

mentioned in the beginning of this introduction for their fulfillment. One more remark that should be made before taking up the several verses is that the various chapters and events of the book are not always chronological as to the years of their occurrence. Attention will be called to any such variation as each case comes up wherever it is thought necessary for clearness.

Verse 1. *Third year* should be considered in connection with 2 Kings 24: 1. It seems that Jehoiakim had formed some kind of mutual agreement with Babylon but that he broke that relationship after three years. That brought Nebuchadnezzar against Jerusalem with an army and that was the beginning of the "first captivity" which means the first stage of the noted 70-year exile. In Jeremiah 25: 1 this event is said to have occurred in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, which might be confusing at first thought. However, if a thing takes place at the end of a man's third year, it could be thought of as as happening in his fourth year since the term third and fourth are just that indefinite in their force.

Verse 2. *The Lord gave* shows that Nebuchadnezzar's advance against Jerusalem was by the decree of God. The account in 2 Kings 24: 3, 4 goes farther than this verse and tells why it was done, that it was because of the sins that the nation had committed. This event was not intended to cause the complete ruin of Jerusalem, for it says that the king of Babylon took *part* of the vessels of the Lord's house with him.

Verse 3. The first *king* means Nebuchadnezzar and the next is Jehoiakim. *Ashpenaz* was an important servant under the king of Babylon, whose specific duty was to oversee the other servants or any others who might become subject to the king. This man was told by his master to bring from Jerusalem to Babylon some of the *king's seed*. That does not mean exclusively his bodily offspring, for we shall see that others were taken. But it includes men near the king within the royal family, and also some of his *princes* which means outstanding men in his service.

Verse 4. The terms Chaldeans and Babylonians may be used interchangeably for all practical purposes, although the latter is nowhere used in the book of Daniel. For the information of the readers I shall quote from

three works of reference: "The Chaldeans were a Semitic [descended from Shem] people who passed into Babylonia from the south, and occupied the whole seacoast region of South Babylonia."—Funk and Wagnalls, New Standard Bible Dictionary, article Chaldaea. "In the Old Testament, from the time of Jeremiah and the establishment of the new Babylonian Empire under Nabopolassar and Nebuchadnezzar, the terms Chaldeans and Chaldees denote the inhabitants of Babylonia, or the subjects of the Babylonian Empire."—Schaff-Herzog Encyclopaedia, article Chaldeans. "It appears that the Chaldeans were in the earliest times merely one out of the many Cushite tribes inhabiting the great alluvial plain known afterwards as Chaldea or Babylonia. Their special seat was probably that southern portion of the country which is found to have so late retained the name of Chaldea. In process of time, as the *Kaldi* grew in power, their name gradually prevailed over those of other tribes inhabiting the country; and by the era of the Jewish captivity it had begun to be used generally for all the inhabitants of Babylonia. It appears that while, both in Assyria and in later Babylonia, the Semitic type of speech prevailed for civil purposes, the ancient Cushite dialect was retained, as a learned language for scientific and religious literature. This is no doubt the 'learning' and the 'tongue' to which reference is made in the book of Daniel, 1: 4. The Chaldeans were really the learned class; they were priests, magicians or astronomers, and in the last of the three capacities they probably effected [accomplished] discoveries of great importance. In later times they seem to have degenerated into mere fortune-tellers."—Smith's Bible Dictionary, article, Chaldeans. When considering the subject from a political or national standpoint the two terms are used interchangeably and I trust the reader will keep that truth in mind. When some special personal characteristics are under consideration, the Chaldeans will be spoken of as a distinct group of people. Hence in this verse we see the reference to these special subjects which Nebuchadnezzar wished to develop in the lives of the Jews who had been selected out from the general population in Jerusalem. The mental qualifications were not the only points the king wished these Jews to have. Their bodies were to be without blemish and they were to be well favored.

The last word is from *MAREH* which Strong defines, "A view (the act of seeing); also an appearance (the thing seen), whether (real) a shape (especially if handsome, comeliness; often plural the looks), or (mental) a vision." The Babylonian king instructed his chief servant to select some Jews who already possessed these traits of mind and body, then he purposed to develop them further by a schedule of special diet.

Verse 5. The schedule as to their bodies consisted of a special provision of food and drink taken out of the store that was brought in for the king's personal use. Having been selected for the special use of the monarch, these articles of diet were supposed to possess unusual qualities for the developing of bodily strength and appearance. This schedule was to be followed for three years after which the men were to be presented to the king for his approval.

Verse 6. This verse tells us that Daniel was taken to Babylon at the "first captivity," that means the first stage of the noted 70-year exile.

Verse 7. This *prince of the eunuchs* must have been allowed a considerable amount of authority, for he took the liberty of changing the names of Daniel and his three companions, or at least of giving them names in addition to the ones they had. These companions of Daniel are the familiar "Three Hebrew Children" who are so often referred to in the stories of heroes of the Bible.

Verse 8. Daniel knew that Nebuchadnezzar was an idolater and that a portion of the royal provisions was given over to consecrate the idol in connection with the feasts. For this reason his conscience would not consent for him to take part in the false religion by accepting the food. He requested the prince to be excused from partaking.

Verse 9. The prince of the eunuchs was responsible for the development of these specially-chosen men, and he would naturally be unwilling to grant to Daniel the exemption requested. But God took a hand in the matter and caused him to have a tender love for Daniel which led him at least to be personally disposed to favor him.

Verse 10. *Sort* means age, and the prince was fearful lest Daniel should not look as well as the others of his age if he were permitted to abstain from the diet provided for him. Of

course that would endanger the life of the man who was made responsible for the welfare of the prisoners allotted to him. He made this protest to Daniel who was reasonable enough to see the position the prince was in, and he seems to have said nothing more to him on that matter.

Verse 11. But the prince of the eunuchs had placed the actual work of providing the food in charge of a steward named Melzar. As far as the record informs us, the prince of the eunuchs saw no more of Daniel and his companions until the time for their appearance before the king. He left the task of serving the food to this steward Melzar.

Verse 12. Daniel's proposition was fair to all parties concerned, for, regardless of the success or failure of the diet he requested, it could not have any ill effect that would show up after three years. On the other hand, his faith in his God was so strong he was certain that such a period would be sufficient to bring about the desired effect. It might be asked if the Lord could not have accomplished the same result in one day. True, he could have done so, but had the transformation been made in one day, the steward would have known that it was not the effect of the diet, and that would have caused an investigation which might have interfered with Daniel's plans. And yet a period of ten days would be enough to expect some results from the schedule of diet used. *Pulse* is sometimes defined as seeds of any kind of vegetables, and in some lexicons it is defined simply as a vegetable food. Since the heathen always used animals in their sacrifices, Daniel knew he would be safe if his diet was restricted to vegetables.

Verse 13. Daniel was willing to leave the decision to the steward. At the end of the ten-day period he was to compare the *countenances* (from same word as "favoured" in verse 4) of him and his three companions with those who ate of the king's food.

Verse 14. The steward agreed to the test proposed by Daniel.

Verse 15. As it was doubtless expected by the reader, the test came out as Daniel wished. One word in the definition for *fatter* is "plump," and *fairer* means "beautiful." I am sure the reader will give the Lord full credit for this favorable experience of the four faithful Hebrews. It was an instance of the assurance God had given, that while all citizens of Judah

had to share in the national calamity of the captivity, the individuals who were righteous would be given special favors from God even though they were in a strange land. The apparent disagreement of some statements on this subject is explained in a long note given with comments on 2 Kings 22: 17, in volume 2 of this Commentary.

Verse 16. Seeing the results of the test, Melzar removed the food that had been taken from the king's supplies, and permitted Daniel to continue with his vegetable diet throughout the period of three years that was appointed by the king for the test.

Verse 17. In acquiring the physical developments desired the *four children* could co-operate with God since it included the partaking of food. In the mental advancement they had no opportunity for their own activity because they were being put through the trial to test out their appearance in body. But God wished them to be as well qualified in mind as in body when the time of their appearance before the king arrived, hence He gave them all those talents as a direct gift.

Verse 18. *End of the days* means after three years (verse 5). It was then time for the prince of the eunuchs to act since he was next to the king with regard to his rank as a servant. Accordingly he brought Daniel and his three companions before Nebuchadnezzar for his official "review."

Verse 19. *The king communed with them* indicates that Nebuchadnezzar was not interested only in the bodily appearance of his captives, for that could have been observed without any conversation. This communication proved to the king that Daniel and his companions excelled all the others who appeared before him.

Verse 20. There is very little difference between the meaning of *wisdom* and *understanding*. The latter could be regarded as knowledge and the former as the ability to use the knowledge rightly. Like the two words italicized above, the words *magicians* and *astrologers* differ very little in their meaning. They both refer to persons who pretend to acquire knowledge of the past, present and future by the relative position of the stars either to each other, or to men and things on the earth. The wisdom manifested by Daniel and his three companions was ten times better than that possessed by all the so-called wise men of Babylon.

Verse 21. *Continued* is from HAYAH which Strong defines, "To exist, i.e. be or become, come to pass." The verse means that Daniel lived to see the end of the Babylonian captivity, not that he did not live any longer. It is significant that the man who was among the first to be taken to Babylon, and who gave prophecies that they would finally be released, should live to see the fulfillment of that prediction. It was in the *first year of king Cyrus* that the Jews were released (Ezra 1: 1-4).

DANIEL 2

Verse 1. Paul says that God spoke in times past to the fathers by the prophets (Hebrews 1: 1) and that He did it at sundry times and in diverse manners. And we also know that He delivered messages to heathen men by dreams and visions and various signs. Thus we now have an instance of it in this chapter, and the king of Babylon is the person who was caused to have a dream. This date is definitely given, the second year of the king's reign which was also the second year of the Jewish captivity. A dream comes to a man in his sleep, but this verse says that Nebuchadnezzar's sleep *brake from him*. The situation is understandable, for the dream caused him to awaken, and its mystifying character so worked him up that he was unable to go to sleep again. What added to his worries was the fact that he could not even recall the dream, much less understand its meaning.

Verse 2. As was usual in such cases, the king called for his so-called wise men to help him out of his confusion. Among them the Chaldeans are named in a way that indicates they were a special class of men. See the comments on chapter 1: 4 for information concerning them. The first object in calling for these wise men was that they might *shew the king his dreams* because he had forgotten them.

Verse 3. With the preceding verse in view we understand that *know the dreams* here means to be told what he dreamed. This is indicated also by a statement in verse 5.

Verse 4. *Syriac* was similar to the language spoken by the Jews, and was the common tongue of the court of Babylon. This explains why the wise men used it when speaking to Nebuchadnezzar. They made what they doubtless thought was a reasonable statement, that if the king would tell them his dream they could give the interpretation of it.

Verse 5. But the wise men were not to get off so easily, for they were demanded to tell the king both the dream and its interpretation. The word *dunghill* occurs 6 times in the Old Testament, and when used figuratively means a foul or corrupt condition.

Verse 6. These *gifts* and *rewards* are not to be regarded in the light of bribes, but as legitimate returns for services rendered. These men were subjects of the king and any assistance they could give towards clearing up the confusion their master was undergoing would be proper and would entitle them to some reward.

Verse 7. The men could only repeat their statement of verse 4.

Verse 8. *Gain* is from ZEBAN, which Strong defines, "To acquire by purchase." These men had nothing of purchasing power or value by which literally to obtain more time, so we know the word is used figuratively. The explanation is in the closing words of the verse, *because ye see the thing is gone from me*. In the hope that the king's memory would finally return and he could recall the dream, they kept repeating their suggestion as a means of gaining more time.

Verse 9. *Tell me the dream, and I shall know*. The logic of Nebuchadnezzar was correct, for if these men possessed the superhuman knowledge they professed to have, it would have been as easy to recall the dream as to interpret it. If there was any difference it would have been easier, since the dream was something that had already occurred while the interpretation was in the future. This consideration led the king to doubt the sincerity of all their pretensions of being wise men in the sense that term was used, and it showed him their reason for seeking more time, which is the meaning of *till the time be changed*. *But one decree* means that no change would be made in the decree that was threatened in verse 5.

Verse 10. The statements the wise men made to the king were true, but they disproved their claims to being possessed with superhuman knowledge. It is true that no mere normal man can reveal that which is unknown or hid from humanity, but the Chaldeans professed to be superhuman beings as to their knowledge.

Verse 11. The statements of these Chaldeans shows they believed in the existence of invisible, supernatural be-

ings who did not live among men. It indicates also that these gods possessed knowledge that was never transmitted to men, for they claimed to have knowledge that ordinary men did not have. The gist of the verse is that the king was asking something that was impossible even of men possessing superhuman talents.

Verse 12. However, such a conclusion rested only on the assertion of these men, for no authority was cited for limiting the extent to which these gods could transmit their knowledge to men if they saw fit to do so, hence there was no valid excuse for the failure of these Chaldeans. The king evidently saw this point and concluded that the so-called wise men were frauds as a class and decided to destroy them all.

Verse 13. *Wise men* was a term that designated all men who were looked upon as belonging in the group possessing special talents pertaining to the mind. That is why the executioner of the king's decree sought *Daniel and his fellows*, knowing they had been pronounced even by the king himself as belonging in such a class (chapter 1: 19, 20).

Verse 14. The executioner found Daniel and informed him of the king's decree. Daniel would have been helpless had he tried to resist the actions of the officer, and it would also have been helpless had he tried to resist the actions of the officer, and it would also have been foolish to use any rash language to him, especially since the executioner had no choice in the matter. Instead of such a course, Daniel spoke with *counsel* and *wisdom*, which is defined in the lexicon as "prudence" and "judgment."

Verse 15. So far the executioner had only announced to Daniel the decree of death with which he was provided as he contacted him and his three companions. *Hasty* is from CHATSAPH and Strong defines it, "A primitive root; properly to shear or cut close; figuratively to be severe." This is what shows Daniel's good judgment in his speech to the captain. He did not raise any question as to the authority of the king, nor as to whether none of the so-called wise men were guilty of death. He only asked why the decree was so severe or sweeping in its decision to slay *all* the wise men. This question induced the executioner to tell Daniel the particulars of the situation that ended with the wholesale death sentence from the king.

Verse 16. Having learned that disappointment at failure to obtain the interpretation of his dream was the real cause of the king's action, Daniel requested him to give him the opportunity and he would get the desired information for him. This request of Daniel produced a "stay of execution" for a while.

Verse 17. *Went to his house, and made the thing known.* This indicates that Daniel and his three companions lived together, or at least were together much of the time. That would be a fair conclusion since they were such close companions in tribulation as we shall see in later chapters of this book.

Verse 18. The purpose of telling his companions of the situation was that they unite with him in prayer to God. It is good to observe that his personal safety was not the first consideration as a motive for the prayer, but that God would give him information concerning the secret of the king's dream to relieve the tension holding him. Their escape from the threatened destruction was the next purpose of their prayer.

Verse 19. After this prayer service Daniel retired for the night, and God answered the prayer in a vision. (See Hebrews 1: 1.) The prophet was grateful and blessed the God of Heaven for the vision. This is another instance discussed in the note cited at chapter 1: 15.

Verse 20. This verse continues Daniel's prayer of thanksgiving for the favor of God in giving him the information asked for. He attributes all *wisdom* and *might* to God, and that is more significant than might be realized at first thought. Wisdom would qualify Him to formulate decrees and might would furnish the ability to do them.

Verse 21. *Times* is from *MODAN* which Strong defines, "A set time," and *seasons* is from *ZEMAN* which is defined, "An appointed occasion." It indicates control over periods and arrangements that are supposed to be fixed. The right and ability to replace one king with another was shown in the histories of the books of Samuel and Kings. *Wisdom to the wise* means that God will favor those who show their appreciation for and the judgment to use more wisdom; the same thought is in the words *knowledge* and *understanding* as to God's dispensing of them to men.

Verse 22. The gist of this verse is that there is nothing that is hid from the knowledge of God, hence he is able to expose all secrets.

Verse 23. This verse sums up the powers and favors of God, in giving to Daniel the revelation of the matter that was troubling the king.

Verse 24. Daniel was now ready to make good his word to the king. He got in contact with Arioch who was the king's captain and who was the one to execute the death sentence on the wise men. The unselfishness of Daniel is shown by his desire to save all the wise men of Babylon. He requested a hearing before the king which he expected to be arranged through the services of the captain.

Verse 25. The meeting was arranged without delay and the captain brought Daniel into the presence of the king. He was introduced as one of the Judean captives who had the ability to interpret the king's dream.

Verse 26. In chapter 1: 20 is a statement that might seem to have made the inquiry of the present verse unnecessary. However, that other occasion only pertained to matters supposed to be within the mental qualifications of magicians or astrologers and Chaldeans, and the king had been told that they were not able to solve such a problem as the present situation presented. Now comes this Daniel who, though found in the first interview with him to exceed the other wise men, was yet in their classification. Hence it was consistent to ask him the questions of the present verse.

Verse 27. In his answer to the king, Daniel confirmed the statements of the Chaldeans related in verses 10 and 11, but which did not explain the inconsistency in the pretensions of the wise men to high abilities regarding mysterious subjects.

Verse 28. Daniel is about to fulfill his promise to the king that he would give him the answer to his problem. But before doing so he makes it clear that it will not be through his ability as a soothsayer. It is to be through the wisdom of God in heaven that the vision is to be recalled and explained.

Verse 29. *Thy thoughts came upon thy bed* signifies that Nebuchadnezzar had not seen some image or statue somewhere among the works of men. It was all a mental picture that came to him while asleep and hence was not a material one.

Verse 30. When God revealed this

great secret to Daniel it was not in recognition of any special talents he already possessed; in truth, it was not for any personal consideration of Daniel at all. The word *their* is not authorized by the original and it is in the way of the proper rendering of the passage. The American Standard Version translates the passage, "But to the intent that the interpretation may be made known to the king," and Moffatt's translation and others agree with this rendering.

Verse 31. Daniel will first recall the vision to the king then tell him the interpretation. *Image* is from *TSELEM* which Strong defines, "An idolatrous figure." It was appropriate for the Lord to use such an object for the present purpose since Nebuchadnezzar was a worshiper of idols. *Brightness* has been rendered also by "countenance," and *excellent* is defined in the lexicon by "preeminent." It means that the image had an imposing appearance. *Form* is from a word that means "appearance," and *terrible* means to be dangerous or threatening. This image with its various parts represented the four world empires described or figurized by the "four living creatures" in Ezekiel 1 namely, Babylonian, Medo-Persian, Macedonian and Roman. In our present chapter the Lord saw fit to represent the four governments by a giant of mixed materials in his bodily composition.

Verse 32. Three of the world empires are represented in this verse, using the image down as far as the thighs, which will be shown when Daniel comes with his interpretation of the whole vision.

Verse 33. This verse is very brief, making only a short mention of the materials composing the remainder of the image, which we shall learn represents the fourth and last of the world empires to which reference has been made in verse 31.

Verse 34. The speech of Daniel is still about his recalling what the king saw in his dream. After the image stood before Nebuchadnezzar until its impression of terrible greatness was fastened upon him, another subject mysteriously appeared on the scene. *A stone was cut out*, and verse 45 supplies the word *mountain* which will be explained at that place. This stone was cut out *without hands* which also will be commented upon when we come to studying the interpretation of the vision by Daniel. We will observe only at present that the stone smote

the image on his feet and broke them; more will be said on that later.

Verse 35. The immediate effect of the smiting on the feet by this stone was the crushing of the entire image into powder. It was not only crushed to pieces, but the fragments were blown out of sight as chaff is blown away. *Summer threshingfloors* has reference to an ancient method of threshing grain. The whole straw was piled on the floor in the path of the wind. It was beaten with a flail or trodden by oxen until the grain was forced out of the hull and the whole mass was a mixture of grain and chaff. Then it was scooped up and tossed into the air by an instrument called a winnowing shovel (called "fan" in Matthew 3: 12). The passing breeze blew the chaff away because it was light, and the grain, being heavier, fell back to the ground to be recovered for use or to be stored. It should be noted that *after* this attack was made by the stone, it enlarged until it filled the whole earth.

Verse 36. *Interpretation* is from an original word which Strong defines with the simple phrase, "An interpretation," and neither is it rendered by any other word in the King James version of the Bible.

Verse 37. The description which Daniel gives of Nebuchadnezzar is for the purpose of showing why he should be represented by the most valuable of the materials. *King of kings* means not only that he is king over other rulers, but the phrase has the force of an adjective to describe the greatness of his power. *God of heaven hath given thee* means that the greater power of Nebuchadnezzar was not solely by his personal achievements, but that it was the divine will that he be a great ruler. Neither should we conclude that it was in reward for his personal merit, for this king was an idolater and a wicked man who had to be humbled severely later. But the Almighty had a great scheme of the ages that called for the existence of such a monarch.

Verse 38. *Wheresoever . . . men dwell* is what justifies the term "world power" that has been ascribed to Nebuchadnezzar and his dominions. *Beasts . . . fowls . . . into thine hand.* It helps to arrive at the meaning of a statement to learn first what it does not mean, especially if some explanation has previously been offered that may be incorrect. A popular theory is that when man sinned, God deprived

him of his dominion over the beasts of the field that was given him in Genesis 1: 28, and that it was renewed on behalf of this king. But such a theory is disproved by Genesis 9: 2 where the same dominion is given to man which was after the "fall of man." Also, James 3: 7 declares that "every kind of beasts . . . and serpents . . . is tamed of mankind," and that was in the days of the writer, many centuries after the sin of Adam. So by the process of elimination, the theory mentioned must be rejected which will require us to look for another explanation. The reasonable conclusion is that while God gave man the right to rule over the beasts and birds, the extent of that power was not specified. Hence our verse means that Nebuchadnezzar was given that dominion to a complete degree. It is an indication of the complete co-operation that this heathen king enjoyed with the many units of his vast domain, *Thou art this head of gold* includes Nebuchadnezzar and his kingdom, for when Daniel goes on to the next division of the image he says "another kingdom," which shows that an absolute monarch and his dominions are one unit.

Verse 39. This verse introduces briefly the two world powers that succeeded Nebuchadnezzar. The first is mentioned simply as one *inferior to thee* [Nebuchadnezzar], and the next the prophet calls a *kingdom of brass*, and he says it was to *bear rule over all the earth* which is the reason it is designated as a "world empire" in history. By referring to comments on verse 31 the reader will see that this *kingdom of brass* was the Macedonian, otherwise called the Greek. We have seen in a number of instances the advantage of citing secular history by way of explaining and corroborating the statements of the scriptures, and I shall do that here on the statement that the third kingdom was one of *brass*. "After Psammetichus [an Egyptian ruler] had passed some years there, waiting a favorable opportunity to revenge himself for the affront which had been put upon him, a courier brought his advice, that brazen men had landed in Egypt. These were Grecian soldiers, Carians and Ionians, who had been cast upon the coast of Egypt by a storm, and were completely covered with helmets, cuirasses, and other arms of brass."—Rollin's Ancient History, volume 1, page 223. "Knowing, then, that he [Psammetichus] had been exceedingly injured by them, he entertained the design of

avenging himself on his persecutors; and when he sent to the city of Buto to consult the oracle of Latona, where is the truest oracle that the Egyptians have, an answer came, 'that vengeance would come from the sea, when men of brass should appear.' He, however, was very incredulous that men of brass would come to assist him. But when no long time had elapsed, stress of weather compelled some Ionians and Carians [Greek soldiers], who had sailed out for the purpose of piracy, to bear away to Egypt; and when they had disembarked and were clad in brazen armour, went to the marshes to Psammetichus, and told him that men of brass, having arrived from the sea, were ravaging the plains. He perceiving that the oracle was accomplished, treated these Ionians and Carians in a friendly manner, and having promised them great things, persuaded them to join with him."—Herodotus, Book 2, section 151.

Verse 40. The fourth and last one of the world kingdoms was the Roman Empire which Daniel describes as being *strong as iron*. This does not refer to the extent of territorial position, for all four of the kingdoms in the general prediction were to be known as world powers. The characteristic of iron attributed to the fourth one pertains to its power. On this point I shall quote a paragraph from an authentic work of reference: "The last of the Old World empires was the one having its capital on the seven hills of Rome. Like most of the others, it was the dominion of a single city; but, unlike others, it represented the conquests, not of a single conquering king, as Nebuchadnezzar or Cyrus, but of a SELF-GOVERNING AND CONQUERING PEOPLE; and, unlike its predecessors, it was not a loose aggregation of states, ready to fall apart as soon as the hand that fettered them was removed, but an empire, carefully welded together, building up in every land its own civilization, and developing a national unity which held its possessions together for a thousand years."—Rand-McNally Bible Atlas. Edward Gibbon, author of *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* says of it, "The frontiers of that extensive monarchy were guarded by ancient renown and disciplined valor. The gentle but powerful influence of laws and manners had gradually cemented the union of the provinces."—Chapter 1. The above estimates by the authentic writers fully justify the prediction of Daniel that the fourth kingdom was to be *strong*

as iron, and that it would be able to break in pieces the elements of resistance which might be encountered by it in the world.

Verse 41. The Lord selected the form of a giant man for the imagery of this prediction in the vision of Nebuchadnezzar because it would serve certain features of the subject better. In proceeding along that line we observe a being with ten toes which represents something that was a part of the Roman Empire. It refers to ten of the prominent governmental units that were incorporated within the Empire and that formed a great part of its strength. I shall reserve the more detailed comments on these ten governments until we reach the 7th chapter of this book. *Shall be divided* does not mean organic or bodily division, but was to be composed of two elements.

Verse 42. This verse is much the same as the preceding one, but it adds the statement that the mixture of clay with the iron will cause the kingdom to be partly broken. That is from REBAR and Strong's definition is, "To be fragile." That justifies the rendering of "brittle" that is in the margin of some Bibles, and Moffatt's version renders it by the same word. The thought is that, while the presence of iron will make the kingdom strong, the mixture of clay will force it to have within itself the elements of weakness that will eventually cause it to fall.

