

A Study of the Book of Daniel

In This Book:

- We see the Universal Sovereignty of God.
- We find a more sure word of prophecy, for it has a lot to say about the plan of the ages.
- We will note it was written to encourage and comfort the exiles.
- We find a prophetic lamp in the darkness showing that God is working out His purposes even in the midst of captivity.

Prepared by Dr. Edward Watke Jr.

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Revival In the Home Ministries, Inc.

3306 Woodhaven Ct.

Augusta, GA. 30909

edward@revivalinthehome.org

-- Preface --

Daniel is a book of prophecy. It is a projected panorama of the future that was yet to be and an apocalyptic picture of the future that is yet to be. It traces the comings and goings of earthly kingdoms. To the Eternal God what will be is as sure as what is and what has been; it should be so to believers. Prophecy is rightly regarded as history not yet completed.

There have been many arrows of infidelity aimed at the Book of Daniel and at Daniel himself from behind the facade of scholarship. But the half measure of accepting the Christ of the New Testament while rejecting those who testified of Him in the Old cannot stand. The Lord of the Prophet has born testimony to the words of His Prophet by the mouth of His Holy Son. Just as there is no way to honor Jesus Christ as a good man if He be not the very God, so there is no way to consider the Book of Daniel to be worthy of a place in the canon of Scripture if it be not in fact the Book of Daniel written by him alone.

The honored Dr. Pusey is quoted as having said that Daniel is a book which "admits of no half measure. It is either Divine or an imposture. The writer, were he not Daniel, must have lied on a most frightful scale, ascribing to God prophecies which were never uttered, and miracles which are assumed never to have been wrought." The Christian church father John Chrysostom points out the thought: "Daniel wrote all these prophecies, God revealing them to him, that those who read and have seen their fulfillment might marvel at the honor which was accorded to him."

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The Book Of Daniel

THE MAN AND HIS MESSAGE

Introductory Thoughts!

Reading: Daniel 1:1-3; 2:46-49; 5:11-12, 29 to 6:3; 8:27-11:4

I think first we should take a survey of the whole book. We cannot plunge straight into this book without getting an idea of what it is all about. And so the object of this opening material is to get a glimpse of the *Message and the Man*.

The Truth Of It!

I suppose that few books in all the Bible have had less controversy than the book of Daniel. The critics say that this book was written after the events and thrown into this prophetic form. They state that it was written first or second century B. C. and was put into this form just to make it interesting. And, of course, the whole thing then is just a mass of fairy tales with only moral meanings.

Now why don't you think that and why don't I? How do we know, right at the beginning, that this is wrong? How do we know that this man Daniel lived and that he probably wrote this book which bears his name? What did our Savior say? Matthew 24:15 reads, "*When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation standing in the holy place spoken of by Daniel the prophet . . .*" Christ reassures us that Daniel was a prophet and He attests to the fact that Daniel wrote about the abomination of desolation that is yet future. Then the critics have made a lot of Ashpenaz, the master of the eunuchs that nobody had ever heard of; but early in this century the name Ashpenaz had been found on one of the monuments of ancient Babylon, which is now in the British Museum. The writing states: "*Ashpenaz master of the eunuchs in the time of Nebuchadnezzar.*"

The Theme Of It!

What is it all about? The theme of the book of Daniel is the Universal Sovereignty of God. *God is still on the throne* is the message of this book. God's sovereignty is seen and declared in the government of the nations.

There are two key phrases in the book of Daniel. The first is in 2:28, "*There is a God in Heaven,*" and the second is in 4:25, "*The Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men.*" When you link these two together you have the keyword of Daniel.

An ordinary historian would have stated that Nebuchadnezzar came and encircled the city of Jerusalem and captured it and conquered the king; but that is not how this book put it. This puts it: "*The Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand.*" Here is the sovereignty of God over the affairs of man! Chapter 2:37 reads, "*Thou, O king, art a king of kings: for the God of Heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength and glory.*"

The book of Daniel, among other things, is a prophetic philosophy of history. And the theme of it is the kingdom of God. It teaches that the kingdoms of this earth are passing away and the kingdom of the Most High is going to abide; and through all the procession, through the running centuries, through all that is taking place, the Most High rules. Let's note something about the theology of the book as the writer magnifies God in many ways.

- * God is the Most High (4:17, 24, 25, 32, 34; 7:22, 25, 27).
- * God is the Most High God (3:26; 4:2; 5:18, 21).
- * God is truly Lord (1:2; 9:16-19).
- * God is Lord of kings (2:47), and Lord of Heaven (5:23).

- * God is the King of heaven (4:37), the great God (2:45) and God of gods (2:47).
- * God has power over kings to such an extent that He puts them into power and removes them from office whenever He wishes (2:21, 38; 4:17, 25, 32; 5:21, 26; 7:12, 25-26; 8:25).
- * He is Daniel's God (6:26; cf. 6:5, 10, 11, 16, 20, 22, 23; 9:18-20) and the God of Daniel's three friends (3:17, 28).

Daniel is a book for today if only for the reason that it shows the sovereignty of God in dealing with despots; it shows the divine limits to despotism; it shows that under the sovereignty of God the biggest of men will be humbled to the dust and brought to naught. We will later read and study about how three of the four despots whom Daniel served came to the place that they made open confession of the supreme power and wisdom of God.

The Time Of It!

The book of Daniel opens with the beginning of the Babylonian captivity. "*In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim King of Judah . . .*" Daniel was writing from the viewpoint of the Gentiles. He wrote of it being the third year, whereas Jeremiah speaks of it being the fourth year. There is no discrepancy, for the Jews always counted even a bit of a year as if it were a whole year. Jeremiah wrote from the Jewish viewpoint and stated that the siege began in the fourth year of Jehoiakim.

At this time Nebuchadnezzar returned to Babylon with the choicest of the treasures of the house of God and the choicest of the princes, Daniel among them. Daniel was taken in exile to Babylon at about sixteen years of age and remained there until the end of his life.

This is the time of it. The history of Daniel covers about seventy-five years.

The Aim Of It!

What does it set out to do? The book of Daniel in its aim is very much akin to the first Epistle of Peter. Peter was written to exiles under persecution, Christians who were under oppression. Well, Daniel is very much like that in aim: it is to encourage the people of God to see the sovereignty of God, to see the purpose of God and to rest their faith in God.

A second aim of the book of Daniel was to give a *more sure word of prophecy*, for it has a lot to say about the plan of the ages. So it was written not only to encourage and comfort the exiles, but to give them a prophetic lamp in the darkness, to show them that God is working His purposes out even in the midst of captivity. Daniel was given revelation about the *Times of the Gentiles* and the Gentile world-rule through the ages in God's plan.

And thirdly, it is a missionary book. It is not God speaking to His own people; it is God speaking to Gentile kings and manifesting His power to them.

The Form Of It!

What form does this wonderful book take? It is very simple because it divides itself into two equal parts so far as chapters are concerned. The first six chapters are history and the second six chapters are prophecy. In chapters one to four we find Daniel revealing God's secrets to kings; and in the second half (7-12) we find angels revealing God's secrets to Daniel.

