace - "The Hebrews were a captive people. It was natural to suppose that they would be restless, and perhaps insubordinate, in their condition, and it was a matter of policy to do all that could be done to conciliate them. Nothing would better tend to this than to select some of their own number who were of their most distinguished families; to place them at court; to provide for them from the royal bounty; to give them the advantages of the best education that the capital afforded; to make an arrangement that contemplated their future employment in the service of the state, and to furnish them every opportunity of promotion" (Clarke, p. 2).

"Daniel appears to have been instructed in all the wisdom of the Chaldeans, which was at that time greatly superior to the learning of the ancient Egyptians" (Clarke, p. 559).

3. "Daniel has a new point of reference! He is in the very center of that world-power which had overthrown and subjugated all the nations of the East, including the covenant people. From this frame of reference he predicts the rise of a *succession* of world-kingdoms, which shall destroy one another until an eternal kingdom of truth and righteousness shall be established on their ruins by the direct interference in history, at a particular point, by the God of heaven. In all of this Daniel relies almost exclusively upon symbolic, apocalyptic language" (Butler, p. 9).
4. Daniel's "circumstances were unique as were those of John, author of the New Testament Apocalypse. Both were commissioned to relate unpalatable predictions upon the pagan societies in which they lived" (Butler, p. 9).

#### IV. DATE OF WRITING:

A. Used in this course: 535 B.C.

1. Since Daniel served under both Nebuchadnezzar and Belshazzar of Babylon as well as Darius the Mede the most reasonable time for writing of this prophecy would be during the decade of 538 B.C. to 528 B.C.
2. To question an early date of writing is to question the omniscience of God. Either God foreknows or He does not.
  - a. God is omniscient as well as omnipotent. Therefore, He is able to communicate to men all He wants them to know.
  - b. By communicating this knowledge to men beforehand God has not forced the course history takes.

The theory of God's forcing future events, simply by already knowing what they will be, is a central point of the doctrine of Calvinism.

If God forces the future then omniscience is not, by definition, omniscience! It is fatalism!

B. Alternate date (liberal commentators): 175-165 B.C.

1. They believe Daniel was written after the rule of Antiochus Epiphanes (in the 100s B.C.) because the accuracy of the book is too great to be written at an earlier date.
  - a. The first critic to deny that Daniel was written in the 6<sup>th</sup> century B.C. was a man named Porphyry. He felt that because the book of Daniel speaks so accurately about the times of Antiochus it must be history not prophecy. "The author of Daniel lied (mentitum) for the sake of reviving the hope of the Jews at his time" quoted by Young (IOT, p. 362).
  - b. "Porphyry's criticism of Daniel, therefore, was based upon his anti-theistic philosophical presumptions. He thought that predictive prophecy was impossible, hence he denied that Daniel could have uttered such prophecy" (Young IOT, p. 362).
  - c. This is based on the conviction that God is not omniscient.
    - (1) However, God does not have to wait for events to actually happen in order for Him to know them.
    - (2) Definition of omniscience – God knows everything that is an object of knowledge, whether real or imagined, or whether it is in the past, present, future or in eternity.
    - (3) For a complete discussion on God's omniscience (as well as the rest of the attributes of God) see the WVBS "Godhead" course.
  - d. For a complete discussion of the historical positions of the liberal date see *An Introduction to the Old Testament*, page 362ff by Edward J. Young.
2. Reasons for rejection of the late date.
  - a. If the book of Daniel was written during the Maccabean era it is not predictive prophecy, which the book claims it is, but a forgery!
    - (1) The book claims to be serious history - a revelation from God

concerning future welfare (from the time it was written) of men and nations.

- (2) A Maccabean dating (to comfort Jews at that time) would mean the book is a fraud.
- (3) Pusey, writing on this makes this statement - "If a prophecy, like those more definite prophecies of Daniel, admitted to no wresting, there was no choice left except to acknowledge prophecy, or to deny the genuineness of the book. Of course, other grounds must be found to veil the nakedness of unbelief; but it is manifest from the writers themselves, that the central argument is this; 'Almighty God does not or cannot work miracles, or reveal the future to His creatures. Therefore since miracles and prophecy must be written long after the alleged miracles are related to have been worked; a book containing predictions beyond the unaided sagacity of man must have been written after the events which are predicted'" (pp. 77-78).
- (4) "The Bible is a book full of miracles and marvels; and he who would have any proper understanding of it must regard and treat it as such. It is impossible to understand or explain it without admitting the possibility and the reality of miraculous events; and in a book which *claims* to be founded on miracles, it does not prove that it is not authentic or genuine simply to say that it assumes that miracles are possible. To destroy the credibility of the book, it is necessary to show that *all* claims of a miraculous character are unfounded, and *all* miracles impossible and absurd; and this objection would not lie against the book of Daniel particularly, but equally against the whole Bible" (Barnes, vol. 1, p. 13).

Definition of a miracle – Something existing within nature and acting in accordance with natural law is acted upon from outside of nature (by God) and when the action is finished (the miracle) the thing acted upon exists and acts according to the laws of nature in its new state.

- (5) "But nothing is gained by a mere answer to objections, so long as the original prejudice, 'there cannot be supernatural prophecy,' remains. Be the objections ever so completely removed, unbelief remains unshaken, because these objections are put forth to delude others, scarcely to blind itself; for they who believe not, know well that the ground of unbelief rests on their conceptions of God and His relation to man, not to history" (Pusey, p. ix).
- (6) "'Faith,' of course there cannot be, in one who would explain as

human, what our Lord declared to be Divine” (Pusey, p. xxi).

- b. The author gives evidence of having a more accurate knowledge of Babylonian-Persian history than any known historian since the 6th century B.C.
  - (1) “Excavations” show a “new Babylon” during the Nebuchadnezzar reign which Daniel 4:30 records!
  - (2) Belshazzar presented as “co-king” under Nabonidus has been brilliantly vindicated by the digger’s spade! (cf. Dan 5).
  - (3) The author knew sixth century B.C. customs:
    - (a) Daniel knew those customs enough to know Nebuchadnezzar was able to make and alter laws with absolute sovereignty (2:12,13,46).
    - (b) He also knew at the same time that Darius the Mede was helpless to change Medo-Persian law (6:8-9).
    - (c) Also the change of punishment from “fire” (3:1ff) to “lions” (6:1ff) shows an accurate awareness of customs of the two nations (fire was sacred to the Persians - Zoroastrianism).
- c. The Dead Sea scrolls (Book of Daniel) have the Hebrew-Aramaic and Aramaic-Hebrew transition points which seriously challenges the possibility of the Maccabean date.
- d. The most decisive reason for rejection of the idea of the equating of Daniel with the apocalyptic literature of the intertestamental period is the New Testament commentaries.
  - (1) The New Testament writers did not look upon the book of Daniel as a romance (a story based on legend - note the Apocrypha).
  - (2) The Lord Himself spoke of Himself in terms taken from Daniel.
  - (3) If the date of writing was in the Maccabean era why did the Jews reject other literature as canonical (e.g. the Apocrypha) and not Daniel? (b, c & d – Chamberlin, pp. 9-10).
- e. “The canon of Scripture was closed some four hundred years before the time of the Saviour; and from the nature of the case, it would have been impossible to foist a book of doubtful origin, or an acknowledged fiction, into the canon in a later age” (Barnes. p. 1:45).

- f. Within the Jewish faith there were two large parties with differing philosophies regarding how to practice their faith, one was the Pharisees and the other was the Sadducees. There were others but the difference between these two help us decide if Daniel was written in the 500s B.C. or 100s B.C.

“The Pharisees insisted on the authority of tradition, and claimed that the oral or unwritten law was of equal authority with the written; while the Sadducees rejected all traditions and ordinances of men not expressly sanctioned by the Scriptures” (Barnes, vol. 1, p. 50).

“The rise of these contending sects must, at all events, be referred to a time which preceded the Maccabees – the time when it is pretended by objectors that the book of Daniel was composed. But the moment when these two parties were formed, the *extent* of the Jewish Scriptures was, of course, a matter that was fully and permanently decided. It is impossible to suppose that the Sadducees would concede to their antagonists the right to introduce new books into the canon, or that a new book could be introduced without producing controversy. This would have been giving up the very point of dispute. No book could be introduced, or could be recognized as entitled to a place there, which was not acknowledged by both parties as having been written by a true prophet, and as being believed to be Divinely inspired. If the book of Daniel, then, was the work of that age, and was falsely attributed to the Daniel of the exile, it is impossible that it could have been introduced into the canon” (Barnes, vol. 1, p. 50).

- g. Davis quotes R. S. Wallace – “Throughout the whole book it becomes obvious that the work is written as a message not primarily for those who are suffering in the midst of deadly persecution but rather for those who are living in a settled condition yet within an alien culture – in other words, not in a Maccabean-type situation, but in a Babylonian-type situation” (Wallace, pp. 20-21; Davis, p. 19).
- h. I agree with Davis when he says – “I can’t claim to prove a sixth-century date, but I see too many problems with the second-century (165 B.C.) position, and I haven’t the faith to overcome those obstacles” (Davis, p. 22).

## V. THEME:

- A. “God rules the nations” or “God is in control” (2:21; 4:17,32).

“The basic theme of this work is the overruling sovereignty of the one true God,

who condemns and destroys the rebellious world power and faithfully delivers His covenant people according to their steadfast faith in Him” (Archer, p. 365).

B. The entire book is an excellent study on God’s providence.

See the special study on “Providence” in the appendix.

## **VI. PURPOSE:**

“The book of Daniel seeks to show the superiority of the God of Israel over the idols of the heathen nations. Although these nations had been God’s instruments in punishing Israel, nevertheless they themselves will in time pass from the scene. In the latter days the God of heaven will erect a kingdom that will never be destroyed” (Young IOT, p. 372).

A. Historical:

1. This was a good time for God to teach Gentile leaders and nations lessons about who was actually in charge of this world.
2. The best way for God to illustrate His omniscience, omnipotence and omnipresence to Gentiles would be to do it with true miracles.
  - a. Any unbeliever would be impressed by and comprehend the language of miracles. Rulers at this time had their own magicians, but they would also know the difference between those and true miracles.
  - b. “Miracles speak a language that the duller ear of the heathen can comprehend” (Leupold, p. 19).
3. This book shows the superiority of the God of Israel over all of the idols of the heathen nations.
  - a. Even though heathen nations had been used by God to punish Israel they themselves will pass from the pages of history.
  - b. This book shows the absolute sovereignty of God in dealing with nations (kingdoms) and individuals.

B. Predictive:

1. To show the Jews that God is going to keep His promises and that the ultimate triumph belongs to Him and to those who faithfully follow Him in true faith and obedience.

Clearly set forth the coming establishment of Jehovah's eternal kingdom (2:44).

2. To show the Jews that mighty nations were actually weak in relation to God's rule.

C. Comfort:

"The book of Daniel was in an outstanding sense a book of comfort, designed for evil days as well as for good days. By the help of it Israel could discern that its oppressions were, indeed, going to be heavy, but, on the other hand, that they were foreknown by God and were therefore not to be dreaded too much. For if an all-knowing God had seen what would transpire He must at the same time be an omnipotent God who would be able to deliver His own, as well as a faithful God who would not suffer them to be tempted above what they were able" (Leupold, p. 27).

D. A three-fold purpose of the exile:

1. It was God's method of punishment for their sins (2 Chron 36:15-17).
2. It was a means of purification and preparation of the Jews for God's Messianic purposes (Ezek 36:22-31).
3. God used it to bless the Gentile nations in preparing them to be called into the Messianic kingdom (cf. Mic 5:7) (Butler, p. 12).

## VII. USE OF HEBREW AND ARAMAIC LANGUAGES:

A. The book of Daniel was written in two languages.

1. 1:1-2:4a and 8:1-12:13 was written in Hebrew.
2. 2:4b-7:28 was written in Aramaic.

B. "There does not appear to be any true satisfactory explanation of the two languages. The explanation which seems to be freest from difficulty is that the use of two languages was deliberate and intentional upon the part of the author. Aramaic was used for those parts which dealt primarily with the world nations,

and Hebrew for those which treated principally the future of the kingdom of God” (Young IOT, p. 376).

- C. Also – “As a writer, this prophet is simple, yet pure and correct: and he is so conscientious that he relates the very words of those persons whom he introduces as speaking. He writes Hebrew where what he delivers is a bare narrative; but he relates in *Chaldee* the conversations which he had with the wise men and the kings; and in the same language he relates Nebuchadnezzar’s edict, which he made after Daniel had interpreted his dream concerning the great metalline image. This is a proof of his great and conscientious accuracy; and exhibits this prophet in a most advantageous point of view. Daniel writes both *Hebrew* and *Chaldee* with great purity” (Clarke, p. 561).
- D. Leupold commenting on the Chaldean portion of this book says – “since this part of the book is primarily the portion which was designed to teach the world powers of those days a lesson, it is written in the language which was the world language in those days” (p. 29).
- E. If the writer of this book were a Chaldean and could write Hebrew it is certain that he would have been careful to write the whole book in as pure Hebrew as possible and would not have jeopardized its credit by so large an infusion of a foreign language (Barnes, vol. 1, p. 18).
- F. The possibility of a Chaldean author is very thin as Belshazzar had to go to Daniel in order to have the Hebrew writing on the wall translated.
- G. It has been claimed that the Aramaic used in the book of Daniel is characteristic of the third century B.C. language not the sixth century B.C.

However, a farmer in 1929 discovered an underground passage with the Ras Shamra tablets in it showing the above criticism in error. The Aramaic on the tablets is similar to that used by Daniel and even dates as far back as 1400 B.C. (McGuiggan, p. viii).

## VIII. LESSONS:

- A. The Lord expects His people to be faithful to Him during trying times.
- B. Jehovah is victor over all idols.
- C. Faith will sustain during dark hours.
- D. All nations are under His power.
- E. The destinies of all individuals are under His control.



**IX. OUTLINES:**

A. Short Outline:

- I. Historical .....Ch 1-6
- II. Apocalyptic .....Ch 7-12

B. Long Outline:

- I. Historical events in the life of Daniel ..... Chapters 1-6
  - A. Daniel raised to prominence ..... 1
  - B. Dream-image of Nebuchadnezzar ..... 2
  - C. Destruction attempt - the fiery furnace ..... 3
  - D. Nebuchadnezzar dethroned due to madness ..... 4
  - E. Drunken feast of Belshazzar ..... 5
  - F. Daniel and the lion's den ..... 6
- II. Visions revealed through Daniel ..... 7-12
  - A. The four beasts ..... 7
  - B. The ram and the he-goat ..... 8
  - C. The seventy sevens (heptads)..... 9
  - D. The Lord God ..... 10:1-11:1
  - E. The kings of the north and the south ..... 11:2-12:3
  - F. The end of the prophecy ..... 12:4-13

C. Detailed Outline:

- I. Narrative: Six historical events in the life of Daniel ..... Chapters 1-6
  - A. Daniel raised to prominence ..... 1:1-21
    - 1. Expedition of Nebuchadnezzar against Jerusalem ..... 1-2

2.	Exiled Daniel and his companions introduced . . . . .	3-7
3.	Energetic faith portrayed by Daniel . . . . .	8-16
4.	Entrance into the king's service . . . . .	17-21
B.	Dream image of Nebuchadnezzar . . . . .	2:1-49
1.	Dream troubles of king Nebuchadnezzar . . . . .	1-16
2.	Daniel's petition and praise to the providing God . . . . .	17-23
3.	Daniel's reliance upon God and the interpretation . . . . .	24-45
4.	Daniel's God praised by king Nebuchadnezzar . . . . .	46-49
C.	Destruction attempt of three friends . . . . .	3:1-30
1.	Erection of an image and edict to worship it . . . . .	1-7
2.	Example of faith and refusal to worship an idol . . . . .	8-12
3.	Entrusting their souls to God . . . . .	13-18
4.	Execution by fire and the result . . . . .	19-30
D.	Dethroned Nebuchadnezzar: A dream and the insane king . . . . .	4:1-37
1.	The declaration of the king . . . . .	1-3
2.	The decree of the king . . . . .	4-9
3.	The dream of the king . . . . .	10-18
4.	The dream defined . . . . .	19-27
5.	The dream fulfilled . . . . .	28-37
E.	Drunken feast of Belshazzar: The writing on the wall . . . . .	5:1-31
1.	The drunken orgy . . . . .	1-4
2.	The distressed king . . . . .	5-12
3.	The discerning prophet . . . . .	13-28

4.	The defeated kingdom and the dead king . . . . .	29-31
F.	Daniel and the den of lions: Kept by faith . . . . .	6:1-28
1.	Conspiracy - a devilish design . . . . .	1-9
2.	Calumny - a deceiving defamation . . . . .	10-18
3.	Confidence - a deliverer dispatched . . . . .	19-24
4.	Commandment - a decree by Darius . . . . .	25-28
II.	Visions: Five miraculous visions revealed through Daniel . . . . .	Chapters 7-12
A.	The four beasts . . . . .	7:1-28
1.	The vision . . . . .	1-14
2.	The interpretation . . . . .	15-28
B.	The ram and the he-goat . . . . .	8:1-27
1.	The vision . . . . .	1-14
2.	The interpretation . . . . .	15-27
C.	The seventy heptads . . . . .	9:1-27
1.	Realization of Daniel . . . . .	1-2
2.	Request of Daniel . . . . .	3-19
3.	Response by Gabriel . . . . .	20-23
4.	Revelation of God . . . . .	24-27
D.	The man in linen . . . . .	10:1-11:1
1.	Prelude: Introduction of the vision - "Even a great warfare" . . . . .	10:1-3
2.	Pre-incarnation: Identity of the "man in linen" . . . . .	4-9
3.	Pronouncement: Instruction to "understand the words" . . . . .	10-14
4.	Perception: Intervention of strength for Daniel . . . . .	15-11:1

E. The great warfare . . . . .	11:2-12:3
1. The three kings . . . . .	2
2. The mighty king . . . . .	3-4
3. The king(s) of the South and king(s) of the North . . . . .	5-20
4. The contemptible one . . . . .	21-35
5. The self-exalted “king” . . . . .	36-45
6. The great prince . . . . .	12:1-3
F. The time of the end . . . . .	4-13
1. Daniel commanded to seal up the book . . . . .	4
2. Daniel receives last instructions . . . . .	5-12
3. Daniel assured in consolation of hope . . . . .	13

**X. Author’s Note.**

There are many direct and indirect quotes in this course from many commentators. This was done so that the reader would know that those thoughts and opinions were not original with this author. This was also done to show that the views held by this writer are not new or unique with him, but were based on extensive research both biblical and secular.

**XI. New King James Version (NKJV)** Unless otherwise noted all scriptures are taken from the New King James Version®. Copyright © 1982 by Thomas Nelson. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

## DANIEL EXPOSITION

### I. NARRATIVE: SIX HISTORICAL EVENTS IN THE LIFE OF DANIEL Chapters 1-6

#### A. DANIEL RAISED TO PROMINENCE . . . . . Chapter 1

In this first chapter we find such facts concerning Daniel and his companions as are essential to the proper understanding of the rest of the book. This chapter may, therefore, very properly be designated as the Preface to the book. . . “What seems to be praise of self (v. 17-21) is a record of achievements whose attainment is very specifically ascribed to God as a gift that He bestowed upon Daniel for very special purposes” (Leupold, p. 47).

#### 1. EXPEDITION OF NEBUCHADNEZZAR AGAINST JERUSALEM . . . 1:1-2

**1. *In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came to Jerusalem and besieged it.***

***Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon*** – “He succeeded his father Nabopolassar, the founder of the more recent kingdom of Babylon, in the year B.C. 606” (Pulpit, vol. 13, p. 1).

**2. *And the Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, with some of the articles of the house of God, which he carried into the land of Shinar to the house of his god; and he brought the articles into the treasure house of his god.***

***And the Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand*** – Why did the Lord do this? Because “he did evil in the sight of the Lord his God” (2 Chron 36:5).

***With some of the articles of the house of God*** – however “he left what were necessary for carrying on the public worship of *Jehovah*, for he did not attempt to alter the civil or religious constitution of Judea” (Clarke, p. 563).

***The land of Shinar*** – this was the ancient name for Babylon.

#### 2. EXILED DANIEL AND HIS COMPANIONS INTRODUCED . . . . . 1:3-7

**3. *Then the king instructed Ashpenaz, the master of his eunuchs, to bring some of the children of Israel and some of the king’s descendants and some of the nobles,***

***Eunuchs*** – this word signifies officers about, or in the palace, whether physically eunuchs or not (Clarke, p. 563).

**4. *young men in whom there was no blemish, but good-looking, gifted in all wisdom, possessing knowledge and quick to understand, who had ability to serve in the king's palace, and whom they might teach the language and literature of the Chaldeans.***

***No blemish, but good-looking*** – “Freedom from blemish and personal beauty were looked upon as a characteristic of moral and intellectual nobility” (Keil, pp. 73-74).

***Gifted in all wisdom*** – “persons capable of every kind of literary accomplishment, that they might be put under proper instruction. And as *children of the blood* and of the *nobles* were most likely, from the care usually taken of their initiatory education, to profit most by the elaborate instruction here designated” (Clarke, p. 563).

***Chaldeans*** – “Is the name usually given (1) to the inhabitants of the Babylonian kingdom founded by Nabopolassar and Nebuchadnezzar, and (2) in a more restricted sense to the first class of the Babylonish priests and learned men or magi, and then frequently to the whole body of the wise men of Babylon” (Keil, p. 74).

**5. *And the king appointed for them a daily provision of the king's delicacies and of the wine which he drank, and three years of training for them, so that at the end of that time they might serve before the king.***

***The king appointed for them a daily provision*** – “they were to eat of the food prepared for the royal board. In days of old lavish display characterized royal courts in the matter of food and drink. To have huge quantities of rare delicacies prepared and to have a large retinue at court consuming these delicacies were reckoned a truly royal distinction” (Leupold, p. 62).

“All meals served at the king's table were feasts, and among the heathen feasts were feasts in honor of the gods. That involved that a portion of the meat to be served would first be dedicated to some god in sacrifice. The eating of the remainder meant sharing in the sacrificial meal, which was, of course, in honor of the god to whom a portion had been sacrificed. To share in such a feast was the equivalent of honoring such an idol, admitting his claims and existence, and so practically denying the one true God” (Leupold, p. 66).

***Three years of training for them*** – this education was not specifically religious in its content. It was to prepare these young men to be able to serve in the king's court.

“The learning of the Chaldeans” (Dnl 1:4; 2:2; 4:7; 5:7,11) comprised the old languages of Babylonia (the two dialects of Sumerian, with a certain knowledge of Kassite, which seems to have been allied to the Hittite; and other languages of the immediate neighborhood); some knowledge of astronomy and astrology; mathematics, which their sexagesimal system of numeration seems to have

facilitated; and a certain amount of natural history. To this must be added a store of mythological learning, including legends of the Creation, the Flood (closely resembling in all its main points the account in the Bible), and apparently also the Temptation and the Fall. They had likewise a good knowledge of agriculture, and were no mean architects, as the many celebrated buildings of Babylonia show" (Pinches, T.G., International Standard Bible Encyclopedia (1933), Vol. 1, Chaldea, p. 591).

Throughout their history the Hebrews were usually open to and accepted secular education which was not adverse to their religion (Young, p. 41).

***At the end of that time they might serve before the king*** – "The course of training might not be an easy one, for Babylonian learning was a thorough-going and very substantial thing. Yet there was the desirable prospect 'at the end of that period' to be among those that stood before the king" (Leupold, p. 63).

"The king's theory was that if he could provide himself with a retinue of widely diversified sources of knowledge and wisdom and at the same time Babylonianize them or bind them to loyalty to Babylon, he would be that much more able to conquer and rule" (Butler, p. 30).

"They were to be presented before the king, and in his presence they were to be examined. They were, then, possibly to be admitted into the college of astrologers and soothsayers, but only in lowly grade. Irrespective of the fact that they would at the least be twenty or twenty-one when this season of education was over, and, even making all allowance for Eastern precocity, this is too young an age for being a member of a royal privy council" (Pulpit, vol. 13, p. 15).

"We gain some idea of the literary resources of the seventh century before Christ when we are introduced through archeology to the vast library of Ashurbanipal (704-681 B.C. just prior to Daniel's day) which contained 22,000 volumes of cuneiform (i.e. 'wedge-shaped' writing) clay tablets. These tablets contain religious, literary, and scientific works, among which were the Babylonian creation and flood tablets" (Butler, pp. 30-31).

"In the field of medicine certain scientific advances were made . . . as early as the Code of Hammurabi (1700 B.C.) physicians performed delicate operations on the human eye . . . Babylonian science was the result of observation and classification, and they used it to serve many practical purposes. Taxonomy in plant, animal and mineral kingdoms was practiced. Chemistry and metallurgy were everyday sciences in Daniel's day. And, of course, there was an extremely complicated theology or philosophy of Babylonian religion" (Butler, pp. 31-32).

Adam Clarke in the 1800s wrote the following about education in his native

country (England): "This was deemed a sufficient time to acquire the Chaldee language, and the sciences peculiar to that people. I suppose they had good *introductory books, able teachers, and a proper method*; else they would have been obliged, like us, to send their children *seven years to school, and as many to the university*, to teach them any tolerable measure of useful and ornamental literature! O how reproachful to the nations of Europe, and particularly to our own, is this *backward* mode of instruction. And what is generally learned after this vast expense of *time and money*? A little *Latin, Greek, and mathematics*; perhaps a little *moral philosophy*; and by this they are *entitled, not qualified*, to teach others, and especially to teach the people the proper *science of salvation*! To such shepherds, (and there are many such,) the hungry sheep look up, and are not fed; and if all are not such, no thanks to our plan of national education" (Clarke, p. 563).

"This was an act of wisdom on Nebuchadnezzar's part. Taking the best youths of Jerusalem would weaken the state of Judah, and thus reduce its potential for rebellion. If he could win the loyalty of these young men, Babylon itself would be stronger for their presence" (Pfeiffer, p. 460).

**6. Now from among those of the sons of Judah were Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah.**

"They were of the sons of Judah, *i.e.* of the tribe of Judah. From this it follows that the other youths of noble descent who had been carried away along with them belonged to the other tribes" (Keil, p.79).

**7. To them the chief of the eunuchs gave names: he gave Daniel the name Belteshazzar; to Hananiah, Shadrach; to Mishael, Meshach; and to Azariah, Abed-Nego.**

These changes of names might do much to make them identify themselves with the Chaldeans and help them to forget the customs and opinions of their own country.

"Daniel signifies 'God is my Judge.' This name they changed to Belteshazzar; in the Chaldee, 'The treasure of Bel,' or 'The depository of the secrets (or *treasure*) of Bel.'

"Hananiah signifies, 'The Lord has been gracious to me;' or 'He to whom the Lord is gracious.' This name was changed into Shadrach, Chaldee, which has been variously translated: 'The inspiration of the sun;' 'God the author of evil, be propitious to us;' 'Let God preserve us from evil.'

"Mishael signifies, 'He who comes from God.' Him they called Meshach, which in Chaldee signifies, 'He who belongs to the goddess Sheshach,' a celebrated deity of the Babylonians, mentioned by Jeremiah, chap. xxv. 26.

“Azariah, which signifies ‘The Lord is my helper,’ they changed into Abed-Nego, which in Chaldee is ‘The servant of Nego,’ who was one of their divinities; by which they meant either the *sun*, or the *morning star*, whether *Jupiter* or *Venus*. The pronunciation of this name should be carefully avoided; I mean that which lays the accent on the first syllable, and hurries to the end, without attending to the natural division of the word *Abed-Nego*” (Clarke, p. 564).

“The treatment accorded Daniel and his companions who were taken to Babylon at Nebuchadnezzar’s command, is comparable to modern techniques of ‘brain washing.’ These lads were not subjected to torture. They were, instead, given every encouragement to forget past loyalties and become well integrated Babylonians” (Pfeiffer, p.460).

### 3. **ENERGETIC FAITH PORTRAYED BY DANIEL . . . . . 1:8-16**

**8. *But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king’s delicacies, nor with the wine which he drank; therefore he requested of the chief of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself.***

Daniel exhibits his steadfast devotion to Jehovah and to his own principles as well as showing common sense in being courteous to those placed over him.

Barnes points out that – “new temptations were before them. They were among strangers. They were noticed and flattered. They had an opportunity of indulging in the pleasures of the table, such as captive youth rarely enjoyed. This opportunity, there can be no doubt, they regarded as a temptation” (p. 1:105).

“From the Babylonian viewpoint this was a gracious act. Captive youths had come from many places, and the living standards of most would be far inferior to that of Babylon. They should be grateful for such treatment as the king now provided. They would enjoy meals truly ‘fit for a king’” (Pfeiffer, p. 462).

**9. *Now God had brought Daniel into the favor and goodwill of the chief of the eunuchs.***

Notice that it was the controlling influence of Jehovah that brought Daniel into this man’s favor.

**10. *And the chief of the eunuchs said to Daniel, “I fear my lord the king, who has appointed your food and drink. For why should he see your faces looking worse than the young men who are your age? Then you would endanger my head before the king.”***

**Looking worse** – “Morose, disagreeable, looking sad, here a pitiful look in consequence of inferior food” (Keil, p. 81).