Verse 43. *Mixed* and *mingle* both are derived from a word that Strong defines, "A primitive root; to braid, i.e., intermix; technically to traffic (as if by barter); also to give or be security (as a kind of exchange); to commingle." *Cleave* is from DEBAQ which the same lexicon defines, "To stick to." *Seed of men* is from an original that means human posterity, indicating that the "mingling" predicted was to be some human relationship, whether by business and political association, or by intermarriage. The above predictions are fully carried out in the vast historical field pertaining to the Roman Empire. It can be seen that the Roman government and institutional life was infiltrated through the civilized world even in cases where the people did not surrender their personal traits. On the other hand, the Romans were also averse to losing their patriotic identity although they were striving to enlarge the power of Rome through the means of coloniza-

tion. Hence we read in Acts 16: 21 a complaint against the Jews because they "Teach customs, which are not lawful for us to receive, neither to observe, being Romans." In other words, the Roman Empire was eager to enlarge its borders by any means that would accomplish that purpose. That included war, colonization, political and commercial traffic, and marriage. But so particular was the empire to retain its own inherent character that the above relationships did not result in a genuine fusion or merging together of all the personalities that professed to embrace the Roman cause. This created an element of weakness that was destined finally to result in the decay of the empire.

Verse 44. A question that is susceptible of two answers calls for the consideration of both. *These kings* could mean those represented by the ten toes, or the entire four kingdoms represented by the giant man considered as a whole. Both would be correct, but the first is more specific since it was literally in course of the ten smaller divisions of the Roman Empire that the event occurred just here being predicted. One very important item which must not be overlooked is that the mentioned event was to take place while the Roman Empire was in its full power, not after it ceased to be. The great event consisted of the setting up of another kingdom, and its character is indicated by the fact that the God of heaven was to set it up, whereas the four world powers of the image had been set up by man. It would seem scarcely necessary to state that this institution that was to be set up is the church or kingdom of Christ, set up by the God of heaven and delivered to His well beloved Son. *Not left to other people* was said in contrast with these kingdoms of the image, concerning which it was said that one was to come after the other, and history shows that was accomplished by the one in power being given over to another. The kingdom of Christ will have no successor and hence it will stand forever. *Break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms.* Note that it was to destroy all these kingdoms, not just destroy kingdoms. True that is a distinction of only one word, but there is a vast amount of meaning in the distinction, for without it the prediction would be that all temporal governments were to be overthrown by the kingdom of Christ. That not only is not the prediction here, but it would contradict

the teaching of the New Testament. Without taking space by quoting the many lines that are in point, I shall cite references that prove beyond any doubt that Christ endorses and expects man to have his own governments and that His servants are to be in subjection thereto. (See Romans 13: 1-6; 1 Timothy 2: 1-3.) It is an unavoidable conclusion that God would not ask His servants to pray for an institution if the very one of which those servants are members was divinely intended to destroy the one to be prayed for. But the key thought in the noted passage is that the kingdom that God was to set up would destroy *these* kingdoms, which means it would bring about the end of world-wide empires such as the four represented by the giant man. Neither does it mean that the church would destroy such empires by a direct and arbitrary attack on the very existence of such governments, but it was to accomplish that end through the principles of individual responsibility, and the inherent right of all human beings to have a part in their own government, that were to be taught by this kingdom of God and Christ. In proportion as men received this teaching thus offered to them through the kingdom which the *God of heaven* set up, they were to see that world-powers with their stifling of individual rights were improper and they would rebel against them, which would result in their overthrow. Such was the prediction which Daniel made and it was fulfilled according to history and other authentic sources to which the attention of the reader is next invited. I shall first make a quotation from Myers' *Ancient History* (page 495) to show the influence that Christianity had on the Roman Empire. "It was in the midst of the reign of Tiberius that, in a remote province of the Roman Empire, the Saviour was crucified. Animated by an unparalleled missionary spirit, his followers traversed the length and breadth of the empire, preaching everywhere the 'glad tidings.' Men's faith in the gods of the old mythologies, the softening and liberalizing influence of Greek culture, the unification of the whole civilized world under a single government, the widespread suffering and the inexpressible weariness of the oppressed and servile classes,—all these things had prepared the soil for the seed of the new doctrines. In less than three centuries the pagan empire had become Christian not only in name but also very largely in fact. This conver-

sion of Rome is one of the most important events in all history. A new element is here introduced into civilization, an element which has given color and character to the history of all succeeding centuries." The next historical information will be from Edward Gibbon, author of the famous *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*. Gibbon was an infidel and would not write anything with the motive of corroborating the scriptures. But he was an authentic historian, and any testimony that comes from him that is favorable to the claims of the Bible will be valuable. In the first paragraph of his great history is the following statement: "During a happy period of more than fourscore years, the public administration was conducted by the virtue and abilities of Nerva, Trajan, Hadrian, and the two Antonines. It is the design of this, and of the two succeeding chapters, to describe the prosperous condition of their empire; and afterwards, from the death of Marcus Antonius, to deduce the most important circumstances of its decline and fall; a revolution which will ever be remembered, and is still felt by the nations of the earth." (Emphasis mine, E.M.Z.) My purpose in this quotation is to show that the succeeding chapters of Gibbon's work are histories of facts that he regarded as causes of the fall of the Roman Empire, the event that Daniel said was foreshown by the dream of Nebuchadnezzar. Among the causes of that "decline and fall," Gibbon devotes two lengthy chapters (15 and 16) to the "Progress of the Christian Religion," and "The Conduct of the Roman Government Towards the Christians." The mere fact of his devoting these two chapters to an end which he declares is to show the causes of the fall of the Roman Empire is very significant, and impresses us with the truth of Daniel's prediction. However, I deem it helpful to quote from the first paragraph of the 15th chapter: "A candid but rational inquiry into the progress and establishment of Christianity may be considered as a very essential part of the history of the Roman empire. While that great body was invaded by open violence, or undermined by slow decay, a pure and humble religion gently insinuated itself into the minds of men, grew up in silence and obscurity, derived new vigor from opposition, and finally erected the triumphant banner of the Cross on the ruins of the Capitol." In the third paragraph of this 15th chap-

ter is the following: "Our curiosity is naturally prompted to inquire by what means the Christian faith obtained so remarkable a victory over the established religions of the earth. To this inquiry an obvious but satisfactory answer may be returned; that it was owing to the convincing evidence of the doctrine itself, and to the ruling providence of its great Author." The foregoing citations to history are sufficient to show that the principles brought to the world through the church or kingdom of Christ resulted in the downfall of the Roman Empire as predicted by Daniel. That was the fourth of the world-wide empires and it was to be the last. Not that no one would ever desire and try to set up another; Napoleon, the German Kaiser and Hitler thought they could accomplish a universal rule, but all of them failed. And any other man or group of men who attempt to accomplish such a world-wide government are doomed to failure.

Verse 45. *Mountain* is from TAWR and defined in the lexicon, "A rock or hill." Stones are often cut out from a bed of rock by some quarry instrument in the hands of a workman, but this one was seen to be extracted out of a hill of rock and no human worker was visible. The thought is intended to be a contrast with the kingdoms represented by the giant man, which were the productions of man. The stone and the kingdom that the God of heaven was to set up are the same inasmuch as it was said of both that they were to smite and destroy the giant image. Of course the church or kingdom of Christ is not a production of man, hence it was said to have been cut out *without* [human] hands. As *thou sawest* was to recall to Nebuchadnezzar the dream that he had, and since Daniel was able to do this, it was evidence to the king that the prophet knew what he was talking about. That constituted the assurance that both dream and interpretation were decreed by the Lord and would prove to be sure.

Verse 46. It was natural for the king to act as the account shows for gratitude alone would prompt it. And there would not be anything strained about his views of propriety seeing he had never known any kind of religious activities other than those belonging to idolatry which usually involved some priest or other attendant to represent the deity being worshiped. Nebuchadnezzar had forgotten his

dream, but there was nothing to prevent him from remembering it after Daniel recalled it for him. He could not know that the prediction would be fulfilled, but he could know whether the recalling of the dream was correct. He then employed the reasoning he had made with the Chaldeans in verse 9, and concluded that Daniel was a true magician and worthy of devotions. But the record does not say that he accepted them, and we are sure he did not judging from his conduct at other times. Instead, he informed the king that it was not through any superior wisdom that he possessed that he could explain the situation, but that it was by the help of his God. This is indicated by the word *answered* in the following verse which is properly translated.

Verse 47. The king then acknowledged that Daniel's God was greater than all other gods or rulers. That meant that He had honored Daniel by enabling him to reveal this secret to the king.

Verse 48. Offering *gifts* to Daniel was on the same principle as those promised to the wise men in verse 6 and was proper. The king was eager to do something to show his appreciation for the favor that Daniel had shown him. Making him *ruler* over the province of Babylon means he was to manage the affairs, even having seniority over other managers, but of course it would be under the jurisdiction of the king. There was a logical reason for offering such a position to him. The monarchs all had need of such subordinates in their dominions, and Daniel had shown that he possessed great wisdom and was qualified and worthy of such a trust.

Verse 49. Daniel's unselfishness manifested itself again, and through his request the king gave the honor to the prophet's three companions while he was content to remain at the court of the palace, ready to perform any service that might be desired. In thus passing the honor on to his friends Daniel gave a good example of the performance that Paul teaches in Romans 12:10.

DANIEL 3

Verse 1. We know the events of this chapter came after those in the preceding one for verse 12 mentions the promotion of the three companions of Daniel, which is recorded in the close of that chapter. King Nebuchadnezzar was an idolater and continued to be

one as long as he lived, as far as our information goes. However, he was made to know and acknowledge the superiority of the God of heaven more than once, although he never became a worshiper of Him in the complete sense. It seems that God wished to use him as an instrument by which to demonstrate to the world that there is one only true God, and that men are blessed in proportion as they serve Him. That was done in the preceding 2 chapters, it will be done in the present one, and will be done again in later chapters. *Image* is from TSELEM which Strong defines, "An idolatrous figure." This statement in the lexicon is all the information we have as to the form or appearance of this image outside of what the text says of its size and some of its dimensions. We may get some useful suggestions, though, from historians and ancient writers, both heathen and believers in God. Such writers as Herodotus, Augustine and Dean Prideaux suggest that the 60 cubits includes the base and pedestal of the image; also that the *breadth* means the distance from front to back of the image, and not that from side to side, and that would describe a more likely proportion. The image was set up at a place called *plain of Dura*, a place not far from Babylon.

Verse 2. The persons referred to were the officers of various ranks in the service of Nebuchadnezzar, and their specific work does not need to be inquired into here. It was to be expected that such individuals would be present on such an important occasion as the dedication of the huge idol.

Verse 3. The men summoned came to the dedication of the image except the three companions of Daniel. Nothing is said about their absence, but even had they been present there would not have been anything to call for a complaint against them, for no one was asked to perform any act of worship that would have been recognized by the idolaters. It says these officers *stood before* the image and that would not have amounted to an act of worship in the eyes either of the king or the officers. When the worship was to be done it would require the citizens to *fall down*. However, the three Hebrews could not conscientiously give even their presence at the dedication of something they would not endorse.

Verse 4. Smith's Bible Dictionary says the following of *herald*: "One who makes public proclamation. The

only notice of this officer in the Old Testament occurs in Daniel 3: 4." The Babylonian Empire embraced virtually all the *people, nations, and languages*, hence the herald addressed these units of the government.

Verse 5. *Hear . . . cornet . . . all kinds of music*. The Babylonian Empire was a vast domain composed of many kinds of people. They could not be expected to leave their homes and all go to Babylon to appear before the image, but were to do this worshipping wherever they might be. They would not all be acquainted with each instrument named, but all would be expected to know some of them and to recognize instrumental music by some one or more of these instruments. *Worship* is from CAGAD and Strong defines it, "A primitive root; to prostrate oneself (in homage)." Hence the kind of worship demanded did not call for any removal of the people from their places, neither did it stipulate any formal schedule in the service; it required only that the people prostrate themselves when they heard the music.

Verse 6. It is a principle that is recognized universally that a law that has no penalty is useless. Hence the decree of Nebuchadnezzar gave the penalty of being cast into a fiery furnace. Jeremiah 29: 22 tells of two men whom the king of Babylon roasted in the fire, so we see this was not to be something new for the Hebrews to be cast therein. Also, verse 19 of our chapter shows the furnace was *went* to be used.

Verse 7. In obedience to the decree, when the people heard the sound of this music, they prostrated themselves in respect for the image which the king had set up. There is no evidence that either the people or the king were aware that any objection would be made by anyone to the kind of action called for, since there would be no outward feature of it that would prevent any man from believing in some other god.

Verse 8. But the three Hebrews would not prostrate themselves, for to do so would have violated Exodus 20: 5 which not only forbade them to serve false gods, but also prohibited them from *bowing down to them*. This conduct was not overlooked by certain *Chaldeans* who doubtless were the officers mentioned in Chapter 2: 48 called "governors." They came near the king to make accusations against the Jews.

Verse 9. *Live for ever* was a phrase used in old times to denote a feeling

of good will. It was sometimes said in a spirit of flattery when the speaker did not really want the one to live endlessly. As an instance, in 1 Kings 1: 31 the mother of Solomon used the expression to the frail king David just after he had made her the promise that her son should reign after him. Had David lived for ever, Solomon never could have been king, hence we know she was using the term as a compliment. The Chaldeans used it as a bid for the favorable attention of the king.

Verse 10. They reminded the king of the decree he made that required all people to fall prostrate to the image upon hearing the musical instruments.

Verse 11. They reminded him also of the penalty he had attached to the decree. This was all in a pretense of concern for the dignity of the king's decree, but that was not the real point of their interest as we shall see.

Verse 12. *There are certain Jews whom thou hast set over the affairs of the province of Babylon.* I have quoted this part of the verse just as it is in the text because it reveals the actual motive of these Chaldeans in reporting the case of disobedience to the king. They made no accusation against Daniel although we are sure he also refused to worship the image. And they certainly knew about it, for the four Hebrews were very close friends and spent much of their time together. (See the comments at chapter 2: 17, 18.) But the three named here were the ones who had been placed in a position of honor over even the other governors (chapter 2: 48, 49), and that filled these subordinate governors with envy. But they used their pretended interest in the dignity of the decree to instigate a persecution of the envied Hebrews. Hence they reported to the king that the men of the Jews named had refused to worship the image.

Verse 13. It is probable that Nebuchadnezzar was actually surprised at the report of disobedience on the part of these Hebrews. He had not realized that his decree would be objectionable to them. But the bare possibility that the report was true caused him to fly into a rage and proceed to investigate for himself.

Verse 14. In spite of his intense feeling Nebuchadnezzar was disposed to question the correctness of the report, or, if it was found to be true, to give the accused parties another

chance. Hence he put the question directly to them and specified the charge that he had heard against them.

Verse 15. Before receiving their reply the king repeated the decree they were accused of disobeying, and informed them of their chance still to avoid the penalty attached to the decree. *Who is that god that shall deliver you?* I have not capitalized the word *god* because this heathen king used the word in the same sense as applied to the gods of the heathen world. It was a challenge to them to test their respective gods.

Verse 16. *Careful* is the key word in this verse, but it is rendered somewhat indefinitely. It is from CHASTICE and Strong defines it, "To be necessary," and Young's definition is, "To be or think necessary." We thus can see that it was not a flippant expression of the three men as if the situation did not merit any serious consideration. It means they did not consider that their fate depended on any speech of defense they could make, and they proceeded to tell the king why they thought so.

Verse 17. *If it be so* means the same as the phrase "if God will." These men did not know what would be the Lord's will in the case. They had the same thought as Paul expressed in 2 Corinthians 1: 9, 10. He did not know whether God was ready to permit his faithful apostle to be put to death yet, or would prolong his life for further service, but whichever it was he was resigned to his lot. And the Hebrews did not know whether their God was ready to give them miraculous deliverance although they believed He was able to do so. They also believed that if it were His will to deliver them, it would be done without any speech of defense from them.

Verse 18. They then gave to the king their ultimatum, that regardless of the will of their God (as to miraculous deliverance), they would not serve the gods of Nebuchadnezzar nor worship the golden image.

Verse 19. Upon learning that the report was true, the rage of Nebuchadnezzar returned with increased fury. *Visage* means face and *changed* means distorted. The king was so enraged that his face was twisted out of its normal shape as he looked at the three Hebrews who were brave enough to defy his decree. *Wont* means accustomed and it shows that the furnace had been in use for some time. (See comments at verse 6.) *Seven* is de-

rived from a word that Strong defines, "A primitive root; properly to be complete." If a furnace had been accustomed to being heated enough that it would roast a man to death (Jeremiah 29: 22), then it would be impossible for a human being to make it literally seven times that hot. The statement therefore means they were to make it as hot as possible. The king allowed his anger to blind him to the inconsistency of his order. He evidently wished to slay these men, yet also intended that they should be tortured first. A furnace "seven times" as hot as usual would cut off their lives all the sooner and hence cause less torture.

Verse 20. There was no occasion for Nebuchadnezzar to employ the *most mighty men* for this execution, for the Hebrews had given no indication that they would resist. But the king was being driven on by a blinding fury and was inclined to exhibit the worst possible spirit of vengeance.

Verse 21. *Hosen* is from PATTIYSH which Strong defines, "A gown (as if hammered out wide)." Many versions render the word "mantle" or cloak. It was a loose-fitting garment worn over the regular articles of clothing for a man, even including the hat in the present case. All of these articles were tied fast around the men and then they were cast into the burning fiery furnace.

Verse 22. *Exceeding hot* is a good definition of "seven times" in verse 19. It was not only the intensity of the heat that slew the executioners, but the extent of the fire. *Flame* is from a word which Strong defines, "Flame (as split into tongues)." I do not know by what means the furnace was heated, but whatever was the fuel generally used, it was increased because of the king's urgent order. The result was that the flame shot out from the furnace or its heat reached to a radius that included the soldiers and slew them.

Verse 23. *Fell down bound* denotes that whatever was done on behalf of the three men was after they were on the inside of the furnace; no act of trickery was performed by some friend on the outside to free them from their shackles.

Verse 24. Nebuchadnezzar must have been near when the men were cast into the furnace, for it was immediately following the act that the text says *then* the king was astonished at what he saw in the furnace. As if he did

not believe the testimony of his eyes, he asked whether they did not cast *three men bound* into the furnace, and his servants gave him an affirmative answer.

Verse 25. There are three words of special importance in this verse as regards the miraculous character of the situation, and they are *four*, *loose* and *walking*. There was one more man in sight than were cast into the furnace. They were loose whereas they had been bound by strong men. The fire might have dissolved the fetters that bound them, but the men were walking around in the furnace which showed they were alive and unhurt. *Like the son of god*. Again I have changed the capitalization because the principles that would make such marking proper were unknown to this heathen king. In verse 28 he is commenting on the circumstance and calls this same person an angel. What the king meant was that the extra person was different in appearance from that of ordinary men, hence he must have been related to the gods.

Verse 26. We are sure that God took a part in the whole proceeding else the king could not have come near enough to the furnace to speak to the men without being injured by the heat. The men inside were not harmed, yet they were prisoners of Nebuchadnezzar and would not be guilty of "breaking jail" until authorized to come forth by him. The king said nothing to the "fourth man," but spoke only to the three Hebrews; the angel evidently had disappeared. Besides, Nebuchadnezzar would not have felt at liberty or considered it necessary to give instructions to him.

Verse 27. Such an event as this would naturally attract the attention of the leading men in the empire, and they were present when Shadrach and his companions came forth. *Nor . . . hair . . .* singed indicates the complete control that was had over the fire. To a believer in the infinite God this miracle is no greater than any other. There are no great and small miracles as far as ability is concerned, for there is nothing too hard for Him (Jeremiah 32: 17, 27). The same God who created fire is the author of all its laws, and it would be no greater task to control those laws than to create them. These men were members of a nation that had to be sent into captivity, and in that sense they had to suffer along with their fellow citizens. But they were personally righteous and hence

were entitled to the special favors that God had promised to such servants. It is important that the reader now consult the note given at 2 Kings 22: 17 in volume 2 of this Commentary.

Verse 28. We have no evidence that Nebuchadnezzar ever ceased to be an idolater, but he was led to believe that the one god whom the Hebrews worshiped was superior to others. And he understood that the deliverance of the three Hebrews was in reward for their refusal to worship any god but their own.

Verse 29. We note that Nebuchadnezzar made no decree that required any person to worship the god of Shadrach and his fellows, only that it would be unlawful to say anything against him. The reason he assigned for the decree was that *no other god can deliver after this sort*, not that he deserved to be given exclusive worship.

Verse 30. To *promote* is from a word that merely means "to advance," whether in matters of temporal success and prosperity or otherwise. All that we can understand from it is that the king bestowed some additional favors upon them besides the position of trust they already had.

DANIEL 4

Verse 1. Chronologically, the first 3 verses of this chapter should be the last 3, yet it was proper to place them where they are as an explanation of why the king is going to tell his story. The message is addressed to all the people of the earth, and is accompanied with his best wishes for their peace.

Verse 2. *I thought it good* gives the purpose of Nebuchadnezzar in sending the proclamation to the nations of the world. The subject of the message is the great things the high God had done toward him.

Verse 3. This verse expresses the opinion the king had of God after the events that are recorded in the rest of the chapter. He was convinced that the wonders of Him were great, and that His kingdom was destined to be an everlasting one.

Verse 4. With this verse begins the report of Nebuchadnezzar's experience that is referred to in the preceding verses. The king was at *rest* which is defined in the lexicon, "to be secure," and *flourishing* means to be prosperous. He seems to have been lulled into a feeling of assurance that

nothing could ever happen to endanger his independence as a monarch over the whole civilized world.

Verse 5. It was the appearance of the things Nebuchadnezzar saw in his dream that frightened him, not what it meant, for he did not know what that was.

Verse 6. We do not know why the king did not call Daniel at first, since he had previously shown his superiority over the wise men. Perhaps the force of habit, or his natural attachment to his own kind had its influence with him. At any rate the usual result followed the call of the Chaldeans, for they could not interpret the dream.

Verses 7, 8. It could be that the king did not specify by his decree just who of the wise men should be called in, and that Daniel might have responded to the call to "bring in all the wise men," since he was thus classified by the men of the empire according to chapter 2: 13. But whatever was the situation, we are not to think of it as being on the principle of "the last resort" for the king to call Daniel. Nothing is said about any specific call for him at all, only that *at the last Daniel came*. *Spirit of the holy gods* was Nebuchadnezzar's way of describing Daniel to the people of his dominions. He had formed that opinion of him at the time he explained the problem of the giant man recorded in the 2nd chapter.

Verse 9. The king remembered this dream, not because it was any more impressive, for it could not have been more important than the one of the giant man. But in that case the Lord wished to convince him that Daniel had superhuman knowledge, which would not have been done merely by offering an interpretation of a dream, for any man might do that and nobody could know whether it was correct. But when he recalled the king's dream it proved his divine standing. That evidence was not needed in the present case, hence the Lord enabled Nebuchadnezzar to relate his dream.

Verse 10. *See and behold* is thought of as being the same, but the idea is that Nebuchadnezzar directed his attention to something that seemed to call for it, and what he beheld was as follows. *A tree in the midst of the earth*. Being situated in that way would indicate that the tree was the center of attraction amidst a vast territory.

Verse 11. *Tree grew* denotes that it became larger and therefore stronger,

until it was so high that it *reached into heaven*, meaning it reached up into the sky or higher air zone. The height of the tree was so great that its top was visible to all the people of the civilized world. That denotes that the curvature of the earth was overcome and it could have harmonized with some scientific discoveries of our day.

Verse 12. This verse gives a description of a fruit tree which, if taken literally, would present one that is beautiful to the sight, affords shelter from the heat by its shadow, a resting place in its boughs for the birds, a gathering place for the beasts, and food for all living creatures. We shall learn, however, that it is a figurative description of something else.

Verse 13. *Watcher* and an *holy one* does not mean there were two persons. The first word is from *lyr* which Strong defines, "A watcher, i.e., an angel (as guardian)." *Holy one* is added as an adjective for *watcher*. Moffatt's version renders this place, "One of the angel-guard," and this also agrees with the singular pronoun with which the next verse begins.

Verse 14. The king heard the watcher shout with a loud voice that the tree must be shorn of its leaves (its beauty), its branches (place of resting) cut off, its fruit (food) be scattered, be forsaken by the beasts and birds, and the body of the tree be cut down. This would seem to be the end of the tree, but we shall see that the condition was not to be permanent.

Verse 15. As a rule if a tree is cut down it means the death of the plant, but that is chiefly because the stump is exposed as a flat surface to the sun which will cause it to crack open, admitting the rain and other weather conditions to penetrate further until it reaches the roots. But this stump was to be bound with a ring of brass and iron which would hold it from opening. *In the tender grass* indicates this stump was in a field that had plenty of moisture, and that would be favorable for the roots of the tree and tend to sustain the life until they could sprout up into new growth. This very thought is expressed in Job 14: 7-9 and Isaiah 11: 1. Then the spokesman switches from the stump to the person represented by the tree that had grown on it and uses a personal pronoun. This person is destined to have his portion with the beasts that feed upon this "grass of the field."

Verse 16. *The heart or mind of this unfortunate person was to be changed*

or deranged so that he would have an intellect no better than a beast. And being thus he will eat grass as they do (verse 25). This condition was to continue until *seven times pass over him*. *Times* is from *iddan* which Strong defines, "a set time; technically a year." Moffatt renders the place "seven years," so the meaning is clear that a period of 7 years (complete number; see definition at chapter 3: 19) was to pass with above conditions.