We will find that Daniel is partly an apocalypse, an unveiling of things to come. Daniel in the Old Testament is the equivalent of Revelation in the New Testament and they both have very much in common.

There are other things about form that are interesting. In the other fifteen books of prophecy of the Old Testament you will find the phrase, "*Thus saith the Lord*," but you will not find it here. God is not speaking to His own people in Daniel. God is speaking to Daniel.

Daniel had no special message for the Jews, as the other major and minor prophets had. Daniel's message was for the world-powers, for the Gentiles and not for the Jews.

The Name of it!

The Book of Daniel!

1. Daniel is the one presiding genius over the whole book on the human level; and it may be that Daniel himself edited it and caused it to be written.
2. On the human level, God does not speak of a single flaw in Daniel's life or character. There are many good men in the Word of God, but none about whom we read so much and yet do not read of weakness, sins and faults.
3. We read of the triumph of his character. He was a member of a foreign race and a captive race and yet he rose to the highest position in the State of Babylon.
4. Daniel presided through three kingdoms and through four reigns. Now what an amazing thing that is!
5. Compromise and stalemate and diplomacy are usually the ways of politicians. But there is none of that in Daniel's life. On the contrary, Daniel was willing to lay down his life for truth, integrity, and righteousness.
5. Life around him was totally pagan, but Daniel stood for God and for godly living. This is one of the great truths of the book that should impact our lives today!

THE DESTINY OF FAITHFUL MEN

Daniel 1

Lesson Aim: To refuse to compromise our convictions

Related Scriptures: (II Chronicles 36; Isaiah 39:5-7; Jeremiah 25:1-14; 52; Hebrews 11)

Introduction:

The Book of Daniel is one of the most interesting portions of the Word of God. Sir Isaac Newton said, *"To reject Daniel is to reject the Christian religion."* We might add that to reject Daniel is to suffer loss and to sit in darkness.

Throughout history God has from time to time raised up men who in a very special way exemplified strengths of character and powers of leadership. The Old Testament prophet Daniel was such a man. The book of Daniel records for us the biography and remarkable prophecies of this man of God.

In G. H. Lang's very excellent treatment of the book of Daniel wrote the following:
"A tool must fit the hand of the workman, the sword the hand of the soldier: God's instrument must be adapted to His use: His coworker must correspond with Himself: the character of the prophet must represent worthily the God before whom he stands and for whom he speaks." Daniel was such a person.

The Book of Daniel is one of the most colorful and significant in all the Bible. The prophet, a man for all seasons, stands in the gap through one pagan government after another as God's peerless model of integrity.

What is the Book of Daniel?

1. The book of Daniel is a lamp of prophecy which shines brighter and brighter as the present age of grace grows darker and darker as we near Christ's return.
2. It announces in advance and with unerring precision the destiny of men and nations.
3. It is the Old Testament key to prophecy without which much of the New Testament would remain locked forever.

How should I approach the book?

1. Approach the study of Daniel with a probing mind. Imagine that you are exploring a deep mine of nuggets of truth that are there for the determined miner.
2. Don't be satisfied with a single, superficial truth. Dig for the meaning that God has for you.
3. Be prepared to let go of preconceived notions. Brace yourself to unlearn anything which did not harmonize with the whole scheme of prophecy. Allow the Lord to teach your heart.

Questions to Ponder!

1. Have you ever allowed yourself to be careless in a situation because no one knew you?
2. Have you ever been tempted to let down your guard, and to enter into sin because you were away from home and felt freedom to do as you please?
3. Do you think it is easy for Christians to be inconsistent? Why?

In this lesson, Daniel illustrates the results of a life of yieldedness. He was consistent in his witness to God in the midst of great pressures. Through all his temptations he remained faithful and was rewarded.

THOUGHT: *A man's character is determined by what he does when no one is watching. His reputation is determined by what others actually see, that may be done for effect.*

I. DANIEL'S ADVENTURES (Daniel 1:1-7)

Although Daniel was in right relationship with God, that was not true of the nation as whole. Their sin had become so great that God allowed the judgment that He had predicted many years before. (See Deuteronomy 28:15-62; 31:16-21; Isaiah 39:6, 7)

Daniel was taken to Babylon. (vs. 1-3)

Daniel, through no fault of his own, found himself captive in a foreign land and was exposed to many practices that were contrary to the Word of God. Daniel was but a mid-teen, as far as we know, and yet had a maturity and dedication about him that few have at that age. He must have been taken to Babylon because his captors saw a lot of ability and potential in Daniel.

Daniel records the first of three sieges which Nebuchadnezzar directed against Jerusalem. The destruction of the city and deportation of the Jews to Babylon mark the beginning of a long period of history which we have come to call *the times of the Gentiles*. *From the time of this conquest of Jerusalem until the second coming of Christ, Jerusalem will be ruled by Gentile world powers.*

Daniel Was Trained in Babylon. (vs. 4, 5)

It was probably because of the family position and his physical and mental ability that Daniel was chosen for training by the Babylonians (vs. 4). Leaders saw great good in Daniel.

This training involved instruction in a very complicated language, and learning what was considered the wisdom of the day. The Chaldeans were considered specialists in the fields of magic and astrology. They were a special group of priests who were the leaders of the day.

If Daniel became successful in his training, then although still a captive, he would probably occupy a preferred place in Babylon.

Daniel was Tested in Babylon. (vs. 6, 7)

The problem that Daniel faced was that the training involved eating what was contrary to the Mosaic law (verse 5).

Study of the Book of Daniel

The delicacy of the food was not the issue, for it was the same that the king himself ate. Something about it, however, would have caused Daniel to defile himself if he had eaten it.

Daniel now had a choice to make; should he do what he knew was wrong, or should he jeopardize his whole future by remaining true to God and requesting some other kind of food? We are not informed precisely what offended these godly Jews, but likely the meat had been offered to idols or was a variety prohibited to Jews by the law.

As a special point to impact the young Hebrew men, the Babylonians changed their names. Their Hebrew names denoted their worship and dedication to the true God. Their new names were statements of trust in some one of the heathen gods of the Chaldeans.

Questions we ought to consider

1. Could Daniel afford to be different? Could he afford to face the wrath of the king and openly stand against wrong?
2. What did Paul write about in I Corinthians chapter 8? How do you think this fits in with Daniel's concern?
3. What would be the problem of eating food that had first been offered to some heathen god as an act of worship?
4. The king had given his orders, and many would have argued that they were only submitting to the authority of the *powers that be*, that they must obey the law of the land. After all did not the king have authority given by God?
5. Do God's commands override the laws of the land? If so, when?

II. DANIEL'S ABSTINENCE (Daniel 1:8-21)

Would Daniel and his three friends go along with the crowd, plead the extenuating circumstances, indulge in what God forbade, or remain faithful to God? To do the latter would be to risk their favored position, incur the wrath of the king, and possibly lose their lives.

Daniel did not delay his decision. He determined there would be no compromise (verse 8). This is a reflection of his past way of life. Because he had been faithful in the past, it was easier for him to make the right decision at this point.

The change of their residence, status, and names had given these Hebrew youth plenty of time to gradually submit to the ideas of this new land, but they did not. Maybe many other Jews taken into captivity did not consider the king's commands a problem, but these did.