**Endanger my head** – “make it that one forfeits his head, his life” (Keil, p. 81).

**11. So Daniel said to the steward whom the chief of the eunuchs had set over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, 12. “Please test your servants for ten days, and let them give us vegetables to eat and water to drink.**

**Vegetables** – “The traditional ‘vegetables’ is a bit misleading. The two related words in vv. 12 and 16 refer to produce grown from seed that is sown and so includes not only vegetables but fruits and grains – and presumably bread made from grain” (Davis, p. 31).

**13. Then let our appearance be examined before you, and the appearance of the young men who eat the portion of the king’s delicacies; and as you see fit, so deal with your servants.”**

In other words if, after the specified time, the appearance of Daniel and his friends is not better than the others, including the other Hebrew youths, let the eunuch handle the situation as he sees fit.

The Hebrew word for “appearance” is not limited to the face as we might take it. It refers to the whole appearance of the person.

**14. So he consented with them in this matter, and tested them ten days. 15. And at the end of ten days their features appeared better and fatter in flesh than all the young men who ate the portion of the king’s delicacies. 16. Thus the steward took away their portion of delicacies and the wine that they were to drink, and gave them vegetables.**

These young men looked healthier and in better shape than those who continued to eat the king’s diet.

## **BIBLICAL FAITH – A Short Study.**

The very nature of biblical faith demands courage.

A. The type of faith that compromises at the first sign of danger is not biblical faith.

1. This type of faith has nothing but “empty words!”
2. Something believed but not lived is not biblical faith! (Jn 14:15 [3<sup>rd</sup> Class Cond]; Jn 14:23 – compare these verses with Rev 2:4-5).

B. Biblical faith is daring! It takes “risks!”

1. When was the last time we took any “risks” on the basis of our faith in Christ?

2. How many are not even willing to inconvenience themselves for the sake of standing for their faith?
  3. Biblical faith must be lived! (Gal 2:20). It must be contended for! (Jude 3). It must be defended! Proved! (2 Cor 13:5).
- C. Biblical faith makes the difference between “pretenders” and “contenders.”
1. Matthew 15:1-9 and Matthew 23:1-6.
  2. Compare 1 Timothy 6:12 with 2 Timothy 4:7 (Rev 2:10 cf. Gal 5:5-6,22).
  3. Strength of life is not possible without testing! (Jas 1:3).
- D. Faith stands strong when one “purposes in his heart” (1 Pet 3:15 cf. Rom 10:8-10; 1 Pet 4:19).  
(Chamberlin, pp. 21-22)

#### 4. ENTRANCE INTO THE KING’S SERVICE .....1:17-21

### **17. As for these four young men, God gave them knowledge and skill in all literature and wisdom; and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams.**

This is very close to being a summary of the achievements of these four during their three years of training.

**God gave** – “Naturally this does not mean the youths do not study and toil and invest themselves in their studies. They surely do. But it means that God’s goodness attends, surrounds and prospers their work and so explains their success” (Davis, p. 35).

**All literature and wisdom** - It is “likely that the *literature and wisdom* in which the youths were instructed did include superstitious practices. The knowledge and intelligence which God gave to them, therefore, was of a discerning kind, that they might know and possess the ability to accept what was true and to reject what was false in their instruction. That these youths might the more effectively serve the Lord at a heathen court, it was necessary that they should be deeply versed in all the Babylonian ‘wisdom’ just as it had been necessary for Moses to be versed in the wisdom of Egypt (Acts 7:22)” (Young, pp. 48-49).

This “to mean the complete curriculum was fitted to make these youths able diplomatists and wise councillors” (Pulpit, vol. 13, p. 24).

**Dreams** – “All the nations of antiquity laid stress on dreams as means by which the future was revealed to men; but in no nation was there so elaborate a system of

interpretation as among the Babylonians” (Pulpit, vol. 13, pp. 24-25).

**18. Now at the end of the days, when the king had said that they should be brought in, the chief of the eunuchs brought them in before Nebuchadnezzar.**

Those who were brought before the king would have been all of the youths referred to in verses 3 and 4.

**19. Then the king interviewed them, and among them all none was found like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah; therefore they served before the king.**  
**20. And in all matters of wisdom and understanding about which the king examined them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and astrologers who were in all his realm.**

***In all matters of wisdom and understanding*** – “The meaning is, in everything which requires peculiar wisdom to understand and explain” (Barnes, vol. 1, p. 113).

It is not unlikely that this conversational examination would involve naturally the languages they would have to be proficient in were they to be of the royal council which could include – Accadian, Assyrian, Hebrew, Egyptian and Median (Pulpit, vol. 13, p. 26).

***He found them ten times better*** – this simply means that Daniel and his three companions were found exceedingly wise and perceptive.

***In all his realm*** – “Not only in the capital, but throughout the kingdom. These arts were doubtless practiced extensively elsewhere, but it is probable that the most skillful in them would be assembled at the capital” (Barnes, vol. 1, p. 115).

**21. Thus Daniel continued until the first year of King Cyrus.**

He continued in influence and authority at different times during that period. It is not necessarily implied that he did not live longer than that, but that during that long and eventful period he had had positions of influence until the captivity was accomplished (Barnes, vol. 1, p. 115).

“We know nothing about the close of Daniel’s life. He lived through the entire period of the Exile and, while he did not return to Jerusalem, it was uppermost in his thoughts” (Pfeiffer, p. 465).

## **B. DREAM IMAGE OF NEBUCHADNEZZAR . . . . . Chapter 2**

### **1. DREAM TROUBLES OF NEBUCHADNEZZAR . . . . . 2:1-16**

This was no ordinary dream as we understand dreams, but this dream was sent by God to Nebuchadnezzar, a pagan king!

Nebuchadnezzar's dream in this chapter clearly shows what the ultimate fate of kingdoms and empires built by men and based on their own human wisdom and strength must and will ultimately be doomed to a startling and drastic overthrow.

God also had to speak to and reassure His people that for them the future had greater hopes than blind human vision was able to see.

While at the same time God was revealing to the heathen nations their concept of the future, built on their own wisdom and strength, was wrong.

**1. Now in the second year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign, Nebuchadnezzar had dreams; and his spirit was so troubled that his sleep left him.**

Liberals claim that Daniel erred – if the youths had trained three years this could not have occurred in the second year of Nebuchadnezzar.

However, the Babylonians counted the first year of any king as his “year of assension.” The table below (by Young) shows there is no error here.

<u>Daniel's years of training</u>	-	<u>Nebuchadnezzar's rule</u>
First year	-	Year of accession
Second year	-	First year
Third year	-	Second year (in which year the dream occurred)

**2. Then the king gave the command to call the magicians, the astrologers, the sorcerers, and the Chaldeans to tell the king his dreams. So they came and stood before the king.**

“In an event which was to him so weighty he must not only ascertain the facts of the case, but should the dream announce some misfortune, he must also adopt means for averting it” (Keil, p. 88).

**3. And the king said to them, “I have had a dream, and my spirit is anxious to know the dream.”**

At this time in history they believed dreams were previews of coming events, so that to know and understand dreams was to be forewarned of things to come.

“The point of the text is that the king called upon the full resources of the religious-scientific community” (Davis, p. 42).

**4. Then the Chaldeans spoke to the king in Aramaic, “O king, live forever! Tell your servants the dream, and we will give the interpretation.”**

“If the king had related the facts of his dream to the Chaldeans, they would have set about at once to compare the details with their astrological charts, cast their horoscopes, made their incantations, submitted the dream to their magic and have come up with an interpretation (which by the way, would probably have been flattering to the king’s ego and favorable to his whims of government and indulgence” (Butler, p. 61).

“Nebuchadnezzar reasoned correctly, that if they could *interpret* the dream they ought to be presumed to be able to tell what it was. The one required no more sagacity than the other: and if they were, as they pretended to be, under the inspiration of the gods in interpreting the dream, it was fair to presume that, under the same inspiration, they could tell what it was” (Barnes, vol. 1, p. 123).

“They were told to reveal both his dream and its meaning. What king ever did that (10b)? It is so arbitrary (welcome to monarchy) . . . they were non-plussed because kings get to ask the impossible. And they will die for inability to do the impossible (12-13). Nebuchadnezzar will purge the lot of them. That’s the brutality of Babylon. Life can be fairly cushy there – until the king gets into a really foul mood. Verses 1-13 let you glimpse the Babylon behind the glitz and glamour” (Davis, p. 39).

**5. The king answered and said to the Chaldeans, “My decision is firm: if you do not make known the dream to me, and its interpretation, you shall be cut in pieces, and your houses shall be made an ash heap.**

**My decision is firm** – “The king was sure and certain of the details of the dream itself” (Butler, p. 61).

**You shall be cut in pieces, and your houses shall be made an ash heap** – “The despotic nature of the punishment pronounced should the Chaldeans fail is in character for an Eastern monarch of that day. Assyrians and Persians were especially notorious for the barbarity of their punishments . . . These Chaldeans faced certain dismemberment since they had no power to tell Nebuchadnezzar his dream” (Butler, p. 62).

“Though Nebuchadnezzar had some good qualities, and was religious *in his way*, yet he had all the usual characteristics of an Oriental despot. He was a man of strong passions, and was a man who would never hesitate in carrying out the purposes of an arbitrary, a determined, and a stubborn will” (Barnes. p. 1:123).

**6. However, if you tell the dream and its interpretation, you shall receive from me gifts, rewards, and great honor. Therefore tell me the dream and its interpretation.”**

Young quotes J. Glentworth Butler (*The Bible-Work*, vol. ix, New York, 1894) – “It is plain that God is shaping this matter to test the intrinsic futility of their (i.e. the Chaldeans’) pretensions to super human knowledge, and to bring out in the most public manner his own infinite superiority over them all” (p. 61).

**7. They answered again and said, “Let the king tell his servants the dream, and we will give its interpretation.” 8. The king answered and said, “I know for certain that you would gain time, because you see that my decision is firm: 9. if you do not make known the dream to me, there is only one decree for you! For you have agreed to speak lying and corrupt words before me till the time has changed. Therefore tell me the dream, and I shall know that you can give me its interpretation.”**

By their repeating their request for more information they have convinced the king of their inability to tell either the dream or its interpretation.

Question – Had Nebuchadnezzar known them well enough to not trust them?

**One decree** – “The expression ‘one law applies to you’ means ‘to all of you alike’” (Leupold, p. 91).

“It seems to have been supposed that the responsibility rested on them individually as well as collectively, and that it would be right to hold each and every one of them bound to explain the matter. As no difference of obligation was recognized, there would be no difference of criminality” (Barnes, vol. 1, p. 134).

**Tell me the dream** – “The words of the king clearly show that he knew the dream, for otherwise he would not have been able to know whether the wise men spoke the truth in telling him the dream” (Klief in Keil, p. 94).

**And I shall know** – “Though we may be unable to recall such a dream distinctly ourselves, we could easily *recognize* it if it were stated to us; and as we could not be imposed on by something else that any one should undertake to make us believe was the real dream, the magicians saw that it was hopeless to attempt to palm a story of their own invention on him, as if that were the real dream” (Barnes, vol. 1, p. 125).

“This walking paradox of power and fear wonders whether he has had a dream or a nightmare, and he won’t know until he finds out what it means . . . His dream actually depicts God’s plan for the world. But someone must declare, reveal or make known what the dream means” (Davis, p. 41).

**10. The Chaldeans answered the king, and said, “There is not a man on earth who can tell the king’s matter; therefore no king, lord, or ruler has ever asked such things of any magician, astrologer, or Chaldean.**

The Chaldeans are forced to admit that the king is demanding them to do something that is humanly impossible.

**11. *It is a difficult thing that the king requests, and there is no other who can tell it to the king except the gods, whose dwelling is not with flesh.***

This confession brings out two major points –

1. Their impotence to do what he demanded of them and
2. The utter failure of paganism.

“The idea is not so much that the thing demanded by the king was *uncommon* or *rarely made* – though that was true, as that it was so difficult as to be beyond the human powers” (Barnes, vol. 1, p. 136).

That was absolutely true!

The king, however, does not admit this excuse, but falls into a violent passion, and gives a formal command that the wise men, in whom he sees as deceivers abandoned by their gods, should be put to death (Keil, p. 95).

**12. *For this reason the king was angry and very furious, and gave the command to destroy all the wise men of Babylon.* 13. *So the decree went out, and they began killing the wise men; and they sought Daniel and his companions, to kill them.***

“Even the command to kill all the wise men of Babylon is scarcely to be understood of all the wise men of the whole kingdom. The word Babylon may represent the Babylonian empire, or the province of Babylon, or the city of Babylon only” (Keil, p. 95).

“After the king issued his personal command it would have to be transmitted in formal publication throughout the capital. His guards would have to go in search of many of the wise men not present at the royal court that particular day. It would be some time before the actual execution could take place” (Butler, p. 67).

**14. *Then with counsel and wisdom Daniel answered Arioch, the captain of the king’s guard, who had gone out to kill the wise men of Babylon;***

***Captain of the king’s guard*** – “Was regarded as the highest office of the kingdom (cf. Jer xxxix. 9,11, xl. 1 ff.). It was his business to see to the execution of the king’s commands” (Keil, p. 96).

**15. *he answered and said to Arioch the king’s captain, “Why is the decree from the king so urgent?” Then Arioch made the decision known to Daniel.* 16. *So***

***Daniel went in and asked the king to give him time, that he might tell the king the interpretation.***

***With counsel and wisdom*** – “Daniel was acting on the basis of his faith in God and without doubt on the basis of a revelation from God that he should do so” (Butler, p. 67).

***The interpretation*** – to give the true interpretation Daniel must also know what the true dream is.

***Went in and asked the king*** – “We must presume that Daniel went through the proper channels and observed the correct protocol in approaching the king” (Butler, p. 68).

The king was ready to grasp at *any* hope, however slender, of being made acquainted with the meaning of the vision. He was willing, therefore, that Daniel should be spared, and that the execution of the decree should be suspended (Barnes, vol. 1, p. 125).

## **2. DANIEL’S PETITION AND PRAISE TO THE PROVIDING GOD . . . 2:17-23**

***17. Then Daniel went to his house, and made the decision known to Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, his companions, 18. that they might seek mercies from the God of heaven concerning this secret, so that Daniel and his companions might not perish with the rest of the wise men of Babylon.***

***Seek mercies from the God of heaven*** – “Daniel did not venture to expect to receive the needed revelation without prayer. His companions are so thoroughly of one mind with him that he needs only to reveal his intention in order to receive their consent” (Leupold, p. 97).

***The God of heaven*** – God is over the sun, moon and stars which they worship.

“Daniel did not immediately go to his books of Chaldean wisdom or ancient certainties in the art of divining but enlisted the aid of his three friends in entreating GOD for the solution!” (McGuiggan, p. 5).

“All depended now on God. It was clear that human skill was exhausted, and that no reliance could be placed on any ability which man possessed” (Barnes, vol. 1, p. 141).

***19. Then the secret was revealed to Daniel in a night vision. So Daniel blessed the God of heaven.***

Notice that the first thing Daniel did was to give thanks for the answer Jehovah gave to him.

Do we constantly give God thanks for His blessings, or do we just go about our lives as if God owed them to us?

**20. Daniel answered and said: “Blessed be the name of God forever and ever, for wisdom and might are His.**

**Wisdom and might** – “By mention of these attributes, the true God is distinguished from the idols of Babylon. God has wisdom – nothing is hid from Him – and He has power, for He governs all things” (Young, p. 67).

**21. And He changes the times and the seasons; He removes kings and raises up kings; He gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to those who have understanding.**

**He changes the times and the seasons** – the course of history lies in God’s hands.

**Times** – God’s providence determines how long any one culture’s influence will last.

**He removes kings and raises up kings** – God has sovereign authority and determination over all political changes.

All rulers owe their position and power to God even though there does not appear on the surface to be any evidence of His control.

“Whatever evil God may permit in allowing despotic rulers to reign, He permits as a part of His disciplinary or sanctifying providence” (Butler, p. 71).

If this were not true there would be no limit to the extent of influence any act of evil would have on the entire world.

Political turnover (or turmoil) is under God’s control (providence).

**22. He reveals deep and secret things; He knows what is in the darkness, and light dwells with Him.**

It is in the course of His providence that one king is put down, and another raised up; and therefore He can distinctly tell what He has purposed to do in the great empires of the earth (Clarke, p. 667).

**23. “I thank You and praise You, O God of my fathers; You have given me wisdom and might, and have now made known to me what we asked of You, for You have made known to us the king’s demand.”**

Notice that Daniel does not claim these gifts were his own, or that he did this by his own efforts, but that God was the source of this knowledge.

### 3. DANIEL'S RELIANCE UPON GOD AND THE INTERPRETATION. 2:24-45

**24. Therefore Daniel went to Arioch, whom the king had appointed to destroy the wise men of Babylon. He went and said thus to him: "Do not destroy the wise men of Babylon; take me before the king, and I will tell the king the interpretation."**

We must take actions on whatever God has given to us. To receive His blessings and then do nothing with them is also a sin.

**25. Then Arioch quickly brought Daniel before the king, and said thus to him, "I have found a man of the captives of Judah, who will make known to the king the interpretation."**

**Arioch** – "focuses the king's attention upon the *man* Daniel, rather than upon God. Daniel speedily deflects attention from himself, and points the eyes of the king to God" (Young, p. 69).

**Brought Daniel before the king** – "It is clear, from the whole narrative, that Arioch had great confidence in Daniel" (Barnes, vol. 1, p. 145).

**26. The king answered and said to Daniel, whose name was Belteshazzar, "Are you able to make known to me the dream which I have seen, and its interpretation?"**

The king wants to know the answer and is quick to respond to Daniel's offer.

**27. Daniel answered in the presence of the king, and said, "The secret which the king has demanded, the wise men, the astrologers, the magicians, and the soothsayers cannot declare to the king. 28. But there is a God in heaven who reveals secrets, and He has made known to King Nebuchadnezzar what will be in the latter days. Your dream, and the visions of your head upon your bed, were these:**

"Astrologers, soothsayers, enchanters, wise men, magicians AND DANIEL are all inadequate for the task set by the king, and, that GOD is completely adequate and able!" (McGuiggan, p. 5).

"The way was thus prepared to show that he who could do this must be the true God, and must be worthy of adoration and praise. Thus prepared, the mind of the monarch was now directed by this pious Hebrew youth, though a captive, to a truth so momentous and important. His whole training, his modesty and his piety, all were combined to lead him to attribute whatever skill he might evince in so difficult a matter to the true God alone: and we can scarcely conceive of a more sublime ob-

ject of contemplation than this young man, in the most magnificent court of the world, directing the thoughts of the most mighty monarch that then occupied a throne, to the existence and the perfections of the true God” (Barnes, vol. 1, p. 146).

**Latter days** – this phrase does not exactly convey the sense of the original. It is *future* days rather than *latter* days (Barnes, vol. 1, p. 147).

**29. As for you, O king, thoughts came to your mind while on your bed, about what would come to pass after this; and He who reveals secrets has made known to you what will be.**

Notice that the king is made to understand that Jehovah has made this known to him and not to anyone else.

**30. But as for me, this secret has not been revealed to me because I have more wisdom than anyone living, but for our sakes who make known the interpretation to the king, and that you may know the thoughts of your heart.**

“It is probable that the magicians were accustomed to ascribe to their own skill and sagacity the ability to interpret dreams and the other prognostics of the future, and to claim special honour on that account. In opposition to this, Daniel utterly disclaims any such wisdom himself, and attributes the skill which he has entirely to God” (Barnes, vol. 1, p. 148).

**31. “You, O king, were watching; and behold, a great image! This great image, whose splendor was excellent, stood before you; and its form was awesome.**

**A great image** – this image is not an idol, but a statue in human form. Human powers are human in nature and as such these world powers are united into one statue (Young, p. 71).

“The world-power is in all its phases one, therefore all these phases are united in the vision in one image” (Kleif in Kiel, p. 102).

**Splendor was excellent** – “The term here is to be understood not merely of the face of the image, but of its entire aspect, as having something in it signally splendid and imposing” (Barnes, vol. 1, p. 149).

**Awesome** – vast, imposing, grand, fearful, terrible.

**32. This image’s head was of fine gold, its chest and arms of silver, its belly and thighs of bronze,**

**Fine gold** – good, pure, unalloyed gold.

**Chest and arms of silver** – “Next to the head it is the most important part, as it

embraces most of the vital organs. Some degree of inferiority, as well as the idea of succession, would be naturally represented by this” (Barnes, vol. 1, p. 150).

**Bronze** – this word could also have been translated brass or copper.

**33. *its legs of iron, its feet partly of iron and partly of clay.***

The king will know that this is not a stable mixture. It is obvious that anything standing on such a base (foundation) will fall and not endure.

**34. *You watched while a stone was cut out without hands, which struck the image on its feet of iron and clay, and broke them in pieces.***

**Without hands** – that is without human power or assistance, *i.e.* God’s power.

“The essential idea is, that the agency of hands did not appear at all in the case. The stone seemed to be self-moved. It became detached from the mountain, and, as if instinct with life, struck the image and demolished it” (Barnes, vol. 1, p. 151).

**35. *Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, and the gold were crushed together, and became like chaff from the summer threshing floors; the wind carried them away so that no trace of them was found. And the stone that struck the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth.***

**No trace of them was found** – the Aramaic says, “no place was found for them.” The sweeping away was so thorough and complete that the dust could not find any visible resting place.

“It is important to remember, when we come to the interpretation of the dream, that the entire statue was obliterated when the stone struck it” (Butler, p. 79).

This vision starts by viewing a huge statue and then ends up with the largest mountain imaginable.

**36. *“This is the dream. Now we will tell the interpretation of it before the king.***

**We will tell** – who is this “we?” Is it Daniel and his friends. Is this an editorial “we?” Or, is it God and Daniel?

**37. *You, O king, are a king of kings. For the God of heaven has given you a kingdom, power, strength, and glory;***

**A king of kings** – “The scepter which he swayed was, in fact, extended over many nations that were once independent kingdoms, and the title here conferred on him was not one that was designed to flatter the monarch, but was a simple statement

of what was an undoubted truth” (Barnes, vol. 1, p. 154).

**For the God of heaven has given you a kingdom** – “Not given by their own gods, nor acquired by their own skill and prowess; it is a divine gift” (Clarke, p. 568).

**Power** – to rule this kingdom.

**Strength** – to defend against all enemies.

**Glory** – great dignity, honor and stature.

**38. and wherever the children of men dwell, or the beasts of the field and the birds of the heaven, He has given them into your hand, and has made you ruler over them all—you are this head of gold.**

**You are this head of gold** – as the rest of this book shows Nebuchadnezzar and the kingdom are used synonymously here; i.e. Nebuchadnezzar = kingdom = head of gold.

**39. But after you shall arise another kingdom inferior to yours; then another, a third kingdom of bronze, which shall rule over all the earth.**

Regarding verses 37, 38 and 39 – “It must be noted, however, that a personal form of address is employed. The empire in the person of its ruler, stood before Daniel and would therefore be addressed as *thou*. Also, in a certain sense, the king was the empire, for he had built it. It is, therefore, the neo-Babylonian empire, represented in the person of its monarch, to whom Daniel makes his address” (Young, p. 74).

**40. And the fourth kingdom shall be as strong as iron, inasmuch as iron breaks in pieces and shatters everything; and like iron that crushes, that kingdom will break in pieces and crush all the others.**

The table below shows the interpretation of the four empires (kingdoms) by this instructor (and most conservative scholars) and adopted in this course –

<u>The statue</u>		<u>The Empire</u>
The head of gold	-	The neo-Babylonian Empire
The breast and arms	-	The Medo-Persian Empire
The belly and thighs	-	The Grecian Empire
The legs and feet	-	The Roman Empire

**Strong as iron** – This does not stand for inner strength and unity, but stands for destructive strength.

The Roman legions were noted for their ability to crush all resistance as with an iron heel.

**41. Whereas you saw the feet and toes, partly of potter's clay and partly of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; yet the strength of the iron shall be in it, just as you saw the iron mixed with ceramic clay.**

Leupold is harsh but right when he says – “we are, no doubt, correct in saying that the toes, generally speaking, represent the kingdoms into which the Roman Empire broke up when the disintegration set in. Since ten is the number of completeness or totality this would have the toes represent the sum total of the kingdoms.

“All attempts to name the resultant kingdoms of an earlier or a later date prove abortive and unreliable. For the number ten is definitely a symbolic number\* as are numbers generally in visions and dreams of this type. There might be in reality nine or eleven or nineteen or twenty. Ten represents the totality of whatever number there is.

\* See “Symbolic Use Of Numbers” in the Appendix.

“Those interpreters who attempt to find the fulfillment of prophecy in enumerations in which ten European kingdoms are reckoned as an exact ten in number are seen to have juggled the facts in an unworthy way and to cut the evidence down to suit the preordained pattern.

“Such attempts inspire no confidence, are misleading, and involve a misreading of prophetic utterances” (p. 122).

This writer agrees with the above, but it must be remembered that we all are basing our thoughts on the idea there were ten toes when, in fact, the number of toes is not stated in the passage.

**42. And as the toes of the feet were partly of iron and partly of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong and partly fragile.**

A foregone conclusion.

**43. As you saw iron mixed with ceramic clay, they will mingle with the seed of men; but they will not adhere to one another, just as iron does not mix with clay.**

**They will mingle with the seed of men** – this statue and what it stands for will not endure even with the best intentions and manipulations of men.

**44. And in the days of these kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people; it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever.**

**The God of heaven will set up a kingdom** – “It shall not owe its origin to the usual causes by which empires are constituted on the earth – by conquests; by human policy; by powerful alliances; by transmitted hereditary possession – but shall exist because God shall appoint and constitute it” (Barnes, vol. 1, p. 173).

The stone that struck the image is an eternal kingdom which God will set up. It is the Church of Christ described in the New Testament.

**In the days of these kings** – “would refer most naturally to the four kingdoms or kings represented by the image. This interpretation is clearly involved in the symbolism of the image (vs. 45) and is permissible because, while distinct, these four kingdoms were also in a sense one. Medo-Persia conquered and incorporated Babylon, Greece did the same to Medo-Persia. And while Rome never conquered all of Alexander’s empire, she did conquer much of it and the extent of the Roman Empire was far greater and more world-wide than any of the others. It was while the image was still standing that the blow was struck. So we may say that is was in the period of those four empires as together representing Gentile world domination but in the days of the last of the four that the kingdom of Messiah was set up” (Allis, pp. 125-126).

**A kingdom which shall never be destroyed** – “The kingdom of God is of Divine origin and eternal duration. For this reason, it cannot be the so called millennium, which is but 1000 years in length. Since the kingdom is divine, it is therefore eternal. It will furthermore not be conquered by others, but will ever be in the hands of the same people, the true Israel of God, the Church. On the other hand it will break in pieces and destroy other kingdoms. The contrast may be represented as follows:

THE KINGDOMS OF THE COLOSSUS	as to	THE KINGDOM OF GOD
Human	ORIGIN	Divine
Temporary	DURATION	Eternal
Overcome by each succeeding kingdom”	POWER	Unconquerable
		(Young, pp. 78-79)

The above chart illustrates the basic feature of world empires – they kept changing hands, each having its time of rule, but not one had permanence.

“The Christian Church broke the power of pagan Rome. The disintegrating and

corrupt empire crumbled through decay from within as well as through the impact of the sound morals and the healthy life of Christianity that condemned lascivious Rome” (Leupold, p.121).

It must be noted here that it was the inspired teaching of the original church established by Christ that caused the breakdown of the Roman Empire. God’s words are effective and do not return to Him void.

It is also true that when the Roman Empire finally came to an end the original church established by Jesus had been modified by the decisions and rulings of mere men. The moment men add to or take away from the word of God it is no longer God’s word (Gal 1:6-9; Rev 22:18; Prov 30:6; Deut 4:2; 12:32; Jude 3)! They are then men’s words and men’s religious organizations are the result. The resulting religious organizations and their rules and regulations are not binding on men’s souls, only God’s unaltered word has this authority.

***The kingdom shall not be left to other people;*** - the ruling power shall never pass from its rightful possessor. The kingdom will never change hands. It will always be God’s.

***It shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms*** – “The whole picture then is that of God establishing His kingdom (the sovereignty or rule of God in the hearts of men through man’s faithful response to the grace of Jesus Christ) and destroying the inadequate and opposing carnal worldly power which can never save or reunite man with God” (Butler, p. 92).

***45. Inasmuch as you saw that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it broke in pieces the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver, and the gold—the great God has made known to the king what will come to pass after this. The dream is certain, and its interpretation is sure.”***

Men still blunder along trying to establish a lasting world power. But each product of human effort shall go the way of all flesh including republics, democracies, united nations, etc., for none of them are sufficient for man’s dilemma – sin (Butler, p. 94).

“No empire, although many have tried, has held universal sway and world-wide dominance since Rome!” (Chamberlin, p. 42).

**SPECIAL NOTE:** We have a God who reveals mysteries, but this does not mean we have a God who reveals everything. Especially everything in the future. He does reveal all that we need to have in order for us to go to heaven. And knowing this we can keep on going forward with Him in confidence and hope as well as without fear. We can say with Jesus, “You could have no power at all against Me unless it had been given you from above.”

#### **4. DANIEL’S GOD PRAISED BY KING NEBUCHADNEZZAR . . . . . 2:46-49**

**46. Then King Nebuchadnezzar fell on his face, prostrate before Daniel, and commanded that they should present an offering and incense to him.**

Daniel would never have accepted worship for himself – “Whatever may have been the precise purpose of the king, we may be sure that a man of the stalwart character of Daniel, whose sole desire was for the glory of his God, would not have taken to himself honor which belonged to God alone” (Young, p. 81).