Verse 17. *Watchers* is plural because it refers to the "angel-guard" mentioned in verse 13, of which the one was a member and a representative when he *came down from heaven* (verse 13) to deliver the decree. *Demand* is from *shela* which Strong's lexicon defines, "Properly a question (at law), i.e., judicial decision or mandate." The passage gives us an interesting and beautiful thought. Everything and all creatures in existence are subject to the will of God, but it is wonderful when that subjection is conducted in the spirit of willing cooperation. As long as the angels are permitted to reside in heaven they will be thus in harmony with the wishes of their Commander-in-Chief. Knowing that He willed to demonstrate a certain great truth, this "angel-guard" (the *watchers*) agreed on a *demand* ("judicial decision") that one of their number (the one in verse 13) should go down to earth and carry out the decree upon the king of Babylon. That decree is so fundamental that I shall here copy it in full in order to make the connection the more impressive: "To the intent that the living may know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdoms of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will, and setteth up over it the basest of men."

Verse 18. With the preceding verse the king completed the telling of his dream, and now he requests Daniel to give him the interpretation of it. He expresses his confidence in Daniel's ability to do what *all the wise men* could not do. The grounds of that confidence are that *the spirit of the holy gods is in thee*.

Verse 19. *Troubled* is from *bahal* which Strong defines, "To tremble inwardly (or palpitate), i.e. (figuratively) be alarmed or agitated; by implication to hasten anxiously." *Astonied* is from *shamem* and Strong defines it, "To stun (or intransitively grow numb), i.e., devastate or (figuratively) stupefy." *Hour* is from *shaaH* and the same lexicon defines it,

"Properly to look, i.e., a moment." With these definitions of key words the meaning of the passage is clear. The story of Nebuchadnezzar's dream was so unusual that for a moment Daniel was stunned with amazement. However, he soon recovered himself and spoke to the king. *Let not . . . trouble thee* was said to reassure the king, since Daniel had recovered from his own surprise. *Dream be to them that hate thee*. The enemies of Nebuchadnezzar were the ones to worry, for the dream will reveal that the king will yet be victorious over his foes.

Verses 20, 21. This paragraph merely repeats the description of the tree as the king gave it to Daniel, and does not call for any additional comments.

Verse 22. *It is thou, O king*, is a similar expression to the one Daniel made to this same king in connection with the dream of the giant man (chapter 2:38). But the application is somewhat different, for that included the king and his kingdom, while this pertains to the king personally. That is, his connection with the kingdom was to be affected by the events indicated in the dream.

Verse 23. This verse repeats the statements in verses 13-15, and *watchers* and *holy one* is explained with the comments on verse 17.

Verse 24. The description of the dream having been repeated, Daniel will next give the interpretation, which he says will be by the decree of the Most High.

Verse 25. *They shall drive thee* means the same as if it said "thou shalt be driven," for it is worded *he was driven* in verse 33. This also corresponds with *mine understanding returned* in verse 34 which indicates that the driving was done by some condition within the king's own being. The conclusion is clear, that Nebuchadnezzar was driven from his throne by the strange mental affliction that God sent upon him. That was what the angel meant in verse 16 when he said, "let a beast's heart be given unto him." The rest of the verse has been explained at verse 16.

Verse 26. *They commanded* has the meaning of "it was commanded." *Thy kingdom shall be sure unto thee* is explained by the comments at verse 22.

Verse 27. Having interpreted the dream of Nebuchadnezzar, Daniel concluded his speech with some advice regarding his conduct. *Break off thy*

sins by righteousness is like the advice that Isaiah gave Judah in his book, chapter 1:16, 17, "Cease to do evil; learn to do well." Both phrases of the passage must work together, for it is certain that nobody will learn to do well while continuing in his evil doing. *Tranquility* is from a word that means security and prosperity. It also has about the same sense as "rest" in verse 4. At the time Daniel stood before Nebuchadnezzar the king was in the midst of great power and peace and royal success. The prophet suggested that if he would make the reformation in his life as just advised, it might mean the prolonging of his *tranquility*.

Verse 28. This verse merely introduces the sequel of the story.

Verse 29. God was very lenient and gave Nebuchadnezzar a year to change his ways but to no avail. Therefore it was time to bring the fulfillment of the dream upon the king, and the Lord chose a time that was especially appropriate. Nebuchadnezzar gave a demonstration of his chief fault (pride) as he was walking around the palace.

Verse 30. The greatness of Babylon was not to be questioned, for the prophet had already declared it to be so. If the king had expressed his appreciation for the good fortune that was his and given proper credit for it, there would have been no objection to his admiration. The fault lay in his pride and claiming that he had accomplished the great work, and that it was done in honor of his majesty.

Verse 31. *While the word was in the king's mouth* is very significant. It is a recognized principle of discipline, both as to human beings and dumb creatures, that an act of punishment is the more effective if administered as near as possible to the evil for which it is a chastisement. Hence, just as the king was uttering his boastful sentence, he was interrupted by a voice from heaven with the announcement, *The kingdom is departed from thee*.

Verse 32. Beginning with verse 28 the language has been in the third person, because the king is composing the account of his own experiences according to the announcement in the beginning of the chapter. *They shall drive thee* means "thou shalt be driven," and the announcement was repeated that was shown in the dream.

Verse 33. Without further delay the Lord smote Nebuchadnezzar with the

strange mental derangement with the result that *he was driven* from men, which means that he forsook his throne and fled out into the field. He was exposed to the outdoor conditions of the weather. In course of this period and in such a state of mind, all care of the body would naturally be neglected. This resulted in a sort of wild development which made his nails and hair become coarse.

Verse 34. *End of the days . . . lifted up mine eyes . . . understanding returned.* These phrases are written in reverse of the order in which the events occurred. It is certain that Nebuchadnezzar would not look toward heaven while the mental derangement still possessed him. And it is equally certain that God would not end the days of the punishment of the king if he were in his right mind but refused to recognize heaven; hence the order of events is as follows. When the Lord considered that Nebuchadnezzar had been punished enough He replaced the beast's heart with the normal one. Then the king was convinced of the truth by his condition of body and his remembrance of the past. Being thus convinced, he was penitent and looked respectfully toward heaven, when the Lord ended the period of exile from the throne. It is not necessary for the text to state that the Lord also changed the debased condition of the king's body; that is taken for granted here, but will be implied in the 36th verse.

Verse 35. Continuing his praise of the *Most High*, Nebuchadnezzar declared that He doeth whatsoever is according to His will, and that the inhabitants of the earth are as nothing.

Verse 36. *Reason* is from the same original word as understanding in verse 34, so this is merely a repetition of that statement. However, another thought is added which is that his *honor and brightness returned*, and the reason for it is stated namely, *for the glory of my kingdom*. Verses 15 and 26 had assured the king that his throne would be reserved for him after he had learned that "the heavens do rule." God would not return a man to the throne of such a glorious kingdom as Babylon who was not worthy of it. Therefore Nebuchadnezzar was placed back on his throne a changed man, both in body and mind and one fitted to rule over his former dominions.

Verse 37. The king concluded the proclamation that was made to "all people, nations, and languages" (verse

1), and in this verse expresses the final impression that his experience left on his mind. It caused him to praise the King of heaven and to acknowledge that He is able to abase every man who is guilty of *pride*. This is all we will hear of the actual reign and life of Nebuchadnezzar in this book, except what will be said of him historically, referring to his reign as a thing of the past.

DANIEL 5

Verse 1. Between the close of the preceding chapter and the beginning of this is an interval of 25 years. We are down at the last year of the Babylonian Empire and Belshazzar is on the throne in the capital city. The Biblical account overlooks a few comparatively unimportant rulers between Nebuchadnezzar and Belshazzar. This man is called *the king* in this verse, but that title must be understood as meaning he was only "acting king," because his father Nabonadius was the actual king, but had left his son on the throne in Babylon while he was conducting a war in another part of the country. This fact accounts for other statements occurring in the record, and it is of such great importance that I shall quote a paragraph from ancient history. "But out of all this confusion and uncertainty a very small and simple discovery made a few years since has educed order and harmony in a very remarkable way. It is found that Nabonadius, the last king of the Canon [royal blood line], associated with him on the throne during the later years of his reign his son, Bilshar-uzar [Belshazzar], and allowed him the royal title. There can be little doubt that it was this prince who conducted the defense of Babylon, and was slain in the massacre which followed the capture; while his father, who was at the time in Borsippa, surrendered, and experienced the clemency which was generally shown to fallen kings by the Persians. . . . My attention has been further drawn to a very remarkable illustration which the discovery of Belshazzar's position as joint ruler with his father furnishes to an expression twice repeated in Daniel, fifth chapter. The promise made and performed to Daniel is, that he shall be the third ruler in the kingdom. Formerly it was impossible to explain this, or to understand why he was not the second ruler, as he seems to have been under Nebuchadnezzar, and as Joseph in Egypt, and Mordecai in Persia. It now appears that, as

there were two kings at the same time, Belshazzar, a subject, could only make him the third personage in the Empire."—Rawlinson, *Historical Evidence*, pages 139, 442. This information will be referred to again and I urge the reader to make careful note of its location. The simple word *feast* means a good meal of food for the fleshly body, but the context shows this was a banquet for they drank wine in connection with it. Moreover, it was a royal or state affair for it was attended by a thousand of his *lords*, which is defined "a magnate" in Strong's lexicon. These men were princes or outstanding persons in the Babylonian Empire and hence were special guests at this great feast. The king participated in the drinking and did so in a cooperative attitude, for it says he *drank wine before the thousand*. That was unusual for the rule was that kings indulged themselves with wine and royal gratifications in their own private apartments.

Verse 2. *While he tasted the wine*. Belshazzar was an idolater in general life, but nothing indicates that this feast was at first intended to be anything but a royal banquet. But intoxication will cause a man to do things he would not do when sober. This drunken king commanded to bring the golden and silver vessels that had been taken from the temple at Jerusalem. We have no account of their having been used before this after being brought to Babylon. The text says the vessels had been taken by his *father* Nebuchadnezzar, because that word is used very generally in the Bible and other literature. It sometimes means any forefather; in this case it means his grandfather. Perhaps it will be well to verify the last statement by a quotation from ancient history. "LINE OF KINGS—(of Babylon) Nabopolassar, Nebuchadnezzar, Evil-merodach, Neriglissar, Laborosoarchod or Laborsoracus, and Nabonadius the last king. He, not being of royal birth, married a daughter of Nebuchadnezzar (probably Neriglissar's widow), and as soon as his son by this marriage, Belshazzar (Bel-shar-uzur), is of sufficient age, associated him on the throne."—Rawlinson, *Ancient History*, page 49. For the difference between *wives* and *concubines* see the comments on Genesis 22: 24, Volume 1.

Verse 3. The order of Belshazzar was obeyed and the king and his company drank wine from the sacred ves-

sels that had been taken from the Lord's service at Jerusalem.

Verse 4. The writer must have been greatly affected by the conduct of the king and his party. In one unbroken statement he says they *drank wine and praised the gods of gold*, etc. Thus an occasion that started out as a royal banquet was turned into a drunken, religious service to dumb idols that were made by human hands.

Verse 5. The familiar expression "handwriting on the wall" is not technically correct, for this verse begins and ends with a distinction between the hand and its fingers. A well known commentator thinks that when the king saw the writing but could not see Him to whom the *hand* belonged, the invisibility of that One would heighten the "awful impressiveness of the scene." I will agree with that opinion, but will add that the "impressiveness" of the scene would be even more awful to see only the fingers that held the writing instrument. Such a scene would eliminate every hint of any mechanical trick of some objector to the merry-making.

Verse 6. *Countenance* is from צֶרֶף which Strong defines, "cheerfulness." The statement means that the merry-making spirit that had been showing itself in the king's face was altered and he looked pale. Strong defines the original for *loins*, "vigor; the loin (as the seat of strength)." Webster defines the English word, "The seat of generation or procreation." *Joints* is from a word that means something that binds or holds together, and in this place it refers to the muscles. So the clause *the joints of his loins were loosed* means that the abdominal region of his body had a feeling as if it were falling apart. The same thought is expressed in Psalms 22: 14 by the words, "My heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of my bowels." This is a prophecy of Christ on the cross and the moral nature of the case is different, but it describes the mental and physical feeling that was being experienced. *Smote* is derived from נֶאֱקַף and Strong says it means "to knock together." Thus we can get a mental picture of the king as he looked upon the weird performance going on over on the wall of his palace. His face turned ashy pale, the abdominal portion of his body seemed to be all in a quiver, and his knees pounded each other.

Verse 7. *Aloud* means more than merely being audible; it is from an

original that means "with might." In addition to the physical feelings the king had by reason of the strange sight, he was perplexed because he could not even read the writing, much less understand what it meant. His common sense told him that such a demonstration had a great significance and that it concerned him since it occurred within his palace. In his fright and perplexity he shouted his orders to summon the Chaldeans and other so-called wise men. Those heathen rulers were so accustomed to relying on their soothsayers and their kind for special information that Belshazzar never thought about calling for Daniel. It was natural for him to expect his own Babylonian wise men to solve the problem that confronted him. See the comments on chapter 2: 6 on the subject of offering gifts to these men. They were asked to perform a double feat; read the writing and tell its meaning. (See quotation at verse 1 on "third ruler.")

Verse 8. *All the king's wise men* means those ordinarily employed by him and who were supposed to be "standing by" for service whenever needed; that is why Daniel was not present at this call. As we would expect, these men could not do the king any good in his great confusion.

Verse 9. The failure of the king's wise men to read the writing affected his countenance in the same way that writing did in verse 6, but it did not seem to have the same effect on his body. Doubtless he had consulted these wise men many times and had been satisfied with their work. However, there was never a situation like the one before them now. It was similar to that of Nebuchadnezzar in some respects. The failure to recall to that monarch his dream indicated that they could not have interpreted it either. So with the wise men before Belshazzar, for if they could not even read the writing, something that was present before them and needed no future knowledge to do, it was evident they could not give the interpretation after it was read. It is no wonder, then, that the king was worried and his lords astonished.

Verse 10. A *queen* was not the king's wife as a rule but instead she was his mother, and the word is so rendered by various versions. See an example of this subject in 1 Kings 15: 13, and it is further explained by the following from Smith's Bible Dictionary. "This title is properly applied to

the queen-mother, since in an Oriental household it is not the wife but the mother of the master who exercises the highest authority. Strange as such an arrangement at first sight appears, it is one of the inevitable results of polygamy." This helps to explain, also, why the *queen* was so well acquainted with the events in the life of Nebuchadnezzar. Being older, and also associated near the throne for many years, she would have some personal recollection of those events, and she also had access to the records of the empire. (See comments on chapter 4: 1, 2.) Learning of Belshazzar's difficulty in solving the mystery about the writing, she came into his presence to console him with her information.

Verse 11. The queen related to the king the story of a certain man in whom was *the spirit of the holy gods*. For information on "thy father" see the comments on verse 2. *Master of the magicians* means he was given a rank of "chief magician," not that he had any authority over them. The point the queen was making was the superior wisdom this particular "magician" must have possessed for the king to give him the rank.

Verse 12. The most of this verse is the same description of Daniel's talents we have had before, but the word *doubts* adds an interesting feature. It is from *qerax* and Strong defines it, "A knot (as tied up), i.e. (figuratively) a riddle." It means that Daniel was able to untie all "hard knots."

Verse 13. When Daniel was brought in, the king first asked him a question for the purpose of identification. The text does not state whether Daniel made any direct reply, but its silence indicates that the king understood the prophet's affirmative attitude toward the question.

Verse 14. As a reason for calling him into the situation, Belshazzar told the prophet of the favorable reputation that he had concerning his knowledge.

Verse 15. *Wise men, the astrologers* is very significant. All of the astrologers were considered wise men, but there were wise men who were not astrologers. Hence the king made the distinction as to which class of wise men had been brought in; it was the astrologers. He did this in respect for Daniel, who, though classed as a wise man (chapter 2: 13), was a higher rank than astrologers; he was one in whom was *the spirit of the gods*. Daniel was informed of the failure of the astrologers.

Verse 16. The king repeated a part of the report he had heard of Daniel, then made him a proposition. If he could read the writing AND make known its interpretation, he would receive personal gifts and other rewards. (See the comments at verse 1 for the meaning of *third ruler*.)

Verse 17. *Let thy gifts be to thyself*, etc. This is not to be taken to mean that Daniel thought it would be wrong to accept the gifts, for verse 29 shows he did accept them afterwards. *Rewards* is rendered "fee" in the margin which helps to describe the situation. (See comments at chapter 2: 6.) The meaning is that Daniel wanted the king to know he would tell the answer desired without regard for the reward.

Verse 18. Before going into the subject of the writing, Daniel related to Belshazzar the background that led up to the present crisis. The meaning of "father" for Nebuchadnezzar is explained by a quotation from history given at verse 2. It should be noted that Daniel says God gave to Nebuchadnezzar his kingdom and his glory.

Verse 19. *For the majesty* means in view of or because of that majesty, the nations trembled and feared. The first is from *zuwa* which Strong defines, "To shake (with fear); the second is from *DECHAL* and the same lexicon defines it, "To slink, i.e. (by implication) to fear, or (causatively) be formidable." We see these words are used in their worst or most unfavorable sense which agrees with the very next phrase, *whom he would he slew*. It is still to be understood that God gave to Nebuchadnezzar his great might and glory, but that does not mean that he approved of the abuses that the king made of the favors thus bestowed upon him.

Verse 20. The abuses were manifested by the things described in this verse. The pride of the king over his greatness was so displeasing to God that he caused the cruel monarch to be taken from his throne and he was shorn of his glory.

Verse 21. This verse repeats in detail what happened to Nebuchadnezzar, and it was what Daniel had prophesied should occur (chapter 4: 25). The only way that Daniel could know of its fulfillment was either by inspiration or from the word of the king himself (chapter 4: 2, 3), for it came upon him while away from the *sons of men*. However it was, all accounts agree and hence we know that they are true.

Verse 22. The general sense of the

terms *son* and *father* is explained at verse 2. *Though thou knewest all this*. The kings of great empires kept records of their transactions and the people, especially men in high positions, had access to those records. Daniel knew that Belshazzar had seen the account of Nebuchadnezzar's experience. The example should have taught him a lesson but it seems to have failed.

Verse 23. In conducting the kind of feast that was being done on this night, Belshazzar was in rebellion against the *Lord of heaven*. The king did not need to be informed of what was actually done on that night, but Daniel enumerated the items so as to make the contrast stand out. He and his family and royal group had given praise to gods that have no intellect of any kind, but had no glory to give to Him from whom even his breath was derived.

Verse 24. *Then*, because of and at the time of this abominable conduct, God sent the *part of the hand*. (See the comments in verse 5 about the fingers only being seen.)

Verse 25. We should remember that the wise men not only were unable to interpret the writing, but they could not read it (verses 8, 15), so the first thing done was to pronounce the words. In this paragraph I shall copy the words and give Strong's definition from the standpoint of a lexicon. *Mene*. "(Chaldee), past participle of *mena*, numbered." *Tekel*. "(Chaldee), to balance." *Upharsin*. "(Chaldee), to split up."

Verse 26. The lexicon definitions of the writing were given in the preceding verse. I shall now comment on Daniel's explanation of their significance. *Numbered* is derived from a word that is defined, "To weigh out; by implication to allot or constitute officially; also to enumerate or enroll." According to Daniel's interpretation it meant that the days of the Babylonian Empire had reached the number allotted to it by the Lord and the kingdom was to be declared ended.

Verse 27. A balance is a weighing device with a beam poised with its center on a neutral pivot. An article to be weighed is placed at one end of the beam, and a weight supposed to be equal to the article is placed at the other end. If the article is correct the beam will remain level or perfectly horizontal. The balance was a familiar instrument in Biblical times (1 Samuel 2: 3; Job 31: 6; Psalms 62: 9). When a balance is used figuratively it

means that a man is weighed or compared with what is required of him and if he stands the test the "beam" will be level, and if not the balance will sink on the heavier end which will condemn the other. Belshazzar was weighed in the balances of God's character requirements but was "found wanting," or was unable to hold the beam level.

Verse 28. *Peres* and *upharsin* are from the same original word. The word means to split and was a fitting one here because the Babylonian kingdom was doomed to be taken over by another kingdom that was composed of two parts, the Medes and Persians.

Verse 29. Belshazzar fulfilled his promise in rewarding Daniel for solving the problem. See the comments at verse 17 on the matter of Daniel's accepting these rewards. The quotation cited at verse 1 explains the meaning of *third ruler*.

Verse 30. The history above explains in what sense Belshazzar was king.

Verse 31. *Darius the Median*. As was stated at verse 28, the empire that succeeded the Babylonian was composed of the Medes and Persians, thus forming a dual monarchy. This kingdom is referred to in various ways; sometimes by its full title and at others as the Persian. It is occasionally mentioned by the single branch Median, which it is in this verse. I shall copy a statement from ancient history on this subject as follows: "After the death of Belshazzar, Darius the Mede is said in scripture to have taken the kingdom; for Cyrus, as long as his uncle lived, allowed him a joint title with him in the empire, although it was all gained by his own valour, and out of deference to him yielded him the first place of honor in it. But the whole power of the army, and the chief conduct of all affairs being still in his hands, he only was looked on as the supreme governor of the empire, which he had erected; and therefore there is no notice at all taken of Darius in the Canon of Ptolemy, but immediately after the death of Belshazzar (who is there called Nabonadius), Cyrus is placed as the next successor, as in truth and reality he was; the other having no more than the name and the shadow of the sovereignty, excepting only in Media, which was his own proper dominion."—Prideaux's Connexion, Book 1, Part 2, Year 538. Verse 30 merely states that Belshazzar was slain on the night of

this feast, but nothing is said about what was going on near and inside the city. The lengthy quotation from history on that interesting subject may be found in connection with Isaiah 13: 7, 8 in Volume 3 of this Commentary.

DANIEL 6

Verse 1. We should bear in mind that historically speaking the 70-year captivity ended at the same time the Babylonian Empire fell, which event was effected by the death of Belshazzar recorded in the close of the preceding chapter. That means the present chapter is at the beginning of the Medo-Persian reign in Babylon. We also should distinguish between the Darius named here and the men of the same name who will be referred to later on who were Persian rulers. The present one is Darius the Median (uncle of Cyrus), named in the last verse of chapter 5. It will be very helpful for the reader if he will make frequent reference to the passages of history quoted from time to time in my comments. When Cyrus slew Belshazzar and took possession of Babylon, he seems to have turned the political affairs over to his uncle Darius, and the appointment of the 120 princes was one of his first acts.

Verse 2. These *princes* were more official than the word generally means. It is derived from a word that Strong defines, "Of Persian derivation; a satrap or governor of a main province of Persia." These men were to manage the affairs as they pertained to the business matters, on behalf of the king, and over them were placed three men called presidents to whom they were to report their work. This was all done as an organization to see that the king would not suffer any *damage* or loss of any kind. Daniel was one of the three presidents and the statement is that he was *first*, which will prove to be very significant later on in our story.

Verse 3. *Was preferred* means that Daniel distinguished himself by his superior talents, and the writer of the text accounts for it by saying that an *excellent spirit was in him*. This was naturally brought to the attention of Darius and it made a favorable impression on him. The king had already delegated most of the business cares to the 120 princes, and now he was thinking of setting Daniel *over the whole realm* which means to give him a ruling authority that would have

made him superior to the other presidents as well as to the princes.

Verse 4. Envy is a terrible spirit and will lead men to commit great crimes. The favorable position which Daniel acquired filled the other presidents and princes with this evil spirit and they began to plot against him. They wished to get him into trouble by some kind of disagreement or rebellion against the government. But Daniel was a law-abiding subject so that no statute could be found that he was violating.

Verse 5. These envious men admitted among themselves that no charge could be cited in connection with any of the existing laws. The only chance was to do something that would bring him into conflict through his religion. To do so it was necessary to have some specific statute which they knew would interfere with his religious practice; something that could be reported as an actual performance. To do this they took notice that one of his regular religious performances was to open the windows of his room that faced in the direction of Jerusalem, and there upon his knees three times daily to pray to God. That furnished them the subject for their wicked plot.

Verse 6. With their envious motive in their wicked hearts they came before the king. They introduced themselves with the familiar salutation, *King Darius, live for ever*. Such a salutation was sometimes uttered out of genuine respect for a dignitary without any selfish motive prompting it. In the present case, however, we know it was for the purpose of getting the king into a favorable attitude toward them and hence it was said in flattery.

Verse 7. There would not seem to be anything wrong with the proposition on first hearing it, only an overture for the purpose of showing honor to the king. Yet a little thought should have at least raised the suspicion of Darius. Why limit the decree to thirty days? If there was any good reason for limiting all petitions, that they should be addressed to the king only, that reason would continue after the period named. Another thing, the proposed decree made no specification as to whether the petitions involved pertained to religion or temporal matters. Had any such distinction been made it might have at least aroused the curiosity of the king and the plot been exposed, so they chose to word it with

this indefinite form so as to give it the impression of a movement just for his honor. Daniel was accustomed to praying daily and hence thirty days may seem to be longer than necessary. But sickness or some other unavoidable circumstance could interrupt his devotions for a few days. Also, something might intervene in their own personal affairs that would make it uncertain to specify a shorter period. So the time allotted would be enough to cover all of these possible emergencies. These men evidently understood the principle of government that requires a law to have a penalty in order to be effective, hence they suggested that one be attached and even named the penalty they wished to be used.

Verse 8. *Sign the writing, THAT it be not changed*. The Persians had the foolish notion that when their king signed a decree it made it so sacred that it could not be repealed or changed even by the king himself. Had the king merely authorized the decree, there might have been some flaw discovered and it could have been set aside. That is why these abominable men induced him to put his signature to the document. The later conduct of Darius proves that he would have repealed the decree had he not signed it, which act took the law out of his hands for ever.