Questions:

1. Were the king's plans for their food really that serious? Did it matter?
2. Would not their compromise be quite harmless? Could they have obtained a greater good by going along with the king's plans?
3. Is witness through compromise a standard foreign to the teaching of the Word of God? (Note II Corinthians 6:14--7:1.)

Daniel's request to abstain (vs. 8-14)

Daniel proposed to the one in charge of his training that the four young men have a ten-day trial period (verse 12). During these ten days they would follow their own diet. If at the end they were in poorer condition than the other captives, they would then eat

the king's food. This did involve some danger to Daniel, his friends, and to the one responsible for them, for it could have cost their lives (verse 10). The man, Ashpenaz, had an affectionate regard for Daniel (verse 9). Such a working of God was necessary for the man to forego the king's diet.

All of this was designed to manifest and fulfill God's eternal purposes. Even Daniel's earlier training, excellent knowledge, and flawless physical appearance were but the preparations of a sovereign God. God was at work to bring His person into the Chaldean court, to witness to Gentile world powers and to forecast Gentile affairs of the future. *Nothing happens by accident.*

THOUGHT: *Daniel guarded against the shortsighted approach to life which sacrifices the eternal on the altar of the present.*

ABOUT DANIEL: Daniel's whole life was beyond reproach. Not a single sin is recorded against him. We are not to imagine that he was actually sinless, but we are given to appreciate that his deepest motives had the glory of God in view.

- 1 He did not approach his supervisor in an arrogant and defiant manner. Nor did he did not assume superiority.
- 2 He requested in a gracious, tactful, yet firm and an uncompromising way.

God's blessing and the results of abstaining (vs. 15-21) And what was the outcome? God in His providence directly intervened in several matters.

First, He prepared the heart of Melzar to grant Daniel's request. This proves that God has access to the minds and wills of even unregenerate men and can impact them as He wills. What Melzar chose to do of his own free will was exactly what God had chosen for him to do.

Second, God sustained Daniel and his brethren so that they suffered no ill effects from such a diet, but instead they were in better health than their pagan peers. They proved that life is more than meat and drink. They put their emphasis upon exercising themselves unto godliness and they reaped the benefits of bodily health in the process.

Third, God gave Daniel and his friends all sorts of knowledge and skills. They surpassed everyone else in the kingdom in their knowledge of the Chaldean language, literature, arts, crafts, and sciences.

Fourth, God gave an additional ability to Daniel. He was made to understand all visions and dreams (verse 17).

Fifth, God providentially arranged the elevation of Daniel and his companions to places of prominence in the Babylonian government.

Note: Archaeology has demonstrated that ancient Babylon had made tremendous strides in grammar, mathematics, astronomy, and the sciences.

These young men were thoroughly instructed; they had a thorough course in liberal arts, which gave them proficiency in all the humanities, but they never adopted the philosophy or the religion of the Chaldeans.

Note: God, in His providential will, was working out the eternal purposes of His plan, and the details called for a Jewish prime minister and prophet to counsel several pagan kings and disclose to them (and to us) the course of world empires.

QUESTIONS in Conclusion:

1. Was there something naturally in Daniel that commended him to and caused him to merit such a place of prominence?
2. Were the qualifications Daniel needed gifts of God's grace? If so, will God in like manner bestow His grace on your life befitting with His call and will?
3. Do you think that God's blessings on Daniel's life were in proportion to his willingness to not compromise? How does this relate to your life and service?

Memory Verse: Daniel 1:8

WORLD EMPIRES IN PREVIEW

Daniel 2

Lesson aim: To believe, trust, and obey God's Word. To emphasize that reliable knowledge of the future can come only from God and to trace the various world-controlling empires that will exist from Daniel's time to the second coming of Christ to rule and to reign.

Related Scriptures: (Daniel 7; Revelation 13:17)

Introduction:

Questions to Consider:

1. What is the value of prophecy?
2. Do the events which are set for a future tribulation period have any relevance for the Christian today? If so, in what way?
3. Is the study of prophecy to just be a fulfilling of our own curiosity about the future?
4. Why do you think God has given so much about prophecy in the Word of God -- both that which has been fulfilled and that yet to take place?

Prophecies, dreams, fortune tellers -- how many times have you heard of people trying to learn about the future through these means? They read cards, palms, and attend seances in their desperate struggle to know the future and to alleviate their fears. It seems that the *unknown is the greatest fear that man faces today!*

The Christian is spared this kind of fear! He should not be anxious because he knows the place of safety and has the promises and knowledge of God's plan for the future. God also has given us a clear outline of the future history of the world. We do not have all the details, but the general broad outline has been given so we would know the course of events that are to take place among the nations. Later chapters of Daniel and the books of Revelation and Ezekiel give us more facts.

Truths to Note:

1. God commands us to give our attention to prophetic truth. (II Peter 1:19).
2. God promise blessing to those who read the prophecy of the book of Revelation (Rev. 1:3).
3. Prophecy is a source of encouragement, comfort, and consolation. (II Thessalonians 1:5-10)
4. The study of prophecy ought to fortify our faith in God's faithfulness, omnipotence, immutability, and omniscience, for He knows the beginning from the end. Christ is the alpha and the omega. (Revelation 1:)

I. THE MYSTERY OF THE DREAM (Daniel 2:1-23)

Questions to consider

Study of the Book of Daniel

1. Why do you think that God planned that the king would not remember his dream? (2:1-7)
2. For what did the wise men plead? Do you think they were genuine? (2:8-13)
3. What was Daniel's approach to Arioch and the God? (2:14-18)
4. What does it mean to you that God reveals the deep and secret things? (2:19-22).

Daniel chapter two gives us the beginning of the unfolding truths concerning how all prophecy relates to nations. Insight is given to us about the panorama of world empires that will exist on the earth from the time of Babylonian conquest of Judah until Christ comes to rule and to reign. Our study today contains the specific information about the succession of empires which will dominated the political history during what the Bible calls the *times of the Gentiles*.

One night King Nebuchadnezzar had a dream which agitated him so much that he woke up and could not get back to sleep. The king did not know the meaning of the dream. He may have been afraid the dream might mean something unfavorable was going to happen to him. He called his wise men and asked them to interpret his dream. They were willing to interpret provided the king would tell them the content of the dream (vs. 4).

Nebuchadnezzar's wise men were totally helpless. (1:1-13)

The king had apparently forgotten the dream, and so he used this occasion to test the ability, and honesty of his wise men. He demanded to *know* the **content** of the dream and the **meaning** of it. (vs. 2). If they knew the dream their reward would be great but if they could not tell they would be killed (vss. 5, 6). They must now produce both the dream and the meaning of it. They proved themselves to be frauds. He felt that all they had said in the past probably had been guesswork and lies. The wise men's excuse was that only the gods could know the dream (vss. 8-11).

The king in anger gave command to destroy all the wise men. Daniel and his three friends were numbered among them. The man appointed to lead the execution of the king's decree came to Daniel and told him what had happened. Daniel asked to be brought before the king. He then requested that the king would give him a little time and he would reveal the dream and its interpretation. (vss. 14-16).