“It was a common practice for pagan rulers to bow before those whom they thought were representatives of Gods” (Butler, p. 96).

**47. The king answered Daniel, and said, “Truly your God is the God of gods, the Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets, since you could reveal this secret.”**

“The profession of the king, however, was nothing more than the profession of a polytheist. He had not yet come to see that Daniel’s God is the only God. However, the superiority of Daniel’s God is recognized when the king calls Him a *revealer of secrets*” (Young, p. 81).

“So Nebuchadnezzar viewed God as one among many, at this point of time, the greatest, but yet one among many” (McGuiggan, p. 13).

**48. Then the king promoted Daniel and gave him many great gifts; and he made him ruler over the whole province of Babylon, and chief administrator over all the wise men of Babylon.**

**And gave him many great gifts** – in the East at this time this was a common way of showing esteem.

**Chief administrator over all the wise men of Babylon** – Young quote Moses Stuart’s comment on this – “What the particular duties of this office were, we do not know. That Daniel so managed them as to keep clear of divination by sorcery or astrology, and the performance of heathen rites, would seem to be implied by the account of his demeanor which is given in the book of Daniel” (A Commentary on the Book of Daniel, Boston, 1850).

Some liberal commentators claim this proves that Daniel also became one of the group he ruled over. But, “where does the passage say he became one of that group? He became their chief governor but what does that prove? Did Darius the Mede become ruler over the Egyptians, did this prove him to be an Egyptian? What we are saying should not need to be said, because Daniel governed the wise men it is not necessary to assume he became one of them and became involved in their godless stupidity!” (McGuiggan, p. 14).

Nebuchadnezzar himself was the king over, and ruled over, the wise men. Did that

make him one of them also? NO!

**49. Also Daniel petitioned the king, and he set Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego over the affairs of the province of Babylon; but Daniel sat in the gate of the king.**

**The king . . . set Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego over the affairs of the province of Babylon** – “It would have been ungrateful on the part of Daniel not to have seen to it that his friends shared in the rewards which the king was bestowing. They had helped him by means of their prayers” (Leupold, p. 129).

These three were given places of trust in which they could do much good and also prevent much evil.

**Daniel sat in the gate of the king** – this was an office of honor and dignity as he was a counsellor of the king.

This is where courts and public business transactions were held.

### **C. DESTRUCTION ATTEMPT OF THREE FRIENDS . . . . . Chapter 3**

#### **1. ERECTION OF AN IMAGE AND EDICT TO WORSHIP IT . . . . . 3:1-7**

**1. Nebuchadnezzar the king made an image of gold, whose height was sixty cubits and its width six cubits. He set it up in the plain of Dura, in the province of Babylon.**

**An image of gold** - we do not know the exact year Nebuchadnezzar erected this image.

Nebuchadnezzar had accumulated great amounts of gold in his conquests and could have conceivably built this idol of solid gold, but the Hebrew language used here does not require this and it could have been gold plated only.

**2. And King Nebuchadnezzar sent word to gather together the satraps, the administrators, the governors, the counselors, the treasurers, the judges, the magistrates, and all the officials of the provinces, to come to the dedication of the image which King Nebuchadnezzar had set up. 3. So the satraps, the administrators, the governors, the counselors, the treasurers, the judges, the magistrates, and all the officials of the provinces gathered together for the dedication of the image that King Nebuchadnezzar had set up; and they stood before the image that Nebuchadnezzar had set up.**

The king gives orders for all of these to gather and they respond accordingly.

**4. Then a herald cried aloud: “To you it is commanded, O peoples, nations, and**

**languages, 5. that at the time you hear the sound of the horn, flute, harp, lyre, and psaltery, in symphony with all kinds of music, you shall fall down and worship the gold image that King Nebuchadnezzar has set up; 6. and whoever does not fall down and worship shall be cast immediately into the midst of a burning fiery furnace.”**

“The threat of the furnace would affect relatively few since nearly everyone would regard the bowing to the king’s image of little consequence” (McGuiggan, p. 15).

“The *religious* significance of this act of general homage by the assembled officials was largely incidental. It was the *political* significance of the event that stood out. He who refused submission was a rebel” (Leupold, p. 146).

**7. So at that time, when all the people heard the sound of the horn, flute, harp, and lyre, in symphony with all kinds of music, all the people, nations, and languages fell down and worshiped the gold image which King Nebuchadnezzar had set up.**

Some liberal scholars have claimed this book is not accurate (inspired by God) because some of the names of these instruments were not Chaldean but Greek. And they felt that there had not been enough trade or intercourse with the Grecian states for these instruments or their names to be known to Daniel.

Writing on this theme, especially regarding the exchange of art, Yamauchi makes this comment – “According to Daniel 5, Daniel himself witnessed the overthrow of Babylon by Cyrus on 539. First-hand Persian contact with the Ionian Greeks came some time before this with the conquest by Cyrus of Lydia and Ionia in 547/546 . . . remember that the Greeks were but one of numerous elements in the Persian Empire, it cannot be denied that the Greek presence and contributions to the Persians in the late sixth and early fifth centuries were substantial” (p. 389).

Nebuchadnezzar was not intent on setting up a new religion or interfering with people worshiping their own gods. It was taken for granted men would still worship their own gods plus those of any society they found themselves in.

However, when one country conquered another the victors expected the losers to worship their gods as superior to their own. The victors felt their god gave them the victory and therefore must be worshiped also. To refuse was, in essence, to say that the victor’s gods were not worthy of honor and neither was the king. It would be viewed as rebellion and therefore the ones who refused should be punished.

## 2. EXAMPLE OF FAITH AND REFUSAL TO WORSHIP AN IDOL . . . 3:8-12

### 8. *Therefore at that time certain Chaldeans came forward and accused the Jews.*

“Jealousy and envy over the quick promotion and success of the Hebrew youths motivated the Chaldeans throughout. Their wounded vanity and unreasoning jealousy is made to look like a patriotic disclosure” (Butler, p. 119).

**9. *They spoke and said to King Nebuchadnezzar, “O king, live forever! 10. You, O king, have made a decree that everyone who hears the sound of the horn, flute, harp, lyre, and psaltery, in symphony with all kinds of music, shall fall down and worship the gold image; 11. and whoever does not fall down and worship shall be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace.***

Notice the accusers make it clear this is the demand of the king himself. They make no mention that this whole idea was theirs in the first place.

**12. *There are certain Jews whom you have set over the affairs of the province of Babylon: Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego; these men, O king, have not paid due regard to you. They do not serve your gods or worship the gold image which you have set up.***

***Jews whom you have set over the affairs of the province of Babylon*** – “shows clearly how they felt about this appointment. They came just short of reproving the king for such inconsiderate advancement of men who were no better than traitorous rebels. They play upon the king’s personal feelings . . . Wounded vanity and unreasoning jealousy motivate what looks like a patriotic disclosure” (Leupold, p. 147).

***These men, O king, have not paid due regard to you*** – “Implied in this accusation is the charge of ingratitude. The king, it is argued, has honored these men but they have paid no heed to him as may be seen by the fact that they do not honor the king’s god, nor worship his image” (Young, p. 89).

## 3. ENTRUSTING THEIR SOULS TO GOD . . . . . 3:13-18

**13. *Then Nebuchadnezzar, in rage and fury, gave the command to bring Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego. So they brought these men before the king.***

**14. *Nebuchadnezzar spoke, saying to them, “Is it true, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, that you do not serve my gods or worship the gold image which I have set up?***

It is hard for the king to believe anyone would refuse to obey a command from him.

**15. *Now if you are ready at the time you hear the sound of the horn, flute, harp, lyre, and psaltery, in symphony with all kinds of music, and you fall down and worship the image which I have made, good! But if you do not worship, you shall***

***be cast immediately into the midst of a burning fiery furnace. And who is the god who will deliver you from my hands?"***

The king is not going to make a judgment just on the accuser's word alone. He will check to see if their accusation is real. It is also possible that he is not ignorant of their jealousy.

***And who is the god who will deliver you from my hands?*** – These words, if judged “from the religious point of view of the Israelites, a blaspheming of God, but considered from Nebuchadnezzar's heathen standpoint, are only an expression of proud confidence in his own might and in that of his gods” (Keil, p. 116).

This is the voice of a materialist, one who is not spiritual in mind.

***16. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego answered and said to the king, “O Nebuchadnezzar, we have no need to answer you in this matter.***

These three are simply acknowledging that the charges made against them are true and they do not need to make any defense or even an apology. They are totally placing themselves in God's care and providence.

They are obeying God rather than men (Acts 5:29).

The Hebrew writer seems to have these men in mind when he wrote of those who quenched the violence of fire by their faith (Heb 11:34).

Also, these three know that Nebuchadnezzar would not understand their viewpoint so they do not even attempt to justify themselves.

***17. If that is the case, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and He will deliver us from your hand, O king.***

“Whether their deliverance would work into the plans of God they did not know. He might rather have them to die, and if this were to be the case, they would still refuse to worship the heathen image!” (McGuiggan, p. 16).

In either case they would be delivered from Nebuchadnezzar's hand.

***18. But if not, let it be known to you, O king, that we do not serve your gods, nor will we worship the gold image which you have set up.”***

They could not do what was commanded of them because it was totally opposite of their faith and their consciences.

The faith of these three men “is one of the noblest examples in Scriptures of faith fully resigned to the will of God. These men ask for no miracle; they expect none.

Theirs is a faith that says: 'Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him' (Job 13:15)" (Leupold, p. 153).

"True religion is a determined purpose to do right, and not to do wrong, whatever may be the consequences" (Barnes, vol. 1, p. 217).

Consider these men and the depth of their faith –

They are young men,

Were captives in a country far from home,

Were standing before the most powerful emperor in the world,

Had no powerful friends to defend them, and

Were being threatened by a very horrible death.

There is a saying – "Stand strong in hard places." These young men did!

#### **4. EXECUTION BY FIRE AND THE RESULT ..... 3:19-30**

**19. Then Nebuchadnezzar was full of fury, and the expression on his face changed toward Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego. He spoke and commanded that they heat the furnace seven times more than it was usually heated.**

His command is absurd, it is a result of his pride and anger which blinds him to common sense.

**Heat the furnace seven times more** – the number seven is used only to indicate that the fire was to be made as hot as possible.

**20. And he commanded certain mighty men of valor who were in his army to bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, and cast them into the burning fiery furnace.**

This was a dangerous task for any person to do. Therefore the king chooses strong troopers to carry out his orders.

**21. Then these men were bound in their coats, their trousers, their turbans, and their other garments, and were cast into the midst of the burning fiery furnace.**

Due to the urgency of the king's command they were bound as they were dressed. No time was taken to strip their fine clothes off first.

**22. Therefore, because the king's command was urgent, and the furnace**

***exceedingly hot, the flame of the fire killed those men who took up Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego.***

“The shape or form of the furnace is unknown to us and it is thus futile to object against the death of those who cast the men into the fire” (McGuigan, p. 16).

***23. And these three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, fell down bound into the midst of the burning fiery furnace.***

**SPECIAL NOTE:** In the Apocrypha there are 68 verses inserted after this verse which are called “the song of the three holy children.” They are not in the original Chaldean and are not a part of the inspired canon of the Old Testament. Within it are items which are fanciful and absurd which, of course, proves it is not from God!

***24. Then King Nebuchadnezzar was astonished; and he rose in haste and spoke, saying to his counselors, “Did we not cast three men bound into the midst of the fire?” They answered and said to the king, “True, O king.”***

***Was astonished*** – “It would seem from this, that the furnace was so made that one could conveniently see into it, and also that the king remained near to it to witness the result of the execution of his own order” (Barnes, vol. 1, p. 221).

***25. “Look!” he answered, “I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire; and they are not hurt, and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God.”***

“Several things startle the king profoundly:

He sees not three but four,

They are not bound but free,

They are not lying down or standing still but walking about,

They are not roasting in the fire but are unhurt (literally: ‘harm was not upon them’), and

The appearance of the fourth was like unto a son of the gods” (Leupold, p. 157).

Butler adds a sixth item – “they were not frantically searching for a way of escape but were evidently resigned to let their God handle the situation” (p. 125).

Either the fire destroyed their bonds but did not burn them, or the angel released them.

***The Son of God*** – “The insertion of the article ‘*the*,’ which is not in the Chaldee, gives a different impression from what the original would if literally interpreted.

There is nothing in the Chaldee to limit it to any 'son of God.'" (Barnes, vol. 1, p. 222).

In other words this should read "a son of god."

Many heathens believed the gods would appear in human form and the king probably felt this was one of those times.

This, more than likely, was not the second person of the godhead, because in a very similar incident when Daniel was thrown into the loins' den, it was an angel who delivered him. However, this is not conclusive.

**26. Then Nebuchadnezzar went near the mouth of the burning fiery furnace and spoke, saying, "Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, servants of the Most High God, come out, and come here." Then Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego came from the midst of the fire.**

"It was apparent as it could be that, from the heathen point of view, a mighty god had wrought a mighty miracle. How could Nebuchadnezzar oppose those whom the gods so signally favored?" (Leupold, p. 159).

**Come out, and come here** – Nebuchadnezzar was "satisfied now they had a Divine Protector, awed by the miracle, and doubtless dreading the wrath of the Divine Being that had become their protector, he commanded them suddenly to come out" (Barnes, vol. 1, p. 201).

**27. And the satraps, administrators, governors, and the king's counselors gathered together, and they saw these men on whose bodies the fire had no power; the hair of their head was not singed nor were their garments affected, and the smell of fire was not on them.**

"A large body of reliable witnesses satisfied themselves as to the perfect deliverance from the certain death experienced by these three Hebrew men" (Butler, p. 128).

**28. Nebuchadnezzar spoke, saying, "Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, who sent His Angel and delivered His servants who trusted in Him, and they have frustrated the king's word, and yielded their bodies, that they should not serve nor worship any god except their own God!"**

"This statement constitutes at least an acknowledgment of the fact that there is a god who can deliver from the king's hand (cf. vs. 15)" (Young, p. 95).

**29. Therefore I make a decree that any people, nation, or language which speaks anything amiss against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego shall be cut in pieces, and their houses shall be made an ash heap; because there is no**

**other God who can deliver like this.”**

**There is no other God who can deliver like this** – Notice that the king answered his own question in the last part of verse 15.

“He was willing to admit that in this respect he surpassed all other divinities” (Barnes, vol. 1, p. 226).

This decree does not require the people to worship Jehovah, it only obligates them to treat Him with reverence.

**30. Then the king promoted Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego in the province of Babylon.**

**The king promoted** – “The Chaldee means no more than *made to prosper*. Whether he restored them to their former places, or to higher honours, does not appear” (Barnes, vol. 1, p. 226).

This incident teaches us “how the true worshipers of the Lord under the dominion of the world power could and would come into difficulties, imperiling life, between the demands of the lords of this world and the duties they owe to God” (Keil, p. 133).

**SPECIAL NOTE:** “According to the prevailing views, no mode of religion could be tolerated which would maintain that *all* the gods that were worshipped were false. Religion was supposed to be identified with the best interests of the state, and was recognized by the laws, and protected by the laws. To deny the claim, therefore, of any and of all the gods that were worshipped; to maintain that all were false alike; to call on men to forsake their idols, and to embrace a new religion—all this was regarded as an attack on the state” (Barnes, vol. 1, p. 228).

**D. DETHRONED NEBUCHADNEZZAR: A DREAM AND THE INSANE KING ..... Chapter 4**

**1. THE DECLARATION OF THE KING ..... 4:1-3**

The Aramaic text here has the first three verses of this chapter as the last three verses of chapter three (4:1-3 were 3:31-33). However, the flow of the text is smooth enough with the chapter break where our translations have it. Remember, chapters and verses were added centuries later and were not a part of the original text.

**1. Nebuchadnezzar the king, To all peoples, nations, and languages that dwell in all the earth: Peace be multiplied to you.**

**That dwell in all the earth** – “The Assyrian and Babylonian kings regarded themselves as kings of all the earth, and in their inscriptions were accustomed thus to speak of themselves. This practice was also in vogue among the Persian rulers”

(Young, p. 97).

**Peace be multiplied to you** – “The wish is that it might *abound*, or that they might be blessed with the numberless mercies which peace produces” (Barnes, vol. 1, p. 244).

**2. I thought it good to declare the signs and wonders that the Most High God has worked for me.**

Again, credit goes where credit is due! And this by a heathen king!

**3. How great are His signs, and how mighty His wonders! His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and His dominion is from generation to generation.**

Through time rulership will depart from him, from the Medo-Persians, then from Alexander, and then the Caesars, but Jehovah God is still ruling in this age and all ages to come!

## **2. THE DECREE OF THE KING . . . . . 4:4-9**

**4. I, Nebuchadnezzar, was at rest in my house, and flourishing in my palace.**

**Rest . . . flourishing** – “The general meaning here is, that he was enjoying abundant prosperity. His kingdom was at peace, and in his own home he had every means of tranquil enjoyment” (Barnes, vol. 1, p. 246).

**5. I saw a dream which made me afraid, and the thoughts on my bed and the visions of my head troubled me.**

**Made me afraid** – “What a mercy it is that God has hidden futurity from us! Were he to show every man the lot that is before him, the misery of the human race would be complete” (Clarke, p. 580).

**6. Therefore I issued a decree to bring in all the wise men of Babylon before me, that they might make known to me the interpretation of the dream.**

“How easily peace can be shattered. But in the king’s case, if fear ruins peace, fear at least has power – *therefore I issued a decree* (6). One wonders how often fear explains the exercise of power” (Davis, p. 61).

At this time the king only asked them to interpret the dream. He did not demand they identify the dream itself as he had before.

**7. Then the magicians, the astrologers, the Chaldeans, and the soothsayers came in, and I told them the dream; but they did not make known to me its interpretation.**

“All of these words refer to the same general class of persons—those who were regarded as endowed with eminent wisdom; who were supposed to be qualified to explain remarkable occurrences, to foretell the future and to declare the will of heaven from portents and wonders” (Barnes, vol. 1, p. 247).

**8. *But at last Daniel came before me (his name is Belteshazzar, according to the name of my god; in him is the Spirit of the Holy God), and I told the dream before him, saying:***

Leupold suggests two possibilities why Daniel was not with the wise men when they came to the king: (a) he may have been busy assembling the wise men and could not come earlier; (b) he may have chosen to defer his coming, timing it carefully to coincide with the moment when the failure of the Chaldeans was most evident (pp. 174-175).

**9. *“Belteshazzar, chief of the magicians, because I know that the Spirit of the Holy God is in you, and no secret troubles you, explain to me the visions of my dream that I have seen, and its interpretation.***

**Chief** – the word rendered chief (Rab) is that which was applied to a teacher (also master or great man) among the Jews. Notice the advance in meanings –

Rab – Teacher,

Rabbi – My teacher, and

Robboni – Our (nation’s) teacher.

**Secret** – “It means that which is *hidden*, and has reference here to the concealed truth or intimation of the Divine will couched under a dream” (Barnes, vol. 1, p. 249).

### **3. THE DREAM OF THE KING . . . . . 4:10-18**

**10. *“These were the visions of my head while on my bed: I was looking, and behold, a tree in the midst of the earth, and its height was great. 11. The tree grew and became strong; its height reached to the heavens, and it could be seen to the ends of all the earth. 12. Its leaves were lovely, its fruit abundant, and in it was food for all. The beasts of the field found shade under it, the birds of the heavens dwelt in its branches, and all flesh was fed from it.***

The tree represents a king (kingdom) which supplies the needs of all who come within its borders.

**13. *“I saw in the visions of my head while on my bed, and there was a watcher, a holy one, coming down from heaven.***

**A watcher, a holy one** – “He evidently does not intend to refer to *two* beings, a ‘watcher’ and ‘one who was holy;’ but he means to designate the character of the watcher” (Barnes, vol. 1, p. 251).

**14. He cried aloud and said thus: ‘Chop down the tree and cut off its branches, Strip off its leaves and scatter its fruit. Let the beasts get out from under it, and the birds from its branches. 15. Nevertheless leave the stump and roots in the earth, bound with a band of iron and bronze, in the tender grass of the field. Let it be wet with the dew of heaven, and let him graze with the beasts on the grass of the earth.**

“The tree with its roots is Nebuchadnezzar, who shall as king be cut down, but shall as a man remain, and again shall grow into a king” (Keil, p. 151).

**16. Let his heart be changed from that of a man, let him be given the heart of a beast, and let seven times pass over him.**

**Let him be given the heart of a beast** – “We have all the earmarks of that form of mental derangement which is also called lycanthropy: a man regards himself to be a wolf or some other beast or creature. To all intents and purposes he behaves as such a beast would behave. Numerous parallels to this condition have been found in every age. There is absolutely nothing impossible or improbable about such a state of derangement” (Leupold, p. 185).

**Let seven times pass over him** – again, with this book being a book of apocalyptic prophecy the number seven would represent perfection. In other words this represents enough time for God to finish His work on this king.

“The idea is that of time considered as designated or fixed by periods, and the word may refer to *any* such period, however long or short—a day, a month, a year, or any other measurement of duration” (Barnes, vol. 1, p. 254).

The exact amount of time is not important, the important thing is that God accomplishes His desires within the time He has set.

“The positive teaching of this verse is simply that for a definite period of time, the exact length of which is not stated, Nebuchadnezzar will be deprived of his reason” (Young, p. 105).

God would also be using Daniel and his three friends in their favorable positions to help keep the empire for Nebuchadnezzar’s return.

**17. ‘This decision is by the decree of the watchers, and the sentence by the word of the holy ones, in order that the living may know that the Most High rules in the kingdom of men, gives it to whomever He will, and sets over it the lowest of men.’**

**The lowest of men** – “It does not denote the mean, the vile, the worthless, the illiberal, but those of humble or lowly rank” (Barnes, vol. 1, p. 256).

**18. “This dream I, King Nebuchadnezzar, have seen. Now you, Belshazzar, declare its interpretation, since all the wise men of my kingdom are not able to make known to me the interpretation; but you are able, for the Spirit of the Holy God is in you.”**

Again, credit is given where credit is due.

#### **4. THE DREAM DEFINED ..... 4:19-27**

**19. Then Daniel, whose name was Belshazzar, was astonished for a time, and his thoughts troubled him. So the king spoke, and said, “Belshazzar, do not let the dream or its interpretation trouble you.” Belshazzar answered and said, “My lord, may the dream concern those who hate you, and its interpretation concern your enemies!”**

**Astonished for a time** – “This amazement seized him because he wished well to the king, and yet he must now announce to him a weighty judgment from God” (Keil, p. 154).

“Daniel was a man who would not violate his conscience at the king’s command, but neither would he be unloyal to the king when it was not a matter of conscience. Men who are loyal to God will always be found to be most loyal to kings. Men like Daniel, though they may refuse to comply with the sinful demands of rulers, will be the first to weep for them and pray for them” (Butler, p. 159).

**May the dream concern those who hate you, and its interpretation concern your enemies** – This comment implies that Daniel wishes that which is coming upon the king would actually happen to the king’s enemies.

Leupold feels a better translation would be “‘The dream is for thy enemies (or haters).’ That would mean: this is a dream that would please your enemies; what it portends they would surely like to see fulfilled upon you” (p. 190).

**20. “The tree that you saw, which grew and became strong, whose height reached to the heavens and which could be seen by all the earth, 21. whose leaves were lovely and its fruit abundant, in which was food for all, under which the beasts of the field dwelt, and in whose branches the birds of the heaven had their home— 22. it is you, O king, who have grown and become strong; for your greatness has grown and reaches to the heavens, and your dominion to the end of the earth.**

It was being made clear that this dream was about Nebuchadnezzar and his

kingdom.

**23. “And inasmuch as the king saw a watcher, a holy one, coming down from heaven and saying, ‘Chop down the tree and destroy it, but leave its stump and roots in the earth, bound with a band of iron and bronze in the tender grass of the field; let it be wet with the dew of heaven, and let him graze with the beasts of the field, till seven times pass over him’;**

**A watcher, a holy one** – not identified who this is, it could be an angel.

**Till seven times** – in Hebrew and Chaldean the number seven is a perfect number and stands for completeness and unity. Therefore, what is meant here is that Nebuchadnezzar would endure this plight long enough until he understood that God was in control.

**24. this is the interpretation, O king, and this is the decree of the Most High, which has come upon my lord the king: 25. They shall drive you from men, your dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field, and they shall make you eat grass like oxen. They shall wet you with the dew of heaven, and seven times shall pass over you, till you know that the Most High rules in the kingdom of men, and gives it to whomever He chooses.**

**This is the decree of the Most High** – “It was not a thing of chance; it was not ordered by idol gods; it was not an event that occurred by the mere force of circumstances, or as the result of the operation of secondary laws: it was a direct Divine interposition—the solemn purpose of the living God that it should be so” (Barnes, vol. 1, p. 258).

“The most important part of Daniel’s revelation is the focus or purpose of the king’s insanity. The intent of the matter is to give mankind, especially this heathen king and his subjects, and the captive covenant people, the proof that the fortunes of kings and empires are in the hands of Jehovah, that His providence perpetually interposes in the affairs of men, distributing thrones and empires, always for the good of the faithful, but according to His will” (Butler, p. 162).

“The purpose of this experience, therefore, is to bring the king to the knowledge of the truth that God, as the most high, is sovereign in His providential dealings with men” (Young, p. 107).

**26. “And inasmuch as they gave the command to leave the stump and roots of the tree, your kingdom shall be assured to you, after you come to know that Heaven rules.**

**Leave the stump and roots of the tree** – it was not to be destroyed, not to be dug up out of the ground.

***Your kingdom shall be assured to you*** – the king will not die while in this state.

“The message here must not be missed. It is of eternal significance and is world wide, and all embracing in scope! God will convince Nebuchadnezzar that He is the real ruler of the world. He will prove this by rendering Nebuchadnezzar incapable of ruling his kingdom and yet keeping it for him during the time of his humiliation” (McGuiggan, p. 19).

This verse says that when Nebuchadnezzar comes to this knowledge this punishment will be withdrawn and his kingdom restored to him.

***27. Therefore, O king, let my advice be acceptable to you; break off your sins by being righteous, and your iniquities by showing mercy to the poor. Perhaps there may be a lengthening of your prosperity.”***

The predicted experience is to come, but Nebuchadnezzar, if he ceases to do evil and learns to do well, may enjoy a longer period of prosperity upon the throne. The text says nothing of averting of the predicted judgment, but merely speaks of a lengthening of a period of tranquility (Young, p. 108).

“There can be no mistaking it that God holds all rulers, pagan and godly, responsible for meeting His moral standards in governing (cf. Amos, chap 1-2)” (Butler, p. 163).

Davis makes the point here that the true servants of the Lord will display two emotions –

1. A love-driven sadness that cringes to speak the hard word of the Lord, and
2. A God honoring obedience that speaks it anyway (p. 62).

#### **5. THE DREAM FULFILLED ..... 4:28-37**

***28. All this came upon King Nebuchadnezzar. 29. At the end of the twelve months he was walking about the royal palace of Babylon.***

“The place, however, upon which he walked, appears to have been the roof of his own palace—doubtless reared so high that he could have a good view of the city from it” (Barnes, vol. 1, p. 265).

***30. The king spoke, saying, “Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for a royal dwelling by my mighty power and for the honor of my majesty?”***

***Is not this great Babylon, that I have built*** – “He greatly enlarged the city; built a new city on the west side of the river; reared a magnificent palace; and constructed the celebrated hanging gardens; and, in fact, made the city so different from what it

was, and so greatly increased its splendor, that he could say without impropriety that he had 'built' it" (Barnes, vol. 1, p. 266).

**31. While the word was still in the king's mouth, a voice fell from heaven: "King Nebuchadnezzar, to you it is spoken: the kingdom has departed from you! 32. And they shall drive you from men, and your dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field. They shall make you eat grass like oxen; and seven times shall pass over you, until you know that the Most High rules in the kingdom of men, and gives it to whomever He chooses."**

"In the very act of his speaking—thus showing that there could be no doubt as to the connection between the crime and the punishment" (Barnes, vol. 1, p. 266).

**33. That very hour the word was fulfilled concerning Nebuchadnezzar; he was driven from men and ate grass like oxen; his body was wet with the dew of heaven till his hair had grown like eagles' feathers and his nails like birds' claws.**

The king had been warned by God and there had been sufficient time for repentance and change therefore the sentence was pronounced.

Beware, punishment delayed can give rise to complacency!

If you are not right with God, according to His word, your time is also running out. Who knows on what day, or what moment, you will die!

**34. And at the end of the time I, Nebuchadnezzar, lifted my eyes to heaven, and my understanding returned to me; and I blessed the Most High and praised and honored Him who lives forever: for His dominion is an everlasting dominion, and His kingdom is from generation to generation.**

**At the end of the time** – "That is, the time designated; to wit, the 'seven times' that were to pass over him" (Barnes, vol. 1, p. 268).

**35. All the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing; He does according to His will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. No one can restrain His hand or say to Him, "What have You done?"**

"The king takes all the inhabitants of the earth together as a unit and avers that they are 'accounted as nothing,' not in the sense that God puts no value on them, but in the sense: when they are contrasted with God" (Leupold, p. 203).