Verse 9. The *writing* pertained to the body of the document which stipulated what the people were prohibited from doing, and the *decree* was the paragraph that was to place it in the class of enactments that could never be repealed, and Darius signed all.

Verse 10. *When Daniel knew* might be taken to mean that Daniel went to his house to pray just because he learned of the edict, and that he did it for spite. His whole life and character would forbid such a conclusion. Besides that, the verse concludes with the words *as he did aforetime*. This shows that he did not make any change in his practices just because of this edict. In truth, it was evidently their witnessing that practice that caused the men to bring about that particular kind of decree. But the phrase means as if it said, "though Daniel knew," or "notwithstanding that Daniel knew." The point is that Daniel was not intimidated out of his regular service to God by hearing the persecuting edict of the king.

Verse 11. The men would naturally be expected to spy on Daniel to be able

to report as witnesses of his conduct to the king.

Verse 12. Their speech to the king was that of a group of hypocrites. They pretended to be shocked and surprised at what they had discovered. But it might be well to remind Darius in the form of a question of the decree he had made and signed. It might have a more active effect upon him to have the edict brought fresh to his mind, and to have him verify it verbally before them.

Verse 13. Every statement these men made in this verse was true, but was uttered with a vicious motive and without regard for the context. It was true that Daniel ignored the decree of the king, but it was not because he did not respect temporal and royal government as they wished to imply. Instead, it was because the decree would hinder his religious service to God, and it has always been taught in the scripture that if a human law conflicts with the law of God, the servants of righteousness should "obey God rather than man" (Acts 5: 29).

Verse 14. The king realized he had been entrapped into something he would not have done had he known what these men were plotting. He had no ill feeling against Daniel but was displeased *with himself*. *Labored . . . to deliver him*. We are not told what the king did in his "labor," whether he was acting the part of an unscrupulous lawyer and trying to find some technical loophole, or thought perhaps that if he would not be in too much of a hurry in putting the edict into execution, something, somehow, might turn up that would release Daniel.

Verse 15. Unlike the decree concerning the image set up by Nebuchadnezzar (chapter 3: 6, 15), nothing was said in this one about the hour at which its violation was to be punished. The delay of Darius in executing it seemed to cause the men to become uneasy lest he fail for some reason. Therefore they assembled before him and reminded him of the unchangeableness of the decree which he had signed.

Verse 16. Being thus goaded by these men, the king was impelled, against his personal inclination, into carrying out the wicked decree. As the prophet was being thrust into the den the king commended him to his God *whom thou servest continually*. Whether "the wish was father of the thought," or he was making a

challenge of the issue I do not know. However, whatever the expectations of the king were, we may truly consider it a test, both of Daniel's faith and of the might of his God.

Verse 17. A stone was brought and laid upon the mouth, not at the mouth or door. That language is appropriate because the den was a pit dug out in the ground. The stone was sealed with the king's own signet, which was a ring equipped with an engraving for making a stamp such as a notary uses today. That sealing had nothing to do with the confinement of Daniel, but protected the place against outside interference.

Verse 18. The whole circumstance was grievous to Darius, for he thought well of Daniel, and had realized that he was the victim of a plot caused by the envy of the lords and princes. The king passed a very restless night. *Musick* has no separate word in the original, but the phrase *instruments of musick* is from DACHAVAH and the most that Strong says of it by way of definition is, "probably a musical instrument (as being struck)," and he says it is equivalent to another original word that he defines, "a primitive root; to push down." Young says the word is of "uncertain meaning." Moffatt renders the word for *instruments of musick* by "dancing girls," and a footnote in the American Standard Version gives the same rendering. Another work of reference renders it "concubines." From the foregoing information we can get a reasonably clear picture of the situation. Darius was an idolater, also was a weak, pleasure-loving king. Under less serious circumstances a man unable to sleep would pass the time in the indulgence of his appetites and passions. But the wakefulness of Darius was caused by a grief so profound that he had no desire for "wine and women."

Verse 19. After a sleepless night the king arose and went to the den. When one is forced to go through a night without sleep from physical causes, the morning usually finds him in a very disturbed frame of mind; how much more so when it has been caused by a feeling of guilt. The entire nervous system of Darius was shattered with remorse.

Verse 20. He approached the den with mingled feelings, torn between hope and despair. The record of Daniel's life was evidently known somewhat to the king, which would tend to give him hope that he would be mirac-

ulously protected. And yet he was not certain that Daniel's God would see fit in this case to intervene. *Lamentable* is from *ATSAB* and Strong's definition is, "to afflict." The meaning of the passage is that Darius cried with a voice that expressed his affliction in both mind and body. We may condense the heart-rending cry to "O Daniel, has thy God seen fit to preserve thee?"

Verse 21. I have no words fully to describe the suspense in which the king must have hung after uttering the foregoing, wailing cry. He could scarcely wait long enough for Daniel to respond should he be still alive, for seconds would seem like minutes or hours. And yet, even a seemingly long silence would not be quite enough time; perhaps when a reasonable pause has passed the prisoner will speak. And again my words fail me in trying to describe the joyous relief the king must have felt when he heard the brief but respectful salutation, *O king live for ever*. No tinge of bitterness or resentment, but the same attitude of respect for his earthly master he had always shown.

Verse 22. In a candid but respectful manner Daniel explained to his king that his God had preserved him. He then accounted for the miraculous escape from the lions' mouths. He had been innocent in the sight of his God, and also had done no *hurt* to his king. That word is defined as "crime" in Strong's lexicon, which proves to us that Daniel was justified in his use of the word. It is true that he had disobeyed the decree of the king, but it was one that he had signed without any knowledge of the circumstances. Since Darius would not have signed the edict had he known the facts, the act of Daniel in continuing what had been his practice all along without any disapproval of the king, constituted no deed that injured the dignity of his sovereign.

Verse 23. We are sure that whatever show of gladness the king made because of Daniel's preservation was sincere. Not only was he preserved but he was not injured in any way. The word *hurt* in this verse means bodily damage. It is the writer who says that Daniel escaped all damage *because he believed in his God*.

Verse 24. In the ordinary sense of *accuse* it means to charge one with something wrong. It is a stronger word in the present case and means "to eat or consume." The thought is that the men desired to have Daniel

destroyed by being eaten by the lions. Instead of such a fate happening to the prophet it came upon the accusers. *Their children and their wives* were thrown into the den with them. The reason for casting these people into the den is clarified by a statement of Josephus, *Antiquities*, Book 10, Chapter 11, Section 6, as follows: "Now when his enemies saw that Daniel had suffered nothing which was terrible, they would not own that he was preserved by God and by his providence; but they said, that the lions had been filled full with food, and on that account it was, as they supposed, that the lions would not touch Daniel, nor come to him, and this they alleged to the king; but the king, out of an abhorrence of their wickedness, gave order that they should throw in a great deal of flesh to the lions; and when they had filled themselves, he gave further order that Daniel's enemies should be cast into the den that he might learn whether the lions, now they were full, would touch them or not; and it appeared plain to Darius, after the princes had been cast to the wild beasts, that it was God who preserved Daniel, for the lions spared none of them, but tore them all to pieces, as if they had been very hungry, and wanted food. I suppose, therefore, it was not their hunger, which had been a little before satisfied with abundance of flesh, but the wickedness of these men that provoked them to destroy the princes. For if it so pleased God, that wickedness might by even those irrational creatures, be esteemed a plain foundation for their punishment." No doubt these wicked enemies of Daniel thought they had a sufficient explanation of his preservation in claiming that the beasts had been previously fed to their full. Whether Darius seriously considered their suggestion we have no way of knowing. But it was a fair test for these accusers to have the lions fed under the king's orders before offering them these human bodies. If being filled before caused them to ignore the body of Daniel (as these men had claimed), then the same condition should work that way again. *Or ever* means "before ever" they reached the bottom of the cave or den. The beasts were so vicious towards these people, even though they had their stomachs filled with fresh meat, that they lunged up and seized them before they had a chance to alight.

Verse 25. The world empires were made up of all people, nations, and

languages of the civilized world, hence a proclamation such as the king wished to be made would be so addressed in order to reach and affect all the subjects of his realm.

Verse 26. *Every dominion of my kingdom* is explained by the comments on the preceding verse. Religion was a state affair with the ancient empires, hence it was in line with the rule for Darius to make the requirement set forth in this decree, though the Lord did not depend on the worldly governments to stipulate the form of worship that was to be offered to Him. The king made a specific mention of his reasons for issuing the decree which were true and very respectful.

Verse 27. The king continued his general remarks about the greatness of "the God of Daniel," but he did not stop with generalities; he cited the case of Daniel's deliverance from the power of the lions.

Verse 28. Strong defines *prospered* as, "A primitive root; to push forward, in various senses (literally or figuratively, transitively or intransitively)." Cyrus is called *the Persian* because the Darius named in the same connection was a Mede. The Persians also had kings with that name but they will come into the history of the empire after the events of this book. This verse is intended as a general statement covering the span of time that Daniel and his work as a prophet had recognition before the rulers of the world.

DANIEL 7

Verse 1. With this chapter the book takes on a different characteristic and will be made up almost entirely of prophecies. However, since the chapters are not chronological as to dates, it will be necessary for the author to make reference to some of the visions of Daniel in connection with their historical settings. Some of them occurred while the Babylonian Empire was yet in power, while others came to him after the Persians took over. The vision of this chapter came to Daniel in the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon. That takes us back a number of years prior to the fall of Babylon. God has used various methods in making revelations of his purposes to the world (Hebrews 1:1). Sometimes He will cause a heathen to become the instrument for service and give him a vision or dream. Sometimes the prophet will be given the

dream and be enabled to explain it to the proper persons. Such was done in this and other chapters of this book.

Verse 2. Prophecies are frequently made in symbols and the interpretation consists in determining what the symbols stand for. It is not so difficult to do that if we may find the history of such prophecies as have been fulfilled. *Four winds* signifies the whole world is to be involved because there are four directions on the compass. Strove is from *giyach* and Strong defines it, "To push forth," which means to cause some commotion or movement. Since the outcome of this rushing will result in something pertaining to human beings, we know *the great sea* means the inhabitants of the civilized world that were to become subjects of this empire.

Verse 3. When this great sea of humanity was stirred up by the four winds it brought forth *four great beasts*. They correspond to the four world kingdoms of chapter 2: 36-40. These kingdoms were *diverse one from another*, which means that although the four governments were alike in that they were world powers in their scope, yet each had characteristics peculiar to itself.

Verse 4. The first beast (Babylon) was like a *lion* which indicates strength. (See chapter 2: 37.) It had *eagle's wings* which indicates the ability to soar and cover the whole area of mankind. (See chapter 2: 38.) *Man's heart given to it* signifies the beast referred to something composed of intelligent, human beings, which was true of the Babylonian Empire.

Verse 5. The second beast (Medo-Persia) was like to a *bear*. That animal is cruel and vicious (2 Kings 2: 24), and likewise the Persians were a cruel people. See the comments on chapter 6: 24, and note that women and children were cast together into the lions' den. The *three ribs* denotes a devouring disposition, and it was told to *devour much flesh*, which means this kingdom would conquer many people. The beast raised itself up *on one side*. It was composed of the Medes and Persians (two sides), and one side (the Persians) rose higher as a political institution than the Medes. To verify this I shall quote some history. "Although the Persians were destined to become the *dominant tribe* (emphasis mine, E.M.Z.) of all the Iranian Aryans, still the Medes were at first the leading people."—Myers' Ancient History, page 88. This

statement is verified also by Herodotus, Part 1, section 130.

Verse 6. A *leopard* is of the same family of beasts as the lion (the cat), but is smaller and apparently with less prospect of accomplishing much in the world. But it is a swift animal (Habakkuk 1: 8) and can make up in speed what it lacks the size of body to perform. This feature of the beast will be described soon. The kingdom represented by the leopard was the Greek or Macedonian (two names applied interchangeably to the same government). This empire was started by Philip of Macedon, but its world-wide proportions were accomplished by his son, known in history as Alexander the Great. In 12 years he covered the territory of the Medo-Persian Empire and brought it under the control of the Grecian, and by such swift military accomplishments justified the comparison to the leopard made by the prophet Habakkuk. *Four wings* and *four heads* refers to the four divisions into which the conquests of Alexander fell upon his untimely death. This great event is well described by the historian from whom I shall quote. "There was no one who could wield the sword that fell from the hand of Alexander. It is said that, when dying, being asked to whom the kingdom should belong, he replied 'to the strongest,' and handed his signet ring to his general Perdiccas. But Perdiccas was not strong enough to master the difficulties of the situation. Indeed, who is strong enough to rule the world? Consequently the vast empire created by Alexander's unparalleled conquests was distracted by the wranglings and wars of his successors, and before the close of the fourth century B.C. had become broken into many fragments. Besides minor states, four monarchies rose out of the ruins."—Myers' Ancient History, pages 286, 287.

Verse 7. The *fourth beast* (Roman) is described as *dreadful* and *terrible*. The first word is from an original that means to look dangerous; the second is defined in the lexicon as "mighty," and both of these characteristics were true of the Roman Empire as history abundantly shows. *Iron teeth* is explained by the comments and history quoted at chapter 2: 40, and also are *devoured* and *drake*. I trust the reader will see that place before going further with the study of this verse. The *ten horns* corresponds to the ten toes in the 2nd chapter that belonged to the giant man in Nebuchadnezzar's dream.

They refer to ten European governments that were within the Roman Empire and whose kings or other heads ruled their dominions in subjection to the great head in the city of Rome. It does not mean that just that number was all of such governments that existed, but they were representative of the group of local powers that made up the fourth and last world empire. The reason for selecting the number of ten is that the initial symbol for the subject was a human form which would call for ten since that is the proper number for the toes. The ten governments are, England, Germany, Italy, France, Holland, Belgium, Austria, Switzerland, Portugal, and Spain.

Verse 8. Religion was a state affair in the world empires, and the success or failure of any conflict between church and state depends on which was the stronger at any given time. The ten horns of the fourth beast were the temporal powers named in the preceding verse, and each of them had some jurisdiction over the religious lives of its subjects. As a rule that jurisdiction was exercised in harmony with the will of the beast to which the horn belonged. But in time a *little horn* sprang up among these temporal powers, and it also had a religious theory, and there was some kind of conflict between it and the temporal powers and the result was that three of them were subdued or *plucked up*. The *little horn* was the papacy that started with small proportions but expanded as the years went by. There is some uncertainty as to which temporal powers were the *three* and I shall not attempt to determine it. But the purposes of this commentary do not require any definite conclusion here. The characteristics of *eyes of a man* and *mouth speaking great things* identify the horn as the papacy.

Verse 9. Not only was religion a state affair in the world empires, but that religion was forced upon the subjects without regard for their personal convictions. As long as that condition existed, such institutions as world empires could exist also. But God purposed to introduce an institution into the midst of "these kings" (chapter 2: 44) that was to change things and teach the principle of individual responsibility that would result in the downfall of these world powers. That is the prediction in the words *till the thrones were cast down* in this verse. The *Ancient of days* is the same being

as is called the *God of heaven* in chapter 2: 44.

Verse 10. *Fiery stream* is a symbol of the forceful discharge of truth that proceeds from God. The many *thousands* refers to the extent of God's dominion over the lives of mankind. *Judgment set; books opened* indicates that God is about to put into execution His determination to overthrow the reign of the world empires. The words italicized are used for this great revolution because such is the usual procedure when anyone or any group is to be brought to a test. In its fulfillment it refers to the predictions made by both Ezekiel and Daniel previously that the dominating world powers were to be overthrown by the influence of God's teaching on individual responsibility.

Verse 11. Two creatures or institutions are referred to in this verse, and they seem to be in collusion for the one purpose of depriving men of their personal liberty of thought and action. Those two creatures are the *horn* and *beast*. The first is the papacy and the second is the world empire of Rome. We do not usually think of these as being in the same class, for one is political and the other is religious; yet they both were opposed to the personal liberty mentioned a few lines above. It is true that the papacy was formed many years after the kingdom was started that the God of heaven was to set up. And it is true also that the beast (Rome) continued many years after it was started. But it received the "death stroke" when that heavenly kingdom was *set up* and some time was required for it to succumb to the stroke. But knowing that it would do so, God directed a vision that is to be dated according to the time of the "stroke," some more particulars of the same which will be seen in the following verses. *Beast was slain* is the event resulting from the "death stroke" stated above, and the *burning flame* is the *fiery stream* of verse 10.

Verse 12. *Rest of the beasts* refers to the same as the ten horns. When the world empires were made to be a thing of the past, the kings of those governments lost the position they once held (*had their dominion taken away*) as part of such an empire. Yet *their lives prolonged* is a figurative way of saying they would not be entirely blotted out. When the next great event occurs, soon to be predicted, these governments will find

that their existence as temporal institutions, independent of the world monarchies, will be recognized and encouraged.

Verse 13. The *Son of man* is Christ and the *Ancient of days* is God his Father. *Near before him* denotes the close association of these two divine Beings in bringing into the world the principles destined to accomplish the things just predicted.

Verse 14. This verse predicts the same things as chapter 2: 44, slightly different terms being used. *Given him* means that God was to work through his Son in "setting up" the kingdom that was never to be destroyed. *All people* were to serve Him even as all nations of them had been under the sway of the world empires. But those empires dominated the people by their political control to such an extent that they perverted even their religious conduct. The kingdom of the God of heaven (the church) was to rule all who became its subjects with the rod of divine truth, which would give to each man the liberty of conscience and conduct that is in harmony with individual responsibility under the principles of that divine truth.

Verse 15. Up to this verse the chapter is describing the dream or vision that Daniel had. The interpretations and comments that I have been giving on the verses are not those of the prophet, for he had not known them himself as yet, but is soon to learn them through another. My comments are based partly on some of the statements of *one of them that stood by* (verse 16), and partly on the facts and truths of history as quoted. We may note here that Daniel was not given the interpretation of his dream along with the vision itself, as was done in other cases, but he must obtain that information from another. So it is another instance of the "divers manners" spoken of in Hebrews 1: 1. After having this vision, the prophet was *grieved and troubled* because he did not know what it meant. However, upon awaking he recalled it and made a record of it, "wrote the dream," and also "told the sum" of it (verse 1).

Verse 16. This verse tells us to whom Daniel told his dream; it was to *one of them that stood by*. This was evidently some person sent by the Lord to explain to Daniel the interpretation of his dream. It is true that God could have inspired the prophet with the interpretation also even as he did in other instances, but He has

not always done his work after the same manner (Hebrews 1: 1). After the one that *stood* by had given to Daniel the interpretation of the dream he disappeared from the scene and the rest of the chapter will be the direct words of Daniel, repeated, of course, after the interpretation as he received it. We may be sure that the Lord will give the prophet whatever help is necessary to assure a correct report of that given him.

Verse 17. I shall avoid lengthy or unnecessary repetition of interpretations that have been given in the forepart of the chapter. The *four kings* are the same as the *four great beasts* in verse 3, and the four kingdoms of chapter 2: 38-40.

Verse 18. *Saints of the Most High* are members of the kingdom that the God of heaven was to set up. *Take the kingdom* is equivalent to "break in pieces and consume these kingdoms" in chapter 2: 44. *Possess . . . for ever and ever* means the overthrow of world empires by the influence of the church, and this influence was to last always.

Verses 19, 20. The one that *stood* by at first gave Daniel a brief interpretation of the *four great beasts*, that they represented four kings who were to arise, and then he added that the saints of the Most High would take the kingdom, indicating that this particular prediction pertained to only one of them, and naturally it would be the fourth and last one. Just then he recalled that in his dream he saw much more concerning it than of any of the others. That caused him to ask for the interpretation of those events, and to make sure that his inquiry was appreciated he repeated the description and doings of the fourth beast; such is the subject matter of these verses.

Verse 21. It is not an unusual thing for a prophecy in the Bible to have a twofold application, or for it to have its original application extended so as to include other things farther in the future, and that was done in this prediction. But to get the background that leads up to this extended application I must take the reader back to a word in the beginning of verse 19 which is the word *truth*. We know Daniel was not in any doubt as to whether anything the one standing by said would be true, hence we must look for a special meaning of the word. It is derived from YATSAB which Strong defines, "A primitive root; to

place (any thing so as to stay); reflexively to station, offer, continue." The last word in the definition is the one for our use here. It signifies that Daniel wanted to know the application of the prophecy so that it "continued" until it included the horn (the papacy). Continuing his inquiry of the man, he saw some additional symbols, and they are the things of the present verse and others to follow. The *war* this horn made against the saints was the persecution of Christians by the church of Rome, that received such strong support from the empire of Rome (the fourth beast) before that beast was overthrown.

Verse 22. The war mentioned in the preceding verse was to continue until God gave his saints some relief from the persecutions they were enduring. This general prediction will become more specific a little farther down.

Verse 23. For some reason the prophet goes back to an earlier time and repeats some things about the fourth beast, describing it as a world power and devouring men.

Verse 24. The story continues on with the inclusion of the ten horns which have been previously explained to be the ten European governments that were a part of the Roman Empire. Perhaps we can see the logical connection between this and what is soon to come before the chapter is concluded. It was among or out of "these kings," including the ten horns, that *another* "little horn" was to arise which was the papacy. It was necessary to refer anew to this institution in order to connect the story up with the important revolutionary events yet to be foretold.

Verse 25. The pronoun *he* stands for the "little horn" which is the papacy or church of Rome, and the passage is a description of the character and conduct of that institution through a long period of years. *Wear out the saints* is a repetition of the "war with the saints" in verse 21. *Think to change times and laws* is still a prediction of the church of Rome which was to be in cooperation with the fourth beast, the Roman Empire; as long as that government existed, and the two thus united composed what is known in history and prophecy as Babylon the Great, otherwise described as the union of church and state. The words italicized means the church of Rome boastfully will claim authority to regulate public matters the same as if it were God. (See a

like prediction of this institution in 2 Thessalonians 2: 4.) *Shall be given into his hand* means they will be persecuted and suppressed during the period soon to be described. That period is known in the language and literature of Christian teachers as the Dark Ages, and its length is acknowledged to have been 1260 years. But the period here is stated in symbols, and we know that all inspired symbols must be interpreted in harmony with the known facts of history. So the symbols denote the following: A *time* (the original for which Strong defines, "a set time; technically a year"), *times* (which would require at least 2 years), and the *dividing of time* (which would be half a year.) Altogether there would be three and a half symbolical years. In prophecy or symbols a day stands for a year. There are 360 days in a prophetic year; multiply 360 by three and a half and we get 1260, the number of years of the Dark Ages. This is not simply an arbitrary conclusion of a devoted advocate of the Bible, but even the historian Edward Gibbon, who was an infidel as regards the Bible, gives us in round numbers the same period for the reign of the church of Rome, and I shall quote a paragraph from his *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, chapter 28, as follows: "In the long period of twelve hundred years, which elapsed between the reign of Constantine and the reformation of Luther [which are the beginning and ending dates of the Dark Ages according to Christian scholars], the worship of saints and relics corrupted the pure and perfect simplicity of the Christian model; and some symptoms of degeneracy may be observed even in the first generations [See 2 Thessalonians 2: 7] which adopted and cherished this pernicious innovation."

Verse 26. This verse is a prediction of the period in history known as the Reformation, started by Martin Luther and conducted in cooperation with others of that time. *Take away his dominion* means the union of church and state was to be dissolved as a result of the Reformation, for that event overthrew the despotic rule of the church of Rome over the lives of men in both public and private life.

Verse 27. The language of this verse is similar to that of chapter 2: 44, and it is fitting that it should be. Each passage had to do with the perpetuity of the church or kingdom of Christ. In the first place the teaching of that

church resulted in the overthrow of the world empires, and in the second it resulted in the downfall of Babylon the Great, and in spite of all the tests its enemies forced upon it, the kingdom of Christ stood and is still standing.

Verse 28. *Hitherto is the end* means that Daniel has related the whole story of this dream. *Cogitations* is defined by Strong as, "a mental conception." The prophet repeats what he said in verse 15, that what he saw in the vision troubled him. Yet he was able to *keep the matter in his heart* and relate it to the one who *stood by*.

DANIEL 8

Verse 1. Again the Lord gave to Daniel a prophecy, but this time it was in the form of a vision instead of a dream. It was shown to him two years after the dream of the preceding chapter. Another difference in this chapter is that, whereas the other considered the four world empires, this will be about the Medo-Persian and Grecian.

Verse 2. At the time Daniel saw this vision he was on the banks of a river in the province of Elam. Shushan (sometimes spelled Susa) was one of the capitals of the Medo-Persian Empire. The reason for saying one of its capitals is that after the ascendancy of this world power, its rulers resided sometimes in this place and sometimes in Babylon. However, at the time of this chapter the Babylonian Empire was still in power, and the reference to the *palace* was because the province had once been a prominent territory and had its own local rulers who had their mansion here. Since Daniel had this vision while the first of the four world powers was in force, it would make the events shown in the vision truly prophetic.

Verse 3. The *ram* in this vision was the Medo-Persian Empire, the two parts of the empire corresponding to the two horns of the beast. In symbols an event may occur that is different from the natural procedure, yet one which truly represents the actual transaction in the application. Thus we here have two circumstances that differ from the natural course of events. The horns of this ram did not grow up together, nor did they maintain the same greatness or height. That was fulfilled in the history of the two parts of the empire, the Medes and the Persians. The Medes were the older of the two groups but never did attain to the proportions of the Per-

sians. The historical evidence of this may be seen in the comments on chapter 7: 5.

Verse 4. The three directions mentioned are significant. A glance at the map will show the original headquarters of the Medes and Persians were in the east-central portion of the then civilized world. If the empire was to expand it would have to do so in these directions. It continued to do so until it grew into the proportions of a world empire. This was the second one of the four kingdoms that had been predicted by both Ezekiel and Daniel. And both of these prophets predicted that it would be subdued and replaced by another, which brings the story up to the next event of the vision seen by Daniel.