Daniel trusted God to give the answer. (2:14-23)

Daniel left the king's presence and held a prayer meeting with his three friends. Their approach to God was based not upon their own merit or their own faithfulness, but they cast themselves upon God's mercy. They felt that for God to answer would be due to His great mercies that are new every morning. (See vss. 17, 18) That very night, through a vision, God revealed to Daniel both the dream and its interpretation. Before Daniel left to tell his friends or the king he spent time praising and worshipping God who is the source of all wisdom. God makes known the secrets of His will and manifests His sovereign actions. (vs.. 19-23)

II. THE MEANING OF THE DREAM (2:24-49)

Questions to consider

1. Why do you think that God at times communicated to men in the Old Testament through dreams and visions?
2. The head of gold represented the kingdom of _____.

3. The silver part of the image represented the _____ kingdom.
(See 4:
4. The copper or bronze part represented the kingdom of _____.
5. The two legs of iron represented the Eastern and Western divisions of the _____ empire.
6. The stone which smites the image refers to _____.
7. The great mountain which fills the earth is the _____ kingdom when Christ rules and reigns.
8. The vision pertains to the period which Daniel calls the _____.
9. A future development of the old Roman empire is represented by the _____.

Daniel shares the derivation of the dream. (2:24-30)

Daniel announced to Arioch his intent now to reveal the dream and its meaning. (vs. 24, 25). Then Daniel makes a contrast between the limited knowledge of man and the unlimited knowledge of God as he begins to speak to the king. (vs. 27, 28). He wanted the king to know that he was about to receive information concerning the latter days that could not be revealed by human means -- it must come from a special revelation from God. Daniel gave all the credit to God alone.

Daniel shares an overview of the dream. (2:31-35)

Before explaining the meaning of the dream, Daniel gave a resume of its content. The king had seen an image in the form of a man. Its composition consisted of various kinds of metals: gold, silver, bronze, and iron mixed with clay. While he was looking at the image, Nebuchadnezzar saw a stone strike the feet of the image with the result that the whole image crumbled. The stone then became larger and larger until it filled the entire earth. All of this has great and very significant meaning. The image represents all the world-ruling empires that would come into existence from Daniel's time until the second advent of Christ, this is expressed in verse 28 in the phrase *latter days*.

Note: Bear in mind that Daniel supplies no information about the church age or anything pertaining to it. He knows nothing about the rapture of the church. All the references to Christ's coming in the Old Testament deal with His coming to rule and reign.

Then Daniel goes into detail about the image. (2:36-49)

The metals in the images represent a lessening of the significance, power, and grandeur of each successive empire. There is a progressive decentralization of authority in each of the successive governments. Nebuchadnezzar possessed absolute dictatorial power: his eventual successors had much less power.

The gold depicts the magnificence and dazzling splendor of the Babylonian empire. The second and third empires (**Medo-Persia and Greece**) are not identified in this chapter (vs 39), but we are told later, however, what these empire are meant to be. Briefly speaking, we go from the glory of gold to the diminished value of silver. Daniel 5:31; 6:1, 28; 8:20 give us details that indicate that the silver part of the image had its fulfillment in the **Medo-Persian empire** under Darius the Mede and Cyrus the Persian. The Persians gradually arose into the position of power over the Medes.

In 8:21 we are told that the belly and thighs of brass (or bronze) speak of the successor to Persia, and he is identified as the King of Grecia whom we recognize to be Alexander the Great. **The Greek empire was massive as it extended to India.**

The legs of iron describe the Roman empire under the Caesars. While this is not identified in this book of Daniel we recognize that Rome followed the Grecian empire as a world ruler. Rome was in power when Christ walked upon this earth. The descriptions of (vss. 40-43) fit Rome, for Rome ruled with an iron fist even though as a Republic with a senate it was the weakest form of government yet to appear. They had sovereign sway over the known world as all roads led to Rome. Iron suggests the power of Rome.

The toes of the image were composed of iron mixed with clay. (vs. 41). This chapter does not speak of five empires. The feet and toes are a development of the legs. The legs probably symbolize the division that split the Roman empire into Western and Easter sections. They also represent ten kings ruling simultaneously. The legs, feet, and toes are all parts of one empire. The vision depicts a time in the future when the territory once occupied by Rome will develop into ten distinct parts of a political unification. **This has not taken place to date!**

Important Thoughts in Conclusion!

We have no alternative but to conclude that the part of the image represented by the toes has never been fulfilled and that it awaits the period of the tribulation. When Christ returns to the earth, He will destroy this ten-nation confederation (verse 44). These ten kings and their kingdoms probably will come into being as a unification after *the removal of the church and at the time of, or during the time of the great tribulation.* They will be in existence at the time of Christ's second coming to rule and reign.

It is only consistent to believe that the **mountain filling the earth is the millennial kingdom** of the future. This chapter does not teach a gradual spread of the so-called kingdom grace in the heart through the preaching of the gospel. What we have here is a **sudden intervention in history** in which Christ comes to smash the final stage of Gentile world domination and set up the empire of Heaven on earth -- the visible, literal, political, social, and historical kingdom of God on earth. The kingdom is always and everywhere future. It is designed to replace earthly empires with a divine government proceeding from Jerusalem. This kingdom will be spiritual and eternal as well as political.

Note: The King responded with great emotion over the unfolding of the dream as given by God through Daniel!

1. He fell on his face and gave respect to Daniel for his ability (vs 46).
2. He recognized that the God of Heaven has the power to reveal dreams, a Lord of kings, and a God of gods (vs 47).
3. He put Daniel and his friends into places of prominence, power and leadership (vs. 48, 49).

SOME PRACTICAL CONCLUSIONS:

1. God works in humanly impossible predicaments. When things are impossible with man, God manifests **His sovereignty, immutability, and power.**
2. Our most effective source of stability is **prayer.** Don't forget to share it with others.

3. When God works, there is no room for pride -- only **praise**.
4. We are rapidly approaching the end of time as we know it. We are rapidly coming to the end of *the times of the Gentiles*. **Christ is coming soon!**
5. All investments in earthly kingdoms are at best only **temporary**.

A MOMENT OF CRISIS, and THE DOWNFALL of A DICTATOR!

Daniel 3, 4

Lesson Aim: To refuse to compromise Scriptural convictions and to see the importance of humility before God, for God resists the proud and gives grace to the humble.

Related Scriptures: With chapter three read Leviticus 26:1-30; Deuteronomy 4:9-31 and Revelation 13, 17. With chapter four read II Chronicles 26:16-21; Proverbs 16:18-25; Isaiah 10:12-19; 28:1-13; and James 4:1-10.

Questions for Consideration

1. Why do you think the body is so important in dedication to Christ? Why does the Scripture emphasize the body in this connection?
2. Why does God not save us from trials? Name all the good reasons you can think of for which God allows us to go through testings and trials?
3. There is much in the world to make us afraid. There is much more in our faith to make us unafraid. Name some of those things that should remove our fears, and Scriptures that are meaningful to you.
4. Why do you think the king would the decree that he does in this chapter? What does it tell us about man?