**36. At the same time my reason returned to me, and for the glory of my kingdom, my honor and splendor returned to me. My counselors and nobles resorted to me, I was restored to my kingdom, and excellent majesty was added to me.**

**Counselors** – probably the same ones who carried on the government during the

king's insanity.

**37. Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and extol and honor the King of heaven, all of whose works are truth, and His ways justice. And those who walk in pride He is able to put down.**

**All of whose works are truth** – All that God does is in accordance with the true nature of all things. Many times the actions of men are shown to be the wrong actions because they did not know all the facts, including the future. But, God sees things as they precisely are (past, present, future or eternal and all at the same time) and He knows accurately what should be done in every instance.

**He is able to put down** – “This is indeed an affecting truth which is constantly illustrated in the world. The reverses occurring among men, the sick-bed, the loss of reason, the grave, show how easily God can bring down rank, and beauty and all that the world calls great, to the dust” (Barnes, vol. 1, p. 271).

Scholars debate over whether Nebuchadnezzar's faith was a saving faith or not. He lived under the Patriarchal Law so we have no definite way of knowing whether it was or not. However, it is to be noted that he did grow in faith in Jehovah –

- |   |                     |
|---|---------------------|
| a. His knowledge of God                               | 2:47; 3:28; 4:34-35 |
| b. He confesses the complete sovereignty of God       | 4:37b               |
| c. He acknowledges the power of God                   | 4:34-35             |
| d. He worships God whom he calls the “king of heaven” | 4:37a               |

“Perhaps the major purpose served in this incident was to bolster the hope of that faithful remnant of Jews down in Babylon that their God could, and would, overcome and carry out His redemptive, messianic purpose in them soon” (Butler, p. 169).

**E. DRUNKEN FEAST OF BELSHAZZAR: THE WRITING ON THE WALL . . . . . Chapter 5**

**1. THE DRUNKEN ORGY . . . . . 5:1-4**

**1. Belshazzar the king made a great feast for a thousand of his lords, and drank wine in the presence of the thousand.**

“The word thousand must be considered as a round number, to indicate the enormity of the feast” (Young, p. 118).

**2. While he tasted the wine, Belshazzar gave the command to bring the gold and silver vessels which his father Nebuchadnezzar had taken from the temple which had been in Jerusalem, that the king and his lords, his wives, and his concubines might drink from them.**

**His father Nebuchadnezzar** – The use of the word “father” was vague in Oriental languages. One expositor shows the word was used in at least eight different ways. Here it is used in the broad sense of “ancestor” (i.e. grandfather) (Young, p. 119).

“Neither in Hebrew, nor in Chaldee, is there any word for ‘grandfather,’ ‘grandson.’ ‘Forefathers’ are called ‘fathers’ or ‘fathers’ fathers.’ But a single grandfather, or forefather, is never called ‘father’s father’ but always ‘father’ only” (Pusey, p. 346).

**3. Then they brought the gold vessels that had been taken from the temple of the house of God which had been in Jerusalem; and the king and his lords, his wives, and his concubines drank from them. 4. They drank wine, and praised the gods of gold and silver, bronze and iron, wood and stone.**

“The wickedness lay in this, that they drank out of the holy vessels of the temple of the God of Israel to glorify their heathen gods in songs of praise” (Keil, p. 180).

“More likely it was merely a drinking bout at which songs in celebration of the idols were sung” (Young, p. 120).

**Gold and silver, bronze and iron, wood and stone** – Notice that the number of materials identifying these idols is six. This is the number of imperfection, the number just short of completion or fulfillment. Generally speaking it is the number of “man” or the “world” which is destined for failure and punishment because it is hostile to God.

## **2. THE DISTRESSED KING ..... 5:5-12**

**5. In the same hour the fingers of a man’s hand appeared and wrote opposite the lampstand on the plaster of the wall of the king’s palace; and the king saw the part of the hand that wrote.**

**Part of the hand** – or “extremity,” the hand from the wrist to the tips of the fingers.

**6. Then the king’s countenance changed, and his thoughts troubled him, so that the joints of his hips were loosened and his knees knocked against each other.**

**7. The king cried aloud to bring in the astrologers, the Chaldeans, and the soothsayers. The king spoke, saying to the wise men of Babylon, “Whoever reads this writing, and tells me its interpretation, shall be clothed with purple and have a chain of gold around his neck; and he shall be the third ruler in the kingdom.”**

**Third ruler** – why third? In order of authority at this time it would be Nabonidus,

Belshazzar then Daniel.

**8. Now all the king's wise men came, but they could not read the writing, or make known to the king its interpretation. 9. Then King Belshazzar was greatly troubled, his countenance was changed, and his lords were astonished.**

**Was greatly troubled** – “Who can guard himself, or prepare himself, when that which is dreaded is undefined as well as awful; when we know not how to meet it, or how long it may endure, or how terrible and wide may be the sweep of its desolation?” (Barnes, vol. 1, p. 291).

**His lords were astonished** – they were all thrown into confusion.

“Once more they fail (8) and Belshazzar’s alarm only intensifies (9). This is sometimes God’s pattern – to aggravate our helplessness by exposing the uselessness of our favorite props, even our favorite religious props” (Davis, p. 74).

**10. The queen, because of the words of the king and his lords, came to the banquet hall. The queen spoke, saying, “O king, live forever! Do not let your thoughts trouble you, nor let your countenance change.**

**The queen** – who is this queen? The text explicitly states that the wives of the king were already present. Josephus had suggested that she was the grandmother of the king, and Origen that she was the queen mother. This would account for the fact that she had known past events of which the king was ignorant or had forgotten (Young, p. 122).

She makes her entrance before the king only as a queen could do.

**11. There is a man in your kingdom in whom is the Spirit of the Holy God. And in the days of your father, light and understanding and wisdom, like the wisdom of the gods, were found in him; and King Nebuchadnezzar your father—your father the king—made him chief of the magicians, astrologers, Chaldeans, and soothsayers.**

**Like the wisdom of the gods** – Meaning like the wisdom only the gods could possess.

“When a Persian king dies, both his astrologers and physicians are driven from the court—the former for not having predicted, and the latter for not having prevented, his death” (Barnes, vol. 1, p. 292).

**12. Inasmuch as an excellent spirit, knowledge, understanding, interpreting dreams, solving riddles, and explaining enigmas were found in this Daniel, whom the king named Belteshazzar, now let Daniel be called, and he will give the interpretation.”**

“The queen mother had probably received a report from someone at court that the situation was critical, and, in view of the fact that the Medes and Persians were camped outside the city gate, someone was going to have to take the hysterical king in hand and bring the head of the government to his senses” (Butler, p. 197).

**3. THE DISCERNING PROPHET . . . . . 5:13-28**

**13. Then Daniel was brought in before the king. The king spoke, and said to Daniel, “Are you that Daniel who is one of the captives from Judah, whom my father the king brought from Judah? 14. I have heard of you, that the Spirit of God is in you, and that light and understanding and excellent wisdom are found in you. 15. Now the wise men, the astrologers, have been brought in before me, that they should read this writing and make known to me its interpretation, but they could not give the interpretation of the thing. 16. And I have heard of you, that you can give interpretations and explain enigmas. Now if you can read the writing and make known to me its interpretation, you shall be clothed with purple and have a chain of gold around your neck, and shall be the third ruler in the kingdom.”**

The scripture does not tell us why the king does not know Daniel.

**17. Then Daniel answered, and said before the king, “Let your gifts be for yourself, and give your rewards to another; yet I will read the writing to the king, and make known to him the interpretation.**

“The response of Daniel is not to be construed as pert or rude. Nor does he speak contemptuously. Nor does Daniel refuse the gifts because of any fear for his own safety, as Hitzig suggests. Rather, he rejects the gifts because he wishes to make it plain that he has no desire for earthly or personal gain or advantage. Furthermore, by his refusal, he makes it abundantly clear that, come what may, he is determined to declare the truth. How this must have impressed the king, who evidently expected Daniel to be a seeker after reward like the Chaldean wise men!” (Young, pp. 123-124).

“Reading the handwriting on the wall is a service rendered both for his God, for God’s people, and for the king. Daniel does not think of reward first in such service. He is not at all like the mercenary wise men of Babylon. They will say what the king wants to hear for the right price. Daniel will tell the truth without reward” (Butler, pp. 200-201).

**18. O king, the Most High God gave Nebuchadnezzar your father a kingdom and majesty, glory and honor.**

“Daniel here traces all the glory which Nebuchadnezzar had to ‘the most high God,’ reminding the king that whatever honour and majesty he had he was equally indebt-

ed for it to the same source, and that he must expect the same treatment from him” (Barnes, vol. 1, p. 295).

**19. And because of the majesty that He gave him, all peoples, nations, and languages trembled and feared before him. Whomever he wished, he executed; whomever he wished, he kept alive; whomever he wished, he set up; and whomever he wished, he put down.**

This truly describes the despotic and ruthless power of Oriental rulers.

**20. But when his heart was lifted up, and his spirit was hardened in pride, he was deposed from his kingly throne, and they took his glory from him.**

There can be no mistaking it that God holds all rulers, pagan and godly, responsible for meeting His moral standards in governing.

**21. Then he was driven from the sons of men, his heart was made like the beasts, and his dwelling was with the wild donkeys. 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 rules in the kingdom of men, and appoints over it whomever He chooses. 22. “But you his son, Belshazzar, have not humbled your heart, although you knew all this. 23. And you have lifted yourself up against the Lord of heaven. They have brought the vessels of His house before you, and you and your lords, your wives and your concubines, have drunk wine from them. And you have praised the gods of silver and gold, bronze and iron, wood and stone, which do not see or hear or know; and the God who holds your breath in His hand and owns all your ways, you have not glorified.**

**But you his son, Belshazzar, have not humbled your heart** – Belshazzar’s problem was not ignorance but insolence (Davis, p. 79).

**The God who holds your breath in His hand** – “While you have been celebrating the praises of idol gods, who can do you neither good or evil, you have been showing special contempt for that great Being who keeps you in existence, and who has power to take away your life at any moment” (Barnes, vol. 1, p. 296).

**You have not glorified** – “All idols, whether they be of wood or stone, the creation of men’s hands, or finely spun philosophies, the creation of men’s minds, cannot hear nor know. Unbelief is folly” (Young, p. 125).

**SPECIAL NOTE:** “Pay attention to what Belshazzar teaches you: having clear information does not guarantee the right response. He knew all this but did not humble his heart (22). So having good data does not necessarily bring about required change” (Davis, p. 79).

**24. Then the fingers of the hand were sent from Him, and this writing was written. 25. "And this is the inscription that was written: MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHAR-SIN. 26. This is the interpretation of each word. MENE: God has numbered your kingdom, and finished it;**

This not only declares God's omniscience, but also declares that He is in control and making the decision on how long the king's rule will be.

**27. TEKEL: You have been weighed in the balances, and found wanting,**

"The king does not measure up to the divine specifications for a man who is to fill this responsible position" (Leupold, p. 235).

**28. PERES: Your kingdom has been divided, and given to the Medes and Persians."**

God has spoken! Who has the power to change His declared outcome? Nobody!

**SPECIAL NOTE:** "All this, however, is only the end of Daniel's answer to Belshazzar. It was, of course, what Belshazzar was interested in knowing (16). But Daniel did not simply give the king the answer he wanted. Notice that the majority (17-24) of Daniel's words are essentially a prophetic denunciation of Belshazzar; the king did not ask for this! He simply wanted the wall writing interpreted. But Daniel will not simply spit out the meaning – Belshazzar must understand why the interpretation will be so severe" (Davis, p. 77).

#### **4. THE DEFEATED KINGDOM AND THE DEAD KING . . . . . 5:29-31**

**29. Then Belshazzar gave the command, and they clothed Daniel with purple and put a chain of gold around his neck, and made a proclamation concerning him that he should be the third ruler in the kingdom.**

Belshazzar obviously believed Daniel which explains why he honored him rather than putting him to death.

**30. That very night Belshazzar, king of the Chaldeans, was slain. 31. And Darius the Mede received the kingdom, being about sixty-two years old.**

"No one crime caused the downfall of Babylon, but this God dishonoring exhibition of Belshazzar wrote 'FINIS' across that empire" (McGuiggan, p. 25).

#### **F. DANIEL AND THE DEN OF LIONS: KEPT BY FAITH . . . . . Chapter 6**

"Babylon has fallen (5:30-31) and now Persia runs the world. And so chapter 6 is saying, new circumstances do not always give you the relief you crave; you may face the same essential troubles" (Davis, p. 82).

“The history recorded in this chapter shows, on the one side, how the ungodly world-power in its progressive development assumes an aspect continually more hostile toward the kingdom of God, and how with the decrease of its power of action its hatred against the true servants of God increases” (Keil, p. 201).

In other words, no matter what happens, either good or bad to non-believers they will always be at odds with God’s true followers.

## 1. CONSPIRACY – A DEVILISH DESIGN . . . . . 6:1-9

**1. It pleased Darius to set over the kingdom one hundred and twenty satraps, to be over the whole kingdom; 2. and over these, three governors, of whom Daniel was one, that the satraps might give account to them, so that the king would suffer no loss.**

“Darius was responsible for the major organization of the empire into districts governed by satraps . . . The satrap was in charge of all aspects of provincial rule. He levied funds necessary for his administration and provided troops for the king. But the imperial troops in the satrapies were commanded by royal officers independent of the satrap. Royal inspectors, called by the Greeks ‘the king’s eyes’ and ‘the king’s ears,’ checked up on the satraps periodically” (Yamauchi, p. 178).

“Efficient governmental administration is always to a large extent closely tied up with a sufficiency of revenues. But note that it is ‘the king’ who is to suffer no loss – an indication that we are dealing with an absolute monarchy of the most pronounced type. Darius is safeguarding the interests of Cyrus” (Leupold, p. 249).

“Here at least is one constant, unchanging reality amid all the flux and upheaval of history: governments are huge repositories of waste, graft and corruption” (Davis, p. 84).

**3. Then this Daniel distinguished himself above the governors and satraps, because an excellent spirit was in him; and the king gave thought to setting him over the whole realm.**

**Because an excellent spirit was in him** – This is no surprise when you consider God’s providence in giving Daniel the unusual gifts, described in chapter one, his training under Nebuchadnezzar, his experience which extended over sixty years or more and the fact that all of these advantages were seasoned by a strong faith in the Lord Himself (Leupold, p. 249).

**4. So the governors and satraps sought to find some charge against Daniel concerning the kingdom; but they could find no charge or fault, because he was faithful; nor was there any error or fault found in him.**

***Sought to find some charge against Daniel*** – this is a great compliment to Daniel!

“Not even these envious schemers could find fault with Daniel’s responsibilities to his pagan ruler!” (Butler, p. 230).

“There are no circumstances in which a man must have his garments spotted by the world! In fact, unfavorable circumstances are the most favorable for the development of the godly character. Development of godly character comes, not by what we draw from the things around, but by what we draw from the things above (Col 3:1-4)” (Butler, p. 231).

The easier life becomes, the easier it is to fall from God’s grace.

***5. Then these men said, “We shall not find any charge against this Daniel unless we find it against him concerning the law of his God.”***

A typical tick of corrupt politicians – attack him in his religion. Even his rivals knew he would remain loyal to his God and could be made vulnerable because of it.

“Their scheme takes for granted Daniel’s unbending fidelity – they simply know he will not turn aside from worshiping his God” (Davis, p. 84).

“Daniel had to answer the question: What matters most – the worship of God or my safety?” (Davis, p. 87).

***6. So these governors and satraps thronged before the king, and said thus to him: “King Darius, live forever! 7. All the governors of the kingdom, the administrators and satraps, the counselors and advisors, have consulted together to establish a royal statute and to make a firm decree, that whoever petitions any god or man for thirty days, except you, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions.***

***All*** – the standard exaggeration of a childish and evil grasping mind.

The idea here is that the king (secular power) is to be regarded as the representative of deity also (spiritual power).

However, “this is not so much religious persecution as an attempt to bring an individual to fall on a religious charge that is specially trumped up because no other type of charge is available” (Leupold, p. 253).

***Whoever petitions any god or man for thirty days, except you, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions*** – “According to the general fundamental principle of heathenism, the ruler is the son, the representative, the living manifestation of the people’s gods, and the world-ruler thus the manifestation of all the gods of the

nations that were subject to him. Therefore all heathen world-rulers demanded from the heathen nations subdued by them, that religious homage should be rendered to them in the manner peculiar to each nation. Now that is what was here sought. All the nations subjected to the Medo-Persian kingdom were required not to abandon their own special worship rendered to their gods, but in fact to acknowledge that the Medo-Persian world-ruler Darius was also the representative of their national gods. For this purpose they must for the space of thirty days present their petitions to their national gods only in him as their manifestation. And the heathen nations could do all of this without violating their consciences; for since in their own manner they served the Median king as the son of their gods, they served their gods in him” (Keil, p. 211).

It appears this new law was not designed to be religious persecution but to entrap Daniel into a position of being obstinate and guilty of political rebellion.

**8. Now, O king, establish the decree and sign the writing, so that it cannot be changed, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which does not alter.”**

“This remains unchangeable and irrevocable, because the king was regarded and honoured as the incarnation of deity, who is unerring and cannot change” (Keil, p. 210).

**9. Therefore King Darius signed the written decree.**

“If the satraps represented to the king the intention of compelling, by this law, all the nationalities that were subject to his kingdom to recognize his royal power and to prove their loyalty, then the propriety of this design would so clearly recommend itself to him, that without reflection he gave it the sanction of law” (Keil, p. 212).

“Such an interdict would work grave hardship upon a pious Jew such as Daniel in that, if he obeyed it, he would not be able to pray directly to God, and if he disobeyed it, he would appear to be disloyal to the king whom he faithfully and devotedly served. The conspirators had done their work well” (Young, p. 134).

**2. CALUMNY – A DECEIVING DEFAMATION . . . . . 6:10-18**

**10. Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went home. And in his upper room, with his windows open toward Jerusalem, he knelt down on his knees three times that day, and prayed and gave thanks before his God, as was his custom since early days.**

“He was not deliberately courting martyrdom or persecution, but if he had evaded the issue he would have given the appearance of trusting his God only when it was physically profitable” (Butler, p. 236).

**11. Then these men assembled and found Daniel praying and making supplica-**

***tion before his God.***

“It was their determined purpose to have Daniel put to death, and part of their conspiracy was to ‘discover’ Daniel at prayer” (Young, p. 135).

***12. And they went before the king, and spoke concerning the king’s decree: “Have you not signed a decree that every man who petitions any god or man within thirty days, except you, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions?” The king answered and said, “The thing is true, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which does not alter.”***

There is no reason to believe the king had any suspicion at this time what their design was.

***13. So they answered and said before the king, “That Daniel, who is one of the captives from Judah, does not show due regard for you, O king, or for the decree that you have signed, but makes his petition three times a day.”***

“They describe Daniel as an exile, rather than as the appointed head over the presidents and satraps, in order that, by calling to mind the fact that he is a foreigner, they may insinuate that he is politically unfaithful to Darius. Furthermore, they first state that Daniel has been unfaithful to the king and then that he has broken the interdict. The matter is thus presented in as bad a light as possible, a common trick of corrupt politicians” (Young, pp. 135-136).

“Daniel would not give precedence to any king or any king’s law over God and His law. However, it was not true that Daniel had no proper regard for the king’s authority in other realms” (Butler, p. 236).

***14. And the king, when he heard these words, was greatly displeased with himself, and set his heart on Daniel to deliver him; and he labored till the going down of the sun to deliver him.***

***Greatly displeased with himself*** – “Darius was no moron. He knew he had been tricked. He also knew he was about to lose his most efficient, trustworthy, and loyal president which did not make him happy” (Butler, p. 237).

“It is remarkable that it is not said that he was displeased with *them* for having proposed it; but it is clear that he saw that the guilt was his own for having given his assent to it, and that he had acted foolishly” (Barnes, vol. 2, p. 21).

***15. Then these men approached the king, and said to the king, “Know, O king, that it is the law of the Medes and Persians that no decree or statute which the king establishes may be changed.”***

A very discourteous reminder to the king that he is bound by his own law.

**SPECIAL NOTE:** The entire focus of verses 16-20 is on the anguish of the king, not on any physical or spiritual trauma on Daniel's part.

**16. So the king gave the command, and they brought Daniel and cast him into the den of lions. But the king spoke, saying to Daniel, "Your God, whom you serve continually, He will deliver you."**

**Den of lions** – There is no record from those times on how the den was constructed.

**17. Then a stone was brought and laid on the mouth of the den, and the king sealed it with his own signet ring and with the signets of his lords, that the purpose concerning Daniel might not be changed.**

**Then a stone was brought and laid on the mouth of the den** – "on the one hand so that Daniel could not escape from within, and on the other so that none of his friends could come and rescue him from without" (Barnes, vol. 2, p. 24).

**18. Now the king went to his palace and spent the night fasting; and no musicians were brought before him. Also his sleep went from him.**

"The Median monarch rolled in mental agony! He would hear no music and would eat no food for he had sent to his death a loyal servant and the friend of a powerful God" (McGuiggan, p. 28).

### **3. CONFIDENCE – A DELIVERER DISPATCHED . . . . . 6:19-24**

**19. Then the king arose very early in the morning and went in haste to the den of lions. 20. And when he came to the den, he cried out with a lamenting voice to Daniel. The king spoke, saying to Daniel, "Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God, whom you serve continually, been able to deliver you from the lions?"**

There is no question that the king was worried about Daniel. He knew he had made a mistake and was hoping against all odds (in his mind) that Jehovah had spared Daniel's life.

**21. Then Daniel said to the king, "O king, live forever! 22. My God sent His angel and shut the lions' mouths, so that they have not hurt me, because I was found innocent before Him; and also, O king, I have done no wrong before you."**

**Innocent** – not that he was sinless, but that he was innocent of the charges wrongly brought against him.

Daniel was innocent in two ways;

Before Jehovah, and

Before the king.

***O king, I have done no wrong before you.*** – “That is, he had in no manner violated his duty to the king; he had done nothing that tended to overthrow his government, or to spread disaffection among his subjects” (Barnes, vol. 2, p. 27).

***23. Now the king was exceedingly glad for him, and commanded that they should take Daniel up out of the den. So Daniel was taken up out of the den, and no injury whatever was found on him, because he believed in his God.***

***The king was exceedingly glad for him*** – “That he had received no hurt, and that he might be restored to his place, and be useful again in the government” (Barnes, vol. 2, p. 27).

***24. And the king gave the command, and they brought those men who had accused Daniel, and they cast them into the den of lions—they, their children, and their wives; and the lions overpowered them, and broke all their bones in pieces before they ever came to the bottom of the den.***

***Their children and wives*** – this was in accordance with Persian custom.

***The lions overpowered them*** – “As the Divine restraint furnished the protection of Daniel was withdrawn, they acted out their proper nature” (Barnes, vol. 2, p. 28).

#### **4. COMMANDMENT – A DECREE BY DARIUS . . . . . 6:25-28**

***25. Then King Darius wrote: To all peoples, nations, and languages that dwell in all the earth: Peace be multiplied to you. 26. I make a decree that in every dominion of my kingdom men must tremble and fear before the God of Daniel. For He is the living God, and steadfast forever; His kingdom is the one which shall not be destroyed, and His dominion shall endure to the end.***

Darius was still a polytheist. He merely raised Jehovah above the other gods.

He does not condemn the worship of the other gods.

This is good politics for non-believers.

***27. He delivers and rescues, and He works signs and wonders in heaven and on earth, who has delivered Daniel from the power of the lions. 28. So this Daniel prospered in the reign of Darius and in the reign of Cyrus the Persian.***

This implies Daniel was restored to his high honor and positions in the government.

**II. VISIONS: FIVE MIRACULOUS VISIONS REVEALED THROUGH DANIEL ..... Chapter 7-12**

This section of the book of Daniel is not written in chronological order. These visions are not intended to be a continuation of the narratives in chapters one through six.

**A. THE FOUR BEASTS ..... Chapter 7**

“This chapter is divided, according to its contents, into two equal portions. Verses 1-14 contain the vision, and verses 15-28 its interpretation” (Keil, p. 220).

**1. THE VISION ..... 7:1-14**

**1. In the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon, Daniel had a dream and visions of his head while on his bed. Then he wrote down the dream, telling the main facts.**

This is a good side lesson – keep a notepad handy at all times to jot down notes to remind us later of things we need to do or ideas we need to research, etc.

**2. Daniel spoke, saying, “I saw in my vision by night, and behold, the four winds of heaven were stirring up the Great Sea.**

**The Great Sea** – this is not referring to the Mediterranean Sea. It is referring to the “Sea of Humanity.”

**The four winds of heaven** – are shown as being in action simultaneously.

“It has often been observed that dreams have little regard for the laws of physics. That does not mean that wild disorder prevails in the vision but merely that the figurative mode of presentation betrays, as is always the case, some shortcoming in the figure employed and so a seeming irregularity from the literal point of view” (Leupold, p. 284).

**3. And four great beasts came up from the sea, each different from the other.**

Each of the beasts represents a kingdom of human origin. Compare Revelation 13:1.

Notice that they arise consecutively, not simultaneously.

“In their relation to one another and in their mode of acquiring power the world powers are rapacious beasts of great strength and are no longer human. As long as a nation makes no bid for imperial control it may preserve a more humanized attitude and character. As soon as it enters the lists to become a leader among the

nations, all resemblance to the finer human traits is laid aside, and the beast comes to the forefront. This flatters human vanity but little but is one of the truest facts ever revealed by the Scriptures. All subtle self-flattery of the nations to the contrary, this is still the most telling and accurate description of the outstanding trait of the nations that aim to exercise control over other nations” (Leupold, pp. 286-287).

**4. *The first was like a lion, and had eagle’s wings. I watched till its wings were plucked off; and it was lifted up from the earth and made to stand on two feet like a man, and a man’s heart was given to it.***

This first beast (lion) corresponds to the head of gold on the statue in chapter two and stands for Babylon.

***Its wings were plucked off*** – “There was some *check* put to the progress of the conqueror . . . that is, the rapidity of his conquests would cease” (Barnes, vol. 2, p. 47).

***A man’s heart was given to it*** – “Its ferocity would be tamed, and it would be characterized by comparative moderation and humanity” (Barnes, vol. 2, p. 47).

**5. *“And suddenly another beast, a second, like a bear. It was raised up on one side, and had three ribs in its mouth between its teeth. And they said thus to it: ‘Arise, devour much flesh!’***

This second beast (bear) corresponds to the chest and arms of silver on the statue in chapter two and stands for the Medo-Persian empire.

***Like a bear*** – “The characteristics of the kingdom . . . would be ferocity, roughness, fierceness in war, especially when provoked; a spirit less manly and noble than that denoted by the lion, severe in its treatment of enemies, with a mixture of fierce and savage cunning” (Barnes, vol. 2, p. 49).

***It was raised up on one side,*** – “The nation that had been in a state of repose was now preparing itself for new conquests—a state descriptive of, and in every way quite applicable to the condition of the Medo-Persian empire” (Barnes, vol. 2, p. 51).

***Three ribs*** – many commentators believe these refer to Babylon, Lydia and Egypt which fits well with the symbolism (Young, p. 145).

However - “any delineation of the ‘three ribs’ as specific empires devoured by the Medo-Persian conquest would have to be totally arbitrary since the Medo-Persian coalition conquered more than three” (Butler, p. 261).

***And they said*** – the Hebrew may be translated as “it was said.”

“The command is given by God, thus showing that Divine Providence overruled

in the affairs of the mighty human kingdom” (Young, p. 145).

**6. “After this I looked, and there was another, like a leopard, which had on its back four wings of a bird. The beast also had four heads, and dominion was given to it.**

The third beast (leopard) corresponds to the belly and sides on the statue in chapter two and stands for the Grecian empire.

“Leopards may not be quite the equal of lions and bears in point of strength, but they may be compared with them in ferocity and may excel them in swiftness and in lightness of movement” (Leupold, p. 293).

Leopards are known for their agility and intelligence.

**And dominion was given to it** – “reveals very clearly that all of Alexander’s accomplishments were providentially given to him by the Most High God” (Butler, pp. 262-263).

**7. “After this I saw in the night visions, and behold, a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, exceedingly strong. It had huge iron teeth; it was devouring, breaking in pieces, and trampling the residue with its feet. It was different from all the beasts that were before it, and it had ten horns.**

The fourth beast (dreadful and terrible and strong) corresponds to the legs and feet on the statue in chapter two and stands for the Roman empire.

This beast is not given a name from the animal kingdom because no single animal can be found which would correspond to these features.

The fact that in the vision the beasts arise one after the other indicates they arise in succession and are not on the earth at the same time.

“As a symbol, it would denote some power much more fearful and much more to be dreaded; having a wider dominion; and more stern, more oppressive in its character, more severe in its exactions, and more entirely destroying the liberty of others; advancing more by power and terror, and less by art and cunning” (Barnes, vol. 2, p. 55).

The four beasts of this chapter and what they represent:

Lion	Babylonian Empire
Bear	Medo-Persian Empire
Leopard	Grecian Empire

**Ten horns** – “The ten horns symbolize a complete, multiplicity of powerful rulers. As with the ‘three ribs’ in the bear’s mouth, should one attempt to designate specifically ten different emperors of Rome he would have to make a very arbitrary selection. The number ten symbolizes completeness” (Butler, p. 263).