Verse 5. Daniel was interested in the event he had just seen and was thinking over it when another sight came before him. A *he goat* was selected by the Lord, that animal being rougher and stronger and better adapted to the action about to take place. The goat represented the Greek or Macedonian Empire which was the third of the world empires we have been reading about. Like the Babylonian Empire, its first king was not its greatest. The first of the Babylonian rulers was Nabopolassar, but its greatest one was Nebuchadnezzar. The first ruler of the Macedonian Empire was Philip of Macedon, but by far its greatest one was his son Alexander, represented by a *notable horn*. In symbolic literature a horn represents power and authority, and Alexander surely possessed both. *Touched not the ground* is figurative and refers to the swiftness of Alexander's march across the Persian dominions. He covered that vast territory in twelve years with very little resistance.

Verse 6. This verse refers to the furious advance of Alexander upon Persia.

Verse 7. In this one verse the complete subjugation of Persia by Alexander was indicated by the vision. *Choler* means bitterness according to Strong's lexicon, but it does not necessarily refer to the personal character of Alexander only. The idea is that the defeat that was inflicted upon the Persians was a bitter experience.

Verse 8. *When he was strong* denotes that Alexander was at the height of his success when he died, and that event also fulfilled the rest of the prediction, *the great horn was broken*. I shall quote a passage from one of the

"church fathers," otherwise called the Nicene Library. "Again, the sons of Greece celebrate Alexander the Macedonian as the conqueror of many and diverse nations; yet we find that he was removed by an early death, before he had reached maturity, being carried off by the effects of revelry and drunkenness. His whole life embraced but the space of thirty-two years, and his reign extended to no more than a third part of that period. Unsparring as the thunderbolt, he advanced through streams of blood and reduced entire nations and cities, young and old, to utter slavery. But when he had scarcely arrived at the maturity of life, and was lamenting the loss of youthful pleasure, death fell upon him with terrible stroke, and, that he might not longer outrage the human race, cut him off in a foreign and hostile land, childless, without successor, and homeless. His kingdom, too, was instantly dismembered, each of his officers taking away and appropriating a portion for himself. And yet this man is extolled for such deeds as these."—Eusebius, *Life of Constantine*, Book 1, Chapter 7. The *four notable ones* refers to the four divisions into which Alexander's conquests fell upon his death, predicted by the four wings and four heads in chapter 7: 6.

Verse 9. In the comments at verse 1 it is stated that this chapter would be concerned with only two of the world powers. That is, all of the chapter would be about those two or some part of them. However, to avoid confusion, I think it should be explained that the four divisions into which Alexander's conquests fell at his death, while still a part of the third world empire, will receive some special attention. It was not long until two of these divisions were absorbed by the others, leaving only two which occupy the prophecy and history until they, too, were absorbed by the growing power of the fourth world empire, the Roman. The two remaining divisions will be referred to as Syria and Egypt. The former embraced the country formerly called Syria, and most of the countries as far eastward as the Indus River, and it included Palestine also, which will account for much of the important prophecy yet to come. The latter embraced the country of Egypt and the territory immediately surrounding it. These two kingdoms are also referred to in history and prophecy as the "northern" and the "southern" kingdoms, and the two were almost con-

stantly in a state of hostility against each other. The present verse has to do with the kingdom of Syria, and especially with one of its kings who was one of the most vile and wicked men in history. Much of this chapter has to do with this man whose name was Antiochus Epiphanes, sometimes referred to by either one of the names only. He is the *little horn* of this verse, and is represented as becoming eager for more and more power. Hence he pushed outward to other territories and included the *pleasant land* which means Palestine.

Verse 10. *Stars* is from KOWKAR which Strong defines, "figuratively a prince." The words *host of heaven*, therefore, means the citizens of this "pleasant land," and the *stars* has reference to the outstanding men among them. This wicked king had a bitter feeling against the Jews, and was disposed to do them all the harm he could.

Verse 11. The *daily sacrifice* was presided over by the priest, hence we know that in this passage the *prince of the host* refers to the priest. The meaning of the prediction is that Epiphanes would stop the offering of the daily sacrifice. *Place of the sanctuary cast down*. Not only was the sacrifice to be stopped, but the altar and temple were to be desecrated. The fulfillment of prophecy is to be seen in the events of history, hence it will be appropriate for me to quote some now: "At the same time that Antiochus, who was called Epiphanes, had a quarrel with the sixth Ptolemy [one of the kings of Egypt] about his right to the whole country of Syria, a great sedition fell among the men of power in Judea, and they had a contention about obtaining the government; while each of those that were of dignity could not endure to be subject to their equals. However, Onias, one of the high-priests, got the better, and cast the sons of Tobias out of the city; who fled to Antiochus, and besought him to make use of them for his leaders, and to make an expedition into Judea. The king being thereto disposed beforehand, complied with them, and came upon the Jews with a great army, and took their city by force, and slew a great multitude of those that favored Ptolemy and sent out his soldiers to plunder them, without mercy. He also spoiled the temple, and put a stop to the constant practice of offering a daily sacrifice of expiation for three years and six months. But Onias, the

high-priest, fled to Ptolemy, and received a place for him in the Nomus of Heliopolis, where he built a city resembling Jerusalem, and a temple that was like its temple; concerning which we shall speak more in its proper place hereafter.

"Now Antiochus was not satisfied either with his unexpected taking of the city, or with pillage, or with the great slaughter he had made there; but being overcome with his violent passions, and remembering what he had suffered during the siege, he compelled the Jews to dissolve the laws of the country, and to keep their infants uncircumcised, and to sacrifice swine's flesh upon the altar; against which they all opposed themselves, and the most approved among them were put to death. Bacchides also, who was sent to keep the fortresses, having these wicked commands, joined to his own natural barbarity, indulged all sorts of the extremest wickedness, and tormented the worst of the inhabitants, man by man, and threatened their city every day with open destruction; till at length he provoked the poor sufferers, by the extremity of his wicked doings, to avenge themselves." —Josephus, Wars, Book 1, Chapter 1, Sections 1, 2.

Verse 12. We might wonder why God would suffer as wicked a man as Antiochus to be so successful against His people. It was not the first time He had used evil characters as instruments by which to chastise the Jews. The last great instance was that of the king of Babylon who was empowered to take them off into captivity to punish them for their idolatry. But after that experience the Lord assured his people that they would never again be sent as a nation out of their own land. However, He did not tell them they never would be punished at all if they disobeyed the divine laws. And when they again became corrupt in other ways (not idolatry), He determined to punish them. This time it was by suffering the wicked king Antiochus to interrupt their sacred practice of the daily sacrifice, and the present verse has to do with that sad affair. *Host* is from TSERAAH which Strong defines. "A mass of persons (or figuratively things), especially regularly organized for war (an army); by implication a campaign, literal or figurative." The prediction means that Antiochus would be given an army to be used in a campaign against the practice of the daily sacrifice. The passage further tells

why he was given this service against the Jews; it was *by reason of transgressions*. This point is verified by ancient history, and I shall quote an interesting paragraph on the subject. "Epiphanes ridiculed all religions. He plundered the temples of Greece, and wanted to rob that of Elymais. He exercised his impious fury chiefly against Jerusalem and the Jews, and almost without resistance. The Almighty seemed to wink for a time at all the abominations which were committed in His temple, till his wrath against his people was satisfied."—Rollin's Ancient History, Volume 4, Page 242. But however faithfully an instrumentality of man is used to carry out the divine will, the Lord never tolerates the wicked motive with which that service is rendered, but will eventually bring the proper punishment upon that person or persons. We shall learn before this chapter is finished that Antiochus received the full reward for his wicked treatment of the Jews who were the people of the God of heaven.

Verse 13. The disgraceful condition produced about the temple and altar aroused the anxious inquiry of the *saint* who beheld it. The verse may well be abbreviated by the words, "How long will it be until this condition will be corrected, and the daily sacrifice be resumed according to the law?"

Verse 14. The answer was addressed to Daniel instead of the saint who had asked the question, because it had been asked in the hearing of the prophet who was to be the reporter of the scene. The number of days, 2300, is nearly six and a half years. This includes the time the altar lay desecrated and idle, and also the period required for the war for the repossession of the holy institution. The war was conducted by Judas Maccabeus, a faithful and zealous Jew. The history of that war is too extensive to copy here, but the reader may see the information in Josephus, Antiquities, 12-7-1-6.

Verse 15. As in the vision of the preceding chapter, after the prophet had seen this one just related, he wished to know its interpretation. We do not know the identity of the person who will speak first, but he evidently was a messenger acting under divine orders, for his directions were obeyed.

Verse 16. That spokesman used the voice of a man, and Daniel heard him speak to the one who *stood before* the prophet, who had the *appearance of a man*, and bade him explain to

Daniel the vision, at the same time addressing him by the name of Gabriel.

Verse 17. The appearance of this messenger from heaven filled Daniel with surprise and terror, and in reverence he fell face downward upon the ground. Then Gabriel made an introductory remark as to the time when the vision would be fulfilled. The *time of the end* could not be the end of the world, for the events predicted do not agree with that period. Neither could it mean the end of the four world empires, for there was still one more of them to come which was to exist for centuries. Hence, on the basis of elimination, the conclusion is that it refers to the end of the second one of the world powers that are pictured in the vision. That is in harmony with the facts of history, for Antiochus Epiphanes, with whom the vision concludes, appears in the historical records about 150 years B.C., and the reign of the Macedonian Empire was tapering off toward its end, to be supplanted by the Roman Empire, which was then beginning to cast its shadow ahead.

Verse 18. The prophet was still under the effect of his prostrating surprise which had thrown him into a deep sleep. That not being the desirable condition in which to receive such an important communication, Gabriel restored him to full consciousness.

Verse 19. *Last end* means the same as *time of the end*, explained by the comments on verse 17. However, there is a more specific item added to the prediction as to the date and that is, *end of the indignation*. The vision ended at the final downfall and death of Antiochus, whose wicked conduct provoked the *indignation* of God.

Verse 20. This is fully explained at verse 3.

Verse 21. *King of Grecia* means the royalty in general, for a particular one of the kings will be alluded to at the end of the verse. *First king* is explained at verse 5.

Verse 22. The *four kingdoms* is explained at verse 8. *Not in his power* means that the four divisions into which the conquests of Alexander fell at his death were none of them as strong as he. This prediction and conclusion may be verified by secular history, and I shall again quote from Myers' Ancient History, page 286: "There was no one who could wield the sword that fell from the hands of Alexander. It is said that, when dy-

ing, being asked to whom the kingdom should belong, he replied, 'to the strongest,' and handed his signet ring to his general Perdiccas. But Perdiccas was not strong enough to master the difficulties of the situation. Indeed, who is strong enough to rule the world?"

Verse 23. *Their kingdom has special reference to the four divisions of Alexander's empire, of which Syria was the most important.* Near the close of that period (see the comments on "last end" in verse 19) a condition was to exist described by *transgressors are come to the full*. This subject of transgression is treated at length by comments and quotation from history at verse 12, which includes the name and some of the traits of the king referred to in this verse. *Fierce countenance* is defined by Strong as meaning "harsh of face." *Dark sentences* is from one original word which is *CHRYDAH*, and Strong defines it, "A puzzle; hence a trick, conundrum, sententious [brief or pithy] maxim." *Shall stand up* means to appear and become very prominent. Hence we understand that Antiochus Epiphanes was a man with a hard looking face and a character equally harsh. He was an expert in matters of trickery, and would not hesitate to use it to his own advantage when the opportunity came before him.

Verse 24. *Not by his own power* is explained at length at verse 12. *Prosper and practice* refers to the success of Antiochus in his wicked transactions. *Destroy the mighty and holy people.* Antiochus was to overthrow those with whom he came in contact, whether they be the strong people of the world or the good people of God.

Verse 25. *Cause craft to prosper* is explained under *dark sentences* in verse 23. *Magnify himself* denotes he will be puffed up with a feeling of his own importance, and will plot and scheme various kinds of wickedness to gratify his egotism. *Peace* is from *SHALVAH* which Strong defines, "security (genuine or false)." Antiochus would win the confidence of men by his false promises and then would destroy them. *Against the Prince of princes* refers to his attack upon the institutions of God as we saw in verse 11. *Be broken without hand.* One word in the definition of the original for *hand* is "means," and the thought is that no apparent or human means would be used to cause the ruin of Antiochus. This violent and super-

natural death of the wicked man is so outstanding in the annals of the times that I shall quote from history as follows: "When this concern about these affairs was added to the former, he [Antiochus] was confounded, and, by the anxiety he was in, fell into a distemper, which, as it lasted a great while, and his pains increased upon him, so he at length perceived he should die in a little time; so he called his friends to him, and told them that his distemper was sore upon him and confessed withal, that this calamity was sent upon him for the miseries he had brought upon the Jewish nation, while he plundered their temple and condemned their God; and when he had said this he gave up the ghost."—Josephus, *Antiquities*, 12-9-1.

"On his arrival thither [Antiochus Epiphanes at Ecbatana in Media], greatly grieved for this baffle and disappointment at Elymais, news came to him of what happened to Nicanor and Timotheus in Judea; at which being exceedingly enraged, he hastened back, with all the speed he was able, to execute the utmost of his wrath upon the people of the Jews, breathing nothing else but threats of utter destruction and utter extirpation against them all the way as he went. As he was thus hastening toward the country of Babylon, through which he was to pass in his return, he met on the road other messengers, which brought him an account how the Jews had defeated Lysias, recovered the temple at Jerusalem, pulled down the images and altars which he had erected, and restored that place to its former worship; at which being enraged to the utmost fury, he commanded his charioteer to double his speed, that he might be the sooner on the place to execute his revenge upon the people, threatening, as he went, that he would make Jerusalem a place of sepulchre [burying place] for the Jews, wherein he would bury the whole nation, destroying them all to a man. But while these proud words were in his mouth, the judgment of God overtook him; for he had no sooner spoken them, but he was smitten with an incurable plague, a great pain seizing his bowels, and a grievous torment following thereupon in his inward parts, which no remedy could abate. However, he would not slacken his speed; but still continuing in the same wrath, he drove on the same haste to execute it, till at length, his chariot overthrowing, he was cast to the ground with such violence, that he was sorely

bruised and hurt in all the members of his body; whereon he was put into a litter; but not being able to bear that, he was forced to put in at a town called Tabae, lying in the mountains of Paraetacene, in the confines of Persia and Babylonia, and there betake himself to his bed, where he suffered horrid torments both in mind and body. For in his body a filthy ulcer broke out in his secret parts, wherein were bred an innumerable quantity of vermin continually flowing from it; and such a stench proceeding from the same, as neither those that attended him nor he himself could well bear; and in this condition he lay languishing and rotting till he died. And all this while the torments of his mind were as great as the torments of his body, caused by the reflections which he made on his former actions. Polybius [a heathen historian] tells us of this, as well as Josephus, and the authors of the first and second books of Maccabees; and adds hereto, that it grew so far upon him as to come to a constant delirium, or state of madness, by reason of several spectres and apparitions of evil spirits, which he imagined were continually about him, reproaching and stinging his conscience with accusations of his past evil deeds which he had been guilty of. Polybius saith, this was for the sacrilegious attempt which he made upon the temple of Diana in Elymais, overlooking that which he had actually executed upon the temple at Jerusalem. Josephus reproves him [Polybius] for this, and with much more reason and justice, lays the whole cause of his suffering in this sickness, as did Antiochus himself, to what he did at Jerusalem, and the temple of God in that place, and the horrid persecution which he thereon raised against all that worshiped him there." —Prideaux's Connexion, year 164. God used Antiochus to chastise his own people "by reason of transgression," (verse 12), yet He was not willing that they should have charge of the last part of the just punishment upon the wicked king, but instead He struck him with a terrible affliction that tormented him in mind and body.

Verse 26. *Evening; morning* is in reference to the number of days mentioned in verse 14. The marginal rendering there is "evening, morning." That agrees with the expression "evening and morning" which occurs six times in Genesis 1 in enumerating the days of creation. The things predicted in the vision were some time in the

future, hence Daniel was told to *shut it up* or keep it a secret for the time being.

Verse 27. Daniel obeyed the instructions about keeping the vision as a secret so well that *none understood it*. But the tension of the whole circumstance was so great that it affected him physically for some days. He finally recovered and resumed his duties under the king which is the meaning of *did the king's business*.

DANIEL 9

Verse 1. Another jump is made in the chronology of dates and the prophet comes down to the year following the taking of Babylon. This is the same Darius named in chapter 5: 31, who was explained to be the uncle of Cyrus the Persian. Although Cyrus was the one who actually made the successful attack upon Belshazzar and took over the city, he permitted his uncle to ascend the throne as the ruler as stated in this verse. It was in the first year of the reign of Darius that Daniel was reading the records.

Verse 2. The prophet read in the book of Jeremiah (chapter 25: 12) that the *desolations of Jerusalem* (the Babylonian captivity) was to last seventy years. That period was just ended when his attention was called to the prophecy. Of course he did not stop with the mere item of the length of the captivity, but read the history of the facts that caused God to send that calamity upon the nation.

Verse 3. Daniel was shocked by the history of his people, because their conduct was so rebellious that all this humiliation had to be imposed upon them. He was not personally responsible for the situation, but had to share in the sad debasement of the nation because he was one of its citizens. He *set his face* or made a firm resolution that he would approach God in prayer and supplication on behalf of his countrymen. He accompanied that prayer with fasting and wearing of sackcloth, a practice of devout people in olden times when under the weight of distress or anxiety.

Verse 4. *Made my confession*. This is in the first person because Daniel is speaking on behalf of the nation as a whole of which he was a member at the time of the great iniquity. *Great and dreadful God* is used in the sense of the supreme reverence and awe that should be accorded to Him. *Them that love him* is the condition on which

God will fulfill the promises made to mankind.

Verse 5. *We have sinned* is to be understood in the same light as "confession" in the preceding verse. *Have sinned* is made more specific by the words *departing from thy precepts*; forsaking a law is the same as disobeying it.

Verse 6. Daniel recognizes the prophets to have been the *servants* of God, and that they *spoke in thy name* which gave their words the weight of divine authority.

Verse 7. The switching back and forth between the first and third persons, and between the plural and singular pronouns, is because of the relationship of Daniel to the nation as a whole. We have no evidence that he ever had an opportunity even to protest against the corruptions of the nation before his prophetic call, which came to him after being taken to Babylon.

Verse 8. *Confusion of face* refers to the state of humiliation that was felt by the people of Israel after being exiled into a foreign land.

Verse 9. The justice of God had been poured out upon the rebellious nation in the 70-year captivity that was just ended. Now the prophet is praying for the *mercy and forgiveness* that can come only from the same God.

Verse 10. It is not enough to profess faith in the Lord, but we must show our faith by *walking in his laws* that had been set out by the prophets.

Verse 11. One outstanding place where Moses gave the threat of God's course upon a disobedient nation is Deuteronomy 28. That passage was plainly written in the book of the law, and the people had no excuse for their disregard of it.

Verse 12. The *evil* that God brought upon the nation means a punishment, not in the sense of something wrong. By imposing this distress upon the nation God *confirmed his words* that were spoken against it.

Verse 13. This verse indicates the thought expressed at verse 11, that the people had been given plenty of opportunity for knowing the law of God, but they had turned from it unto their own wicked ways.

Verse 14. *Watched upon the evil* denotes that God sees all that is done by His servants. Daniel acknowledges that everything that God does is righteous, which includes the chastisement He had brought against the nation.

Verse 15. The gratitude of the prophet is so great that he goes back to the very beginning of Israel's history as a nation. He recalls the deliverance from Egyptian bondage which was many centuries before; now the same people are just emerging from another bondage. However, there is a wide difference between the two cases. The former was imposed upon God's people for no wrong on their part, while the latter was decreed by the same God as a punishment for sin.

Verse 16. Daniel continues his prayer on behalf of his people, and acknowledges that all of their suffering is because of their sins. The most disheartening feature of it is that the nation has become a reproach in the eyes of the other nations.

Verse 17. *Sanctuary that is desolate* is in reference to the condition of the temple in Jerusalem. The captivity had just been ended, but the Jews had not yet rebuilt it which they will later on. *For the Lord's sake* means that he prays for the holy place to be restored for His sake, not that the people deserved the favor.

Verse 18. *Open thine eyes*. The first word is from PAQACH which Strong defines, "to be observant." God never literally closes his eyes, but Daniel means for Him to take favorable notice of them in their sad condition. The closing statement of the verse is very humble and respectful towards God. Daniel does not claim that his people deserved the favor of God on the ground of their righteousness; he is relying solely on the mercy of the Lord.

Verse 19. This verse is an excellent example of a supplication made to God. That word is a stronger one than merely praying or asking for a favor. It consists in expressions of deep and earnest entreaty, made impressive by repetitions of terms that indicate great humility and a profound sense of helplessness. And again the prophet portrays more concern for the dignity of the name of God than for any personal favor for himself or his people.

Verse 20. *My sin and the sin of my people* is explained at verse 4. *Holy mountain of my God* is a figurative reference to the nation of God whose capital city was Jerusalem which was in ruins at the time the prophet was offering this prayer.

Verse 21. Daniel is about to receive an answer to his prayer, and the thing to be promised will be far greater or include more than he is asking. The

favor the prophet is seeking pertains to the restoration of the capital city of Jerusalem. That is going to be granted, and it also will be the dating place for an event concerning his people that will be without a parallel in all history. He is not going to be held waiting very long for the answer to his prayer, for even while he was praying the angel Gabriel came and contacted him. *Time of the evening oblation* means the daily sacrifice that the Jews' religion included when they were in their own land. The sacrifice was conducted twice daily, at 9 and 3 o'clock respectively. Daniel only refers to it by way of designating the hour when Gabriel contacted him, not that such an offering was being made, for the Jews were not permitted, even by the Lord, to perform their altar services in the strange land (Deuteronomy 28: 36; Isaiah 43: 24).

Verse 22. *Skill and understanding* means mental skill, that which comes from special understanding. Gabriel informs Daniel he was sent to him for the purpose of giving him this favor. God could have inspired the prophet directly with the information as had been done previously, but He saw fit to do it in a different manner this time by sending an angel to him. In this circumstance we have an instance that is spoken of in two passages of the New Testament; Hebrews 1: 1 and 14.

Verse 23. As soon as Daniel had begun his prayer, the Lord gave the order to Gabriel to go unto the earth and deliver the message. We do not know when the angel began his flight to the land of Persia, for he did not interrupt the prophet until he was near the conclusion of his prayer. When it was the proper instant to make the contact, Daniel saw him in a "forced march" or flight as he approached him. As a personal merit on the part of Daniel for his receiving the favor just promised, the angel tells him he is *greatly beloved*. The severe tests of faith which Daniel had undergone and withstood, endeared him to the God of heaven and determined Him to bestow upon the prophet this honor.

Verse 24. This verse introduces the most important time prophecy in the Bible; important because it concerns the last act in God's provision for the salvation of mankind. The reason the subject should be considered as an answer to Daniel's prayer for his people, is the fact that it was to be accom-

plished through the instrumentality of those people and while their dispensation was still in force. The verse is a general statement that covers the entire period of the great transaction, after which the prophet starts with the details of the prophecy. *Seventy weeks* is figurative as to "weeks," and means 70 times 7 years. In other words, the period to be covered by the great prophecy will be 490 years. The grand purpose to be accomplished, and with which it will complete the fulfillment of the prophecy, will include the items referred to in general terms in this verse. *Make an end of sins* means to perform the final act of God for the salvation of mankind from their sins. *Bring in everlasting righteousness* refers to the same fact that was predicted before Nebuchadnezzar about the kingdom that would "stand forever" (Daniel 2: 44). *Seal up the vision and prophecy* means to ratify the prophecy about to be made through the prophet. *Anoint the most Holy* refers to the crowning of Jesus as "King of kings" for the whole earth, both Jew and Gentile.

Verse 25. This verse includes 69 of the 70 weeks, which brings us to the beginning of the public ministry of Christ, here expressed by the words *unto the Messiah the Prince*. This 69-week space is subdivided into smaller periods of 7 and 62 weeks. The first period (and hence the whole 70-week period) begins with *the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem*. When we learn the date of that commandment, we will know when the famous 70-week time prophecy began. It is thought by some that the work of Nehemiah could not figure in the question of the beginning time, but the reference to the rebuilding of the streets undoubtedly connects the work of that great reformer with it. And since the work of Ezra and others had to do with the temple and the services so vitally connected with Jerusalem, we may well include that also in the subject. But there is a difference of 13 years between the work of Ezra and that of Nehemiah. If each of the men is used as a beginning point, will they both come out at the one time, that of the beginning of the public work of Christ? Yes, the apparent difficulty is clarified by remembering that in those times both the lunar and solar years were used. The solar year contains some 11 or 12 more days than the lunar, hence if the beginning point of Ezra be taken, using solar years, there will be enough extra days to make up

for the 13 years between that and the work of Nehemiah, using the lunar year from his date. The work of Ezra began in the year 457 B.C. which is to be regarded as the beginning of the 70-week time prophecy now under consideration. There is a good reason for marking off the first *seven weeks* into a period to itself, for that was about the time covered by the commotions set up by the enemies of the Jews at the work and reforms of Ezra, Nehemiah and other zealous Jews, referred to here by *troubulous times*. After that the prophet ignores all the events of the intervening years down to the beginning of the public ministry of Christ, merely mentioning the period as *threescore and two weeks*.