A MOMENT OF CRISIS -- Chapter three

A football team were in the throes of a difficult game. Someone yelled, "Give Leroy the ball, Give Leroy the ball!" Leroy yelled back just as vehemently, "Leroy don't want the ball!" In some ways that is exactly the way it is with God's people. Often we do not want the responsibilities that go with being a born-again Christian or serving the Lord.

Daniel and his three friends often found their faith tested to the limit. How do we respond when God allows the difficult testings to come?

I. NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S DECREE (3:1-7)

He constructed an image.

This chapter opens with the account of the building of the great golden image in the plain of Dura (about 15 miles from Babylon). It was gold plated, but perishable wood inwardly. Man is much like this -- outwardly, a great amount of show, but on the inside, inferior and corrupt.

Possibly the king's decree to build this image was an afterthought after the dream recorded in chapter two which had taken place about twenty years earlier.

Probably this great image was not only to glorify himself but also to impress his

subjects with the king's majesty, might, and magnificence. He was an absolute monarch who could demand as he wished and no one dare refuse his summons. Every governmental officer was represented with the exception of Daniel. He may have been out of city on a trip?

Probably this decree was to consolidate worship.

Maybe he thought to strengthen his empire by unifying religious worship. This great ceremony was pompous, universal, sensual, orderly, and compulsory. To defy the order was to court one's death in a hot furnace.

II. NEBUCHADNESSAR'S DISCOVERY (3:8-18)

The report about the Jews was given.

It is clear that there were three exceptions to this universal obedience as Daniel's three friends refused to obey. Evidently some of the Chaldeans were watching the Jews to see whether they would obey the king. When the three Jews failed to comply, the Chaldeans immediately went to the king and reported them (vs 8). It was likely that the Chaldeans saw this as an opportunity to rid themselves of these foreign usurpers who had positions which they felt rightfully belonged to true Babylonians. Probably they had looked for some opportunity to destroy these Jews.

These went to remind the king of his decree (vss. 9-11), and they made three charges against the Jews: 1. They did not honor the king, 2. they would not worship the king's god, and 3. they would not worship the golden image (vs. 12). The king was furious about this as they had hoped (vs. 13). The king considered this defiance a direct challenge to his authority, and this conduct was something he could not tolerate.

The three Jews refused to obey the king.

Commanding the three Jews to be brought to him, he asked whether they understood the significance of what they had done (vs 14). Because he had no reason to question their loyalty in the past, and because they were such useful and wise servants, he gave them the benefit of the doubt by inquiring whether they had misunderstood the meaning of his decree. He gave them a second chance to worship the image. If they disobeyed him, their death was certain and no god could deliver them from his power (vs. 15).

The witness of the three Jews was loud, and clear for they knew worshiping the image meant a denial of the true God of Israel and an infraction of the first commandment. (See Exodus 20:3-5.) They were willing to pay any price which the king might impose upon them knowing that God could deliver them from the penalty decreed by the king if He so desired. Regardless they would be true to God's will and desire for their lives. Willing submission to God was their heart decision.

III. NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S DISPOSITION (3:19-30)

The king was angry, in fact he was furious over the fact they had insulted him and had challenged his authority.

He commanded the furnace to be seven times hotter than necessary. It probably was something like a modern brick kiln. It would have been wider at the bottom than at the top and had two openings, one at the bottom where materials were added to supply the fire and where ashes were removed; the other, at the top, where people were cast into the fire.

A pair of steps led up the side of the furnace to the opening above. Carrying the

three Jews to the top of the stairs and throwing them in the men were scorched to death in the process (vs. 20- 23). What a miracle God had worked in His providential care for them.

Nebuchadnezzar had to acknowledge the Jew's God. (vs.. 26-30)

The king was now shocked to behold four in the fire, and one like a messenger from God. They were no longer bound, but safe. Nebuchadnezzar was now convinced that somehow the Jews had been delivered by supernatural means, and so he called the men to come out of the furnace. He calls them "*servants of the most high God*" (vs. 26). The king would have been a believer in polytheism. He admitted only that the God of the Jews was the greatest of all gods. That was as far as he was willing to go. It did not destroy his belief in his other gods, nor did he trust the Hebrew's God. The king did praise the God of the Jews. He observed their trust in God who had delivered them, and that they had completely yielded their bodies to God, although it might have cost them their lives.

Having come out of the fire, the Jews were examined by the government officials (vs. 27). Here was manifestation of the great miracle -- nothing was burned; there was no smell of fire on them; their clothing showed no effects of the flames. God indeed wrought a mighty miracle.

Now the king issues a different decree. Any insult against the Hebrews or their God would be rewarded with death. While the king did not repent at least he admired a God who could deliver. God allowed the three to be promoted to higher service in the province of Babylon (vs 30).

Important Reflections to Think Upon

1. God will honor the Jewish people in a time to come. He has great plans for the survival of the Jews during the Great Tribulation here on the earth. They will be His miracle people.
2. God's commands must take precedence over the dictates of the state.
3. God is sovereign -- whether the result is triumph or tragedy.
4. Suffering is a part of life and is necessary -- whether seen as fair or unfair.
5. Deliverance is impressive -- whether seen by the godly or ungodly.
6. When God takes us through suffering, He **uses us** to exalt His name!

The Downfall of a Dictator -- Daniel 4

Pride is something that God hates! Pride was involved in the entrance of sin into the human race and it is a universal sin. Pride is at the base of almost every sin in which engages. Man is captivated by his selfish ego. He is obsessed with this own self-reliance, self-control, and self-esteem. In his pride he fancies himself his own god and thus lives independently of God.

Questions to Ponder

1. Why does God hate pride? What effects does pride have on lives as you see it in daily life?
2. Look up the word *pride* in a concordance and see what God says about it.
3. How do you see pride in the temptation the devil brought to Eve and how do you see prideful desire at work in that time of temptation?

4. In what ways does prideful desire impact your own personal life, and how do you see it in the lives of your children?

The events of chapter four of Daniel are a part of the episode in the history of Babylon.

1. In chapter one we have the commencement of the *times of the Gentile* as seen in the Babylonian empire.
2. In chapter two we have the image that depicts the course of these times through the ages.
3. In chapter three we have defined the character of the *times of the Gentiles* -- a period of the domination of the worship of man, polytheism, and idolatrous worship.
4. Now in chapter four we see the culmination of these times -- that man in all his pomp and importance will pass off the scene. After this chapter Nebuchadnezzar will not be seen again.

I. THE DANGER OF PRIDE 4:1-27

The danger of pride is clearly seen (4:1-18).

This part of the lesson deals with the subject of pride, the exalted heights to which it soars, and the method which God uses to bring proud sinners to their knees. This chapter magnifies God's absolute sovereignty and man's total sinfulness. This account took place after the king had learned about God's power, supremacy, and mercy. Yet in his pride he did not take heed!

The chapter begins with the king's message about the signs and wonders that God had wrought in his life. The chapter probably was written by the king after the experience of which he wrote. Many commentators feel that the king came to know the Lord as his God and personal Savior as a result of the experience he went through.

The signs and wonders he went through was a mental derangement that God allowed. He wrote, wanting all under his domain to know what God had done in his life. This is unusual, indeed (vss. 1-3).

The monarch's complacency in the midst of the peace of his empire was interrupted by a dream that disturbed his sleep and made him fearful of the future (vss. 5-17).