“Since the number *ten* indicates completeness, we need not regard the horns as representing ten specific *contemporary* kings” (Young, p. 147).

**8. *I was considering the horns, and there was another horn, a little one, coming up among them, before whom three of the first horns were plucked out by the roots. And there, in this horn, were eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking pompous words.***

This is a vision, not a literal representation. The next verse shows this is talking about God’s absolute control of events on this earth.

By means of God’s providence all events are either directed by Him or allowed to happen by Him and He will work them to His desired end.

**9. *“I watched till thrones were put in place, and the Ancient of Days was seated; his garment was white as snow, and the hair of His head was like pure wool. His throne was a fiery flame, its wheels a burning fire;***

***Its wheels a burning fire*** – “Ancient royal thrones were sometimes represented as having wheels; and so God’s throne has them, which is to convey the impression of its not being a throne that is bound to one place. For God’s judgment, as is He Himself, is omnipresent” (Leupold, p. 302).

**10. *A fiery stream issued and came forth from before Him. A thousand thousands ministered to Him; Ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him. The court was seated, and the books were opened.***

***A thousand thousands*** – “The numbers are not to be taken as definite; they indicate rather that a vast multitude, an innumerable host, stood ready to serve the majestic Figure that was seated on the throne” (Young, p.152).

***And the books were opened*** – “The rest of the Old Testament (other than Daniel) knows only one Book (cf. Ex 32:32-33; Psa 69:28; 139:16) but in the New Testament it is books (pl.). God has not only a record of the deeds of men but a record of all who are His. To be blotted out of His book is to be lost and condemned to an eternal separation from Him unto punishment” (Butler, p. 267).

**11. *“I watched then because of the sound of the pompous words which the horn***

***was speaking; I watched till the beast was slain, and its body destroyed and given to the burning flame.***

***Because of the sound of the pompous words which the horn was speaking*** – “The ungodly power of the fourth beast reached its climax in the blaspheming horn; in this horn, therefore, the beast is slain and destroyed, while its body is given to the burning” (Keil, p. 232).

***The burning flame*** – “Since it is the destruction of empires and not of individuals as such which is described, it is probable that the primary reference is not to the fire of hell” (Young, p. 153).

“It is to be remembered that all this is *symbol*, and no part should be taken literally more than another, nor is it congruous to suppose there would be a literal consuming of *fire* in the case any more than that there would be literally a *beast*, or ten horns, or a little horn” (Barnes, vol. 2, p. 62).

***12. As for the rest of the beasts, they had their dominion taken away, yet their lives were prolonged for a season and a time.***

“The nations referred to by these first three beasts were still in being, and could be recognized as nations, in their boundaries, or customs, or languages; but that the *power* which they had wielded had passed into other hands” (Barnes, vol. 2, p. 62).

All four of these kingdoms came into existence, prospered and were defeated under the providence of God. The kingdoms could only do what God, in His providence, allowed them to do.

***13. “I was watching in the night visions, and behold, One like the Son of Man, coming with the clouds of heaven! He came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought Him near before Him.***

***Night visions*** – This is not to be regarded as a fourth vision, but as the climax of the one vision. The judgment which Daniel beheld does not end in the destruction of the world-powers. It is continued in the foundation of the kingdom of God by the Son of Man (Young, p. 154).

***The Son of Man*** – “In Ezekiel this designation is commonly applied to the prophet himself. But here, the language is employed to signify a new kingdom and one of entirely different character from that represented by the beasts” (Young, p. 154).

The phrase here refers to the Messiah. Notice how the Lord applies this designation to Himself (Mt 25:31; Mk 10:45; Lk 17:24, etc.).

***They brought Him near before Him*** – The idea is that He was brought near or presented. It is a royal audience. Those who bring Him near are evidently angels

(ministering spirits) (Young, p. 156).

**14. Then to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom the one which shall not be destroyed.**

**Dominion** – rule or authority.

There are two views on how this prophecy will be fulfilled here on earth –

- 1) The Son of God, the Messiah, will reign personally and physically here on the earth, or
- 2) There will be a spiritual reign here on earth by the Son of God, the Messiah.

View number two is the correct view!

A basic tenant of theory number one is that Jesus will come back to this earth and rule both physically and spiritually from Jerusalem.

However, the scriptures prove clearly that Jesus will never return to this earth again to rule in Jerusalem and prosper.

The first thing we need to understand is that there is one king in the lineage of Jesus who is called by three different names in the Bible. The names for this one man are Coniah, Jechoniah and Jehoiachin. (Go to Strong’s Concordance or any Bible dictionary to verify this.)

The second thing is that in Jeremiah 22:24-30 God tells us He is very dissatisfied with king Coniah and no descendant of his will ever rule in Jerusalem and prosper.

In Matthew 1:1-16 (especially verse 12) we are told Jesus is a descendant of king Coniah (Jeconiah, Jehoiachin).

Therefore, Jesus can never return to this earth, then rule in Jerusalem and prosper.

**2. THE INTERPRETATION ..... 7:15-28**

**15. “I, Daniel, was grieved in my spirit within my body, and the visions of my head troubled me.**

**I, Daniel, was grieved** – “This was probably in part because he did not fully understand the meaning of the vision, and partly on account of the fearful and momentous nature of that which was indicated by it” (Barnes, vol. 2, p. 67).

***In my spirit within my body*** – “The words in the original are uncommonly emphatic. *My spirit was grieved, or sickened, within its sheath or scabbard.* Which I think proves, 1. That the human *spirit* is different from the *body*. 2. That it has a proper subsistence independently of the body, which is only its *sheath* for a certain time. 3. That the spirit may exist independently of the body, as the *sword* does independently of its *sheath*” (Clarke, p. 593).

**16. *I came near to one of those who stood by, and asked him the truth of all this. So he told me and made known to me the interpretation of these things: 17. ‘Those great beasts, which are four, are four kings which arise out of the earth.***

***Kings*** = kingdoms.

**18. *But the saints of the Most High shall receive the kingdom, and possess the kingdom forever, even forever and ever.’***

***The saints*** – the saints are the true members of the covenant nation and the congregation of the New Covenant, consisting of the faithful coming from all nations according to verse fourteen.

***Shall receive*** – from the Son of Man. They are not to establish or found a kingdom on their own right. This is the Lord’s kingdom and those established by men will be destroyed in the end and their member’s souls will be lost.

“It is significant that these saints of God are said to ‘obtain’ [receive] the kingdom. It is bestowed by Him whose it is to give it. They, on their part, have not striven after dominion as the rulers of this world do” (Leupold, p. 318).

***And possess the kingdom forever, even forever and ever*** – “It is not necessary to interpret this as meaning that there would be literally an eternal kingdom on this earth, for it is everywhere taught in the Scriptures that the present order of things will come to a close” (Barnes, vol. 2, p. 69).

**19. *“Then I wished to know the truth about the fourth beast, which was different from all the others, exceedingly dreadful, with its teeth of iron and its nails of bronze, which devoured, broke in pieces, and trampled the residue with its feet;***

***The truth*** – this phrase is in opposition to incomprehension, not accuracy. What had been shown in symbolic form concerning the fourth beast was absolutely accurate, but its meaning was not understood (Butler, p. 273).

**20. *and the ten horns that were on its head, and the other horn which came up, before which three fell, namely, that horn which had eyes and a mouth which spoke pompous words, whose appearance was greater than his fellows.***

***Whose appearance was greater than his fellows*** – refers to the “other horns.”

**21. “I was watching; and the same horn was making war against the saints, and prevailing against them, 22. until the Ancient of Days came, and a judgment was made in favor of the saints of the Most High, and the time came for the saints to possess the kingdom.**

***Ancient of Days*** – God is still in control.

**23. “Thus he said: ‘The fourth beast shall be a fourth kingdom on earth, which shall be different from all other kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, trample it and break it in pieces.**

***Which shall be different*** – different in its severity and ruthlessness.

**24. The ten horns are ten kings who shall arise from this kingdom. And another shall rise after them; he shall be different from the first ones, and shall subdue three kings.**

“The horns are not represented as arising consecutively; they are simultaneously upon the head of the beast. They do not, therefore, aim to picture any ten consecutive kings or kingdoms that grew out of the Roman Empire” (Leupold, p. 322).

This fourth beast-kingdom will be world-wide and will rule savagely. However, it will not be able to hold itself together. Wherever there is evil there is no lasting cohesion. This is true whether we are talking about kingdoms or small neighborhood organizations.

All kingdoms have within themselves the seeds of self-destruction.

**25. He shall speak pompous words against the Most High, shall persecute the saints of the Most High, and shall intend to change times and law. Then the saints shall be given into his hand for a time and times and half a time.**

***Time and times and half a time*** – again, symbolic of an incomplete or shortened period of time.

**26. ‘But the court shall be seated, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and destroy it forever. 27. Then the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people, the saints of the Most High. His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey Him.’**

Again, God is in control –

God will remove the worldwide kingdoms, but also establish His own kingdom.

His kingdom will belong to His saints and it will be a spiritual kingdom.

His kingdom will never come to an end.

The saints will come out of all kingdoms and serve Jehovah.

**28. “This is the end of the account. As for me, Daniel, my thoughts greatly troubled me, and my countenance changed; but I kept the matter in my heart.”**

Daniel did not understand this but he kept the truth in his heart.

## **B. THE RAM AND THE HE-GOAT . . . . . Chapter 8**

### **1. THE VISION . . . . . 8:1-14**

**1. In the third year of the reign of King Belshazzar a vision appeared to me—to me, Daniel—after the one that appeared to me the first time.**

This vision occurred a short time prior to the fatal night of chapter five.

**2. I saw in the vision, and it so happened while I was looking, that I was in Shushan, the citadel, which is in the province of Elam; and I saw in the vision that I was by the River Ulai.**

**Shushan, the citadel** – “This was later to become the seat, or at least the summer capital, of the Persian Empire. When the vision appeared to Daniel, nothing concerning the future importance of this site was known” (Leupold, p. 335).

“Archeological effort in the last part of the 1880’s uncovered in Shushan the great palace of King Xerxes (486-465 B.C.) in which Queen Esther lived” (Butler, p. 295).

Xerxes was also known as Ahasuerus. His name meant “ruling over heroes” or “rules over men.” (Yamauchi, p. 187).

**3. Then I lifted my eyes and saw, and there, standing beside the river, was a ram which had two horns, and the two horns were high; but one was higher than the other, and the higher one came up last.**

**Two horns** – these represent the Medes and the Persians. The horn which grew up higher represents the Persians who, under Cyrus, were given the ascendancy over the Medes.

Cyrus was the founder of the Medo-Persian empire. He was the son of Cambyses, king of Persia: and grandson of Astyages, king of Media, by his

daughter Mandane, who had been given in marriage to Cambyses. Cyrus marrying Roxana, daughter and only child of his uncle Cyaxares, called in scripture Ahasuerus, succeeded to both crowns, and thus united Media and Persia (Clarke, p. 596).

“Cyrus began his thirty-year reign over the Persians around 559” (Yamauchi, p. 80).

**4. I saw the ram pushing westward, northward, and southward, so that no animal could withstand him; nor was there any that could deliver from his hand, but he did according to his will and became great.**

“The directions are merely intended to indicate the directions in which the Persian Empire made her greatest conquests; to the west, Babylonia, Syria, and Asia Minor, to the north, Armenia and the regions about the Caspian Sea, to the south, Egypt, Ethiopia, etc.” (Young, p. 168).

**5. And as I was considering, suddenly a male goat came from the west, across the surface of the whole earth, without touching the ground; and the goat had a notable horn between his eyes.**

**A male goat** – “The goat represented the Macedonian power and all this power was concentrated in the person of Alexander—undoubtedly denoted by the single horn—as if all the power of Greece was concentrated in him” (Barnes, vol. 2, p. 106).

**Without touching the ground** – this simply represents the speed of its conquests.

**6. Then he came to the ram that had two horns, which I had seen standing beside the river, and ran at him with furious power.**

“In the vision this occurs by the river Ulai, the seat of the ram’s power, and serves merely to indicate the complete subjugation and downfall of Persia” (Young, p. 168).

**7. And I saw him confronting the ram; he was moved with rage against him, attacked the ram, and broke his two horns. There was no power in the ram to withstand him, but he cast him down to the ground and trampled him; and there was no one that could deliver the ram from his hand.**

**Broke his two horns** – “refers to the breaking up of the empire as a whole. For, since horns typify strength, this breaking of the horns refers to the crushing of the Persian strength” (Leupold, p. 342).

**8. Therefore the male goat grew very great; but when he became strong, the large horn was broken, and in place of it four notable ones came up toward the four winds of heaven.**

**Four notable ones** – “these four horns represent four kingdoms into which Alexander’s empire was broken up. These were:

- 1) Macedonia under Cassander,
- 2) Thrace and Asia Minor under Lysimachus,
- 3) Syria under Seleucus and
- 4) Egypt under Ptolemy.

“Originally there were five of the Diadochi, but Antigonus was soon overthrown, so that in reality there became four kingdoms” (Young, p. 169).

**Four winds** – these four kingdoms correspond to the four points of the compass indicating that these kingdoms were dispersed to the four winds.

**9. And out of one of them came a little horn which grew exceedingly great toward the south, toward the east, and toward the Glorious Land.**

This shows that the Glorious Land (Israel) will still be in existence. So, even after the exile ends, and many will return to Israel, this does not mean that the Kingdom of God will immediately appear.

**10. And it grew up to the host of heaven; and it cast down some of the host and some of the stars to the ground, and trampled them.**

“In the vision the prophet saw the horn actually raise itself against the stars and cast some of them to earth. According to v. 24 this meant that some of the holy people would be destroyed. That stars should signify God’s holy people is not strange when one considers as a background the words that were spoken to Abraham concerning the numerical increase of the people of God, Gen 15:5; 22:17” (Leupold, p. 346).

“Great numbers of the people of Israel consorted with Antiochus and welcomed his Hellenization of their culture. Many of them were given over to transgression. God permitted it – He did not cause it! The same principle is evident here as is announced in 2 Thessalonians 2:11-12. If men wish to be deluded it is in the economy of God’s creating them as free, moral agents that they shall be permitted to be so deluded. If, however they wish to know the truth and love the truth, God will always make it possible that they shall have the opportunity to know it and practice it” (Butler, pp. 310-311).

Compare Romans 8:28ff.

**11. He even exalted himself as high as the Prince of the host; and by him the daily**

***sacrifices were taken away, and the place of His sanctuary was cast down.***

***Exalted himself as high as the Prince of the host*** – this proud ruler sought to make himself equal to Jehovah.

***Daily sacrifices*** – more than likely this refers to all sacrifices and works done regularly in the temple.

**12. *Because of transgression, an army was given over to the horn to oppose the daily sacrifices; and he cast truth down to the ground. He did all this and prospered.***

***Because of transgression*** – “All of this was on account of the transgression of the people, or on account of abounding iniquity. God gave up the people, and their temple, and their sacrifices, into the hands of Antiochus, on account of the prevailing iniquity” (Barnes, vol. 2, p. 112).

***He cast truth down to the ground*** – “Every copy of Jewish scriptures that could be found was burned and many faithful Jews were slain” (Butler, p. 311).

**13. *Then I heard a holy one speaking; and another holy one said to that certain one who was speaking, “How long will the vision be, concerning the daily sacrifices and the transgression of desolation, the giving of both the sanctuary and the host to be trampled underfoot?”***

***A holy one speaking; and another holy one*** – these are referring to angels.

***And another holy one*** – “We may conclude . . . that one angel has more knowledge than another, or that things are communicated to some which are not to others” (Barnes, vol. 2, p. 113).

***The host*** – the Jews, who were the people of God.

**14. *And he said to me, “For two thousand three hundred days; then the sanctuary shall be cleansed.”***

“The oppression prophesied of in this chapter would visit the people of Israel at not to distant a time; and its commencement as well as its termination, announced by God beforehand, was fitted to strengthen believers in the faith of the truth and fidelity of God for the time of the great tribulation of the end, the duration of which God the Lord indeed determined accurately and firmly beforehand, but according to a measure of time whose extent men cannot calculate in advance” (Keil, p. 308).

“The 2,300 figure tells us this is rather a long period, yet the fact that it is calculated in days means it is a definitely limited one” (Davis, p. 109).

It is still a period of suffering for God's people.

## 2. THE INTERPRETATION ..... 8:15-27

**15. Then it happened, when I, Daniel, had seen the vision and was seeking the meaning, that suddenly there stood before me one having the appearance of a man. 16. And I heard a man's voice between the banks of the Ulai, who called, and said, "Gabriel, make this man understand the vision."**

**Between the banks** – in other words over the river itself.

**Gabriel** – He is mentioned only as bearing messages to Daniel, to Zacharias, and to Mary.

Gabriel is not an archangel!

There is only one archangel named in the Bible and that is Michael (Jude 9).

To say there is more than one archangel is to add to the word of God (Gal 1:6-9; Rev 22:18; Prov 30:6; Deut 4:2; 12:32; Jude 3).

**17. So he came near where I stood, and when he came I was afraid and fell on my face; but he said to me, "Understand, son of man, that the vision refers to the time of the end."**

**Time of the end** – it refers to the end of the period when afflictions and indignations were permitted on Israel. It is the end of the Old Testament period. It is not the end of all time at the second coming of our Lord.

**18. Now, as he was speaking with me, I was in a deep sleep with my face to the ground; but he touched me, and stood me upright. 19. And he said, "Look, I am making known to you what shall happen in the latter time of the indignation; for at the appointed time the end shall be."**

**The latter time of the indignation** – the Jews are being told that the present divine wrath (indignation) will not last forever.

**Indignation** – "is a technical term used by the prophets to designate the wrath of God and His displeasure executed in giving the covenant people over to captivity, or to oppression by their pagan enemies" (Butler, p. 316).

**20. The ram which you saw, having the two horns—they are the kings of Media and Persia. 21. And the male goat is the kingdom of Greece. The large horn that is between its eyes is the first king.**

"This is one of the instances in the Scriptures in which symbols are explained.

There can be no doubt, therefore, as to the meaning” (Barnes, vol. 2, p. 119).

**22. As for the broken horn and the four that stood up in its place, four kingdoms shall arise out of that nation, but not with its power. 23. “And in the latter time of their kingdom, when the transgressors have reached their fullness, a king shall arise, having fierce features, who understands sinister schemes.**

**Transgressors** – “The transgressors are not the heathen, but the apostate Jews who introduced heathen rites among the Jews and built in Jerusalem a heathen gymnasium for their games” (Young, p. 179).

**Have reached their fullness** – The idea is, that there is a certain measure or amount of sin within a nation which can be tolerated, but beyond that the Divine compassion cannot go (Barnes, vol. 2, p. 120).

“This is true, doubtless, of individuals and nations, and this period had arrived in regard to the Jews when Antiochus was permitted to lay their temple, city, and country waste” (Barnes, vol. 2, p. 120).

Compare with the Amorites in Genesis 12.

**Fierce features** – a hard, determined, unyielding and adamant king.

**Who understands sinister schemes** – one who habitually practices deceit and is a hypocrite being able to disguise his true intents with ambiguous words and phrases.

This king will be a master schemer, but also one who cannot be easily fooled himself.

This is not a complement! It exposes his evil character.

This has happened down through history over and over and in many countries.

**24. His power shall be mighty, but not by his own power; he shall destroy fearfully, and shall prosper and thrive; he shall destroy the mighty, and also the holy people.**

**But not by his own power** – Antiochus will not accomplish all of this by his own power, but the power which God gives to him.

**25. “Through his cunning he shall cause deceit to prosper under his rule; and he shall exalt himself in his heart. He shall destroy many in their prosperity. He shall even rise against the Prince of princes; but he shall be broken without human means.**

**He shall cause deceit to prosper under his rule** – “It will seem as if evil and deceit are about to take over the whole world when this king reigns. Whatever he undertakes will prosper (for a while). He will have power and cunning to do as he pleases, especially against his immediate political opponents and against the saints of God in Palestine” (Butler, p. 318).

**He shall destroy many in their prosperity** – “Here the phrase seems to mean ‘in the midst of security;’ that is, while they were at ease, and regarded themselves as in a state of safety, he would come suddenly and unexpectedly upon them, and destroy them. He would make sudden war on them, invading their territories, so that they would have no opportunity to make preparation to meet him” (Barnes, vol. 2, p. 121).

**Prince of princes** – Jehovah.

**Without human means** – he has raised up himself against God, therefore God Himself will break him.

Today, as then, because of the sins of the saints, God has allowed many who are against Him to become powerful and persecute Christ’s church.

When that happens we must repent of our sins and return to the old paths given to us in the New Testament. This is the only way we can remain in God’s good graces.

Not all who call themselves Christian are Christians according to the New Testament pattern (Rom 9:6). Personal faith in Jesus and obedience to Him is the only way to heaven!

**26. “And the vision of the evenings and mornings which was told is true; therefore seal up the vision, for it refers to many days in the future.”**

**Is true** – “This was said by the angel, giving thus to Daniel the assurance that what he had seen (vers. 9-14) was no illusion, but would certainly come to pass” (Barnes, vol. 2, p. 122).

**Seal up the vision** – this does not mean that he was to keep it a secret, but that he should preserve it for future generations.

For those who live in these days in the future these verses would bring encouragement in that they would know these evil times would be brought to a close by Jehovah.

God brought these days of punishment on them and only He knows when the punishment has been sufficient and when to bring these days to an end.

And God, through His omniscience, has already determined when this will be. Therefore the Jews would be comforted in knowing an end is coming and will not fail.

**27. And I, Daniel, fainted and was sick for days; afterward I arose and went about the king's business. I was astonished by the vision, but no one understood it.**

“In all such revelations of the future, there must be much in detail which is not fully understood” (Barnes, vol. 2, p. 123).

We can see from Daniel's reaction why God does not reveal any more of the future than He already has. We would more than likely be truly disturbed and grieved because of that knowledge.

### C. THE SEVENTY SEVENS (HEPTADS) . . . . . Chapter 9

#### 1. REALIZATION OF DANIEL . . . . . 9:1-2

**1. In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of the lineage of the Medes, who was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans— 2. in the first year of his reign I, Daniel, understood by the books the number of the years specified by the word of the LORD through Jeremiah the prophet, that He would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem.**

**Darius** – this king was also known as Cyaxares II . . . he was the immediate successor of Belshazzar.

He had a reign lasting for thirty-six years. He died in November 486 B.C. after a month long illness at the age of sixty-four (Yamauchi, p. 182).

**The son of Ahasuerus** – or the son of Astyages.

It was not unusual for kings or rulers to be known by two or more names. Therefore, one writer might call them by one name and another by another name and both be correct.

**Books** – it is best to understand this word in its simplest sense as referring to a group of writings in which the prophecies of Jeremiah were found.

“Probably the term applies broadly to the Scriptures, those sacred books which were recognized as authoritative” (Young, p. 183).

There is nothing at all in this phrase which lends support to the idea that the canon of the Old Testament was settled and closed.

If this could be proved by liberal commentators it would mean that the book

of Daniel was not written until as late as 200 B.C. This would remove the book from being a prophecy and would make it a history book written after the facts related in the book.

***The number of the years specified by the word of the LORD through Jeremiah the prophet, that He would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem*** – “This confession of sin, and the entreaty for mercy, show that the people, as a whole, were not in that spiritual condition in which they might expect the fulfillment of that promise of the Lord spoken by Jeremiah (ch. xxix. 12 ff.): ‘Ye shall seek me and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart; and I will be found of you, and will turn away your captivity,’ etc.” (Keil, p. 326).

## **2. REQUEST OF DANIEL . . . . . 9:3-19**

Israel’s spiritual unreadiness stands in the way of God fulfilling the promise He made through Jeremiah. Israel is still mostly impenitent.

“Very significant is Daniel’s attitude in the matter of dealing with the sins of the nation: they are, as it were, one unit, one mass of guilt, to which the fathers contributed their part and Daniel and his contemporaries their own part. But when confession is made, the whole mass must be confessed” (Leupold, pp. 381-382).

### **3. Then I set my face toward the Lord God to make request by prayer and supplications, with fasting, sackcloth, and ashes.**

Daniel’s prayer falls into two parts:

- 1) Confession of the sin and guilt of God’s people, and
- 2) A plea for mercy.

### **4. And I prayed to the LORD my God, and made confession, and said, “O Lord, great and awesome God, who keeps His covenant and mercy with those who love Him, and with those who keep His commandments,**

***And made confession*** – Daniel began his prayer acknowledging that all they had suffered was deserved.

“If we attempt to vindicate and justify ourselves, we can have no hope that the judgment will be averted” (Barnes, vol. 2, p. 129).

***Who keeps His covenant and mercy with those who love Him*** – Daniel appeals to the mercy of God who would fulfill His covenant with them if they were penitent.

### **5. we have sinned and committed iniquity, we have done wickedly and rebelled, even by departing from Your precepts and Your judgments.**

**We have sinned** – “In all of this confession of sin, Daniel who had lived most of his life in Babylon and was now an old man, by using the pronoun we, identified himself with his people” (Young, p. 185).

**Departing from Your precepts and Your judgments** – here Daniel names the reason for all of Israel’s sins, they had departed from God’s word!

This remains true today whether as individuals or groups denominating ourselves as different from God’s word!

**6. Neither have we heeded Your servants the prophets, who spoke in Your name to our kings and our princes, to our fathers and all the people of the land.**

**Who spoke** – “These were true prophets who clearly indicated that they were from God. They did not carry on their work in a corner, but preached to all the people, high and low. Hence, the enormity of the nation’s sin. All, without exception, are guilty” (Young, p. 186).

**Kings . . . princes . . . our fathers . . . all the people** – the godless example of preceding generations promoted further godliness in their descendants.

**7. O Lord, righteousness belongs to You, but to us shame of face, as it is this day—to the men of Judah, to the inhabitants of Jerusalem and all Israel, those near and those far off in all the countries to which You have driven them, because of the unfaithfulness which they have committed against You.**

**All Israel** – “The entire nation (northern and southern kingdom alike) has been guilty of faithless dealing toward God” (Young, p. 186).

No matter whether they lived at home in Jerusalem or Judah, they were just as guilty as those who were dispersed among the nations.

The sins of the nation rested on them all, they were all guilty.

**8. “O Lord, to us belongs shame of face, to our kings, our princes, and our fathers, because we have sinned against You. 9. To the Lord our God belong mercy and forgiveness, though we have rebelled against Him. 10. We have not obeyed the voice of the LORD our God, to walk in His laws, which He set before us by His servants the prophets.**

The free and unforced admission of sin is a sign of sincere deep repentance.

**11. Yes, all Israel has transgressed Your law, and has departed so as not to obey Your voice; therefore the curse and the oath written in the Law of Moses the servant of God have been poured out on us, because we have sinned against**

**Him.**

Israel knew from God's written word what the consequences of sin would be. Therefore, they are totally without excuse in their sins and deserved their punishment.

**12. And He has confirmed His words, which He spoke against us and against our judges who judged us, by bringing upon us a great disaster; for under the whole heaven such has never been done as what has been done to Jerusalem.**

**He has confirmed His words** – “Nothing is more certain than that God will ‘confirm’ all the words that he has ever spoken, and that no sinner can hope to escape on the ground that God will be found to be false to his threatenings, or that he has forgotten them, or that he is indifferent to them” (Barnes, vol. 2, pp. 132-133).

**13. “As it is written in the Law of Moses, all this disaster has come upon us; yet we have not made our prayer before the LORD our God, that we might turn from our iniquities and understand Your truth.**

**Your truth** – “The truth of God is His plan of salvation revealed in His word, according to which the sinner can only attain to happiness and salvation by turning to God and obeying His commands” (Keil, p. 332).

Faith and obedience has always been God's plan of salvation!

**14. Therefore the LORD has kept the disaster in mind, and brought it upon us; for the LORD our God is righteous in all the works which He does, though we have not obeyed His voice.**

**The LORD has kept the disaster in mind** – “The practical truth taught here—and it is one of great importance to sinners—is, that God is not inattentive to their conduct, though he may seem to be, and that in due time he will show that he has kept an unslumbering eye upon them” (Barnes, vol. 2, p. 133).

**We have not obeyed His voice** – “Daniel seems to be saying that though Israel has gone through the ravages of God's curse, the people remain unchanged, unbroken, unrepentant . . . what good will it do to have a people back in the land with still no sense of their sin, and no exercise in repentance? Who have never been crushed in spirit over their idolatry . . . a new spirit will produce a new sadness that mourns and agonizes over sin” (Davis, pp. 118-119).

**15. And now, O Lord our God, who brought Your people out of the land of Egypt with a mighty hand, and made Yourself a name, as it is this day—we have sinned, we have done wickedly!**

“The thought implied is: He who did mighty works can still do them” (Leupold, p.

391).

It was this act of redemption that set apart Jehovah from false gods, it gave Him a “name” as a covenant God of deliverance.

**16. “O Lord, according to all Your righteousness, I pray, let Your anger and Your fury be turned away from Your city Jerusalem, Your holy mountain; because for our sins, and for the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem and Your people are a reproach to all those around us.**

“Jerusalem should have been the mount unto which all nations would flow, and Israel should have been a light unto the Gentiles, but because of the people’s sins, Jerusalem and Israel have become a reproach” (Young, p. 188).

What about today in the Church which belongs to Christ?