Verse 26. *After threescore and two weeks* means 62 weeks after the first 7 (69 weeks in all) *shall Messiah be cut off*, but it does not say how long after. We shall see that it was to be three and a half years after, for it was that many years after Jesus began his public ministry that he was *cut off* by the crucifixion. *Not for himself*. The last word has no separate term in the original and it must be understood in the light of the context. Moffatt's translation renders the phrase, "leaving no successor," and the American Standard Version says, "shall have nothing." These renderings agree with Isaiah 53: 8 on the same subject which says, "who shall declare his generation?" The statement is in question form but it is actually an affirmative prediction. The meaning is that when Jesus died he left no successor, and the thought is most significant and beautiful. Daniel 2: 44 and many other passages predict that the kingdom of Christ was to "stand forever." In that case He would have no need for a successor, and God would see to it that even death should not prevent his Son from ascending the throne of the everlasting kingdom to be set up soon after his death and resurrection. *People of the prince*. The last word is from *NAGID* which Strong defines, "A commander (as occupying the front), civil, military, or religious." The *prince* in this passage is Titus, who commanded the Roman forces at the siege and destruction of Jerusalem. The reader should secure the history of Josephus and read the third volume if possible, for the matter is too lengthy to copy here. He will find that the stubbornness of the Jews forced Titus to press the siege with unspeakable suffering being imposed upon them, "ending in desolations" as this

verse states. That event occurred 40 years after the death of Christ, and we may wonder why it is injected at this place, when the passage as a whole is not through with the public ministry and death of Christ. It was appropriate to interrupt the prophecy because of the direct relationship between the death of Christ and the destruction of Jerusalem. When Jesus was before Pilate (Matthew 27: 25) and that governor was hesitating about what to do with his prisoner, the Jews cried out, "His blood be on us, and on our children." God sometimes takes people at their word, as he did in this case. Forty years after that terrible sentence the city of Jerusalem was destroyed with all the afflictions referred to above, and it was a punishment upon them for their murder of Jesus. The death of the Son of God was necessary for the salvation of the world, and it was to be accomplished by the wicked Jews as predicted. But the Lord never did tolerate a wrong attitude shown by any of His agencies, even when they were carrying out the divine decrees. Hence we have the crucifixion of Christ and the destruction of Jerusalem (40 years apart) predicted in one connection, after which the prophet resumes predictions of the Messiah.

Verse 27. The *one week* is the last one of the 70-week period, being the seven years from the beginning of Christ's public ministry to the conversation of Cornelius. The *covenant* is the one made with Abraham in Genesis 12: 3 that "In thee shall all families of the earth be blessed." In other passages the same covenant includes the words "and in thy seed," which we know refers to Christ (Galatians 3: 16). The Mosaic covenant was for the Jews only but the one in this passage was for Jews and Gentiles alike, which is signified by the words *with many*. The reason it required a week (of years) for Jesus to confirm or fulfill the covenant, is the truth that His office required him to continue the good work until both Jews and Gentiles had been accepted. The *covenant* demanded that, because it was to bless "all the families of the earth." Jesus accomplished the work for the Jews in person while in his personal ministry of three and a half years; but this was for the Jews only (Matthew 15: 24). The part for the Gentiles was performed by the apostles in the course of the three and a half years after the crucifixion, which culminated with the conversion of the household

of Cornelius. Twice three and a half years gives us a week (of years), designated in this verse as *one week*. In the *midst of the week* denotes the time of the crucifixion, which came three and a half years after Jesus began his public ministry, and the same length of time before Cornelius. Before proceeding with the verse, I shall sum up the dates to show how this time prophecy was literally fulfilled in 70 weeks of years or 490 years. The work of Ezra began in the year 457 B.C., the public ministry of Christ began in the year 26 A.D., the conversion of Cornelius was in 33 A.D.; 457 plus 33 is 490, the number of years required by the time prophecy. *Shall cause the sacrifice and oblation to cease* means that the death of Christ put an end to all other sacrifices for sin (Romans 10: 4; Hebrews 10: 8, 9, 14). *For the overspreading of abominations, etc.*, was commented upon in the preceding verse. The crucifixion of Christ and destruction of Jerusalem are very properly mentioned here in direct connection; for while the crucifixion had to be, yet the motive of the Jews in destroying Him brought upon them the destruction of their city.

DANIEL 10

Verse 1. When giving a date for any event, a reference to either Darius or Cyrus is the same. This is because the Medo-Persian Empire was ruled jointly by the two men, hence they may be used interchangeably for dates since they took possession of Babylon together as far as chronology was concerned. The preceding chapter began with the first year while the present one comes down to the third year of the same reign. This verse is composed in the third person and Daniel writes it only as a historian. *True, but . . . long* signifies that an inspired prophecy is not weakened any as to its reliability just because it looks far into the future. God knows as much about the future as he does of the past, hence an inspired prediction cannot fail.

Verses 2, 3. Fasting or making of vows was not required as a general practice under the law of Moses. However, such devotions were approved when entered into by servants of God, and they were generally done in times of great anxiety or sorrow. Daniel put on a three-week fast because of his concern for the Jews, who, though formerly released from the Babylonian captivity, were yet in an unsettled state due to the desolated condition of

their city of Jerusalem. Ate no *pleasant* bread means he abstained from the food of his choice and ate only what was necessary to support an existence. The people among whom Daniel then dwelt used aromatic ointments upon their bodies for the purpose of its pleasant odor and sensation, but he abstained from the use of that costly delicacy during the period of his fast.

Verse 4. Apparently the fast that Daniel observed was to bring no results, for it was three days before he heard any word of encouragement. The reason for the delay will be explained later. The prophet was on the bank of one of the rivers of Babylon; Hiddekel, later known as the Tigris.

Verse 5. *Uphaz* is another word for "Ophir," a place that produced an unusually fine quality of gold. The fine clothing this *certain man* was wearing indicated the dignity of his mission and the glory of the authority behind it.

Verse 6. All of these descriptive words were used for the same purpose that was stated in the preceding verse. Whether the person was directly from heaven, sent to the earth in the form of a man, or was a being of the earth and especially adorned and qualified to serve the present purpose, I do not know. In either case we may regard him as a person being used by the Lord to accomplish certain ends with conditions on earth.

Verse 7. Daniel had some men with him, but upon the approach of this unusual person they became frightened and ran away, and as a result Daniel was the only one who saw the vision and heard the words spoken.

Verse 8. The prophet did not flee, yet he was greatly affected by the circumstance so that he had a prostrated feeling or a loss of bodily strength. However, this prostration did not interfere with his hearing and activity of mind.

Verse 9. Daniel heard the voice of the man, which, in addition to the state of his mind and body already produced by the appearance of such an unusual person, caused him to fall upon his face to the ground.

Verse 10. Before continuing the communication, the man caused Daniel to have a bodily posture of resting on his hands and knees.

Verse 11. While in this position the prophet received assurance that no harm was intended against him for he was greatly beloved. But before any

further part of the message would be delivered he was told to stand up. He obeyed the instructions to arise, but his full strength had not returned and he trembled as he stood in the presence of this awe-inspiring personage.

Verse 12. In this verse the man again encourages Daniel and acknowledges the three-week fast that he had observed. He assures him that his words of prayer were heard from the beginning, and that it was *for his words* or because of them he had come.

Verse 13. In this verse the "man" (or angel) will explain to Daniel why his prayer was not acknowledged sooner, although it was observed favorably from the start. To use a familiar form of speech, the man was engaged in other business which detained him. Some commentators think that Daniel was contending with this *prince of the kingdom of Persia* to persuade him to permit the Jews to return to Jerusalem. I do not understand how that would be, for according to Ezra 1:1-4 that privilege had been granted them two years before. If this controversy had anything to do with that subject, it must have been with some outstanding men of Persia who were not in full accord with the edict of Cyrus. Whatever it was, it pertained to the interests of the Jews, and this man or angel could not go to the relief of Daniel for a while. He finally had "reinforcements" in the person of Michael, and together they got matters in shape so that the latter could "hold the fort" for a time, which released the "man" to go and comfort Daniel.

Verse 14. The situation is similar to that described in chapter 9: 23, in that Daniel is to have his prayer answered favorably, but is also to be given more information than he had expected. In the present instance, if the prophet was asking for some reassurances of the return of his people to Jerusalem he was granted that consolation. But this inspired messenger was to tell him of some events in the centuries ahead that would involve these same people of the Jews. Since that *vision is for many days*, however, the specific predictions will not be given him until the next chapter. But in recognition of his devotion and concern for the people of God, the messenger was sent to give him the encouragement.

Verse 15. Daniel was again overcome by the presence and communication of the man, but nothing is said about his being frightened as before.

He was rendered *dumb* or speechless but it did not affect his body otherwise, and he could only bend his head toward the ground.

Verse 16. I do not understand that more than one man or angel came to Daniel, though the language seems to indicate that there was. The general subject has been the same all through these verses and hence there would be no occasion for another messenger. The person was in the form of a man whoever he was, but he was endowed with supernatural power and knowledge for he was yet to make many predictions for us to examine. This angel recovered Daniel from his dumbness, and also renewed his bodily strength after a few moments. After regaining his power of speech, Daniel told the angel of his sorrow and its effect upon his bodily feeling.

Verse 17. Daniel felt humiliated and inferior in the presence of the person whom he called *my lord*. *Neither is there breath left in me* is figurative as to its extent, and means that the prophet was virtually exhausted by the vision.

Verse 18. *Then came again* means the same man or angel again contacted Daniel for the purpose of further strengthening him and making him feel assured.

Verse 19. Being comforted and strengthened by the angel, Daniel requested him to speak, which indicated that he felt prepared in body and mind to give attention.

Verse 20. The angel asked Daniel if he knew or understood why he had come to him. There is no recorded answer to the question that is available to us, but the absence of everything to the contrary implies that he understood. Thus the subject or occasion of the present meeting between Daniel and the angel was dropped, and the latter informed the prophet that he was going back to Persia to resume the controversy that is mentioned in verse 13. He added a general reference to another great event that was to occur between Persia and Greece after this angel has conducted his "fight" with the former. But this item is out of place chronologically and it will be treated in its proper place in the next chapter.

Verse 21. Chronologically speaking, the first part of verse 20 has been fulfilled and the last part of it is due; that is, it is the proper place to go more into detail as to the meaning of the

words *prince of Grecia shall come*. Before doing so, the angel assures Daniel that what he is going to reveal to him will be in harmony with what the scriptures had previously foretold. On the present matter of predictions, Michael was the only one of the angels who was taken into the same confidential service as the one now talking to Daniel.

DANIEL 11

Verse 1. The pronoun *I* means the person described in chapter 10: 18 and other verses in that chapter. The reader should "keep his bearings" as to the chronological place we have reached in this most wonderful prophecy. In chapter 10: 20 it was shown that Persia was to be contacted by the king of Grecia. But that was a long jump into the future and other events were to happen first. This angel is still in the presence of Daniel, and even before returning to *fight with the king of Persia*, he is going to reveal to the prophet the things that are to happen to Persia and Greece and the Jews who will be involved in the whole affair. Remember, this conversation or visit of the angel with Daniel is taking place in the third year of Cyrus (chapter 10: 1), but in this meeting the angel inserts the present verse to tell the prophet of his work in the *first* year of that reign, that it consisted in *confirming and strengthening* the kingdom of the Medes and Persians. That confirmation was done because the change from the Babylonian Empire to the Medo-Persian was according to God's decree. And now after two or three years have gone by, this angel is in the presence of Daniel and ready to reveal to him the events referred to in the forepart of this paragraph.

Verse 2. We now come to the grand drama of the nations that was referred to by the angel after he had made the necessary preliminary explanations to Daniel, and while he was still in the presence of the prophet on the bank of the Tigris River. *The truth* refers to that mentioned as "scripture of truth" in the last verse of the preceding chapter. No other scripture goes into as many details as does the present chapter, but the prophecy as a whole was seen by inspired eyes, and made known by the prophets in various places and under diverse figures. *Stand up yet three kings in Persia*. At the time this speech by the angel was made, Cyrus and Darius were the joint rulers of the empire. The three

to follow were unimportant and are passed over with the brief numerical statement italicized, to bring the prophecy down to the *fourth* king in this enumeration, who was to be a very important king. The pronoun *thee* refers to Daniel to whom the angel was delivering this prophecy. The prediction is that this *fourth* king was to be rich and strong and finally would cause such a stir among the nations of the world that he would bring the powerful kingdom of Greece (destined to be the third world power) into a hostile attitude because of the encroachments of Persia upon that realm. In this chapter there are no less than 20 characters referred to, either directly or otherwise, and it will be helpful if not necessary for the understanding of the great passage to have the history that confirms the predictions. Hence I shall make numerous quotations from time to time from authentic sources for the information of the reader. The *fourth* king of this verse was XERXES I, and history has this to say of him: "For eight years all Asia was astir with the work of preparation [for the expedition against Greece]. Levies were made upon all the provinces that acknowledged the authority of the Great King [Xerxes I], from India to Macedonia, from the regions of the Oxus to those of the Upper Nile. From all the maritime states upon the Mediterranean were demanded vast contingents of war galleys, transport ships, and naval stores. While these land and sea forces were being gathered and equipped, gigantic works were in progress on the Thracian coast and on the Hellespont to insure the safety and facilitate the march of the coming hosts."—MYERS' *Ancient History*, page 191.

"Xerxes thus levied his army searching out every region of the continent. For from the reduction of Egypt, he was employed four whole years in assembling his forces, and providing things necessary for the expedition. In the course of the fifth year he began his march with a vast multitude of men. For of the expeditions with which we are acquainted, this was by far the greatest, so that that of Darius against the Scythians appears nothing in comparison with this."—HERODOTUS, Book 7, Sections 19, 20.

"Xerxes, in the four years which followed on the reduction of Egypt, continued incessantly to make the most gigantic preparations for his intended attack upon Greece, and among them included all the precautions which a

wise foresight could devise in order to ward off every conceivable peril. A general order was issued to all satraps throughout the Empire, calling on them to levy the utmost force of their province for the new war; while, as the equipment of Oriental troops depends greatly on the purchase and distribution of arms by their commander, a rich reward was promised to the satrap whose contingent should appear at the appointed place in the most gallant array. . . . His army is said to have accompanied him; but more probably it joined him in the spring, flocking in, contingent after contingent, from the various provinces of his vast Empire. Forty-nine nations, according to Herodotus, served under his standard."—Rawlinson, *Five Great Monarchies*, Volume 3, Chapter 7, pages 443, 452.

"All these expeditions, and any others, if there have been any besides them, are not to be compared with this one. For what nation did not Xerxes lead out of Asia against Greece? What stream, being drunk, did not fail him, except that of great rivers. Some supplied ships; others were ordered to furnish men for the infantry, from others cavalry were required, from others transports for horses, together with men to serve in the army; others to furnish long ships for the bridges, and others provisions and vessels."—Herodotus, Book 7, Section 21.

"The Decline and Fall of the Persian Empire.—The power and supremacy of the Persian monarchy passed away with the reign of Xerxes. The last one hundred and forty years of the existence of the empire was a time of weakness and anarchy, and presents nothing that needs claim our attention in this place. In the year 334 B.C., Alexander the Great, king of Macedonia, led a small army of Greeks and Macedonians across the Hellespont intent upon the conquest of Asia. His succeeding movements and the establishment of the short-lived Macedonian monarchy upon the ruins of the Persian Empire are matters that properly belong to Grecian history, and will be related at a later stage of our story."—MYERS' *Ancient History*, page 94.

"From Xerxes we have to date at once the decline of the Empire in respect to territorial greatness and military strength, and likewise its deterioration in regard to administrative vigor and national spirit."—Rawlinson, *Five Great Monarchies*, Volume 3, Chapter 7, Page 471. There were some

other rulers in Persia, but they were inferior to the one just seen in these quotations and will not claim our attention at this time.

Verse 3. This *mighty king* was Alexander the Great of Macedonia, the same who was referred to in chapter 8: 5. The angel passes immediately from Xerxes to Alexander, thus ignoring all the intervening history. This was evidently because of its unimportance; also because Alexander's work was the next important event for prophecy after Xerxes. I shall quote some more history in confirmation of the predictions of this verse: "Alexander was now free to carry out his father's scheme in regard to the Asiatic expedition. In the spring of 334 B.C., with all his plans matured, he set out at the head of an army numbering about 35,000 men for the conquest of the Persian Empire. Crossing the Hellespont, Alexander first proceeded to the plain of ancient Troy, in order to place a garland upon the supposed tomb at that place of his mythical ancestor Achilles. Proceeding on his march, Alexander met a Persian army on the banks of the Granicus, over which he gained a decisive victory. Three hundred suits of armor, selected from the spoils of the field, were sent as a votive offering to the temple of Athena at Athens. The victory at the Granicus laid all Asia Minor open to the invader, and soon practically all of its cities and tribes were brought to acknowledge the authority of the Macedonian."—Myers, *Ancient History*, pages 274, 275.

Verse 4. *When he shall stand up* means that just as Alexander reaches the height of his glory he will come to his end, and his conquests will be divided into four parts. See the comments and quotation from history at chapter 8: 8. *Not to his posterity* refers to the fact that Alexander died without any descendants to receive his kingdom, as may be seen in the historical quotation referred to. *Nor according to his dominion* means that no man lived in Greece who was strong enough to handle the dominion left by Alexander, since no one was as strong as he. I shall quote again from history as follows: "And when he [Alexander] shall stand up, his kingdom shall be broken, and shall be divided towards the four winds of heaven and not to his posterity, nor according to his dominion which he ruled; for his kingdom shall be plucked up, even for others namely, besides the four greater

princes. We have already seen the vast empire of Alexander parcelled out into four great kingdoms; without including those foreign princes who founded other kingdoms in Cappadocia, Armenia, Bithynia, Heraclea, and on the Bosphorus. All this was present to Daniel."—Rollin, *Ancient History*, Volume 3, Page 597. From the various citations to history that have been offered the reader, he may understand that the pronoun *those* with which the verse closes, refers to *the four winds* or the four divisions into which Alexander's conquests fell at his death. *Others besides* means the forces in the world that finally swallowed up the realms of the four princes of Alexander, since they were not strong enough to retain them. As the statement has already been made by the historian elsewhere, "No one was strong enough to handle the sword that fell from the hand of Alexander."

Verse 5. We have seen that when Alexander died his dominions were divided into four parts and taken over by his generals. Two of these divisions were short-lived and were absorbed by the other forces about them. The two that remained were ruled by Seleucus Nicator, and Ptolemy. The dominions of the former are referred to in this chapter as *king of the north*, the latter as *king of the south*. They may occasionally be referred to simply by a pronoun, in which case an explanation will be given. These two divisions of Alexander's conquests were ruled at first by the two men named, but their realms were ruled successively by different persons as long as they existed as governments, until all was finally absorbed by the Roman Empire. This *northern* and *southern* kingdom were constantly hostile toward each other, in spite of a few occasions of pretended friendliness, and the entire chapter from here on is a series of predictions of their dealings with their respective conditions. I shall now take up the comments on the verses in their order. *The king of the south* was Ptolemy Soter who ruled over Egypt. *One of his* (Alexander's) *princes* was Seleucus Nicator who ruled over Syria. *Strong above him* means the king of the north was stronger or had more extensive dominions than those possessed by the king of the south. The history and geography of the times will verify this prediction. Syria embraced "Syria and the countries eastward to the Indus," while "Ptolemy held sway over Egypt," according to the history of Myers. It

can thus be seen why the prediction is that the king of the north was to be *strong above him* (the king of the south).

Verse 6. The rulers of these two dominions were succeeded by others as the years went by, but the scripture does not make mention of the new kings by name. The two governments are merely referred to as the north and the south, and if a change in kings in either has taken place, we will have to learn it and find the name of the king by history. For this reason it will be necessary to make quotations from the historical sources. In order that the reader may the more readily detect the particular word or words concerned in the prediction, I shall add my own emphasis to them. It will be the rule to make the quotation first, then interpret the verse or verses in the light of the history, hence it is very important that the reader give careful attention to the quotations. The history to be used for the present verse is as follows: "The commotions and revolts which happened in the east, making Antiochus (Theos) weary of his war with King Ptolemy (Philadelphus), *peace* was made between them on the terms, that Antiochus, divorcing Laodice, his former wife, should marry Bernice, daughter of Ptolemy, and make her his queen instead of the other, and entail his crown upon the male issue of that marriage. And this agreement being *ratified by both sides*, for the full performance of it, Antiochus put away Laodice, though she were his sister by the same father, and he had two sons born to him by her; and Ptolemy carrying his daughter to Pelusium, there put her on board his fleet, and sailed with her to Selucia, a seaport town near the mouth of the River Orontes in Syria; where having met Antiochus, he delivered his daughter to him, and the marriage was celebrated with great solemnity. And thus 'the king's daughter of the south came, and was married to the king of the north'; and, by virtue of that marriage, 'an agreement was made between those two kings,' according to the prophecy of the prophet Daniel, 11: 5, 6. For in that place, by the king of the south, is meant the king of Egypt, and by the king of the north, the king of Syria; and both are there so called in respect of Judea, which lying between these two countries, hath Egypt on the south, and Syria on the north. For the fuller understanding of this prophecy, it is to be ob-

served, that the holy prophet, after having spoken of Alexander the Great (verse 3) and of the four kings among whom his empire was divided (verse 4) confines the rest of his prophecy in that chapter to two of them only, that is to the king of Egypt, and the king of Syria, and first he begins with that king of Egypt who *first* reigned in that country after Alexander, that is, Ptolemy Soter, whom he calls the king of the south, and saith of him that he should be strong. And that he was so, all that write of him do sufficiently testify; for he had under him Egypt, Libya Cyrene, Arabia, Palestine, Coele-Syria, most of the maritime provinces of Lesser Asia, the island of Cyprus, several of the isles of the Aegean Sea, now called the Archipelago, and some cities also in Greece, as Sicyon, Corinth, and others. And then the prophet proceedeth to speak of the four successors (or princes, as he calls them) of Alexander, and he was Seleucus Nicator king of the north; of whom he saith 'should be strong above the king of the south, and have great dominion'; that is, greater than the king of the south. And that he had so, appears from the large territories he was possessed of; for he had under him all the countries of the east, from Mount Taurus to the river Indus, and several of the provinces of Lesser Asia, also from Mount Taurus to the Aegean Sea; and he had moreover added to them, before his death, Thrace and Macedon. And then, in the next place (verse 6) he tells us 'the coming of the king's daughter of the south, after the end of several years, to the king of the north, and the agreement, or treaty of peace, which should thereon be made between these two kings.' Which plainly points out unto us this marriage of Bernice, daughter of Ptolemy Philadelphus king of Egypt, with Antiochus Theus king of Syria, and the peace which was thereon made between them; for all this was exactly transacted according to what was predicted by the holy prophet in his prophecy. After this the holy prophet proceeds, through the rest of the chapter, to foreshadow all the other most remarkable events that were brought to pass in the transactions of the succeeding times of those two races of kings, till the death of Antiochus Epiphanes, the great persecutor of the Jewish nation; all which I shall take notice of in the following series of this history, and apply them to the prophecy for the explication of it, as they come

in my way.—PRIDEAUX'S CONNEXION, year 249.

"Details of this reign. [That of Antiochus Theos]—Marriage of Antiochus with Laodice, daughter of Achaeus. Her influence, and that of his sister Apame, wife of Matas, engaged him in war with Ptolemy Philadelphus, B.C. 260, which is terminated, B.C. 252, by marriage between Antiochus and Berenice, Ptolemy's daughter. Soon after the close of this war, B.C. 255, Parthia and Bactria revolt and establish their independence. On the death of Philadelphus, B.C. 247, Antiochus repudiates Berenice and takes back his former wife Laodice, who however, doubtful of his constancy, murders him to secure the throne for her son, Seleucus, B.C. 246."—Rawlinson, *Ancient History*, page 251.

"As soon as Antiochus Theos had received intelligence of the death of Ptolemy Philadelphus, his father-in-law, he divorced Berenice, and recalled Laodice and her children. This lady, who knew the variable disposition and inconstancy of Antiochus, and was apprehensive that the same levity of mind would induce him to supplant her, by receiving Berenice again, resolved to improve the present opportunity to secure the crown for her son. Her own children were disinherited by the treaty made with Ptolemy; by which it was also stipulated that the issue Berenice might have by Antiochus should succeed to the throne, and she then had a son. Laodice, therefore, caused Antiochus to be poisoned. . . . Laodice, not believing herself safe as long as Berenice and her son lived, concerted measures with Seleucus to destroy them also; but that princess, being informed of their design, escaped the danger for some time by retiring, with her son, to Daphne, where she shut herself up in the asylum built by Seleucus Nicator; but being at last betrayed by the perfidy [treachery] of those who besieged her there, by the order of Laodice, first her son, and then herself, with all the Egyptians who had accompanied her to that retreat were murdered in the basest and most inhuman manner."—Rollin, *Ancient History*, Volume 3, Book 16, Chapter 3, Section 1.

In view of the foregoing information from history we may be able to comment, briefly, on the leading terms of this verse. The first pronoun *they* means the kingdoms of the north and the south. *King's daughter* is Berenice, daughter of Ptolemy Philadelphus,

whom her father gave in marriage to the king of the north in hopes of bringing about a peace. But the plan did not have the effect that was expected, which is the meaning of the words *not retain the power of the arm. Shall be given up*, etc. All who were involved in this "love triangle" were brought to disappointment.

Verse 7. The preceding paragraph informs us that the ones involved in the affair of Berenice were disappointed and that she was slain. But her death did not end the matter, for at the time she was being held there were certain forces at work to avenge her misfortune. I shall quote from history again as follows: "While Berenice [daughter of Philadelphus and former wife of Antiochus Theos] continued shut up and besieged in Daphne, the cities of Lesser Asia [or Asia Minor], hearing of her distress, commiserated [sympathized] her case, and immediately, by a joint association, sent an army toward Antioch for her relief; and Ptolemy Euergetes, her brother, hastened thither with a greater force out of Egypt for the same purpose. But both Berenice and her son were cut off before either of them could arrive for their help; whereupon both armies turning their desire of saving the queen and her son into a rage for the revenging of their death, the Asian forces joined the Egyptians for the effecting of it, and Ptolemy, at the head of both, *carried all before him*; for he not only slew Laodice, but also made himself *master of all Syria and Cilicia*, and then passing the Euphrates, brought all under him as far as Babylon, and the River Tigris, and would have subjugated to him all the other provinces of the Syrian Empire, but that a sedition arising in Egypt during his absence called him back to suppress it."—Prideaux's *Connexion*, year 246.