1. No wise men were able to interpret the dream, and it was committed to Daniel (vs. 9).
2. He saw a tree planted on earth, growing until it became so large that it stretched up to the heavens.
3. He then saw in a vision from Heaven -- an angel who commanded the tree to be felled, the animals driven away from it, and the fruit scattered.
4. Fetters of iron and bronze were ordered for someone who was to be given the heart of a beast for the space of seven years and to live like an animal of the field.

Note: The dream, added the angel, would be brought to pass for it would serve God's purpose of vindicating His absolute sovereignty. Further, it would demonstrate that

God Himself elevates men to positions of earthly glory as it pleases Him and that He also deposes them at will (vs 17).

The danger of pride is clearly defined (vs. 19-27).

It is evident that God gave Daniel the understanding of the dream for the sake of the king.

1. The tree represented Nebuchadnezzar in all his glory and grandeur (vss. 20-22). Like the tree, he had exalted himself to Heaven for in his pride he had been vaunted in his accomplishments. (He has spread his dominion to the remote recesses of the world. Millions of people rested in the protective *shade* of this tree which illustrated Babylon. Maybe this also shows us how men will trust in political powers and not God.)
2. The felling of the tree at the height of its glory (vs. 23) no doubt speaks of the collapse of the Babylonian empire (Daniel 5).
3. Daniel told the king he was to suffer a seven year period of insanity in which he would crawl about on all fours, fancying that he was an ox. He would be banished from the company of men and left to live with the brutes of the field, dieting on grass (vs 25). He would live the life of a mad man.
4. The stump (vs. 26) foretells us that the king would survive the ordeal and live to be reinstated on his throne. It implies that the empire would outlive him and be passed on to his successor.

Note: Daniel's parting words to the king was an appeal for him to forsake his sins and iniquities and prove that he has genuinely repented by producing deeds of kindness. Such a reversal of his attitudes and actions might avert the fulfillment of the prophecy and judgment of God (vs 27).

II. THE DESTRUCTION OF PRIDE 4:28-37

Seemingly the King's prideful actions and attitudes were not greatly impacted by the dream. He reflects upon how great his kingdom is, how mighty, what he had done to built it and that it was for his majesty that it existed.

Pride brings it's own workings (vss. 28-33).

The king was suddenly smitten by God. God withdrew his blessing from Nebuchadnezzar and losing his rational powers he was reduced to the beast of the field (vs 33). This demonstrates that God has direct access to the mentality of men and that He can do with it anything that suits His purpose. The blatant character of the king was much like people today, who in egotism and pride reject even the fact of God's existence. (See Daniel 7:25 and Revelation 13:5.)

The king's madness lasts for seven years. (Is it significant that the future kingdom of the beast will have its rise at the beginning of the seven year tribulation and exist in one form or another for a period of seven years? Maybe, indeed, Nebuchadnezzar is a type of the antichrist, as the three Jews in the fiery furnace are a type of the Jews in the tribulation time who cannot be destroy.)

In the final kingdoms of earth there will be two *beast-men* who are savage and ferocious, energized by the devil and set on destroying the people of God.

Note: *Mankind is much like a beast! In utter godlessness and lawlessness they refuse God's jurisdiction over them as they do not entertain any thought of God.*

Pride and its outcome is clearly seen (vss. 34-37). The king learned much from his experience. We also need to learn the following!

1. He now knew there existed only one eternal God -- the most High.
2. He knew that God was supreme and all-glorious and that he could not share his glory with the creature.
3. He now knew that men are as nothing in God's sight. Man has absolutely nothing with which to commend himself to God. All man's works are worthless and transitory.
4. He learned that God has the right to do exactly as He pleases without consulting the creature first or ever.
5. He now knew that God's sovereignty extends to the highest Heaven and to the lowest Hell. Nothing in Heaven above or on the earth below can thwart God's purposes or interrupt His plans. (Do we know that?)
6. The king learned that no mortal man has the right to question what God does. God acts in unfettered liberty to do with His creatures anything that pleases Him.
7. He learned that God is eternally just and true, faithful and righteous altogether. Do we believe these truths?

Thoughts to Ponder

1. *God's ways are behind the scenes, but He moves all the scenes which He is behind!*
- J. N. Darby
2. God's judgment may be slow -- but it is **certain**.
3. God will go to **any** extreme to show us **He is Lord**.

COLLAPSE OF A KINGDOM

Daniel 5

Lesson Aim: To see the overthrow of ancient Babylon in the light of its parallel at the end of the *times of the Gentiles* when Babylon will be reconstructed and then destroyed by invading armies from the East. To trust in the Lord, not in worldly enterprises!

Related Scripture: Isaiah 13; 14:18-27, 47; Jeremiah 50, 51; Revelation 17, 18

Introduction:

The last solemn scenes in connection with the downfall of the *Head of Gold* are here before us. *A dynasty is passing away in this chapter.* This is the downfall of ancient Babylon, though its destruction, and Revelation chapters 17 and 18 record the downfall of mystical Babylon and of literal Babylon, and the destruction of both.

This chapter is the account of the judgment of God against godlessness, as He brought to an end the rule of *Babylon the Great*. Historically, as a supreme power in the world, Babylon had seemed impregnable.

Overjoyed with a handful of her own money, a little girl entered into a Woolworth store to buy some trinket that would increase her delight. Her eyes fixed upon some gold-colored chains. How they sparkled! She purchased one and was very proud of it. A few weeks later she looked with sad and tearful eyes at her beloved chain. Its gold color had disappeared, leaving only a dull, unattractive, and worthless piece of metal. She had learned that outward appearance is not always representative of the actual worth.

Babylon had an outward appearance of prosperity and security, but the armies of the Medo-Persians were beating at the city gates, and great Babylon was soon to fall in fulfillment of Daniel's prophecy of chapter two.

Questions to Consider:

1. As it relates to this lesson, in what ways can a Christian desecrate the vessels of the Lord? (See I Corinthians 6:19,20 and II Timothy 2:19-26.)
2. In what ways do you see the outward life is insignificant compared to the *inner man* and the *inner life of the soul*?
3. In this chapter we will be studying a bit of the judgment of God upon blasphemous, wicked lewdness. In what way does the New Testament deal with such immoral living?
4. Do you think that America is ripe for God's judgment? How do you think this will impact us if it happened in our day?
5. Is it possible for a saved person to live in unrepentant, deliberate wrong and get by? What is your proof from the Word of God?

I. A PROFANE ORGY: Daniel 5:1-16

Twenty to thirty years have passed between chapters four and five. Nebuchadnezzar was succeeded at his death by his son, Evil-Merodach (A boy suitable named, I should imagine), who reigned for only a couple of years and was assassinated. In fact a

number of people reigned briefly after that, before Belshazzar came to the throne.

Here we see a sacrilegious indulgence on the part of the king (vs. 1-4).

Belshazzar was co-ruler with his father, Nabonidus, who has fallen out of favor with the people and absented himself much of the time from the capital city. Belshazzar was the second ruler of the kingdom; therefore, he could only offer Daniel the third position of rule. (vs. 16), whereas Daniel was second in power under Nebuchadnezzar.