**17. Now therefore, our God, hear the prayer of Your servant, and his supplications, and for the Lord’s sake cause Your face to shine on Your sanctuary, which is desolate.**

**For the Lord’s sake** – “That is, that he would be propitious for his own sake; to wit, that his glory might be promoted; that his excellent character might be displayed; that his mercy and compassion might be shown” (Barnes, vol. 2, p. 135)

**18. O my God, incline Your ear and hear; open Your eyes and see our desolations, and the city which is called by Your name; for we do not present our supplications before You because of our righteous deeds, but because of Your great mercies.**

**The city which is called by Your name** – “The city had been consecrated to God, and was called his—the city of Jehovah. It was known as the place of his sanctuary—the city where his worship was celebrated, and which was regarded as his peculiar dwelling-place on earth” (Barnes, vol. 2, p. 135).

**19. O Lord, hear! O Lord, forgive! O Lord, listen and act! Do not delay for Your own sake, my God, for Your city and Your people are called by Your name.”**

**O Lord, hear! O Lord, forgive! O Lord, listen and act** – This is not vain repetition, for its force is not in the words employed, but in the manifest fervor, earnestness, and sincerity of spirit which pervade the pleading (Barnes, vol. 2, p. 135).

**For Your own sake** – “This is the key phrase of the entire second half of Daniel’s beautiful prayer. The deep humiliation and concern for God’s glory must serve as a model for the attitude in all true prayer” (Butler, p. 339).

**SPECIAL NOTE:** Daniel is now pleading for God to restore His reputation. It is as if

God had “ruined” His reputation when He “gave” Judah’s king and the temple vessels into the hands of Nebuchadnezzar. In the world’s eyes God had just become another god in the pantheon of gods. Daniel is pleading for God to restore His own reputation and “name” (Davis, p. 120).

**3. RESPONSE BY GABRIEL . . . . . 9:20-23**

***20. Now while I was speaking, praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my supplication before the LORD my God for the holy mountain of my God,***

Notice that Daniel prays for himself first in order that he will be cleansed and be acceptable as a speaker for and a representative of others.

Today, all over the world the restored Church of Christ has to endure pressures from rulers and leaders who are not members of the Church, but, at the same time, apathy and apostasy eat at her from within. The true Church needs the prayers of righteous men and women just as much today as Israel did in Daniel’s time!

***21. yes, while I was speaking in prayer, the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, reached me about the time of the evening offering. 22. And he informed me, and talked with me, and said, “O Daniel, I have now come forth to give you skill to understand. 23. At the beginning of your supplications the command went out, and I have come to tell you, for you are greatly beloved; therefore consider the matter, and understand the vision:***

Gabriel was not speaking to Daniel in a vision here, but while Daniel was in the state of natural consciousness.

***At the beginning of your supplications the command went out*** – “The angel reported that God’s decree to accomplish what Daniel was praying for went forth at the very moment Daniel opened his mouth and began to pray! God knows what we have need of before we ask it” (Butler, p. 343).

“To understand this in a manner befitting God and angels we should do well to suppose that, as soon as he was sent, the angel was present with Daniel, where he waited till Daniel had finished his prayer and then ‘touched’ him to secure his attention and, perhaps, to strengthen him. Angels are not hampered by the laws that condition the existence of material beings” (Leupold, pp. 402-403).

**4. REVELATION OF GOD . . . . . 9:24-27**

Some scholars have called the history of exegesis on the seventy sevens (heptads or weeks) of Daniel the “Dismal Swamp” of Old Testament criticism.

“Even though the seventy years of the exile (9:2) are coming to a close, Yahweh’s people face ‘seventy sevens.’ Clearly, then, the end of the exile will not usher in any full or final restoration. In their overall context, verses 24-27 seem to say to Israel: The kingdom of God will *not* immediately appear and you must prepare for ‘a long obedience in the same direction’” (Davis, p. 129).

**SPECIAL NOTE:** A review of the phrase “seventy weeks,” or more properly “seventy sevens.”

- A. The “seventy sevens (weeks)” defined.
  1. The literal rendering is “sevens seventy.”
    - a. “Sevens” is most often translated as “weeks” in this book.
    - b. The phrase “sevens” is placed first for emphasis sake.
    - c. Paraphrase: “Sevens - and in fact seventy of them...”
  2. The phrase “sevens” here occurs in the masculine plural (10:2-3 cf. Gen 29:27).
    - a. It usually appears in the feminine plural.
    - b. The reason for using the masculine plural may be that Daniel deliberately desired to point out that the word “sevens” was being used in an unusual sense.
    - c. The word means “divided into sevens” and in some other passages signifies the most common of such divisions e.g. the ordinary week of seven days (Gen 29:27; Dan 10:2-3).
  3. The full expression “seventy sevens” is known as an “hebdomad.”
    - a. The Greek “hepta” (seven) and “hebdomos” (seventh) give the definition, i.e. “a group of seven” (cf. Lev 26; Mt 18:22).
    - b. Hence, the expression “divided into sevens.”
  4. The expression itself gives no intimation as to the length of time intended. Therefore we must ask, “how long is the “seven(s)?”
    - a. The length cannot be determined by the word itself, but only by other considerations.
    - b. That a literal “490 days” is not intended is obvious. How would 490

days meet the needs of this prophecy under any view-point?!

c. There does seem to be a reference to the “years” of Jeremiah in Daniel 9:1-2.

(1) Most commentators believe the expression means a “week of seven years duration.” The most convincing argument is this appeal to the years of Jeremiah.

(2) Hence the total duration would be “490 years.”

(3) However, there is no actual or real support by appealing to Jeremiah.

(a) Just to appeal to the “seventy years” in Jeremiah does not mean that “seventy sevens” means “seventy weeks of years” here in Daniel.

(b) There is no satisfactory proof to support a “week-year” idea. The “Sabbatical years” of 2 Chronicles 36:21 cannot be used, for they are called “years” and not “weeks” (sevens).

(c) Therefore, the “sevens” are not to be expected to mean “sevens of years” because:

[1] The signification “weeks of years” is not found in the Old Testament.

[2] This passage (Dan 9:24-27) contains no indication that the “sevens” are “seven years.”

[3] The total of 490 years does not strictly fit the absolute needs of the prophecy.

If it did the actual time would have been 490 years – but it was not.

[4] It is questionable that, in this passage, a precise and absolute chronological reckoning is to be expected.

d. The expression therefore must be referring to “an intentionally indefinite designation of a period of time measured by the number seven, whose chronological duration must be determined on other grounds” (Keil, p. 339).

(1) “Seven times (heptads - weeks)” is an indefinite number, or time,

such as “sevenfold,” “seven times,” “seven periods.”

- (2) These are seventy periods in God’s mind, not ours!
- (3) Any one of these periods of seven may not equal any other of these periods of seven.
- (4) Each period of seven is a “complete period of time,” a “full period of time” regardless of the amount of earthly time involved in each period of seven.
- (5) This chronological duration will be brought out in the exposition of the text.
- (6) It should be kept in mind that the emphasis of the passage is not an exegesis of the “sevens” themselves but the particular events that would transpire during that period.
- (7) Again, it should be noted that the expression “seventy weeks (sevens)” is to be regarded as a complete unit.
  - (a) The opening phrase, “seventy sevens are decreed” shows this is so.
  - (b) Therefore the phrase is to be taken in a “collective sense.”

[1] Paraphrase: “A period of sevens - even seventy of them - is decreed.”

[2] The seventy sevens are regarded collectively and as one unit.

#### B. The “seventy weeks (sevens)” purpose.

1. The purpose of the decreed seventy sevens is seen in verse 24:
  - a. The purpose of the decree has reference to Daniel’s people (“thy people”) and Jerusalem (“thy holy city”). Notice his prayer (9:3ff.).
  - b. Daniel was in prayer regarding this matter when Gabriel appeared and informed him Israel’s restoration will not be complete until she goes through another seventy periods of seven.
  - c. The detailed purpose for decreeing the seventy sevens is seen in the six-fold results.

2. The purposed results:
  - a. To finish transgression,
  - b. To make an end of sins,
  - c. To make reconciliation for iniquities,
  - d. To bring in everlasting righteousness,
  - e. To seal up vision and prophecy and
  - f. To anoint the most holy.

Conclusions:

1. The Hebrew language here refers to typical units of seven quite independent of the calendar week. This also told them that none of that present generation would live to experience its end.
2. “The pile-up of sin-terms in Daniel 9:24 is probably not meant to focus on their individual nuances, but to suggest that God intends to deal finally and fully with sin in *all* its guises” (Davis, p. 129).
3. It is God who has decreed (lit. “cut” or “determined”) this period of time.
4. It is for the accomplishing of His redemptive purposes: i.e. a period of seventy sevens has been determined for this accomplishment.
5. It refers primarily to Israel after the flesh, but the passage being Messianic removes any restriction or limitation to “Israel only” (see Rom cf. Eph 2:14-16) and also applies to all who will benefit from these things, i.e. the true people of God (Jews and Gentiles); the true “Israel of God,” the church (Gal 6:16).
6. It means that the things described (i.e. the six-fold accomplishment) are to occur within the “seventy sevens” and not after the period. Verse 24 shows the accomplishment of these things are before the expiration of the collective period, i.e. “seventy sevens”).

(The basis of this review of the “seventy weeks comes from Chamberlin, pp. 122-125).

Young makes this statement regarding the seventy sevens – “in the expression itself there is no intimation as to the length of time intended.” Then he asks the question – “how long, then, is the seven?” – and gives no specific answer (p. 195).

“Seventy sevens (weeks)” is symbolic language and there is no definite answer as to the exact amount of time indicated by God because we do not have a “thus says the Lord” on the subject from Him.

**24. “Seventy weeks are determined for your people and for your holy city, to finish the transgression, to make an end of sins, to make reconciliation for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy, and to anoint the Most Holy.**

**Seventy weeks are determined** – “shows that the phrase is to be taken in a collective sense. We might paraphrase: ‘A period of sevens—even 70 of them—is decreed.’ The 70 sevens are thus regarded as a unit” (Young, pp. 196-197).

The seventy sevens are decreed for the purpose of accomplishing six things. There are two groups of three which make up the six things which were to be accomplished.

They are:

NEGATIVE

POSITIVE

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1. To finish the transgression         | 4. To bring in everlasting righteousness |
| 2. To make an end to sins              | 5. To seal up vision and prophecy        |
| 3. To make reconciliation for iniquity | 6. To anoint the Most Holy               |

These six points reviewed.

A. Negative accomplishments:

1. “To finish the transgression” (i.e. for restraining the transgression or possibly “shutting in” denoting “forgiveness”) (cf. Dan 9:5,7,8,9,10,11,14,15,16,18-20).
  - a. “Transgression” (PESHA) is “sin or wickedness” with the ideas of apostasy and rebellion combined (cf. Daniel’s confession in vv. 5-11).
  - b. This can only be the work of God.
    - (1) Only God can shut up, or bring to an end, sin (cf. Rom 8:1-3; 10:1-4).
    - (2) This was accomplished through the atoning work of His only begotten Son, Jesus the Christ (Isa 53:1ff cf. Eph 2:1ff).

- (3) That this atoning work is for all, not only the Jews is seen both by Old Testament prophecy and New Testament fulfillment (Heb 8:12).
2. "To make an end of sins" (Zech 5:11).
    - a. The expression may be interpreted; "To seal up sin; to take away sin; to remove sin out of sight." This refers to:
      - (1) The removal of sin as such (Heb 8:12), or
      - (2) The reserving of sin for punishment (Deut 32:34; Job 14:17) (cf. 1 Thess 2:16; Rom 2:4,16).
    - b. The meaning seems to me, by context, to be referring to the "remission of sins" or the removal of sins.
      1. John 1:29.
      2. 2 Corinthians 5:21.
      3. Hebrews 9:26; 10:12 (Eph 2:12-15).
      4. 1 Peter 2:21-24.
  3. "To make reconciliation for iniquity," i.e. to expiate iniquity; to pardon iniquity.
    - a. If God is the subject it means "to forgive," and if the sinner is the subject it means "to cover." However, no subject is mentioned (cf. Isa 33:24).
    - b. Nevertheless, the doctrine of reconciliation is clear and is accomplished by "God in Christ" (2 Cor 5:19 cf. Rom 5:8-11; Col 1:20).
  4. Summary: Sin (i.e. "the transgression;" sins and iniquity) is to be abolished. This is the first statement of purpose of the decree of seventy sevens.
    - a. Sin is to be restrained (shut up) or removed - regarded as non-existent.
    - b. Sin is brought to an end - no longer presented as a power to enslave.
    - c. Sin is done away - the guilt which it involves has been expiated and, therefore, those "in Christ" are justified.

B. Positive accomplishments.

1. To bring in everlasting righteousness” [note Dan 9:7,15-16,(18)].
  - a. This righteousness is “brought” and that it is brought from “without!” It is righteousness “brought in” by God through the Messiah (i.e. Christ Jesus, our Lord).
    - (1) It is the “righteousness of God” (Isa 51:5-8 cf. Psa 85:11-13).
    - (2) It is “everlasting” or “eternal” righteousness.
      - (a) Because of its origin in the eternal counsel of the eternal God.
      - (b) Because of its eternal duration.
    - (3) It is noted in Old Testament passages such as Isaiah 45:17; 60:21 (cf. Dan 2:44; 7:18-27) and Malachi 4:2 in various aspects. It therefore comprises both external and internal righteousness.
    - (4) It is the righteousness of God which comes from God to “fill the heart of those who have had transgression removed!” (cf. Mt 5:6,8).
  - b. This “everlasting righteousness” is the righteous relationship which the once unrighteous sinner now has through faith in Jesus Christ (Rom 3:21-31 cf. 10:4).
    - (1) 1 Corinthians 1:29-30 (cf. Gal 2:20-21).
    - (2) Romans 1:16-18 (cf. 10:1-7).
    - (3) Romans 14:17; Philippians 3:9.
    - (4) Compare the above with Jeremiah 23:5 and Isaiah 51:7.
2. “To seal up vision and prophecy.”
  - a. “Understanding *to seal up vision and prophet* is a bit tricky.
    - (1) “Some see ‘to seal’ as implying a disposing function. When a piece of property is sealed it is, as perhaps in 12:4,9, placed out of reach or off limits, so that no use may be made of it; it is sealed off. On this view *to seal up vision and prophet* means that once the seventy weeks are ended no further prophecy or divine revelation will be needed.

- (2) “Or one may place emphasis on the *authenticating* function of a seal (see 6:17), in which case ‘the idea would be that God will someday set his seal of authentication upon every truly God-given revelation . . . by bringing about its complete fulfillment’ (cf. Rev 10:7).
  - (3) “In any case, both the *righteousness* clause and the *seal* clause presuppose the full establishment of God’s visible regime.” (Davis, p. 130).
- b. We understand the reference is to the sealing up of Old Testament prophecy / visions (Isa 1:1; Amos 1:1). Its functions are finished; no longer needed. There is no need for further prophecy, what there is, is enough.
  - c. The Old Testament period of prophecy and vision, the medium of Revelation, was completed and fulfilled in Christ Jesus (Lk 16:16).
    - (1) Luke 24:27,44-46 (cf. Mt 26:53-56).
    - (2) Acts 3:18,22-26 (cf. Deut 18:15).
    - (3) John 5:39 (cf. Acts 13:27-30; Mt 5:17ff).
    - (4) Hebrews 1:1-3.
  - d. “The seventy years of exile are drawing to a close but God’s purposes for his people involve *seventy sevens* before they reach completion” (Davis, p. 131).
3. “To anoint the most holy” (lit. “holiness of holiness”).
- a. Not:
    - (1) The dedication of Zerubbabel’s temple.
    - (2) Nor the reconsecration of the altar desecrated by Antiochus Epiphanes.
    - (3) Nor the consummation; that is the holy city, the heavenly Jerusalem.
  - b. But to Jesus Christ Himself we must ascribe these words; because of context and definition.

- (1) The word occurs without the article, hence its meaning “a most holy thing.” “Christ” means “anointed one,” compare verse 25. (cf. Lk 1:35).
  - (2) The Old Testament designation and the New Testament fulfillment (for “anointing” and “Holy Spirit” see Zech 4:1-14).
    - (a) Isaiah 61:1-3 compared with Luke 4:12-18.
    - (b) John 1:29-34; 3:34.
    - (c) Hebrews 1:8-9.
    - (d) Acts 4:25-28.
  - (3) Therefore the “anointing” of the “Holiness of Holinesses” (a most Holy Thing) can only, in this prophetic passage’s context, and all other scriptural comment upon the subject, refer to Jesus, the Son of God - the “Anointed One.”
4. Summary: The relationship of the “seventy sevens” and the “hexad.”
- a. These six terms (the hexad) are all Messianic.
  - b. This fact settles the ending boundary date of the prophecy.
    - (1) The six predicted items, according to God’s revelation, were to be accomplished with the “decreed / determined” period of sevens - all seventy of them.
    - (2) The termination of the seventy sevens coincides not with:
      - (a) The “times of Antiochus Epiphanes.”
      - (b) Nor the “end of the present age.”
      - (c) Nor the “second advent (coming) of Christ.”
  - c. These six items refer to the Lord’s first advent as Messiah.
    - (1) These six items refer to that period that culminates in the Messiah and His ministry.
    - (2) Therefore, after our Lord’s life, death, resurrection and the Holy Spirit descended, there was not one of the six items of Daniel 9:24 that was not fully accomplished (Acts 2:33-41; cf. 3:18-26).

- (3) Hence, all millennialists (including all of their varied theories) are against divinely revealed prophecy and its fulfillment!

“What is said here by the angel is not a direct answer to Daniel’s prayer. He prays to know when *the seventy weeks of the captivity* are to *end*. Gabriel shows him that there are *seventy weeks determined* relative to a *redemption* from *another sort of captivity*, which shall commence with the *going forth of the edict to restore and rebuild Jerusalem*, and shall terminate with the *death of the Messiah the Prince*, and the total *abolition of the Jewish sacrifices*. In the four following verses he enters into the particulars of the most important *determination*, and leaves them with Daniel for his comfort, who has left them to the church of God for the *confirmation* of its faith, and a *testimony* to the truth of Divine revelation. They contain the fullest confirmation of Christianity” (Clarke, pp. 601-602).

**25. “Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the command to restore and build Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince, there shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublesome times.**

***There shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks*** – “‘Seven and sixty-two’ is a strange way of saying ‘sixty-nine,’ if that’s all one meant to say. Why bother mentioning ‘sixty-two’ unless it marked off a distinct segment?” (Davis, p. 134).

Do not take the word “weeks” as literal weeks. God uses them to represent a non-definite periods of time, and so must we. Therefore we must break down the total periods as follows –

7 periods (weeks) = a relatively short or restricted time

62 periods (weeks) = a relatively extended time

1 period (week) = a clearly climactic time

***Even in troublesome times*** – “This was well illustrated by the oppression and the opposition which God’s people suffered during the time of Ezra and Nehemiah (cf. Neh 4:1ff.; 6:1ff.; 9:36,37)” (Young, p. 206).

**26. “And after the sixty-two weeks Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself; and the people of the prince who is to come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end of it shall be with a flood, and till the end of the war desolations are determined.**

***Messiah shall be cut off*** – “The proper notion or meaning here is, undoubtedly, that of being cut off by death, and would suggest the idea of a violent death, or a death by the agency of others” (Barnes, vol. 2, p. 177).

***But not for Himself*** – ASV: “and shall have nothing” / ASV footnote: “there shall be none belonging to him.”

“Lit: there is naught to Him. These words are extremely difficult, but they seem to indicate that all which should properly belong to the Messiah, He does not have when He dies. This is a very forceful way of setting forth His utter rejection, both by God and man . . . In that hour of blackness He has nothing, nothing but the guilt of sin of all those for whom He died. Utterly forsaken, He was cut off” (Young, p. 207).

***The people of the prince who is to come*** – “It seems likely that the ‘people’ are the Romans, and the prince who is to come is Titus Vespasianus” (Young, p. 207).

McGuiggan also agrees, see page 59 of his book.

***With a flood*** – “The destruction will be of such a nature that it will end in a mighty overflow” (Young, p. 207).

“Hence it would appropriately denote the ravages of an army, sweeping everything away. It would be like a sudden inundation, carrying everything before it” (Barnes, vol. 2, p. 180).

***Till the end*** – “It is no passing hostile invasion that is here referred to, like that which occurred in the time of Antiochus Epiphanes; but one in which the city and the temple would be completely destroyed” (Young, p. 208 quotes Ernst W. Hengstenberg).

***27. Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week; but in the middle of the week he shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall be one who makes desolate, even until the consummation, which is determined, is poured out on the desolate.”***

***He shall confirm a covenant*** – He is not making a covenant, but confirming a covenant which had already been made, i.e. the Covenant with Abraham.

***With many*** – “In what sense, however, may it be said that the Messiah causes a covenant to prevail for many? The answer to this question, it would seem, is to be found in the fact that the Messiah during His earthly ministry and by means of His active and passive obedience to the Law of God, did fulfill the terms of that covenant which was in olden times made with Abraham and his seed. Romans 15:8 speaks of this covenant as the promises made unto the fathers” (Young, p. 212).

***In the middle of the week*** – “The ‘cutting off’ of the anointed one and his causing sacrifice and oblation to cease are coincidental; therefore his cutting off is determined to be ‘in the midst of the week’ (in the midst of the 70<sup>th</sup> week). This settles once

and for all that the 70<sup>th</sup> week is not waiting for Christ's second advent" (Butler, p. 349).

**Sacrifice and offering** – "The subject is the Messiah, who by His death causes sacrifice and oblation to cease. The two words are intended to represent bloody and unbloody offerings, i.e., the entirety of worship by sacrifice" (Young, p. 217).

"It is true that immediately after Christ's death the sacrifices did not cease. Nevertheless, at His death, the veil of the Temple was rent in twain; the way into the Holy of Holies was opened, the Gospel was preached, and the sacrifices of the Jews could no longer be regarded as legitimate. 'When Christ was put to death, Jerusalem ceased to be the holy city, and the temple was no longer the house of God, but an abomination' (Hengstenberg). After Christ's death the sacrifices continued for a time, until the destruction of the city by Titus. However, this actual cessation was in reality but the outwardly manifestation of that which had already been put into effect by our Lord's death" (Young, pp. 217-218).

**The wing** – "The word apparently refers to the pinnacle of the temple which has become so desecrated that it no longer can be regarded as the temple of the Lord, but as an idol temple" (Young, p. 218).

**Abominations** – "The word has a primary reference to idols. Now, at the time of Titus, actual idols were not erected in the temple. Therefore, the word must be used figuratively to describe the worship of the temple after the veil has been rent in twain. No longer was this the house of the Lord, but a house of abominations, for the true worship [*Jewish*] of Jehovah had ceased" (Young, p. 218 – *ital.* added).

**SPECIAL NOTE:** The "premillennialists" teach that there is a hidden parenthesis between the 69<sup>th</sup> and 70<sup>th</sup> weeks (periods) of this prophecy. However, as seen above this chapter does not skip over the church age in a hidden parenthesis.

Would anyone reading the book of Daniel prior to the first century A.D. understand or even think of a "parenthesis" inserted anywhere in the seventy weeks (periods)? NO!

Actually we find just the opposite. In the seventieth week (period) is the prediction of that great climatic event upon which the Church of Christ is founded. We find the atoning death of the Messiah as the fulfillment and authentication of the types and prophecies of the Old Testament (Allis, p. 123).

For an in-depth study of millennialism read the book "Prophecy And The Church" by Oswald T. Allis published by the Presbyterian & Reformed Publishing Company (1947), Phillipsburg, NJ.

**D. THE MAN IN LINEN . . . . . Chapter 10:1-11:1**

Everything in this chapter is preparatory to chapter eleven.

**1. PRELUDE: INTRODUCTION OF THE VISION –  
“EVEN A GREAT WARFARE” . . . . . 10:1-3**

**1. *In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia a message was revealed to Daniel, whose name was called Belteshazzar. The message was true, but the appointed time was long; and he understood the message, and had understanding of the vision.***

*In the third year of Cyrus* – “It is evident, therefore, that Daniel did not return to Palestine with the first deportation under Zerubbabel but remained in Babylon. He was now an old man, and God had yet a further revelation to give him. His work in Babylon, therefore, was not yet complete” (Young, p. 223).

*Belteshazzar* – “He adds his Babylonian name, it would seem, because the Babylonian empire is now overthrown and he would preserve his identity among the people. He thus attests that he is the same person who was carried into captivity over seventy years previously and that he is the one concerning whom the previous portions of the book relate” (Young, pp. 223-224).

**2. *In those days I, Daniel, was mourning three full weeks. 3. I ate no pleasant food, no meat or wine came into my mouth, nor did I anoint myself at all, till three whole weeks were fulfilled.***

“The word about the restoration of Jerusalem which he had received through the angel Gabriel in the first year of Darius (ch. ix.) had come to pass since that revelation in the first year of Cyrus, but had had only a little effect on the religious lukewarmness of the majority of the people” (Keil, pp. 408-409).

The length of this fast shows just how deep Daniel’s respect and homage for Jehovah was.

**2. IDENTITY OF THE “MAN IN LINEN” . . . . . 10:4-9**

**4. *Now on the twenty-fourth day of the first month, as I was by the side of the great river, that is, the Tigris,***

“Daniel found himself on the sides (banks) of the river Hiddekel, *i.e.* the Tigris, along with some who accompanied him (ver. 7); thus he was there in reality, and not merely in vision as at the Ulai, ch. viii. 2” (Keil, p. 409).

**5. *I lifted my eyes and looked, and behold, a certain man clothed in linen, whose waist was girded with gold of Uphaz! 6. His body was like beryl, his face like the***

**appearance of lightning, his eyes like torches of fire, his arms and feet like burnished bronze in color, and the sound of his words like the voice of a multitude.**

**A certain man** – this man is also the speaker in verses 12-14: “where he acknowledges that he received assistance in his conflict from Michael. There is something jarring about the supposition of omnipotence receiving help. Hence, I hold that verses 5-6 depict an unknown angelic figure, who packs the splendor, power and dread of the God he serves” (Davis, p. 143).

Young, in his commentary, holds the opposite view - “The description seems to indicate that the majestic Person here presented is none other than the Lord Himself. The revelation therefore is a theophany, a pre-incarnate appearance of the eternal Son. This is proved by the very similar description (Rev 1:13-15) of the One whom John sees in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks” (Young, p. 225).

“Similar descriptions” do not prove anything except that they are “similar.”

**7. And I, Daniel, alone saw the vision, for the men who were with me did not see the vision; but a great terror fell upon them, so that they fled to hide themselves. 8. Therefore I was left alone when I saw this great vision, and no strength remained in me; for my vigor was turned to frailty in me, and I retained no strength. 9. Yet I heard the sound of his words; and while I heard the sound of his words I was in a deep sleep on my face, with my face to the ground.**

We are not told who these men were or why they were with Daniel.

“What is here said resembles Acts ix. 3 ff., where Christ, after His exaltation, appeared to Paul and spoke to him – Paul’s companions hearing only the voice, but seeing no one” (Keil, p. 414).

**3. PRONOUNCEMENT: INSTRUCTION TO “UNDERSTAND THE WORDS” ..... 10:10-14**

**10. Suddenly, a hand touched me, which made me tremble on my knees and on the palms of my hands. 11. And he said to me, “O Daniel, man greatly beloved, understand the words that I speak to you, and stand upright, for I have now been sent to you.” While he was speaking this word to me, I stood trembling.**

He was restored to strength gradually, not all at once.

**12. Then he said to me, “Do not fear, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart to understand, and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard; and I have come because of your words.**

**Your words were heard** – even though God hears our prayers when they are uttered this passage shows that the answer may be delayed, and delayed by causes we are not aware of.

In this instance the answer was delayed as the messenger was delayed while on his way (v. 13). At other times it may be from other causes, and it may take days, months or even years.

**I have come because of your words** – Daniel prayed and angels were sent to work on their behalf. Cannot this be the same for us today (Jas 1:14 cf. Psa 91:11; Heb 1:19)?

**13. But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me twenty-one days; and behold, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I had been left alone there with the kings of Persia.**

**Prince of the kingdom of Persia** – this is not the physical king of Persia for this is spiritual warfare not physical (cf. Rev 12:7).

This is proven in the fact that Michael came to help and he is an angel.

“There are powerful forces of evil at work in and through the nations and their rulers to defeat and to overthrow the people of God. This may alarm and cause terror when one considers how powerful these demon potentates are. On the other hand, there are still more powerful agents of good at work who, by harmonious cooperation, will prevail over their wicked opponents. So the cause of the kingdom is in good hands, and its success is assured” (Leupold, pp. 459-460).

“We get a rare glimpse behind the scenes of world history as it occurred then and even now. There are spiritual forces at work that are far in excess of what men who disregard divine revelation would suppose. They struggle behind the struggles that are written on the pages of history. They explain the Satanic evil that often comes to light under the things that appear on the surface. Since a particular ‘prince of the kingdom of Persia’ is mentioned, it seems to be a valid conclusion that every godless, cruel, tyrannical nation is dominated by some such prince. Whether each evil angel may have but one nation as his domain, or whether there may be broader spheres of activity in which the more powerful among them are active, we cannot decide on the limited information available in Scripture” (Butler, p. 379).

Angels who were evil had ascendancy at the Persian court. But, they could not hold that position without the consent of the governed. Each individual is a free moral agent deciding how they will conduct their lives and this group in that court had given the evil angel his position whether they knew it or not.