Verse 8. The very things predicted in this verse took place, therefore the best and only comments necessary will be offered in another historical quotation which is as follows: "Ptolemy III, Euergetes, ('well-wisher'), B.C. 247-222; alluded to in Daniel 11: 7-9; invaded Syria in 246, to avenge the repudiation and murder of his sister, Berenice (See Antiochus II, page 95), and had conquered it as far north as Antioch, and was moving eastward towards Babylon, when he was recalled by troubles at home. His policy towards the Jews in Egypt was generous; while, in token of his victories,

he sacrificed in the temple at Jerusalem 'after the custom of the law' (Josephus: C. Ap., 11: 5). He brought back to Memphis the gods taken from Egypt by Cambyzes. It was for this he received the epithet, 'well-doer.'"—Schaff-Herzog, Article, Ptolemy III.

"And therefore, having appointed Antiochus and Xantippus, two of his generals, the former of them to command the provinces he had taken on the west side of Mount Taurus, and the other to command the provinces he had taken on the east side of it, he marched back into Egypt, carrying with him *vast treasures*, which he had gotten together, in the plunder of the conquered provinces; for he brought from thence with him *forty thousand talents of silver*, a vast number of precious vessels of silver and gold, and *images also to the number of two thousand five hundred*, among which were many of the *Egyptian idols*, which Cambyzes, on his conquering Egypt, had carried thence into Persia. These Ptolemy (son of Philadelphus and brother of Berenice) having restored to their former temples, on his return from this expedition, he thereby much endeared himself to his people,"—Prideaux's *Connexion*, year 246.

Verse 9. *King of the south* was Ptolemy Euergetes of whom we read in the preceding verse and historical comments. The reader should see that paragraph for the explanation of this verse. We note that in verse 8 the statement is made that the king of the south was to continue more years than the king of the north.

Verse 10. This is one of the verses where we have only the pronouns for the kings, and their names must be learned from history. Since the events of the preceding verse another king has arisen over the north by the name of Seleucus Callinicus, and the pronoun *his*, second word of this verse, refers to him. But he was to be opposed by another man in his kingdom referred to in the words *one shall certainly come*; that "one" was Antiochus the Great, sometimes titled Antiochus III. He not only opposed Callinicus, but carried his operations even to the border of Egypt. The last *his* refers to the Egyptian king Ptolemy Philopator who had succeeded Ptolemy Philadelphus. That is what is meant by the words *he stirred up even to his* (Philopator's) *fortress*. In confirmation of the predictions of this verse I shall quote some more history: "The weakness of Philopator, and the mis-

management of the State by Sosibius, who was at once incapable and wicked, laid the empire open to attack; and it was not long before the young king of Syria, Antiochus III, took advantage of the condition of affairs to advance his own pretensions to the possessions of the long-disputed tract between Syria Proper and Egypt. . . . Details of the war. Antiochus commenced B.C. 219, by besieging Seleuceia, the port of Antioch, which had remained in the hands of the Egyptian governor of Coele-Syria. He invaded that country, took Tyre and Ptolemais (Acre), and advanced to the frontiers of Egypt."—Rawlinson, *Ancient History*, Page 275.

Verse 11. It may be a surprise and yet a help to the reader to know that, beginning with the second verse of this chapter and including the rest of the chapter, a space of over 300 years is covered. It is natural to think that since the rulers and other outstanding characters in the chapter, about 20 in all, belonged to the two governments, there would be both long and short reigns among them. In some instances the ruler in one of the kingdoms would reign as long as two or more kings in the other. Hence we may pass from one verse to another without a change of kings in one or the other. Before making further comments on this verse I shall quote from history:

"Ptolemy Philopator, was an indolent, effeminate prince. It was necessary to excite and drag him, in a manner, out of his lethargy, in order to prevail with him to take up arms, and repulse the enemy, who were preparing to march into his country. At last he put himself at the head of his troops; by the valor and good conduct of his generals, obtained a signal victory over Antiochus (the Great) at Raphia."—Rollin's *Ancient History*, Volume 4, Page 143.

"It might have been expected that, under the circumstances, he (Antiochus the Great) would have been successful. But the Egyptian forces, relaxed though their discipline had been by Sosibius, were still superior to the Syrians; the battle of Raphia (B.C. 217) was a repetition of the lessons taught at Pelusium and Gaza. The invader was once more defeated upon the borders, and by the peace which followed, the losses of the two preceding years were, with one exception, recovered (by Philopator). . . . In the third year of the war, B.C. 217, Philopator marched out from Alexandria in

person, with 70,000 foot, 5,000 horse and 73 elephants. Antiochus advanced to give him battle, and the two armies met at Raphia, on the eastern edge of the desert. After a vain attempt on the part of Theodotus to assassinate Philopator in his camp, an engagement took place, and Antiochus was completely defeated. He then made peace, relinquishing all his conquests but Seleuceia."—Rawlinson, *Ancient History*, Page 275.

The king of the south is Ptolemy Philopator who was a weakling in character, but others insisted and agitated him until he finally bestirred himself. He gathered a large army and came with *choler* (bitterness) against him, king of the north who is the Antiochus the Great of verse 10. *Multitude shall be given into his* (Philopator's) hand.

Verse 12. He is Ptolemy Philopator, king of Egypt. His success against Antiochus the Great filled him with pride and *his heart shall be lifted up. Shall not be strengthened by it* means that his kingdom did not profit by the success against Antiochus, although he personally had the arrogant satisfaction of looking upon his victory. We shall learn in the next verse that defeat finally came to his kingdom from the very man whom he had beaten. But for the present verse, let the reader keep the foregoing comments in mind as he reads the following quotations from history:

"Antiochus III lost upwards of ten thousand foot and three hundred horse, and four thousand of his men were taken prisoners. Philopator, having marched, after his victory, to Jerusalem, was so audacious as to attempt to enter the sanctuary, ("his heart shall be lifted up"); and being returned to his kingdom, he behaved with the utmost pride toward the Jews, and treated them very cruelly. He might have dispossessed Antiochus of his dominions had he taken a proper advantage of his glorious victory; but he contented himself with recovering Coele-Syria and Phoenicia, and again plunged into his former excesses; 'but he shall not be strengthened by it.'"—Rollin's *Ancient History*, Volume 4, Page 143.

"Ptolemy (Philopator) having thus regained these provinces, made a progress through them; and, among other cities which he visited in his perambulation, Jerusalem was one that had this favor from him. On his arrival thither, he took a view of the temple,

and there offered up many sacrifices to the God of Israel, and made many oblations to the temple, and gave several valuable donatives to it. But, not being content to view it only from the outer court, beyond which it was not lawful for any gentile to pass, he would have pressed into the sanctuary itself, and into the holy of holies in the temple, where none but the *high priest only, once a year*, on the great day of expiation, was to enter. This made a great uproar all over the city. The high-priest informed him of the sacredness of the place, and the law of God which forbade his entrance thither. And the priests and Levites gathered together to hinder it, and all the people to deprecate it; and great lamentation was made everywhere among them on the apprehension of the great profanation which would hereby be offered to their holy temple, and all hands were lifted up unto God in prayer to avert it. But the king, the more he was opposed, growing the more intent to have his will in this matter, pressed into the inner court; but, as he was passing farther to go into the temple itself, he was smitten from God with such a terror and confusion of mind, that he was carried out of the place in a manner half dead. On this he departed from Jerusalem, filled with great wrath against the whole nation of the Jews, for that which happened to him in that place, and venting many threatenings against them for it."—Prideaux, year 217.

"Ptolemy IV, Philopator ('father-loving'), B.C. 222-205; alluded to in Daniel 11: 10-12, defeated Antiochus the Great at Raphia, near Gaza (B.C. 217); sacrificed in the temple, and attempted to enter the sacred precincts, when a shock of paralysis stopped him. He was indolent, effeminate, and licentious, but capable, on occasion, of splendid and vigorous deeds."—Schaff-Herzog, Article, Ptolemy IV.

Verse 13. This verse begins with the word *for* which indicates a continuation of some of the thoughts in the preceding verse. Those thoughts were regarding the success of Ptolemy Philopator against Antiochus the Great. It is stated as verse 12 concludes, that those thousands of men would not strengthen the kingdom of Philopator, and the present verse proceeds to tell us why it would not. And since that subject consists in the further activities and success of Antiochus the great, my comments on the verse further will be some historical quotations:

"Antiochus, after he had ended the war beyond the Euphrates, raised a great army in those provinces. Finding, fourteen years after the conclusion of the first war, that Ptolemy Epiphanes, who was then but five or six years of age, had succeeded Philopator his father, he united with Philip of Macedon, in order to deprive the infant king of his throne. Having defeated Scopas [a general conducting the war on behalf of the infant king] at Panium, near the source of the river Jordan, he subjected the whole country which Philopator had conquered, by the victory he gained at Raphia."—Rollin's Ancient History, Volume 4, page 144.

"He (Antiochus III) then turned towards the eastern frontiers of his realm, against Parthia and Bactria; penetrated into Northern India and organized a formidable army, including a hundred and fifty Indian elephants. In 204 Philopator died; and the Egyptian crown devolved on his son, Ptolemy V, (Epiphanes) a boy of five years. This circumstance Antiochus meant to utilize. He conquered Coele-Syria, Phoenicia, and Palestine, and gained a decisive victory in 198 at Paneas in Coele-Syria. Peace was then concluded."—Schaff-Herzog. Article, Antiochus III.

"Antiochus, king of Syria, and Philip, king of Macedon, thinking to serve themselves of the advantage they had by the death of Philopator, and the succession of an infant king after him, entered into a league to divide his dominion between them, agreeing that Philip should have Caria, Libya, Cyrene, and Egypt, and Antiochus all the rest. And accordingly Antiochus forthwith marched into Coele-Syria and Palestine, and partly this year, and partly in the next, made himself master of these provinces, and all the several districts and cities in them."—Prideaux's Connexion, year 203.

"Return of Antiochus from the East, B.C. 205 and resumption of his Egyptian projects. A treaty is made with Philip of Macedon for the partition of the kingdom of Ptolemies between the two powers. War in Coele-Syria, Phoenicia, and Palestine with varied success, terminated by a great victory over Scopas near Panias, B.C. 198. Marriage of Cleopatra, daughter of Antiochus, with Ptolemy V. Coele-Syria and Palestine promised as a dowry, but not delivered."—Rawlinson, Ancient History, page 254.

Verse 14. The first half of this verse

is virtually a repetition of the prediction in the foregoing, but I shall insert a brief quotation again from history as an explanation: "Antiochus, king of Syria, and Philip, king of Macedon, thinking to serve themselves of the advantage they had by the death of Philopator, and the succession of an infant king after him, *entered into a league* to divide his dominions between them." Prideaux's Connexion, year 203.

The second half of this verse introduces a new item into the prediction. *They* is a pronoun referring to Daniel, against whose people the robbers were to *exalt themselves*. But the prediction is that they were to fail which the history shows did happen. I have departed somewhat from the rule suggested a short while ago to quote the history for each verse first and then make my own comments upon it. Whichever may seem to be the better plan in given cases will be followed. I now shall insert the history that confirms the prediction favorable to the Jews in the last of this verse.

"At this time [reign of Ptolemy Epiphanes] Antiochus having passed into Lesser Asia, and there engaged himself in a war with Attalus, king of Pergamus, the minister of Alexandria took advantage hereof to send Scopas with an army into Palestine and Coele-Syria, for the recovery of those provinces; where he managed the war with such success that he took several cities, and reduced all Judea by force, and put a garrison into the castle at Jerusalem; and, on the approach of winter, returned to Alexandria with full honor for the victories he had obtained, and with as great riches, which he had gathered from the plunder of the country. . . . The Jews were at this time very much alienated in their affections from the Egyptian king; whether it were by reason of the former ill treatment of their nation by his father, or for some fresher ill treatment they had received, is not said. It is most likely it was because of the ravages and robberies of Scopas, in his taking Jerusalem the former year; for he was a very covetous and rapacious man, laying his hands everywhere on all that he could get; and therefore, on Antiochus' marching that way, they willingly rendered all places unto him, and on his coming to Jerusalem, the priests and elders went out in a solemn procession to meet him, and received him with gladness, and entertained him and all his army in their city, provided for his horses and ele-

phants, and assisted him with their arms for the *reducing* of the castle where Scopas had left a garrison."—Prideaux's Connexion, year 193.

"Now it happened that in the reign of Antiochus the Great, who ruled over all Asia, that the Jews, as well as the inhabitants of Coele-Syria, suffered greatly, and their land was sorely harassed; for while he was at war with Ptolemy Philopator, and with his son, who was called Epiphanes, it fell out that these nations were equally sufferers, both when he was beaten and when he beat the others; so that they were very like a ship in a storm, which is tossed by the waves on both sides; and just thus were they in their situation in the middle between Antiochus' prosperity and its change to adversity. But at length, when Antiochus had beaten Ptolemy, he seized upon Judea; and when Philopator was dead, his son sent out a great army under Scopas the general of his forces, against the inhabitants of Coele-Syria, who took many of their cities and in particular our nation; which, when he fell upon them, went over to him. Yet was it not long afterward when Antiochus overcame Scopas, in a battle fought at the fountains of Jordan, and destroyed a great part of his army."—Josephus, 12-3-3.

Verses 15-17. The persons and facts of this series of verses are so interwoven that I think it will the better be explained by grouping them into one paragraph. I shall quote some lines from history, then explain the events in their relation to the persons involved in the light of the history. Let the reader give close attention to the following: "Antiochus, besieged and took, first Sidon, then Gaza, and afterwards all the cities of those provinces, notwithstanding the opposition made by the chosen troops which the king of Egypt had sent against him. 'He did according to his own will,' in Coele-Syria and Palestine, and nothing was able to make the least resistance against him. Pursuing his conquests in Palestine, he entered Judea, 'the glorious,' or, according to the Hebrew, 'that desirable land.' He there established his authority and strengthened it, by repulsing from the castle of Jerusalem, the garrison which Scopas had thrown into it. This garrison being so well defended that Antiochus was obliged to send for all the troops in order to force it, and the siege continuing a long time, the country was ruined and consumed by the stay the army was obliged to make in it. . . .

Antiochus, seeing that the Romans undertook the defence of young Ptolemy Epiphanes, thought it would best suit his interest to lull the king asleep, by giving him his daughter in marriage, in order to 'corrupt her,' and excite her to betray her husband; but he was not successful in his design; for as soon as she was married to Ptolemy, she renounced her father's interests, and embraced those of her husband. It was on this account that we see her join with him in the embassy which was sent from Egypt to Rome, to congratulate the Romans on the victory which Acilius had gained over her father at Thermopylae."—Rollin's Ancient History, Volume 4, pages 144, 145.

It should be remembered that a reference to the *north* always means Syria in this chapter, and the king who is ruling there at the time, and the *south* means Egypt. *Cast up a mount* means that Antiochus III would prepare to attack the cities of the *south*, which would not be able to withstand the attack. *He that cometh against him* means that Antiochus was to come against Ptolemy Epiphanes and the latter would not succeed. To make his gains further sure, the king of the north was to give his daughter (whose name was Cleopatra as supplied by history) in marriage to the king of the south, thinking that she would place her love for her father above that for her husband, and thus really act as a spy for her father in the household of her husband. But she was true to her husband; *not stand on his* (her father's) *side, neither be for him*.

Verse 18. Antiochus III was a noted man and accomplished many exploits among the nations. However, we have just seen that he had some reverses, and we shall see some more of the same in the present verse. Before making further comments on it, I shall make some historical quotations:

"Antiochus, having put an end to the war of Coele-Syria and Palestine, sent his two sons, at the end of the land-army, to Sardis, while he embarked on board the fleet, and sailed to the Aegean Sea, where he took several islands, and extended his empire exceedingly on that side. However, the prince of the people, whom he had insulted by making this invasion, that is L. Scipio, the Roman consul, caused the reproach to turn upon him, by defeating him at Mount Sipilus, and repuls-

ing him from every part of Asia Minor."—Rollin, Volume 4, page 145.

"He (Antiochus III) then invaded Asia Minor, and in 195 he crossed the Hellespont, and advanced into Europe. Here he encountered the Romans; but in 190 he was totally defeated at Magnesia by Scipio Asiaticus, and he obtained peace from Rome only on very severe conditions."—Schaaf-Herzog. Article, Antiochus III.

"The conquests of Antiochus in Asia Minor and Europe, B.C. 197 to 196, bring him into contact with the Romans, who require him to evacuate the Chersonese and restore the Greek cities in Asia Minor to freedom. He indignantly rejects their demands, and prepares for war. Flight of Hannibal to his court. B.C. 195. Antiochus makes alliance with the Aetolians, and in B.C. 192 crosses into Greece, lands at Demetrias, takes Chalcis. Great battle at Thermopylae between the Romans, under Acilius Glabrio, and the allied forces of Antiochus and the Aetolians. Antiochus, completely defeated, quits Europe and returns to Asia B.C. 191. His fleet has orders to protect the shores and prevent the Romans from landing. But the battle of Corycus ruins these hopes. The Romans obtain the mastery of the sea; and their army, having crossed the Hellespont without opposition, gains under the two Scipios the great victory of Magnesia, which places Antiochus at their mercy, B.C. 190. He purchases peace by ceding all Asia Minor except Cilicia, and by consenting to pay a contribution of 12,000 talents. The ceded provinces are added by the Romans to the kingdom of Pergamus, which is thus raised into a rival to Syria."—Rawlinson, Ancient History, page 254.

With the facts of history before us, we can understand the present verse and properly assign the pronouns. *Isles* means inhabited spots, and that is the meaning of the places where *he* (Antiochus III) turned his face. That called the Romans into action and they sent their military leader, Scipio, into the field. When Antiochus invaded the territories in which the Romans were interested it was considered a *reproach* upon them. But Scipio was successful in repulsing Antiochus, so that he caused it to rebound upon *him* (Antiochus) without having any reproach of *his* (Scipio's) *own*.

Verse 19. Antiochus, completely defeated, turned his steps towards his own country. *Stumble and fall* refers to his failure in another matter of his

obligations, and the explanation of the predictions is best shown in the historical quotations which will be quoted before making further comments.

"Antiochus, after his defeat, returned to Antioch, the capital of his kingdom, and the strongest fortress in it. He went soon after into the provinces of the east, in order to levy money to pay the Romans; but having plundered the temple of Elymais, he there lost his life in a miserable manner."—Rollin's Ancient History, Volume 4, page 146.

"The defeat of Magnesia is followed by the revolt of Armenia, B.C. 189, which henceforth becomes independent. It leads also to the death of Antiochus, who, in order to pay the war contribution imposed upon him by the Romans, is driven to the plunder of the Oriental temples. Hence a tumult in Elymais, wherein the king is killed, B.C. 187."—Rawlinson, Ancient History, page 254.

"Retiring to his eastern provinces in order to raise money for the tribute he (Antiochus III) owed Rome, he was slain in 187, while plundering the temples of Belus in Elymais."—Schaff-Herzog, Article, Antiochus III.

Verse 20. *His estate* means in the place of Antiochus III whose death was predicted in the preceding verse. The prediction *raiser of taxes* means he will be an extortioner and will lay heavy tax burdens on the people. He was to be destroyed, *neither in anger nor in battle* denotes he would not die in open warfare nor by voluntary bodily contest with another, but will die unresistingly by the hand of another. I shall give the reader the history which confirms the predictions of this verse.

"These few words (Daniel 11: 20) denote, evidently, the short and obscure reign of Seleucus, and the kind of death he was to die. The Hebrew text points him out still more clearly. 'There shall arise up in his place, (of Antiochus) a man who, as an extortioner, a collector of taxes, shall cause to pass away, and shall destroy, the glory of the kingdom.' And, indeed, this was the sole employment of his reign. He was obliged to furnish the Romans, by the articles of peace concluded between them, a thousand talents annually; and the twelve years of this tribute exactly ended with his life. He reigned but eleven years."—Rollin's Ancient History, Volume 4, page 203.

"Antiochus was succeeded by his son,

Seleucus IV, who took the name of Philopator, and reigned eleven years, B.C. 187 to 176. This period was wholly *uneventful*. The fear of Rome, and the weakness produced by exhaustion, forced Seleucus to remain quiet, even when Eumenes of Pergamus seemed about to absorb Pontus. . . . Seleucus was murdered by Heliodorus, his treasurer (B.C. 176), who hoped to succeed to his dominions."—Rawlinson, Ancient History, page 255.

"After the death of Antiochus the Great, Seleucus Philopator, his eldest son, whom he left at Antioch on his departure thence into the east, succeeded him in the kingdom, but made a very poor figure of it, by reason of the low estate which the Romans had reduced the Syrian Empire to, and the heavy tribute of one thousand talents a year, which, through the whole time of his reign he was obliged to pay them; by the treaty of peace lately granted by them to his father. The whole of this king's reign is expressed by Daniel 11: 20. For in that text it is foretold, that after Antiochus the Great, who is spoken of in the foregoing verses, 'there should stand up in his estate a raiser of taxes.' And Seleucus was no more than such all the time, for the whole business of his reign was to raise the thousand talents every year, which, by the treaty of peace that his father had made with the Romans, he was obliged for twelve years together, annually to pay that people; and the last of these years was the last of his life. For, as the text saith, 'within a few years after he should be destroyed, and that neither in anger, nor in battle'; so accordingly it happened. For he reigned only eleven years, and his death was neither in battle nor in anger; that is, neither in war abroad, nor in sedition or rebellion at home, but by the secret treachery of one of his own friends. His successor was Antiochus Epiphanes his brother, of whom we shall treat in the next book."—Prideaux's Connexion, years 186, 176.

Verse 21. The pronoun *his* refers to Seleucus IV, also called Philopator, and is referred to in the preceding verse as a "raiser of taxes." *Shall stand up* means he shall get the place occupied by the preceding king. The man who was to take this place is named Antiochus Epiphanes, brother of the murdered Philopator. The predictions indicate that he was to obtain the throne in an irregular manner, not in an honorable way. The details of

that event are described in the following historical quotation:

"On the death of Seleucus Philopator, Heliodorus, who had been the treacherous author of his death, endeavored to seize the crown of Syria. Antiochus, the brother of Seleucus, was then on his return from Rome. While at Athens in his journey, he there heard of the death of his brother, and the attempt of Heliodorus to usurp the throne; and finding that the usurper had a great party with him to support him in his pretensions, and that there was another party also forming for Ptolemy, (who made some claim to the succession in right of his mother, she being sister to the deceased king) and that both of them were agreed 'not to give unto him (though the next heir in the absence of Demetrius) the honor of the kingdom,' as the holy prophet Daniel foretold, he applied himself to Eumenes, king of Perhamus, and Attalus his brother, and (by flattering speeches and great promises of friendship) prevailed with them to help him against Heliodorus. And by their means that usurper being suppressed, he was quietly placed on the throne, and all submitted to him, and permitted him, without any further opposition, peaceably to obtain the kingdom, as had been predicted of him in the same prophecy. Eumenes and Attalus, at this time having some suspicions of the Romans, were desirous of having the king of Syria on their side, in case a war should break out between them, and Antiochus' promises to stick by them, whenever such a war should happen, were the inducements that prevailed with them to do him this kindness."—Prideaux's *Connexion*, year 175. See also, Rawlinson, *Ancient History*, page 255.

This Antiochus Epiphanes is described here as a *vile person*, which refers to his character as a man as well as to his conduct in public affairs. In view of his prominence in the prophecies and history of things pertaining to God's people, I believe it will be helpful to quote at length from the historical sources. As this quotation may be referred to again, the reader is urged to give it careful attention, particularly the parts which I shall emphasize.