Note: The accuracy of Belshazzar's existence and Daniel's account has been verified by archaeological discoveries. Belshazzar name has appeared on Babylonian inscriptions and we know that he reigned, as the Word of God states, even though higher critics of the Bible have rejected the Bible's accuracy.

We want to consider the conditions in the city, and the security that Babylon seemed to have.

After the death of Nebuchadnezzar, Babylon sank to new depths of moral depravity. God willed that Babylon's security was threatened by the invading forces of Cyrus the Persian.

The walls were, according to a Greek historian, 87 feet thick and 350 feet high, dominated by 250 watchtowers and encircled by a moat 35 feet wide. There was pasture land inside to sustain the populace for a 25-year siege. The Euphrates, flowing diagonally across the city, supplied an unfailing supply of water. The city seemed very secure!

Belshazzar entertained the aristocracy of Babylon at a most unusual feast. It was unparalleled for:

1. the presence and numbers of dignitaries (v. 1)
2. the desecration of the vessels from Jerusalem. (See I Samuel 5:8-12; II Samuel 6:6,7)
3. the defiance of God and right (vs. 4). In all the annals of biblical history, this banquet is unrivaled for debauchery, blasphemy, revelry, and profanity. Belshazzar provided the menu of women and wine. He was not satisfied until he had committed a terrible sacrilege. Inflamed with wine, he decided to do something daring and sensational.
4. he mocked God--the living God--by defiling the sacred utensils which his grandfather had removed from the Temple at Jerusalem. To show superiority of the Babylonian's gods, he commanded that the golden and silver vessels be filled with wine and distributed to the intoxicated guests.

Note: There will be another Babylon, which is revealed in Revelation 17. It will be built on the very site of this ancient city. This chapter is but the foreshadowing of what will take place in the future Mystery Babylon the Great. At that time there will be a final apostasy, with harlots and whores, with fornication's and drunkenness. God will judge the Babylon to come.

Belshazzar believed that his heathen deities had secured him against the siege of Cyrus and the eastern army, and so the king arranged a feast to honor his gods and to show his contempt for the Medes and Persians. He praised the gods of gold, of silver, of brass and iron and wood and stone. All of this was characterized by recklessness, impropriety, intemperance, sacrilege and profanity.

There is a sudden interruption by the hand of God (vvs. 6-9)

In the grim watches of the night when the orgy had reached its zenith, the fingers of a man's hand appear, writing on the palace wall. This brought the wicked merrymakers to a sudden and sober halt. The king was so affected by the mysterious interruption that his face took on a ghastly pallor, his mind reeled under the force of it, and his knees trembled uncontrollably. His own guilty conscience told him that he could not expect anything but bad news. (See Isaiah 45:1-3.)

The true state of affairs was that:

Cyrus was God's appointed minister of judgment who would subdue Babylon and terrorize Belshazzar. Cyrus, by rechanneling the Euphrates River, would succeed in marching his troops up the riverbed into the city, and he would find the bronze gates unbolted because of Belshazzar's sense of false security. The Persians must have done their work out of sight and undetected.

Belshazzar sought the meaning of the writings from his *wise men* who before had proven themselves incapable of interpreting Nebuchadnezzar's dream. Neither did they now know the meaning of the handwriting, Belshazzar sought out Daniel who was brought with haste. If Daniel would only tell him the meaning of the strange words, he would be rewarded with prestige, power, and princedom.

II. A PROPHETIC ORACLE: (Daniel 5:17-30)

Here we have the message of Daniel, the *seer for God*, who brings a *sermon* and lets the king know the *secret* of what God was about to do. Daniel was probably an old man by now, maybe in his eighties.

The king had rejected the example of his grandfather (vss. 17-23)

Daniel could not be bribed or bought, and he did not read the divine inscription for money. In his response he refused the gifts of the profligate king (vs. 17). In contrast to Belshazzar, Daniel had respect for Nebuchadnezzar. Daniel explained history before he explained mystery. Daniel was pointing his finger at the king for his failures. His message was: "*thou knewest. . . thou oughtest therefore.*" Daniel recounted the providence of God to Nebuchadnezzar. Then he faced Belshazzar with his refusal to acknowledge dependence upon God, denying God's supremacy, and robbing God of the glory due His Name. (vss. 22,23) The king's sin was very grave, and God would judge him for it.

An empire is about to be dissolved (vvs. 24-30).

God's patience exhausted, righteous judgment must be executed. God would act--the day of reckoning had dawned--and Daniel was used to pronounce the sentence of doom in the interpretation of the writing from the finger of God.

Mene-- means numbered, for the allotted number of days for the duration of the Babylonian empire has been determined by God, they had run their course. (vs. 26)

Tekel--means weighed or to be found ***wanting***. The king had been weighted in the scale of God's standard and found deficient.

Upharsin--means to divide into pieces. The empire would be split up, and there would be a transfer of power to the Medes and Persians (vvs. 24-28).

While Belshazzar kept his word to Daniel and promoted him to become the third ruler in the kingdom, the king did not live long enough to see Daniel installed. Before the light of morning had broken across the eastern skies, Cyrus's soldiers entered the city by marching under the walls in the muddy riverbed of the Euphrates, and Belshazzar came to an ignominious end.

Daniel chapter five involves more than what merely meets the eye.

It is a history of the collapse of the Babylonian empire of the past, but is also a forecast of the destruction of great Babylon of the future. The whole book of Daniel was written with the *times of the Gentiles in view*-- their commencement, course, characteristics, culmination, and collapse. Everything that is true of the early stages of the Gentile period of world politics is also true of the final stage of Gentile history.

1. The initial stage and the ultimate stage are both marked by the prominence of the ruling classes, commerce, concubines, carousals, contempt for God, consternation, and condemnation.
2. Babylon's destruction is reserved for the day of the Lord. (Isaiah 13:9)
3. The *Day of the Lord* begins with the time of Great Tribulation.
4. Celestial signs and sights will mark Babylon's final destruction. (Isaiah 13:10)
(See Matthew 24:29,20.)
5. The final fall of Babylon just prior to the millennial age will be attended by the final deliverance and joy of Israel.

Food for thought:

All sin is sin, but guilt is proportionate to knowledge. God always judges us by what we know. . . We shall only be judged by what we know; but if we know, then we are guilty if we do not do! -- Guy R. King

Questions for application:

1. What do you think are the primary elements that bring the collapse of a nation?
2. Why do you think so many people in our day desire or seek after the sensual?
3. What sin do you think is the basis of all sins? What sin caused Lucifer to be lifted up against God? (See Isaiah 14:12-17.) Is that sin apparent in Belshazzar's life?
4. To what extent do you think this sin mentioned in the 3rd question brings failure to so many of the saved? What is the answer? (See Galatians 2:20.)

Lessons to be learned:

1. God's judgment may seem slow--but it is thorough.
2. Never underestimate the power of one godly life!

THE PLOT THAT FAILED

Daniel 6

Lesson Aim: To catch a glimpse of the Lord Jesus Christ in Daniel 6. To see the power of a life that is yielded to God.