“It must have been the desire of the heart of Cyrus, and perhaps others of his

kingdom, to know and to be able to live the truth; so God sent His angel Michael to overthrow the rule of evil angels in the minds and hearts of the Persian court” (Butler, p. 379).

It was Cyrus who “instituted the enlightened policy of placating the gods of his subject peoples instead of carrying off their cult statues and peoples as the Elamites, Hittites, Assyrians, and Babylonians before him had done. His generosity in permitting the Jews to return to their homeland was not unique but was paralleled by his benevolence to the Babylonians and others” (Yamauchi, pp. 89-90).

“The motives of the Persian kings in providing for the rebuilding of their subjects’ temples were not altogether altruistic. They wanted both their political support and also their prayers, ‘so that they may offer sacrifices pleasing to the God of heaven and pray for the wellbeing of the king and his sons (Ezra 6:10)” (Yamauchi, p. 159).

“In 530, although nearly 70 years old, Cyrus campaigned in the distant northeastern part of his realm against the nomadic Massagetae . . . Cyrus was killed in battle toward the end of July 530 B.C.” (Yamauchi, p. 92).

**14. Now I have come to make you understand what will happen to your people in the latter days, for the vision refers to many days yet to come.”**

“The statement as a whole means that some of the vision given refers to the days after the next series of events, that is, to the Messianic Age” (Leupold, p. 461).

#### **4. PERCEPTION: INTERVENTION OF STRENGTH FOR DANIEL 10:15-11:1**

**15. When he had spoken such words to me, I turned my face toward the ground and became speechless. 16. And suddenly, one having the likeness of the sons of men touched my lips; then I opened my mouth and spoke, saying to him who stood before me, “My lord, because of the vision my sorrows have overwhelmed me, and I have retained no strength. 17. For how can this servant of my lord talk with you, my lord? As for me, no strength remains in me now, nor is any breath left in me.” 18. Then again, the one having the likeness of a man touched me and strengthened me. 19. And he said, “O man greatly beloved, fear not! Peace be to you; be strong, yes, be strong!” So when he spoke to me I was strengthened, and said, “Let my lord speak, for you have strengthened me.” 20. Then he said, “Do you know why I have come to you? And now I must return to fight with the prince of Persia; and when I have gone forth, indeed the prince of Greece will come.**

***I must return to fight*** – “It appears that God chose to make use of the ministry of angels in this work; that angels, as they could be only in *one* place at *one* time, could not produce influence where *they were* not” (Clarke, p. 607).

***Prince of Persia . . . prince of Greece*** – “the angel returns to maintain the position which he has won but which will not go unchallenged or unassailed” (Leupold, p. 465).

This spiritual warfare will continue until the will of God is accomplished.

“As soon as the one conflict ends, another takes its place: ‘lo, the prince of Greece will come forth.’ Demon influence will endeavor to enlist Greece in the war of destruction of God’s people. If the angel who is speaking did not interpose, demon influence might well meet with success. So the prophet is apprized of some of the undercover movements in history but also of the type of checking that God employs to keep them within proper bounds” (Leupold, p. 466).

**21. *But I will tell you what is noted in the Scripture of Truth. (No one upholds me against these, except Michael your prince.***

***Michael your prince*** – Michael being their prince confirms again that this is spiritual warfare not physical.

**11:1 “*Also in the first year of Darius the Mede, I, even I, stood up to confirm and strengthen him.*”**

The strength and resources of the speaker and Michael are sufficient for this task.

“The teaching seems to be that unseen evil powers influence and control the kingdoms and governments of this world in order to inflict harm and havoc on the people of God. There is what we see on the surface, but then there is this whole unseen arena; an invisible war is going on behind the ‘seems’” (Davis, p. 146).

“What a dreadful thought . . . the government offices of a nation occupied by the forces of anti-God. We don’t usually think this way. We have no trouble believing that incompetence and bungling are endemic to governments and political machinery, but we don’t as easily think of suave and sinister spirits of evil lurking in the corridors of our congresses or shaping the policies of our parliaments” (Davis, p. 146).

“History, then, is not only long – stretching over time, but deep – beneath its surface unseen denizens carry on a hidden war, seeking to decimate the people of God. Given that, it is amazing, is it not, that – Psalm 124-like – the Lord’s flock still endures in this flesh-eating, saint hating world?” (Davis, p. 146).

**E. THE GREAT WARFARE . . . . . 11:2-12:3**

“Our chapter presents the conclusion of the two main sections of all historical developments, the conclusion of the Old Testament period as well as the conclusion of the New Testament period” (Leupold, p. 470).

“The prominent, the material points, would be the reign of those three kings; then the reign of the fourth, or Xerxes, as his mad expedition to Greece would lay the real foundation for the invasion of Persia by Alexander, and the overthrow of the Persian empire . . . the three kings here referred to were Cambyses, Smerdis, and Darius Hystaspis” (Barnes, vol. 2, p. 208).

“The revelation has as its object, to show how the heathen world-kingdoms shall not attain to an enduring stability, and by their persecution of the people of God shall only accomplish their purification” (Keil, p. 429).

**1. THE THREE KINGS . . . . . 11:2**

**11:2 *And now I will tell you the truth: Behold, three more kings will arise in Persia, and the fourth shall be far richer than them all; by his strength, through his riches, he shall stir up all against the realm of Greece.***

***By his strength, through his riches*** – “The king spent his treasures for the raising and maintaining of a great army” (Young, p. 232).

**2. THE MIGHTY KING . . . . . 11:3-4**

**3. *Then a mighty king shall arise, who shall rule with great dominion, and do according to his will.***

Secular history shows this to be Alexander the Great.

Some historians say the Jewish high priest showed Alexander this passage and the passages influenced him to look favorably upon the Jewish people.

**4. *And when he has arisen, his kingdom shall be broken up and divided toward the four winds of heaven, but not among his posterity nor according to his dominion with which he ruled; for his kingdom shall be uprooted, even for others besides these.***

***When he has arisen*** – when the king has come to full power.

“This implies that he had not really become weakened or lost power. His empire was still intact when this monarch died so young” (Leupold, p. 478).

“The sense is, that his empire would not *gradually* diminish and decay, but that

some event would occur, the effect of which would be to rend it into four parts” (Barnes, vol. 2, pp. 210-211).

***Shall be broken up*** – “This division did not occur immediately upon the death of Alexander, but a few years thereafter” (Young, p. 233).

***Divided towards the four winds of heaven*** – this shows that the kingdom will eventually be split up into four parts.

***But not among his posterity*** – in other words none of Alexander’s relatives will inherit this kingdom.

***Not according to his dominion with which he ruled*** – none of these kingdoms will be as great as Alexander’s was.

**SPECIAL NOTE:** The destiny of the other sections of Alexander’s empire did not significantly affect the history of the Jewish religion, or pertain to the holy land and, therefore, are not covered. This is the normal pattern in the Old Testament.

### **3. THE KING(S) OF THE SOUTH AND KING(S) OF THE NORTH . . . 11:5-20**

This is talking about the kingdoms to the north and south of Palestine. It is about Syria (the Seleucids) and Egypt (the Ptolemies).

See the chart on the Seleucids and Ptolomies in the appendix.

During these times, of the wars between Syria and Egypt, many of the battles took place on Palestine’s soil. Therefore, the land changed hands and rulers often.

**5. “Also the king of the South shall become strong, as well as one of his princes; and he shall gain power over him and have dominion. His dominion shall be a great dominion.**

***The South*** = Egypt.

***The king of the South*** = Ptolemy Soter.

***One of his princes*** = Seleucus.

***He shall gain great power over him and have dominion*** – “The meaning is not that he will conquer the king, but that his rule will be far greater than that of the king” (Young, p. 234).

**6. And at the end of some years they shall join forces, for the daughter of the king of the South shall go to the king of the North to make an agreement; but she shall**

***not retain the power of her authority, and neither he nor his authority shall stand; but she shall be given up, with those who brought her, and with him who begot her, and with him who strengthened her in those times.***

***She shall be given up*** – given up to death.

**7. *But from a branch of her roots one shall arise in his place, who shall come with an army, enter the fortress of the king of the North, and deal with them and prevail.***

These verses make us aware of the long and strong opposition that grew up between these two powers. Therefore, because Israel's location was between these two nations it was bound to become dangerous for her (Leupold, p. 483).

***From a branch of her roots one shall arise*** – refers to her family and history shows us that it was her brother Ptolemy Euergetes who was her avenger.

***Fortress*** – in these verses the singular (fortress) is used for the plural (fortresses).

**8. *And he shall also carry their gods captive to Egypt, with their princes and their precious articles of silver and gold; and he shall continue more years than the king of the North.***

Victory goes to the Egyptian and he carries away:

Their gods - thought to be their protectors,

Their princes and

Their treasures of gold and silver.

**9. *“Also the king of the North shall come to the kingdom of the king of the South, but shall return to his own land.***

***King of the North*** – Seleucus Callinicus. He died as a result of a fall from his horse.

**10. *However his sons shall stir up strife, and assemble a multitude of great forces; and one shall certainly come and overwhelm and pass through; then he shall return to his fortress and stir up strife.***

***His sons shall stir up strife*** – Seleucus Ceraunus and Antiochus the Great.

Ceraunus then died and Antiochus took rule.

Even though Antiochus the Great was just fifteen years old when he took the

rule he successfully led the war against Egypt.

**11. “And the king of the South shall be moved with rage, and go out and fight with him, with the king of the North, who shall muster a great multitude; but the multitude shall be given into the hand of his enemy.**

**But the multitude** – the multitude of Antiochus.

**12. When he has taken away the multitude, his heart will be lifted up; and he will cast down tens of thousands, but he will not prevail.**

**But he will not prevail** – “He was wholly given up to luxury, sloth and voluptuousness, and returned immediately after his victory into Egypt . . . the consequence was, that he, by his conduct, excited some of his people to rebellion, and greatly weaken himself in the affections and confidence of the rest” (Barnes, vol. 2, p. 217).

**13. For the king of the North will return and muster a multitude greater than the former, and shall certainly come at the end of some years with a great army and much equipment. 14. “Now in those times many shall rise up against the king of the South. Also, violent men of your people shall exalt themselves in fulfillment of the vision, but they shall fall.**

**Many shall rise up** – “The reference is especially to Philip, king of Macedon, and to Agathocles, who excited a rebellion against him in Egypt” (Barnes, vol. 2, p. 218).

**Violent men of your people shall exalt themselves** – Palestine was under the authority of one nation or the other. As a result they were also under whoever of their own people were placed in charge by the conquerors. And these Jews were also tyrannical and oppressive.

**15. So the king of the North shall come and build a siege mound, and take a fortified city; and the forces of the South shall not withstand him. Even his choice troops shall have no strength to resist.**

**The forces of the South shall not withstand him** – In other words Antiochus will be victorious.

**16. But he who comes against him shall do according to his own will, and no one shall stand against him. He shall stand in the Glorious Land with destruction in his power.**

**The Glorious Land** – Palestine.

**With destruction in his power** – “The angel does not seem to refer to any wanton destruction of the land, but only to what would necessarily occur in its invasion, and in securing provision for the wants of an army” (Barnes, vol. 2, pp. 220-221).

**17. “He shall also set his face to enter with the strength of his whole kingdom, and upright ones with him; thus shall he do. And he shall give him the daughter of women to destroy it; but she shall not stand with him, or be for him.**

**And upright ones with him** – with Jews in his army fighting for him.

**The daughter of women** – the reference here is to Cleopatra, Antiochus’ own daughter (Barnes, vol. 2, p. 222).

This is not the Cleopatra of “Cleopatra and Mark Anthony” fame.

**To destroy it** – Egypt.

**But she shall not stand with him, or be for him** – him = her father (Antiochus).

She will side with her husband.

**18. After this he shall turn his face to the coastlands, and shall take many. But a ruler shall bring the reproach against them to an end; and with the reproach removed, he shall turn back on him.**

**A ruler** – “A Roman prince, or a leader of the Roman armies. The reference is to Lucius Cornelius Scipio, called Scipio Asiaticus, in contradistinction from Publius Cornelius Scipio, called Africanus, from his conquest over Hannibal and the Carthaginians. The Scipio here referred to received the name Asiaticus, on account of his victories in the East, and particularly with Antiochus” (Barnes, vol. 2, p. 224).

These two men were brothers as well as generals in the Roman army.

**Shall bring the reproach against them to an end** – “The reference is to the disgrace brought on the Roman armies by the conquests of Antiochus. Antiochus had seemed to mock that power: he had engaged in war with the conquerors of nations; he had gained victories, and thus appeared to insult the majesty of the Roman name. All this was turned back again, or caused to cease, by the victory of Scipio” (Barnes, vol. 2, pp. 224-225).

**19. Then he shall turn his face toward the fortress of his own land; but he shall stumble and fall, and not be found.**

**But he shall stumble and fall, and not be found** – He, and the soldiers who were with him, was slain while attempting to plunder the temple of Elymais (Barnes, vol. 2, p. 224-225).

This prophecy concerning the main events in Antiochus the Great’s life ends here.

**20. “There shall arise in his place one who imposes taxes on the glorious kingdom; but within a few days he shall be destroyed, but not in anger or in battle.**

**Not in anger or in battle** – “The description would indicate a reign of peace, and one whose end would be peace, but who would have but a short reign” (Barnes, vol. 2, p. 225).

**SPECIAL NOTE:** Davis makes this comment regarding this section – “Our text teaches that our Lord brings judgment not only at the climax of history but also within history as he injects futility into the designs of self-exalting, saint-ignoring rulers of the world, so that their schemes end in shambles. Not that he always does this; but the text, by its repeated examples, implies that this is his tendency, that he does it far more often than we may be aware. How could God’s people bear to live if he simply allowed self-styled deities of this age to fulfill their plans? (p. 152).

#### **4. THE CONTEMPTIBLE ONE . . . . . 11:21-35**

“The remainder of this chapter is occupied with a detail of the crimes, the cruelties, and the oppressions of Antiochus Epiphanes, or Antiochus IV” (Barnes, vol. 2, p. 227).

“All of verses 21-35 focuses on Antiochus IV. We may break down the passage into three ‘chunks’: first, a synopsis of his reign (22-24), which sketches his overall military success (22-23) and lavish rewards to those he favored (24); second, the objects of his hostility (25-31), the king of the south (25-27) but especially the covenant people (28-31); and third, the cost of his savagery (32-35) – the great price the faithful in Israel will pay as they resist Antiochus’ programme” (Davis, p. 153)

“In the year 175 B.C. Antiochus Epiphanes quietly ascended the throne, while the lawful heir, Demetrius, was absent at Rome” (Barnes, vol. 2, p. 227).

It is more than likely this section was included in order to prepare the Jewish people for these terrible events to come. It would also assure them that a deliverance would follow these horrible times.

**21. And in his place shall arise a vile person, to whom they will not give the honor of royalty; but he shall come in peaceably, and seize the kingdom by intrigue.**

**Vile person** – “Properly means one despised or held in contempt” (Barnes, vol. 2, p. 227).

This would be Antiochus Epiphanes.

“Epiphanes” means “the illustrious.” However many of his subjects called him “Epimanes” which means “the insane” (Barnes, vol. 2, p. 228).

**To whom they will not give the honor of royalty** – he assumed the throne, but it was not by any lawful means, or an act of the nation as a whole, or by regular succession.

**But he shall come in peaceably** – “Quietly; without war or force; by art rather than by arms . . . the idea seems to be, that he would do it when the nation was not expecting it, or apprehending it; when they would be taken off their guard” (Barnes, vol. 2, p. 228).

**And seize the kingdom by intrigue** – “He would obtain the throne by acts of dissembling, and by promises of rewards and offices” (Barnes, vol. 2, p. 229).

“By smoothness, intrigues and cunning, not merely flatteries or smooth words, but generally hypocritical behaviour in word and deed” (Keil, p. 451).

**22. With the force of a flood they shall be swept away from before him and be broken, and also the prince of the covenant.**

God does not tell us who these people are who are going to be overthrown.

**23. And after the league is made with him he shall act deceitfully, for he shall come up and become strong with a small number of people.**

**The league** – or pact, was with Egypt and Antiochus will try to evade its terms and he shall refuse to comply with its conditions.

**He shall come up** – “Come up on Egypt. The result would be war. Rather than surrender the provinces according to the treaty, he would ultimately invade Egypt” (Barnes, vol. 2, p. 230).

**And become strong with a small number of people** – “The fact of the case was, that Antiochus pretended in his invasion of Egypt to be the friend of the Egyptian king, and that he came to aid him, and to settle him firmly on the throne. By degrees, however, he became possessed of one town after another, and subdued one place after another, until he finally became possessed of the king himself, and had him entirely in his power” (Barnes, vol. 2, p. 230).

**24. He shall enter peaceably, even into the richest places of the province; and he shall do what his fathers have not done, nor his forefathers: he shall disperse among them the plunder, spoil, and riches; and he shall devise his plans against the strongholds, but only for a time.**

**He shall enter peaceably, even into the richest places of the province** – “The sense is, that he would do this unexpectedly; he would make gradual and artful approaches until he seized upon the best portions of the land” (Barnes, vol. 2, p.

231).

***He shall do what his fathers have not done, nor his forefathers*** – in other words he would conquer Egypt which they had not been able to do.

***He shall disperse among them*** – his followers and fellow conspirators.

***But only for a time*** – until forced by the Romans to withdraw and go back to Syria.

**25. *“He shall stir up his power and his courage against the king of the South with a great army. And the king of the South shall be stirred up to battle with a very great and mighty army; but he shall not stand, for they shall devise plans against him.*”**

***Against the king of the South*** – “This must refer to a subsequent invasion of Egypt by Antiochus. In the course of his reign he four times invaded that country with various degrees of success” (Barnes, vol. 2, p. 231).

**26. *Yes, those who eat of the portion of his delicacies shall destroy him; his army shall be swept away, and many shall fall down slain.***

***Those who eat of the portion of his delicacies shall destroy him*** – the Egyptian king.

“They of his own family; they who are nourished at his table; they who are his cabinet counsellors, and professed and confidential friends. The meaning is, that they would prove treacherous and unfaithful” (Barnes, vol. 2, p. 232).

***His army*** – the Egyptian army.

**27. *Both these kings’ hearts shall be bent on evil, and they shall speak lies at the same table; but it shall not prosper, for the end will still be at the appointed time.***

“The reference here is, evidently, to Antiochus and Ptolemy Philometor, and the time alluded to is when Ptolemy was in the possession of Antiochus, and when they were together forming their plans” (Barnes, vol. 2, p. 233).

***They shall speak lies at the same table*** – it appears, for whatever reasons, they were each planning against the other while pretending to be agreeing with each other.

***But it shall not prosper*** – their plans do not coincide with God’s and therefore He will not let them prosper.

***For the end will still be at the appointed time*** – God has His schedule, no mere human, or group of humans, has the power to change His appointed time.

“This is the time in which the conduct of the kings previously described, in their rising up and in their hostility against the people of God, reaches its end (ver. 45); and with the overthrow of these enemies the period of oppression also comes to an end. This end comes only at the time which God has determined for the purifying of His people (ver. 35)” (Keil, p. 454).

**28. *While returning to his land with great riches, his heart shall be moved against the holy covenant; so he shall do damage and return to his own land.***

***While returning to his land with great riches*** – Antiochus with spoils from Egypt.

***His heart shall be moved against the holy covenant*** – This refers to the holy land, Israel.

***So he shall do damage and return to his own land*** – “When he was in Egypt, a report was spread abroad that he was dead. In consequence of this rumour, Jason took the opportunity of recovering the office of high-priest from his brother Menelaus, and with a thousand men took Jerusalem, drove Menelaus into the castle, and slew many whom he took for his enemies. Antiochus, hearing of this, supposed that all the Jews had revolted, and determined to inflict summary chastisement on them on his way to his own land” (Barnes, vol. 2, p. 234).

**29. *“At the appointed time he shall return and go toward the south; but it shall not be like the former or the latter.***

“The idea is, that there was a definite period in the Divine Mind in which all this was to be done, and that when this should occur Antiochus would return again to invade Egypt” (Barnes, vol. 2, p. 234).

***But it shall not be like the former or the latter*** – Antiochus was successful in his first and second invasions, but he will not be successful in this invasion.

**30. *For ships from Cyprus shall come against him; therefore he shall be grieved, and return in rage against the holy covenant, and do damage. “So he shall return and show regard for those who forsake the holy covenant.***

***Ships from Cyprus*** – “To those of Palestine Cyprus (Kittim) referred not only to the island but to all the regions that lay beyond it to the west – therefore Rome. Those who translated the LXX understood this so well that they rendered this verse, ‘And the Romans will come, etc.’” (Butler, p. 430).

“The Egyptian government had called in the aid of the Romans, and Antiochus, therefore, was threatened with a war with the Romans if he did not abandon his enterprise against Egypt” (Barnes, vol. 2, p. 235).

***Return in rage against the holy covenant*** – “The historical facts have been briefly and conclusively brought together by Hitzig thus: ‘On the complaint of the Alexandrians the Roman senate sent an embassy, at the head of which was C. Popillius Laenas (Polyb. xxix. 1; Liv. xlv. 19). After being detained at Delos (Liv. xlv. 29), they set sail to Egypt after the battle of Pydna (Liv. xlv. 10). Here he met Antiochus four Roman miles from Alexandria, and presented to him the message of the senate. When Antiochus explained that he wished to lay the matter before his councillors, Popillius described with the staff he carried in his hand a circle around the king, and commanded him to give his answer before he left the circle. Antiochus, confounded by the circumstances, submitted and withdrew from Egypt (Liv. xlv. 12; Polyb. xxix. 11; Appian, *Syr. C.* 66; Justin. xxxiv. 3)’” (Keil, p. 456).

“The rage he was unable to vent on Egypt is now turned against the people of Palestine. If Egypt was to remain unconquered by him, and a rival power, Antiochus found it more necessary than ever to retain his hold on Palestine” (Butler, pp. 430-431).

When Antiochus “returned to Antioch he published a decree that all should conform to the *Grecian worship*; and the Jewish worship was totally abrogated, and the temple itself consecrated to *Jupiter Olympius*. How great must the wickedness of the people have been when God could tolerate this!” (Clarke, p. 613).

***31. And forces shall be mustered by him, and they shall defile the sanctuary fortress; then they shall take away the daily sacrifices, and place there the abomination of desolation.***

“The Akra [a newly built fortress] was garrisoned by a large force of Syrian soldiers which was expected to keep the Jews in submission to the policies of Antiochus. One of Israel’s darkest periods began. A systematic attempt was made to Hellenize the country by force. An edict demanded the fusion of all the nationalities of the Seleucid empire into one people. Greek deities were to be worshipped by all. An elderly Athenian philosopher was sent to Jerusalem to supervise the enforcement of the order. He identified the God of Israel with Jupiter and ordered a bearded image of the pagan deity, perhaps in the likeness of Antiochus, set up upon the Temple altar. The Jews spoke of this as ‘the Abomination of Desolation.’ Syrian soldiers and their paramours performed licentious heathen rites in the very Temple courts. Swine were sacrificed on the altar. The drunken orgy associated with the worship of Bacchus was made compulsory. Conversely, Jews were forbidden to practice circumcision, Sabbath observance, or the observance of the feasts of the Jewish year, upon the penalty of death. Copies of the Hebrew Scriptures were ordered destroyed. All of this can be obtained from the historical record of 1 Maccabees” (Butler, p. 431 brackets added).

***32. Those who do wickedly against the covenant he shall corrupt with flattery; but the people who know their God shall be strong, and carry out great exploits.***

**Those who do wickedly against the covenant** – the Jews who turned their backs on Jehovah and were receptive to the Greek religions.

**33. And those of the people who understand shall instruct many; yet for many days they shall fall by sword and flame, by captivity and plundering.**

**Shall instruct many** – in the Jewish faith and their duty to God and country.

Israel was still to be a theocracy at this time.

**For many days** – we do not know how long this was to be, but it was to be a prolonged time.

**34. Now when they fall, they shall be aided with a little help; but many shall join with them by intrigue.**

**Aided with a little help** – a few Jews would join their countrymen in their rebellion against Antiochus.

**But many shall join with them by intrigue** – but, a few would join them because of personal reasons such as looking for spoils, etc.

**35. And some of those of understanding shall fall, to refine them, purify them, and make them white, until the time of the end; because it is still for the appointed time.**

Even knowing the spiritual significance of what is going on around them they are not exempt from the evil surrounding them. Many will still become martyrs for the Lord. However, this will only last as long as the Lord allows it to last. The ultimate victory is still His, and theirs!

**It is still for the appointed time** – “This seems to be designed for an assurance that the calamity would come to an end, or that there was a limit beyond which it could not pass. Thus it would be an encouragement to those who were engaged in the struggle, for they would see that success must ultimately crown their labours” (Barnes, vol. 2, p. 240).

## **5. THE SELF-EXALTED “KING” ..... 11:36-45**

**36. “Then the king shall do according to his own will: he shall exalt and magnify himself above every god, shall speak blasphemies against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the wrath has been accomplished; for what has been determined shall be done.**

**He shall exalt and magnify himself above every god** – the one who does this is

setting himself up as being superior to any god, or gods, including Jehovah!

He is in essence saying that he is the ultimate authority and has the authority to tell each individual which god or gods he is to worship and the gods, including Jehovah, have no say in the matter.

***Shall prosper till the wrath has been accomplished*** – “He will be successful in his impious course only until the anger of God towards His people has come to an end” (Young, p. 248).

***For what has been determined shall be done*** – “This anger of God is irrevocably determined, that His people may be wholly purified for the consummation of His kingdom in glory” (Keil, p. 463).

***37. He shall regard neither the God of his fathers nor the desire of women, nor regard any god; for he shall exalt himself above them all.***

***He shall regard neither the God of his fathers*** – He shall worship any god he pleases. He is not bound by family tradition, or anything else.

Besides this Antiochus had been educated abroad and had no special tie to his own country’s religious leanings.

***Nor the desire of women*** – commentators are divided on what this means. It could be understood in three different ways:

1. The desires of the women themselves. That is, he would not take into consideration any pleadings women would make based on what they desired.
2. The natural and physical desires a man has for a woman. He would not let any physical or emotional feeling about women influence his own self-determinations or gratifications.
3. Some commentators felt this did not apply to Antiochus himself at all as he was licentious and apparently under the influence of wanton women.

***Nor regard any god; for he shall exalt himself above them all*** – Antiochus would not submit totally to any formalized religion because his own desires would always usurp any religious beliefs or ties.

***38. But in their place he shall honor a god of fortresses; and a god which his fathers did not know he shall honor with gold and silver, with precious stones and pleasant things.***

***He shall honor a god of fortresses*** – the reference here is not to any particular god or cult.

It is a religion that is characterized by fortresses or strongholds. In other words this religion (god) is the personification of war.

The Jews had known war, but had never deified it.

Thus, in the place of any god he will honor war as his god (Young, p. 249).

***He shall honor with gold and silver, with precious stones and pleasant things***

– “For religion he will substitute war, and war he will support with all that he has.

This thought is figuratively expressed by the words, with gold and silver, etc.”

(Young, p. 249).

“The general sentiment is, that all obligations of religion, and justice, and compassion, would be disregarded, and he would carry his purposes by mere power” (Barnes, vol. 2, p. 244).

**39. Thus he shall act against the strongest fortresses with a foreign god, which he shall acknowledge, and advance its glory; and he shall cause them to rule over many, and divide the land for gain.**

***With a foreign god*** – apparently the Roman god Jupiter.

***Which he shall acknowledge, and advance its glory*** – by building temples and altars to Jupiter.

He was using religion for his own purposes.

***He shall cause them to rule over many, and divide the land for gain*** – as he goes forth and conquers he will reward those who have sided with him.

Verses 40-43. “We believe these verses to be a general summarization of the whole warlike career of Antiochus Epiphanes especially against Egypt and Israel. There are no historical records of a fourth Syrian campaign with details to fit this context. This, however, does not necessarily mean such a campaign did not actually take place. The careful Bible-believer has learned that the silence of history does not necessarily prove biblical prophecy contradictory. The silence of history only proves the silence of history” (Butler, p. 437).

Albert Barnes agrees with the above assessment, but includes verses 44 and 45 in this summary (vol. 2, p. 247).

**40. “At the time of the end the king of the South shall attack him; and the king of the North shall come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, horsemen, and with many ships; and he shall enter the countries, overwhelm them, and pass through.**

***He shall enter the countries*** – Syria, Israel, Egypt and the surrounding countries.

***41. He shall also enter the Glorious Land, and many countries shall be overthrown; but these shall escape from his hand: Edom, Moab, and the prominent people of Ammon.***

***The Glorious Land*** – Palestine (Israel).

***But these shall escape from his hand: Edom, Moab, and the prominent people of Ammon*** – Antiochus will be so busy in the territories he has already invaded that these countries will escape his attentions.

***42. He shall stretch out his hand against the countries, and the land of Egypt shall not escape. 43. He shall have power over the treasures of gold and silver, and over all the precious things of Egypt; also the Libyans and Ethiopians shall follow at his heels.***

***Also the Libyans and Ethiopians shall follow at his heels*** – this phrase can have two meanings:

1. They became his allies.
2. They were led captive.

***44. But news from the east and the north shall trouble him; therefore he shall go out with great fury to destroy and annihilate many.***

***But news from the east and the north shall trouble him*** – “He will hear something from those quarters that will disarrange all his other plans, or that will summon him forth to his last and final expedition” (Barnes, vol. 2, p. 250).