"On his being thus settled on the throne, he took the name of Epiphanes, that is, The Illustrious; but nothing could be more alien to his true character than this title. The prophet Dan-

iel foretold of him that he would be 'a vile person,' so our English version has it; but the word נִבְזֶה in the original rather signified despicable than vile. He was truly both in all that both these words can express, which will fully appear from the character given him by Polybius, II, Philarchus, 12, Livy, 13, and Diodorus, 14, who were all heathen writers, and the two first of them his contemporaries. For they tell us, that he would get often out of the palace and ramble about the streets of Antioch, with two or three servants only accompanying him; that he would be often conversing with those that graved in silver, and cast vessels of gold, and be frequently found with them in their shops, talking and nicely arguing with them about the mysteries of their trades, that he would very commonly debase himself to the meanest company, and on his going abroad would join in with such as he happened to find them met together, although of the lowest of the people, and enter into discourse with any of them whom he should first light on; that he would, in his rambles, frequently drink with strangers and foreigners, and even with the meanest and vilest of them; that, when he heard of any young company met together to feast, drink, or any otherwise to make merry together, he would, without giving any notice of his own coming, intrude himself among them, and revel away the time with them in their cups and songs, and other frolics, without any regard to common decency, or his own royal character, so that several, being surprised with the strangeness of the thing, would, on his coming, get up and run away out of the company. And he would sometimes, as the freak took him, lay aside his royal habit, and putting on a Roman gown, go round the city, as he had seen done in the election of the magistrates of Rome, and ask the votes of the citizens, in the same manner as used to be there practiced, now taking one man by the hand, and, then embracing another, and would thus set himself up, sometimes for the office of aedile, and sometimes for that of tribune; and, having thus voted into office he sued for, he would take the chair, and sitting down in it, hear petty causes of contracts, bargains, and sales, made in the market, and give judgment in them with that serious attention and earnestness, as if they had been matters of the highest concern and importance. It is said also

of him, that he was much given to drunkenness; and that he spent a great part of his revenues in revelling and drunken carousals; and would often go out into the streets while in these frolics, and there scatter his money by handfuls among the rabble, crying out, 'Let him take to whom fortune give it.' Sometimes he would go abroad with a crown of roses upon his head, and wearing a Roman gown, would walk the streets alone, and carrying stones under his arms, would throw them at those who followed after him. And he would often wash himself in the public baths among the common people, and there expose himself by many absurd and ridiculous actions. Which odd and extravagant sort of conduct made many doubt how the matter stood with him; some thinking him a fool, and some a madman; the latter of these, most thought to be his truest character; and therefore, instead of Epiphanes, or the Illustrious, they called him Epimanes, the Madman. Jerome tells us also of him that he was exceedingly given to lasciviousness, and often by the vilest acts of it debased the honor of his royal dignity; that he was frequently found in the company of mimics [clowns], *pathics* [boys kept for unnatural purposes], and *common prostitutes*, and that with the latter he would commit acts of lasciviousness, and gratify his lust on them *publicly in sight of the people*. And it is further related of him, that having for his *catamites* [same as pathics] two vile persons, called Timarchus and Heraclides, who were brothers, he made the first of them governor of Babylonia, and the other his treasurer in that province, and gave himself up to be governed and conducted by them in most that he did. And having, on a very whimsical occasion, exhibited games and shows at Daphne, near Antioch, with vast expense, and called thither a great multitude of people of foreign parts, as well as from his own dominion, to be present at the solemnity; he there behaved himself to that degree of folly and absurdity, as to become the ridicule and scorn of all that were present; which actions of his are sufficiently abundant to demonstrate him both despicable and vile, though he had not added to them that most unreasonably and wicked persecution of God's people in Judea and Jerusalem which will be hereafter related."—Prideaux, year 175.

Verse 22. This is still making predictions about Epiphanes; in fact, this

wicked character will figure in most of the affairs throughout the rest of this chapter. *Arms of a flood* refers to the military forces that Epiphanes brought against the Egyptian king. The pronoun *him* refers to Epiphanes, and the *prince* is Heliodorus who had seized the throne. The fulfillment of this verse will be seen in the following history.

"Heliodorus, the murderer of Seleucus, and his adherents, as also those of the Egyptian king, who had formed designs against Syria, were defeated by the forces of Attalus and Eumenes, dispersed by the arrival of Epiphanes, whose presence disconcerted all their projects. By the 'prince of the covenant,' we may suppose to be meant, either Heliodorus, the chief of the conspirators, who had killed Seleucus; or rather Ptolemy Epiphanes king of Egypt, who lost his life by a conspiracy of his own subjects, when he was mediating a war against Syria. Thus Providence removed this powerful adversary, to make way for Antiochus Epiphanes, and raised him to the throne."—Rollin's Ancient History, Volume 4, page 236.

"On the death of Seleucus, the throne was seized by Heliodorus; but it was not long before Antiochus Epiphanes, the brother of the late king, with the help of Pergamene monarch, Eumenes, recovered it. This prince, who is known in history as Antiochus IV, or (more commonly) as Antiochus Epiphanes, was a man of courage and energy."—Rawlinson's Ancient History, page 255.

Verse 23. Another king is in power in Egypt by the name of Ptolemy Philometor, and the pronoun *him* stands for this man. The pronoun *he* is Epiphanes who is to come against this new king in Egypt. He will have a *small people* which means he will have a smaller army than usual, but yet by certain tactics he will win the contest. The fulfillment of the verse may be seen in the following history.

"Antiochus Epiphanes, though he was already determined on the war, yet shall he assume a specious [deceptive] appearance of friendship for the king of Egypt.' He even sent Apollonius to Memphis, to be present at the banquet given on occasion of that prince's coronation, as a proof that it was agreeable to him. But soon after, on pretence of defending his nephew, he marched into Egypt, with a *small army*, in comparison of those which he levied afterwards. The battle was fought near Pelusium. Antiochus was

strongest, that is, victorious, and afterwards returned to Tyre. Such was the end of his first expedition."—Rollin, Volume 4, pages 236, 237.

"Antiochus, having, ever since the return of Apollonius from the Egyptian court, been preparing for the war which he found he must necessarily have with Ptolemy about the provinces of Coele Syria and Palestine, and being now ready for it, resolved to defer it no longer—and then forthwith marched his army toward the frontiers of Egypt, where, being met by the forces of Ptolemy (Philometor) between Mount Casius and Pelusium, it there came to battle between them, in which Antiochus having gotten the victory . . . without attempting anything further this year, returned to Tyre; and there, and in the neighboring cities, put his army into winter quarters."—Prideaux, year 171.

Verses 24-26. We have another series of verses that can better be considered as a group. The predictions are still about Epiphanes and his dealings with the king of the south which means Egypt. Epiphanes is still pictured as an insincere person, making plausible offers of friendship that he did not mean. Another expedition is here predicted and the history showing his fulfillment will now be quoted:

"In these three verses (Daniel 11: 24-26) appear the principal characters of the second expedition of Antiochus into Egypt. His mighty armies, his rapid conquests, the rich spoils he carried from thence, and the dissimulation [hypocrisy] and treachery he began to practice with regard to Ptolemy. Antiochus, after employing the whole winter in making preparations for a second expedition into Egypt, invaded it both by sea and land, as soon as the season would permit. 'Wherefore, he entered into Egypt with a great multitude, with chariots, and elephants, and horsemen, and a great navy. And made war against Ptolemy king of Egypt; but Ptolemy was afraid of him, and fled; and many were wounded to death. Thus they got the strong cities in the land of Egypt, and he took the spoils thereof. I Maccabees, 1: 17, 18, 19.' Diodorus relates, that Antiochus, after this victory, conquered all Egypt, or at least the greatest part of it; for all the cities, Alexandria excepted, opened their gates to the conqueror. He subdued Egypt with an astonishing rapidity, and did that 'which his forefathers had not done, nor his father's fathers.' Ptolemy either surrendered

himself, or fell into the hands of Antiochus, who at first treated him with kindness; had but one table with him; seemed to be greatly concerned for his welfare, and left him the peaceable possession of his kingdom, reserving to himself Pelusium, which was the key to it. For Antiochus assumed this appearance of friendship, with no other view than to have the better opportunity of ruining him. 'They that feed of the portion of his meat shall destroy.' Antiochus did not make a long stay in Egypt at that time, the news which was brought of the general revolt of the Jews obliging him to march against them. In the mean time, the inhabitants of Alexandria, offended at Philometor for having concluded an alliance with Antiochus, raised Euergetes, his youngest brother, to the throne in his stead. Antiochus, who had advice of what had passed in Alexandria, took the opportunity to return into Egypt, upon pretext of restoring the dethroned monarch, but in reality to make himself absolute master of the kingdom."—Rollin, Volume 4, pages 237, 238.

"Antiochus, having been making preparations during all the winter for a second expedition into Egypt, as soon as the season of the year would permit, again invaded that country both by sea and land. . . . While Antiochus carried on his vast invasion, Philometor came into his hands; whether he were taken prisoner by him, or else voluntarily came in unto him, is not said; the latter seems most likely. For Antiochus took not from him his library, but they *did eat at the same table*, and conversed together as friends; and for some time Antiochus pretended to take care of the interest of this young king his nephew, and to manage the affairs of the kingdom as tutor and guardian to him. But when he had, under this pretence, made himself master of the country, he seized all to himself; and, having miserably pillaged all parts where he came, vastly enriched himself and his army with the spoils of them."—Prideaux's Connexion, year 171.

Verse 27. The first sentence of verse 28 should be included in this paragraph, for the historical quotation that will be made includes it. *Both these kings* means Philometor and Epiphanes. They both put on a show of friendliness, even eating at the same table which was one of the strongest indications of friendship in ancient times. But all the time they were thus

chatting in a good-natured manner at the table, Epiphanes was plotting the ruin of Philometor. The latter actually suspected the treachery of Epiphanes, but pretended not to see anything wrong; thus they did *speaking lies at one table*. Nothing decisive was accomplished and Epiphanes returned to his own land, having only the consolation of obtaining some great possessions of personal property. I shall give the reader some history, showing the fulfillment of this prophecy.

"The third expedition of Antiochus could scarcely be pointed out more clearly (in Daniel 11: 27, 28). That prince, hearing that the Alexandrians had raised Euergetes to the throne, returned to Egypt upon the specious pretence of restoring Philometor. After having overcome the Alexandrians in a sea fight at Pelusium, he laid siege to Alexandria. But, finding the inhabitants made a strong opposition, he was contented with making himself master of Egypt again, in the name of his nephew, in whose defence he pretended to have drawn the sword. They were then at Memphis, ate at the same table, and behaved towards one another with all the outward marks of a sincere friendship. The uncle seemed to have the nephew's interest at heart, and the nephew to repose the highest confidence in his uncle; but all this was mere show, both dissembling [acting hypocritically] their real sentiments. The uncle endeavored to crush his nephew, and the nephew, who saw through his design, strove immediately to be reconciled to his brother. Thus neither succeeded in deceiving the other; nothing was yet determined, and Antiochus returned into Syria."—Rollin, Volume 4, page 239.

"Antiochus, on hearing of this [the raising of Euergetes to the throne of Egypt] laid hold of the occasion for his making a third expedition into Egypt, under pretence of restoring the deposed king, but in reality to subject the whole kingdom to himself. Ptolemy Euergetes and Cleopatra his sister, who were then shut up in the town, being hereby much distressed, sent ambassadors to the Romans to represent their case, and pray relief. And, a little after there came ambassadors from the Rhodians, to endeavor to make peace between the two kings. But while they were proceeding in long harangues on these topics, Antiochus interrupted them, and in a few words told them that there was no need of long orations as to this matter; that the kingdom belonged to

Philometor the elder brother, *with whom he had some time since made peace, and was now in perfect friendship with him*; that, if they would recall him from banishment, and again restore him to his crown, the war would be at an end. This said he, not that he intended any such thing, but only out of craft farther to embroil the kingdom, for the better obtaining of his own ends upon it. . . . And, with this view having withdrawn from Alexandria, he marched to Memphis, and there seemingly again restored the whole kingdom to Philometor, excepting only Pelusium, which he retained in his hands, that, having the key of Egypt still in his keeping, he might thereby again enter Egypt, when matters should there, according to the scheme which he had laid, be ripe for it, and so seize the whole kingdom; and, having thus disposed matters, he returned again to Antioch."—Prideaux, 169.

Verse 28. The latter part of this verse predicts the wicked conduct of Epiphanes toward the Lord's institutions in Jerusalem. That subject comes up again in this chapter, and I shall defer any further comments together with historical quotations till later.

Verse 29. This paragraph must include half of verse 30 to get the predictions. It is a prophecy of the fourth expedition of Epiphanes into Egypt. *Not be as the former or as the latter*. Some indefiniteness is seen in the historians as to which expeditions are meant since he had made three of them before. But it is clear that the fourth one would not be as successful as the others had been. The reason for it is given in the statement about the *ships of Chittim* that were to come against him. I shall quote the history for this paragraph:

"Fourth expedition of Antiochus into Egypt—Advice being brought to Antiochus, that the two brothers were reconciled, he threw off the mask, and declared publicly that he intended to conquer Egypt for himself. And, to support his pretensions, he returned toward the south, that is, into Egypt, but was *not so successful* in this expedition as before. As he was advancing to besiege Alexandria, Popilius and the other Roman ambassadors, who were on board a fleet composed of Macedonian or Greek ships, for this the Hebrew word *Chittim* signifies, which they found at Delos, obliged him to lay down his arms, and leave Egypt. He obeyed, but 'with the utmost re-

luctance, and made the city and temple of Jerusalem feel the dire effects of his indignation," as will be presently seen."—Rollin's Ancient History, Volume 4, pages 239, 240.

Verse 30. The conduct of Epiphanes as it pertained to the Jews was so vicious, and it occupies so much of the prophecy and in so many places, that I think it will be proper to copy at length from history before making any more of my own comments on that subject. After doing this shall resume my interpretation of the various statements in the verses, relying on the history quoted for the basis of my comments, and adding other historical quotations from time to time as the subject matter may require. I again insist that the reader give the most possible attention to these quotations as they will be needed in the understanding of the predictions.

"At the same time that Antiochus, who is called Epiphanes, had a quarrel with the sixth Ptolemy about his right to the whole country of Syria, a great sedition fell among the men of power in Judea, and they had a contention about obtaining the government; while each of those that were of dignity could not endure to be subject to their equals. However, Onias, one of the high-priests, got the better, and cast the sons of Tobias out of the city; who fled to Antiochus, and besought him to make an expedition into Judea. The king being thereto disposed beforehand, complied with them, and came upon the Jews with a great army, and took their city by force, and slew a great multitude of those that favored Ptolemy, and sent out his soldiers to plunder them, without mercy. He also spoiled the temple, and put a stop to the constant practice of offering a daily sacrifice of expiation for three years and six months. . . . Now Antiochus was not satisfied either with his unexpected taking the city, or with its pillage, or with the great slaughter he had made there; but being overcome with his violent passions, and remembering what he had suffered during the siege, he compelled the Jews to dissolve the laws of their country, and to keep their infants uncircumcised, and to sacrifice swines flesh upon the altar; against which they all opposed themselves, and the most approved among them were put to death."—Josephus, Wars, Book 1, Chapter 1, Sections 1, 2.

"And when the king [Epiphanes] had built an idol altar upon God's

altar, he slew swine upon it, and so offered a sacrifice neither according to the law, nor the Jewish religious worship in that country. He also, compelled them to forsake the worship which they paid their own God, and to adore those whom he took to be gods; and made them build temples, and raise idol altars in every city and village, and offer swine upon them every day. He also commanded them not to circumcise their sons, and threatened to punish any that should be found to have transgressed his injunction. He also appointed overseers, who should compel them to do what he commanded. And indeed many Jews there were who complied with the king's commands, either voluntarily, or out of fear of the penalty that was denounced; but the best men, and those of the noblest souls, did not regard him, but did pay a greater respect to the customs of their country than concern as to the punishment which he threatened to the disobedient; on which account they every day underwent great miseries and bitter torments; for they were whipped with rods and their bodies were torn to pieces, and they were crucified while they were still alive and breathed; they also strangled those women and their sons whom they had circumcised, as the king had appointed, hanging their sons about their necks as they were upon the crosses. And if there were any sacred book of the law found, it was destroyed; and those with whom they were found, miserably perished also." Josephus, Antiquities, Book 12, Chapter 5, Section 4.

"After this, having spoiled the city of all its riches, they [forces of Epiphanes] set it on fire in several places, demolished the houses, and pulled down the walls round about it; and then, with the ruins of the demolished city, built a strong fortress on the top of an eminence in the city of David, which was over against the temple; and overlooked and commanded the same, and there placed a strong garrison; and making it a place of arms against the whole nation of the Jews, stored it with all manner of provisions of war, and there also they laid up the spoils which they had taken in the sacking of the city. And this fortress, by the advantage of its situation, being thus higher than the mountain of the temple, and commanding the same, from thence the garrison soldiers fell on all those that went up thither to worship, and shed blood on every side of the sanctuary, and defiled it with

all manner of pollutions; so that from this time the temple became deserted, and the daily sacrifices omitted; and none of the true servants of God durst any more go up thither to worship, till Judas, after three years and a half, having recovered it out of the hands of the heathens, purged the place of its pollutions, and, by a new dedication, restored it again to its pristine use."—Prideaux's Connexion, year 168.

Before leaving this verse I shall make a few comments. This indignation was caused by the trouble the Jews gave Epiphanes by not all submitting to him. But some of them did submit and furnished him with "inside" information concerning the confidential interests of the holy service. We notice this information or intelligence was furnished by them that forsake the holy covenant. It is true that the worst enemies the work of the Lord has are those in the ranks of His professed servants who turn spies.

Verse 31. The arms were seen in the historical quotation, which Epiphanes used to further his opposition to the Jews. *Abomination that maketh desolate* is a descriptive phrase that might be used at different times. In general it means any condition where some abominable character or group of characters threaten the decency and dignity of the service of God. That is why Jesus applies the saying to the presence of the Roman army near the holy city of Jerusalem (Matthew 24: 15). In the present case it means the corrupt condition created by Epiphanes about the temple and altar of sacrifice.

Verse 32. *Shall he corrupt by flatteries* refers to the persons who gave Epiphanes "intelligence" in verse 30, who were the real enemies of the Jewish nation although they professed to love it. *The people that do know their God shall be strong, and do exploits* refers to a family known in history as the Maccabees. This family performed the service of rescuing the altar from the corrupt servants of Epiphanes and restoring it to its lawful use. I shall quote some history on this subject.

"Mattathias and Judas Maccabeus supported the distressed nation, and the almost universally abandoned religion, with so small a number of forces, that we can consider the success which the Almighty gave their arms no otherwise than a miracle. The troops grew more numerous by degrees, and afterwards formed a very

considerable body."—Rollin's Ancient History, Volume 4, page 242.

"At this time Judas Maccabeus, with some others that accompanied him, fled into the wilderness, and there lived in great hardship, subsisting themselves upon herbs, and what else the mountains and woods could afford them, till they gained an opportunity of taking up arms for themselves and their country, in a manner as will be hereafter related."—Prideaux's Connexion, year 168.

"These measures [of Epiphanes] induced an open revolt, whose leader was the priest and patriot Mattathias of Modin. His bold deed of the public murder of a royal official was the sign for the beginning of the revolt. Fleeing to the mountains, he, with the co-operation of five heroic sons, organized war on a small scale. He died in 166 B.C."—Schaff-Herzog. Article, Maccabees.

Verse 33. "Judas, one of the younger sons, who had taken the most prominent part in the plans of his father, was appointed his successor. For six years he led the party with almost superhuman effort and varying success. Decisive battles he had to avoid. But in innumerable skirmishes he defeated the hated foreigners; and his enthusiastic followers called him 'Maccabi,' or the 'Hammerer,' from which his family has received the appellation 'Maccabees.' It is apparent that this conflict had more of a religious than of a national character."—Schaff-Herzog, Article, Maccabees.

This verse predicts the hardships endured by the Maccabees in their struggles against the vicious Epiphanes. They had an army finally that fought under them, and its men suffered the hard treatment here named, including the sword, fire and prison.

Verse 34. The chief item predicted in this verse is the fact that the forces with which the conflict for the altar was waged were a little help, which means that the number was small, as we have seen in the history quoted.

Verse 35. There is not much new in this verse as it is still speaking of the hardships that the Maccabees endured in their struggles for the restoration of the worship in Jerusalem. *Make them white* refers to the purification that results to the righteous when they are "persecuted for righteousness' sake."

Verse 36. This king is still Epiphanes whose wicked doings we have

been observing through many of the verses. *Do according to his will.* This king was selfish and headstrong and acted according as his own will dictated, regardless of others' rights and whether the thing he wished to do was right or wrong. The predictions of the verse are general but the main thought is the same as that in verse 31. *Till the indignation be accomplished.* This means the indignation of God against his own people because of their sins at this time. Epiphanes was suffered to oppress the Jews in order to punish them, and as soon as the wrath of the Lord was satisfied, the wicked king was to be brought to his own punishment. This prediction is the same as that made in chapter 8: 12. There is an extended comment with a quotation from history at that place and the reader is asked to see it again.

Verse 37. *Nor the desire of women.* Epiphanes was a very immoral man, and most of his immoral actions were unnatural. The prediction does not mean he never was intimate with women for he was, but that was not the chief object of his carnal desires. Another lengthy paragraph is devoted to the vile character of this king at verse 21 which the reader should see. The rest of the items of this verse have been explained.

Verses 38, 39. Epiphanes had no regard for the true God, neither for the rights of good men. The only god he served was that of military and financial forces. Such is the gist of this paragraph, and the many historical quotations that have been given clearly prove the predictions to be true.

Verses 40-43. No advantage would be gained by separating these verses into paragraphs for each, for all of them are on the same subject and have been virtually explained previously. The paragraph is a summing up of the activities of Epiphanes in his mad hostilities against Egypt and other peoples.

Verses 44, 45. The historical quotation that belongs with this paragraph is quoted at chapter 8: 24, 25. Briefly summing up, Epiphanes was madly pursuing his attacks in the south when he learned of the disturbances going on in another part of his dominions. In his *fury* he started thither, determined to wreak severe vengeance upon the Jews whom he blamed for most of the disturbances. But he was not suffered to carry out his wicked designs. In the midst of his mad performances

he was smitten by the Lord and finally died in a most shameful and loathsome manner. In this way he fulfilled the prediction, *yet he shall come to his end, and none shall help him.*

DANIEL 12

Verse 1. *That* is a demonstrative pronoun but does not necessarily refer to any definite time as to exact date. It means that a certain time is referred to and is designated by this pronoun because of the importance of the events to be predicted. The closing events of the preceding chapter bring the date down to a century and a half before Christ. Since those events were directly connected with the bitter experiences of the Jews, it was appropriate to speak of the good things about to be predicted as being for the sake of *thy* (Daniel's) people. However, there were to be some more hardships imposed upon God's people, only they will be His people belonging to all nations and not the Jews alone. Altogether, the things predicted in this chapter will pertain to the greater part of the Christian Dispensation, even including the general resurrection at the last day. No doubt the prophecy in this verse is still remembering the persecutions of the Jews because of Epiphanes' wicked treatment of them, and that Michael was an instrument in God's hands to help them according to Hebrews 1: 13, 14. But the passage is not restricted to that subject for the vision passes immediately in the next verse to the events of the resurrection day.

Verse 2. Beyond any question, this verse predicts the general resurrection since it includes the two classes of mankind, the good and the evil. In John 5: 28, 29 the Lord Jesus makes the same prediction in virtually the same language. As further evidence that this is a prediction of the general resurrection we have Paul in Acts 24: 15 mentioning the general resurrection, and says of it that *they* (the Jews) *themselves also allow*, or admit. Yet the Jews could not have known of this doctrine but from the prophecy of Daniel. *Many of them* does not signify that not all will arise. The word *many* is defined by Strong as "abundant," and the phrase merely means that a vast number of people will have lived and died by the time of the resurrection day.

Verse 3. This verse has been perverted to teach that the saved will have stars in their crowns. That the-

ory is wrong from every standpoint, and entirely misses the things predicted. The saved are said to shine as the stars but that has nothing to do with their possessing any stars in their crown, for there is not even any mention of crowns.

Verse 4. *Shut up the words, and seal the book* indicates that the fulfillment of the predictions would be far in the future. Before they are fulfilled *knowledge shall be increased*. This refers to the general diffusion of the light of truth to be sent out through the kingdom of Christ, and predicted also in Isaiah 11: 9.

Verse 5. The prophet next sees a vision of things to take place in the Gospel age, or at least things that will be a part of its blessings. The Lord often uses rivers and other streams figuratively to represent His blessings upon the righteous. However, at the present time Daniel is still by the river where he received his last message from heaven. Now there is a person on each side of the river prepared to give some information in the hearing of the prophet.

Verse 6. One of the men spoke to the man *clothed in linen* (chapter 10: 5) and asked how long it would be to the end of *these wonders*. The answer that will be given indicates the question pertained to a period in the far-off future that would be similar in principle to that previously predicted to come in the nearer future on the Jews.

Verse 7. The answer came in figurative language, that it was to be after a *time, times and a half*. This is the same symbolic prediction that is made in chapter 7: 25 and means the "dark ages" of 1260 years. The figure is explained at that place which the reader should see. *Scatter the power of the holy people* refers to the persecutions of Christians by Rome during the dark ages.

Verse 8. Daniel saw the men and heard them speak, but he was concerned because he did not understand the answer to the question.

Verse 9. The spokesman rather put Daniel off with an indefinite reply for the same reason as expressed in verse 4 where he was told to *seal the book* because the fulfillment was to be in the long future.

Verse 10. While the man or angel would not go into all the details of the things predicted, yet Daniel was given some further information as to what

would happen in the course of the "dark ages." *Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried by the persecutions of the dark ages. None of the wicked shall understand* refers to the blindness of the Roman clergy, and the same is predicted by Paul in 2 Thessalonians 2: 11.

Verse 11. *Daily sacrifices and abomination that maketh desolate* are used figuratively or comparatively. The terms are those used of the corruption of the sacrifice by Epiphanes, but they are used to denote the time when the dark ages would start, because at that time the pure worship would be polluted by Rome. The prophet was told it would be 1290 days, while the period of the dark ages was 1260 (years). But it took some time before the work got a good start, so the addition of 30 (years) is allowed in this figurative prophecy.

Verse 12. When the work of Luther and his co-laborers got well underway, the clergy of Rome and leaders of the temporal dominions of the State that formed the union known as Babylon the Great, began to see what it was all about and began to persecute the reformers. For some time they were subjected to bitter experiences, comparable with the ones suffered by the Maccabees, and the distress was so great that some yielded and gave up the struggle. There were others, though, who *waited and came through* until the battle of the Reformation was won, which the passage sets at the end of 1335 days (years), and a blessing is promised to those who endured to that time. Of course the number of years indicated is only approximate, but it gives the general idea of the great epoch.

Verse 13. The vision is ended and Daniel is dismissed to go on his way. He has faithfully and patiently given attention to the address of man or angel. *Thou shalt rest* is a blessing pronounced upon him in view of his righteous life. He has been an exile from the land of his fathers since the beginning of the great captivity and it is now the third year since that period ended. *Stand in thy lot*. The first word means to be established and the last means fortune or destiny. The promise means that when the last great day comes (*end of the days*), Daniel will be among those who will be able to join with the faithful of all ages in sharing the blessings of Him whose faithful servant he has been while living on the earth.