***45. And he shall plant the tents of his palace between the seas and the glorious holy mountain; yet he shall come to his end, and no one will help him.***

***Between the seas and the glorious holy mountain*** – Nobody can say for certain where this is. Commentators have many ideas but are not certain.

Some sites suggested are between the:

Dead Sea and the Mediterranean Sea,

Dead Sea and the Persian Gulf,

Caspian Sea and the Euxine Seas or the

Caspian Sea and the Persian Gulf.

**No one will help him** – “None shall save his life; none shall rescue him out of his danger. That is, he would certainly die, and his plans of evil would thus be brought to a close” (Barnes, vol. 2, p. 253).

## 6. THE GREAT PRINCE ..... 12:1-3

“It will contribute to a right understanding of this chapter to remember, that it is a part of the one vision or prophecy which was commenced in ch. x, and that the whole three chapters (x., xi., xii.) should be read together” (Barnes, vol. 2, p. 254).

**12:1 “At that time Michael shall stand up, the great prince who stands watch over the sons of your people; and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation, even to that time. And at that time your people shall be delivered, every one who is found written in the book.”**

**At that time** – the period referred to in chapter eleven.

**Michael shall stand up** – he shall give aid. Again, as before, this is spiritual warfare not physical. Michael will not actually physically stand upon the earth.

“It is clear that we may not limit the help on the part of Michael to the help which he renders to the saints of God in the last war and struggle, but that he stands by them in all wars against the world-power and its princes, and helps them to victory” (Keil, p. 480).

**The great prince** – Michael, not the Messiah as some religions teach.

**There shall be a time of trouble** – because of the actions of the king of the North.

**2. And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, some to shame and everlasting contempt. 3. Those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the firmament, and those who turn many to righteousness like the stars forever and ever.**

**Many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake** – “Deliverance for some at least will come via resurrection. They are then a *vindicated* people, for though they may forfeit their lives in the time of suffering, their resurrection will prove to be their deliverance and more than that – an act of God’s defiance to the ungodly ‘terminators’ of this age” (Davis, p. 163).

**Some to everlasting life, some to shame and everlasting contempt** – “Yet resurrection in itself is not deliverance . . . resurrection day will also be division day” (Davis, p. 163).

“The salvation of the people, which the end shall bring in, consists accordingly in the consummation of the people of God by the resurrection of the dead and the judgment dividing the pious from the godless, according to which the pious shall be raised to eternal life, and the godless shall be given up to everlasting shame and contempt. But the leaders of the people who amid the wars and conflicts of this life, have turned many to righteousness, shall shine in the imperishable glory of heaven” (Keil, p. 484).

Compare 1 Corinthians 3:5-17.

**F. THE TIME OF THE END ..... 12:4-13**

**1. DANIEL COMMANDED TO SEAL UP THE BOOK .....12:4**

**12:4 “But you, Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book until the time of the end; many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall increase.”**

**Shut up the words** – in other words Daniel is to guard, preserve and protect these words which have been revealed to him by God.

**Seal the book** – in order to preserve the book.

“The written revelation of God is in the world, but men heed it not. Instead, they look for knowledge where it is not to be found” (Young, p. 258).

**Until the time of the end** – this is when the Lord shall return to settle all accounts.

**Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall increase** – “To and fro” has intensity attached to its meaning and therefore promises progress in their understanding of this message.

This is God’s pattern in the use of scripture – immersion in the study of it brings insight and understanding of His true meaning.

However, immersion in our study of scripture does not insure an accurate understanding of it. We must approach the study of scripture without any preconceived notions.

We must study scripture to find out what God is saying, not to confirm what we already believe it says.

We must abandon all denominational ideas, we must speak where the Bible speaks and be silent where the Bible is silent.

We must *restore* God’s meaning to the scripture not *reform* it to mean what we want it to mean.

“The passage looks forward to a higher and more important event than any that occurred in the times of the Maccabees—to the general resurrection of the dead, of the just and the unjust and to the final glory of the righteous” (Barnes, vol. 2, p. 263).

## 2. DANIEL RECEIVES LAST INSTRUCTIONS ..... 12:5-12

**5. Then I, Daniel, looked; and there stood two others, one on this riverbank and the other on that riverbank. 6. And one said to the man clothed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, “How long shall the fulfillment of these wonders be?” 7. Then I heard the man clothed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand and his left hand to heaven, and swore by Him who lives forever, that it shall be for a time, times, and half a time; and when the power of the holy people has been completely shattered, all these things shall be finished.**

**He held up his right hand and his left hand to heaven** – it appears the angel, by raising both hands, is making a very solemn pledge.

**The power of the holy people has been completely shattered** – this tells us that the people of God will seemingly be completely weakened as the end approaches.

This is needed because men seem to refuse to have a desire to depend wholly on God and not themselves.

As long as men think they can depend on themselves it is impossible for them to lean totally on God for anything, especially their salvation.

**8. Although I heard, I did not understand. Then I said, “My lord, what shall be the end of these things?” 9. And he said, “Go your way, Daniel, for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end.**

“The reason for this command is stated in the fact that the words are preserved in security against destruction so that they may be read and understood at the time of their fulfillment. It is not necessary that Daniel himself should understand the answer to his question, for it does not have immediate application to him” (Young, p. 260).

“God in His infinite wisdom has revealed to us only that which it is needful for us to have in order that we may know what He requires of us” (Young, pp. 260-261).

**10. Many shall be purified, made white, and refined, but the wicked shall do wickedly; and none of the wicked shall understand, but the wise shall understand.**

“Though in a measure tribulation befalls also the wicked, they on their part shall not profit thereby but shall continue to ‘practice wickedness’” (Leupold, p. 544).

This is brought out very clearly in the book of Revelation.

Sin prevents a clear perception of God’s truth, evil men have no proper view of the plans and purposes of God (Barnes, vol. 2, pp. 268-269).

**11. “And from the time that the daily sacrifice is taken away, and the abomination of desolation is set up, there shall be one thousand two hundred and ninety days.**

**One thousand two hundred and ninety days** – “these numbers are to be interpreted symbolically. They do refer to the times of Antiochus, that period of Israel’s sore trial. The turning aside of the continual sacrifice and the abomination clearly seem to indicate this” (Keil as noted by Young, p. 263).

**12. Blessed is he who waits, and comes to the one thousand three hundred and thirty-five days.**

**Blessed is he who waits** – these blessings are promised in both the physical and spiritual realms:

Physical – “But he who endures to the end shall be saved” (Mt 24:13).

Spiritual – “And you will be hated by all for My name’s sake. But he who endures to the end shall be saved” (Mt 10:22).

So what are we to understand about these two numbers (1,290 and 1,335)?

“The most notable characteristic of the number 1,335 days, is that it is larger than 1,290. If then one makes it to the 1,335 days, he or she has outlasted the 1,290. They outlast the pressure, the persecution, the pain – they have gone through and beyond the trouble (cf. Mk 13:13; Heb 10:36). The numbers may baffle us but the way they are used here simply implies that Yahweh has a people who will make it in spite of everything thrown at them” (Davis, p. 167).

**3. DANIEL ASSURED IN CONSOLATION OF HOPE . . . . .12:13**

**13. “But you, go your way till the end; for you shall rest, and will arise to your inheritance at the end of the days.”**

**But you, go your way till the end** – the idea is to go on living in the same manner as you have been.

“Thus the book closes with a ringing note of victory - also a comfort for troublous times” (Leupold, p. 549).

“So, what if you, like Daniel, are not one of the heroic faithful near the end? What if you never live to encounter the final edition of the antichrist? What if you don’t go through the ‘shattering’ of the power of the holy people? Are you then deficient? Is yours a second-class experience? Rather, do you not have all you need? Your duty is clear and your future is settled. Is that not enough? If your Lord says to you, ‘And you will rest and will stand in your allotted place at the end of the days’, isn’t that about all you really need?” (Davis, pp. 168-169).

## KINGS OF THE NORTH AND THE SOUTH

### NORTH (BABYLON – SYRIA)

Daniel 11:5

1. Seleucus I Nicator (Victor).  
312-280 B.C. (Dan 11:5)
2. Antiochus I Soter (Savior).  
280-261 B.C.

Daniel 11:6

3. Antiochus II Theos (God).  
261-246 B.C.

Wife – Laodice

Daniel 11:7

Sons 1) Seleucus Callinicus  
2) Antiochus

Daniel 11:9

4. Seleucus II Callinicus (The Gloriously  
Triumphant).  
246-221 B.C.

Daniel 11:10

Sons 1) Seleucus Ceraunus  
2) Antiochus The Great

5. Seleucus III Ceraunus (Thunderbolt)  
226-223 B.C. (assassinated).

### SOUTH (EGYPT)

Daniel 11:5

1. Ptolemy I Soter (Savior).  
323-285 B.C. (Dan 11:5)
2. Ptolemy II Philadelphus (Brother-  
love).  
285-247 B.C. (Dan 11:6)

(Daughter Bernice)

Daniel 11:7-8

3. Ptolemy III Euergetes (Welldone)  
246-221 B.C.

(Brother of Bernice)

## NORTH (BABYLON – SYRIA)

Daniel 11:10

6. Antiochus III The Great  
223-187 B.C.

(Daughter Cleopatra)

Daniel 11:20

7. Seleucus IV Philopater (Lover of his father).  
187-175 B.C.

Daniel 11:21

8. Antiochus IV (Illustrious)

Invasion of Egypt – wins battle of  
171 B.C. (captures Ptolemy VI).

Daniel 11:22-24

Invasion of Egypt – successful c. 170 B.C.

Daniel 11:25-28

Invasion of Egypt – convinced by Roman  
consul C. Popollius Laenas to withdraw  
from Alexandria.

Daniel 11:29-30

Antiochus turns against Jerusalem in anger.

Daniel 11:31-35

## SOUTH (EGYPT)

Daniel 11:11-12

4. Ptolemy IV Philopater (Lover of  
his father).  
221-204 B.C.

Daniel 11:14-15

5. Ptolemy V Ephiaphanes  
(Illustrious)  
204-181 B.C.  
5 Years old at the beginning of  
his reign. His character and reign  
deteriorate when faithful minister  
Aristomenes dismissed.

Daniel 11:25-27

6. Ptolemy VI Philometer (Fond of Pelusium  
his mother) (Dan 11:25,26,27).

Mother Cleopatra acts as Queen-  
regent for the first seven years of  
his reign.

(Chamberlin, pp. 15-16)

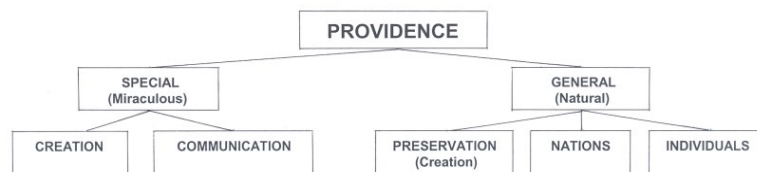
## PROVIDENCE

### I. Defined:

- A. Providence is God's providing for all the needs of all His creation and in the same process bringing all His creation to the ultimate conclusion for which He designed it.
- B. Providence is that continuous agency of God by which he makes all the events of the physical and moral universe fulfill the original design with which he created it (Strong, Systematic Theology, pg. 419).
- C. Providence . . . may be defined, "The solicitous, everywhere powerful, and continued [intuitus] inspection and oversight of God, according to which He exercises a general care over the whole world, and over each of the creatures and their actions and passions, in a manner that is befitting Himself and suitable for His creatures, for their benefit, especially for that of pious men, and for a declaration of the divine perfection" (Arminius, The Works Of James Arminius, Vol. 2 pg. 367).
- D. Providence is God's attention concentrated everywhere. His attention is microscopic as well as telescopic.
- E. God's providence sees the creatures' needs in the future that the creatures do not yet recognize.
- F. "The universe does indeed function on its own to a great extent through dependable natural laws. In fact, if it did not so operate, we could not predict the weather or build airplanes. But God can and does intervene, in a providential way, to answer our prayers and benefit our lives. (We define *providence* as God's non-miraculous manipulation of natural law and circumstances to accomplish his purposes. This should not be thought strange, because man himself manipulates natural forces for his own uses. He takes natural materials (dirt, ore, wood, etc.) and constructs airplanes, radios, and other devices; and in all these operations, the materials themselves obey natural law at all times. If man can use nature to accomplish his purposes, then so can God; and to a greater degree)." [Curtis Cates quoting John Temples, "How Does God Answer Prayer?" Gospel Advocate (July 1, 1982); 397.]
- G. "No situation can exist that God cannot providentially overrule for our good. Consider: (Rom 8:35-39 quoted). So it **is** true, God overrules everything providentially. He overrules the kings of the earth (Rev. 1:5), their kingdoms and the opportunities in them. He providentially guides,

guards and keeps us in every situation of life.” (Andrew M. Connally, The Providence Of God, pp. 487-488)

- H. Biblical teaching does not present the fact of providence as dependent upon our recognition of it.
- II. There is a theory of “general” providence only (deism). Those who hold this theory believe God controls the movement of planets and the destinies of nations, but denies any involvement of God in particular events.
- A. This is a form of deism which holds that God has not removed Himself wholly from involvement in His universe, but has limited Himself to the maintenance of general laws.
  - B. Control over nature and history is impossible without control over every particular (animate or inanimate) which affects either nature or history.
  - C. “We cannot suppose only a general outline to have been in the mind of God, while filling up is left to be done in some other way” (E. G. Robinson as quoted by Strong, pg. 429).
  - D. Incidents so small as to nearly escape notice when they occurred have frequently been found to determine the whole future of one person, and through him or her the fortunes of nations or even an entire era.
- III. Diagramed:



IV. Special or Miraculous providence.

- A. Creation.
  - 1. Creation was the free act of the triune God by which in the beginning He made, without the use of preexisting materials, the whole universe (Strong, p. 371).
  - 2. “Creation is not a fashioning of preexisting materials, nor an emanation from the substance of Deity, but is a making of that to exist which once did not exist, either in form or substance” (Strong, p. 372).

3. Scriptures – Gen 1:26; Psa 135:6; Jer 18:6; Rev 4:11.

B. Definition of the word Miracle.

1. Creation itself was a miracle in that God created the universe and all that is in it from nothing.
2. Other than creation a miracle is defined as – Something within nature and obeying all the rules of nature was acted upon and changed by God from outside of nature and at the conclusion of the miracle the thing changed existed again within nature and obeyed all the rules of nature.
3. The performing of miracles has ceased. God no longer does miracles (1 Cor 13:8-13).

C. Communication.

1. Direct – “God, who at various times and in different ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds” (Heb 1:1,2).
2. Indirect – “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 complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work” (2 Tim 3:16,17).
3. Confirmation – “And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples which are not written in this book; but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name (Jn 20:30,31).

A close study of all miracles recorded in the Bible will show they were performed to confirm what God had spoken or to affirm that He is the only God and thus is to be obeyed and worshiped according to His decrees.

V. General or Natural providence.

A. Preservation of creation.

1. “Preservation is that continuous agency of God by which he maintains in existence the things he has created, together with the

properties and powers with which he has endowed them” (Strong, p. 410).

2. God’s preservation of the universe is His own free choice and action. God was free to create or not create therefore He is free to continue or not continue to preserve all things in being.
3. God is the primal cause of all things. In this created order myriads of billions of secondary causes are every moment occurring, all sustained “by His word of power” - Heb 1:3 (Oden, Vol. 1, p. 281).
4. God and nature are not mutually exclusive, nature is a method of God’s working.
5. “The Scriptures say more about God’s work in providence than about his work in creation. They show that God exercises sovereign rule over all the physical universe, over plant and animal creation, over the nations of the earth, and over all individuals.
  - (a) “Over the physical universe. Scripture indicates that God controls all the physical universe. Sunshine (Matt. 5:45), wind (Ps. 147:18), lightning (Job 38:25,35), rain (Job 38:26; Matt. 5:45), thunder (1 Sam. 7:10), waters (Ps. 147:18), hail (Ps. 148:8), ice (Job 37:10), snow (Job 37:6; 38:22), and frost (Ps. 147:16) are all subject to his bidding. The heavenly bodies, such as the sun (Matt. 5:45) and the stars (Job 38:31-33), obey his will. The mountains are moved (Job 9:5), the earth quakes (Job 9:6), and the ground yields her increase (Acts 14:17) at his mandate. He uses the beneficent elements as expressions of his goodness and love, the destructive as instruments of discipline and punishment. Men should, therefore, humble themselves in the times of physical visitation and pray to him who has all the elements in his power.
  - (b) “Over the plant and animal creation. Every living creation is in the hand of God (Job 12:10). God provides for and controls all plants (Jonah 4:6; Matt. 6:28-30), fowl (Matt. 6:26; 10:29), beasts (Ps. 104:21,27f.; 147:9), and fish (Jonah 1:17; Matt. 17:27)” (Thiessen, pp. 123).
6. What preservation is not.
  - (a) “Preservation is not creation, for preservation presupposes creation. That which is preserved must already exist, and must have come into existence by the creative act of God.

- (b) “Preservation is not a mere negation of action, or a refraining to destroy, on the part of God. It is a positive agency by which, at every moment, he sustains the persons and the forces of the universe.
- (c) “Preservation implies a natural concurrence of God in all operations of matter and mind. Though personal beings exist and God’s will is not the sole force, it is still true that, without his concurrence, no person or force can continue to exist or act” (Strong, p. 411).

B. Providence among nations.

“God ‘rules over the nations’ (Ps. 22:28). He increases and destroys them (Job 12:23), observes and judges them (Ps. 66:7), establishes and dethrones rulers (Dan. 2:37-39; 4:25), sets national boundaries (Acts 17:26), and uses nations and their rulers in the exercise of his will (Isa. 7:20; 10:5-15; 45:1-4). ‘There is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God’ (Rom. 13:1)” (Thiessen, p. 123).

Also see Jer 18:7-10; Lk 1:52.

C. Providence among individuals.

1. “Over all areas of each man’s existence. (1) Over the birth, career, and death of men. God is actively involved before one is yet born (Ps. 139:16; Jer. 1:5) and works out his purposes in one’s life (1 Sam. 16:1; Gal. 1:15f.). This is the case whether one recognizes it or not (Isa. 45:5; Esth. 4:14). God provides for man’s needs (Matt. 5:45; 6:25-32; Acts 14:17) and determines the time and circumstances of man’s death (Deut. 32:49f.; John 21:19; 2 Tim. 4:6-8). (2) Over the successes and failures of men. The Lord promotes and demotes people (Ps. 75:7), puts down princes and exalts the lowly (Luke 1:52), makes rich and makes poor (1 Sam. 2:6-8). He is involved in the very thinking process of man (Prov. 21:1). (3) Over the most trivial of circumstances. He is concerned with the sparrow, and more so the hairs of our head (Matt. 10:29f.). He determines the way the lot falls (Prov. 16:33). He even gives and withholds sleep (Esth. 6:1). (4) Over the needs of people. He cares for his own (1 Pet. 5:7), gives safety (Ps. 4:8), protects (Ps. 121:3), provides good (Ps. 5:12), sustains (Ps. 63:8), supplies needs (Phil. 4:19), and in general makes all things work out for good for those who love him (Rom. 8:28). ‘For from old they have not heard nor perceived by ear, neither has the eye seen a God besides Thee, Who acts in behalf of the one who waits for Him’

(Isa. 64:4). (5) Over the destinies of the saved and unsaved. He will bring the believer through this life to glory (Ps. 73:24), and, though he fall, the Lord will uphold him (Ps. 37:23f.), but judgment shall come from the Lord upon the unbeliever (Ps. 11:6). (6) Over the free acts of men. He worked in the hearts of the Egyptians to do his bidding (Exod. 12:36), and likewise in the hearts of David (1 Sam. 24:18), Artaxerxes (Ezra 7:27), the believer (Phil. 2:13), the king (Prov. 21:1), even men (Jer. 10:23). ‘The plans of the heart belong to man, but the answer of the tongue is from the Lord’ (Prov. 16:1)” (Thiessen, pp. 123-124).

2. “Of His providence these things are true: 1. Man lives under the natural order, subject to all natural laws, and consequences: blessings, accidents, suffering, death. 2. The natural order is adapted to the moral and spiritual training of free beings (Job; James 1:2-5; 1 Peter 1:5,6). 3. God has the power of guiding free beings from above without interfering with their freedom; this includes nations and individuals. 4. God can directly alter the course of events if He will, in answer to human prayer, or without it” (Quoted by Hailey, p. 116, from An Outline of Christian Theology. Wm. N. Clark, pp. 148-152).
3. “God plainly affirms that men should trust Him (Prov. 3:3-5). . . It teaches (1) that one is to trust in the Lord with all of his heart (that is, without reservation), (2) that one is not to lean upon his own understanding (one is not to substitute mere human doctrine for divine doctrine, cf: Gal. 1:6-9; II John 9-11), (3) one is to acknowledge God (obey Him, be submissive to Him) in all – not merely a few which one might especially like – of His ways (cf: the life of Paul, Phil. 1:20-21), and (4) as a result, God will direct one’s path. This is the ‘*special*’ providence of God. Thus, it is clear that men are to believe that God both can and will do what He has said He will do. Further, men must be wise and loving enough to do what He has told us to do (John 14:15,21; I John 5:3). Every man who does these things will be doing what is best for himself. This is the case because doing such brings him under the saving power of the blood of Christ (Rom. 5:7-8; 8:1-5; II Tim. 4:1-8; et. al.). During the Christian age (since the first day of Pentecost after the resurrection of Christ, Acts 2), God’s special providence is directed in a special way at faithful Christians (especially in answer to their prayers) and also to unfaithful Christians in efforts to bring them to repentance. Also, it must be noted that, while no alien sinner can be saved without learning the gospel of Christ, the providence of God works (non-miraculously) in their lives to bring them to see and obey the truth” (Thomas B. Warren in The Providence Of God, p. 55).

4. “The teaching of providence is much closer to the daily life of the believer than at first might be supposed. It is interwoven with the power and courage to live the Christian life day by day, to persevere through trying difficulties, to celebrate divine guidance present in hostile environments. It is faith in providence that enables Christians to pray that God will carry them through hazards, care for them, and be present to them amid ordinary and extraordinary human struggles. Without God’s providing, the act of praying would be absurd” (Augustine, Of The Work of Monks 31-37, *NPNF* 1 III, pp. 518-21 as quoted by Oden, p. 271).
5. “God’s care embraces all of life’s circumstances. Nothing is governed finally by fate or absolute chance. Human free will has room to play in history, but it cannot overrule God’s purposes: ‘A man’s heart may be full of schemes, but the Lord’s purpose will prevail’ (Prov. 19:22)” (Oden, p. 293).
6. “God uses his control over the laws of nature, to bring about special effects. Men in sickness, in danger, or in any distress, pray to God for help. This is not irrational. It supposes God’s relation to the world to be precisely what it is declared to be in the Bible. It does not suppose that God sets aside or counteracts the laws of nature; but simply that He controls them and causes them to produce whatever effects He sees fit” (C. Hodge, p. 609).
7. “God has not made us interpreters of His providences except for ourselves; and even much of that which we sincerely believe comes to us in a graciously providential manner we can well afford to keep as a sacred secret between ourselves and our God, seeing that God has not furnished us with any means of absolutely proving that what has happened to us might not have happened, under similar circumstances, even to sinful man” (ISBE, p. 2485).
8. “Early in his letter to Rome, Paul had conceived of God’s caring and providing activity manifesting itself through law, conscience, and nature, so that everyone has reason enough already to know and recognize the providence of God, so much so that our repeated failures to recognize it are inexcusable (Rom 1:20)” (Oden, p. 308).
9. “When man does his part, according to God’s Word, then God, in fashion as a Father, provides for the necessities of man that best suit his (man’s) needs under the Lord’s watchcare. The constant goal in such providential care is the eternal salvation of the soul involved” (Joseph Meador in The Providence Of God, p. 331).

10. God's providence in relation to sin.
- a. "It is not God that causes sin, but rather it is human freedom, which is a good but distortable creation of God, that elicits sin. We do the sinning ourselves; God does not do it. It is not sin with which God cooperates, but human freedom" (Oden, p. 284).
  - b. God's providence with respect to men's evil acts is described in Scripture as four sorts: (a) Preventive, — God by his providence prevents sin which would otherwise be committed. Gen 20:6; 31:24; Ps 19:13; Hos 2:6. (b) Permissive, — God's permissive providence is simply the negative act of withholding impediments from the path of the sinner, instead of preventing his sin by the exercise of divine power. Ps 81:12,13; Acts 14:16; Rom 1:24,28. (c) Directive, — God directs the evil acts of men to ends unforeseen and unintended by the agents. Gen 50:20; Acts 4:27,28; Isa 10:5; Jn 13:27. (d) Determinative, — God determines the bounds reached by the evil passions of his creatures, and the measure of their effects. Since moral evil is a germ capable of indefinite expansion, God's determining the measure of its growth does not alter its character or involve God's complicity with the perverse wills which cherish it. 2 Thess 2:7; Job 1:12 cf: 2:6; Ps 124:2; 1 Cor 10:13; Rev 20:2,3. (Strong, pp. 423-425).
  - c. How is God related to man's sinful acts? This can be answered in four ways. (1) Often God restrains man from the sin which man intends to do. This is called preventative providence. God said to Abimelech, "I also kept you from sinning against Me; therefore I did not let you touch her" (Gen 20:6). David prayed, "Also keep back thy servant from presumptuous sins; let them not rule over me" (Ps 19:13; cf: Mt 6:13). God has promised not to allow the believer to be tempted above what he can bear (1 Cor 10:13). (2) God, instead of actively restraining man from doing evil, will sometimes permit sin to take its course. This is called permissive providence. In Hosea 4:17, God said, "Ephraim is joined to idols; let him alone." God "permitted all the nations to go their own ways" (Acts 14:16; cf: 2 Chron 32:31; Ps 81:12; Rom 1:24, 26, 28). (3) Further, God uses directive providence. He allows evil, but directs the way it goes. Jesus said to Judas, "What you do, do quickly" (Jn 13:27). Those involved in the crucifixion of Christ did what God predetermined to occur (Acts 2:23; 4:27f.). Man's intent was

evil, but God used this evil intent to accomplish his will. God uses the wrath of man to praise him (Ps 76:10; cf: Isa 10:5-15). (4) Finally, God, through restrictive providence, determines the limits to which evil and its effects may go. He said to Satan, "Behold, all that he has is in your power, only do not put forth your hand on him" (Job 1:12; cf: 2:6; 1 Cor 10:13; 2:6; 2 Thess 2:7; Rev 20:2f.). (Thiessen, pp. 124-125).

- d. Not only do the Scriptures teach that the holy angels have access to this world, that they are "ministering spirits sent forth to do service for the sake of them that shall inherit salvation," and that they guard and keep the Lord's people (Heb 1:14; Ps 91:11,12 [of Jesus]). They also teach that the Devil and other fallen spirits or demons have access to this world and that they tempt and corrupt human beings so far as they are able (Gen 3:1-15; Lk 8:12). Although invisible to our eyes, good and bad spirits are constantly about us. (Boettner, p. 67).
- e. "The good that may ensue to good men from the evil conduct of the wicked is certainly not due to the intrinsic power in sin to work good to those against whom it is maliciously directed; it can only be due to the fact that God overrules it for the good of the innocent (Gen 50:20)" (ISBE, p. 2484).
- f. "God is constantly resisting, constraining, limiting, and working to prevent the consequences of sin from inordinately undermining God's larger purposes. God would never allow sin finally to frustrate or overcome God's good purpose in creation" (Oden, p. 285).

## SYMBOLIC USE OF NUMBERS

- 3 – The perfect divine number (the Father, Son and Holy Spirit).
- 4 – The perfect world number - the 4 corners of the earth, or the 4 directions (North, East, West, South - we get our word “news” from these directions).
- 5 – Some feel this represented the number of fingers or toes. If a person had all 5 fingers on a hand it was complete.
- 6 – The number of man - 6 was a sinister number, it was just short of perfection (7), It means defeat when success was just in reach, it had the ability to be great but but fell short.
- 7 – Expresses perfection when combining the meanings of numbers 3 and 4 (7 Spirits, 7 lampstands, 7 stars, 7 churches).
- 10 – If a person had all 10 fingers (or toes) it showed completeness, fullness (notice the 10 Commandments).
- 12 – Stands for organized religion in its completeness (12 tribes of Israel, 12 apostles, 12 gates to the Holy City here in Revelation). It was arrived at by the multiplication of the perfect world number by the perfect number of deity ( $4 \times 3 = 12$ ).
- 70 – The sacred number 7 multiplied by the complete number 10 equals a very sacred number (70 members of the Jewish high court, 70 translators of the Greek Old Testament).
- 666 – The number of absolute imperfection.
- 1,000 – Absolute total completeness ( $10 \times 10 \times 10$ ).
- 144,000 – Absolute completeness physically and spiritually ( $12 \times 12 \times 10 \times 10 \times 10$ ).
- $3\frac{1}{2}$  – The perfect number (7) cut in half, stood for indefinite, incomplete, dissatisfied. Sometimes stated as “a time, times, and a half time;” as “42 months” or as “1,260 days” ( $3\frac{1}{2}$  times 360 days).

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revision: 08-2019