Related Scripture: Genesis 37-45; Isaiah 44: 24-45:4; Jeremiah 30:1-9; John 20:1-18

Introduction:

The stage is set for Daniel's suffering. In I Peter chapter two, Peter wrote to encourage the early saints about the reality of suffering and to encourage suffering saints to live in a manner pleasing and honoring to the Lord -- even if it meant death.

In a day of political intrigue, governmental graft, and credibility gaps, it is refreshing to review the integrity of Daniel whose only fault was a godly life and conscientious business dealings. Daniel by now was an old man, long overdue for retirement; he was all alone in a corrupt culture and court. He was hated by his associates and under continual surveillance.

While Nebuchadnezzar and Belshazzar honored many gods; Darius made himself a god. Here we encounter the crowning blasphemy characteristic of Gentile domination - the deification of man.

This sixth chapter of Daniel maintains the continuity of the previous historical sections of this book. This chapter represents the historical fulfillment of the prophecy of Daniel 2 where the silver part of the image developed from the gold. Silver is inferior to gold, and the kingdom of the Medes and Persians was inferior to the kingdom of Babylon, basically in authority.

Questions to Consider:

1. How will Daniel react to adversity? How do we react when circumstances are totally different than what we anticipated? Is God at work? Do we see His providence and will?
2. Will Daniel be able to withstand in an evil day, and having done all, to stand? (See Ephesians 6:10-13.) On what basis could Daniel stand?
3. What makes the difference for the saint of God when the going gets tough?
4. Does the fact of Daniel's promotion tell us anything about his person? What Christian character traits do you think Daniel manifested?

I THE HISTORICAL INCIDENT (Daniel 6:1-28)

Darius and Mede advanced the aged Daniel to a very prominent and **influential** position in the Persian government (vs. 1-3). We are not informed about what led to Daniel's promotion, but we may surmise that his long familiarity with administration and his personal ability would be valuable assets to the new regime. Daniel was trustworthy, and a person of great integrity and so was attractive to a king who needed such a person.

Daniel's enemies plotted against Daniel. (vs.. 1-16).

The king's first move was to divide the conquered territory among 120 princes who were responsible to three presidents, Daniel being one of them (vs. 1, 2). The elevation of this Jew to such heights of service and honor probably won him the hatred of envious politicians who determined to bring an indictment against the prophet and man of God and thus remove him from office (vs. 4).

Note Daniel's character:

1. Daniel's private and public life was flawless, they could find nothing against him.
2. Darius was soon to learn that Daniel was no ordinary man, that he was unbending in his convictions. Yet, he was the king's favorite.
3. Daniel had an excellent spirit for without doubt he was so yielded to God that the Holy Spirit prompted these virtues in Daniel. (See Numbers 27:18.)
4. Daniel was loyal to the empire, and there were no irregularities in his dealings. He must have been a person of extraordinary wisdom and strength.

The other officers resented Daniel's position.

1. Appealing to Darius' vanity and implying that Darius himself was a god the conspirators talked the king into passing a law forbidding prayers to any other god for a period of thirty days (vs. 6-9).
2. They counted on Daniel defying the irrevocable Persian decree, and they were not disappointed. According to his custom, Daniel faced toward Jerusalem and knelt in prayer to his God three times a day (vs 10).
3. He did not close the window so they would not know, but he doubtless prayed for the king, and not to the king. These rogues detected Daniel's infraction of the law, and reported it to the king (vs. 11-13).
4. Darius realized too late that he had been tricked into setting his signature to the diabolical edict. He was bent upon finding some loophole in the law, but the law was binding (vss. 14,15). Darius had no alternative except to carry out the demands of the law by casting Daniel into the den of lions. (vs. 16, 17).

Questions to Ponder:

1. Why do men debase God and elevate themselves to the position of God?
2. As you reflect upon this portion, what characteristics do you see in Darius that is so prevalent today both among political and educational leaders?
3. Daniel who was preferred and then persecuted is not neglected by God. What does this teach us?
4. As we look at the results of Daniel's faith what kind of faith do you feel you have in God's power, care, and providential working in your personal life? Do difficulties look like mountains which are immovable?

God protects Daniel in through the trial (vs. 16-28).

1. Daniel was sealed in the den of lions for the night. As soon as it was daybreak, Darius hastened to the execution chamber to inspect the result (vs 19). He was delighted to find Daniel unharmed (vs. 20-23).

2. Daniel was removed from the den, and the men who plotted his destruction were fed to the lions (vs. 23,24).
3. The king celebrated the occasion by sending a peace proclamation into the whole empire exalting Daniel's living, faithful, and eternal God (vss. 25-27).

II. THE TYPICAL IMPORTANCE OF THE EVENT

While we do not have a statement in Scripture that what took place in Daniel's life is a type of Christ, the details of this chapter are so minutely repeated events in Christ's life that we see a correlation between the two.

We will briefly listed some of things that took place in Daniel's life that are typical of Christ's life.

1. Daniel was one of a tri-presidency whom Darius intended to set over the whole realm. Christ is one of the three persons of the triune Godhead whom the Father intends will govern the whole world in the day of His millennial glory.
2. Daniel's character was spotless before man; Christ was innocent and sinless.
3. Daniel's life was a daily rebuke to the indiscretions and sins of the nation. They trumped up charges against him and got a conviction on the grounds of his relationship with his God -- so with Christ.
4. Daniel was condemned by an unchanging law. The unalterable law of God was involved in the death of Christ for us. (Romans 5:12).
5. Before Daniel's execution day he faced toward the holy city and prayed. Jesus set his face toward Jerusalem and agonized in prayer in the garden of Gethsemane.
6. Darius wanted to saved Daniel, but he could not set aside the law. Pilate believed in Christ's innocence and yet could not set him free.
7. Daniel was cast into the place of death and a stone, sealed with signet of a Gentile empire secured the entrance. Christ went to the place of a skull and poured out his life in violent death for us.
8. Very early in the day, a mourning king hurried to the intended sepulcher to inquire of Daniel's condition. It was at the dawn of the first day of the week that mourning women came to Joseph's tomb to prepare the body of Jesus for permanent burial.
9. Daniel's deliverance from the jaws of death was the occasion of a message of peace. Christ has made peace for us through the blood of His cross. (See Romans 5:1, 8: 1.) We are to herald that peace throughout the world. (See II Corinthians 5:17-21).

III. THE PROPHETIC IMPLICATION OF THE EVENT

Each isolated historical event in the Bible has come indispensable connection with God's overall plan and purpose to inaugurate the coming kingdom. Scripture records only that history which has some bearing upon the ultimate goal of history -- the eternal reign of the kingdom of God. In what we call the *Lord's prayer*, Christ prayed

Thy will be done, on earth, as it is in heaven.

**Chapter six of Daniel contains the elements of prophecy
in history, in events yet to come.**

We see prophetic implications of the Great Tribulation.

The Great Tribulation is sometimes called *Jacob's trouble* -- meaning that the Jews especially will be tried in the fire of suffering as the three friends of Daniel were in the fiery furnace. The Jews will be miraculously preserved as Daniel was in this chapter. All of this trouble came at the hands of *Gentiles* which has always been the case for the Jews as a nation and will continue to be true in prophetic events to come.

Darius is a picture of the bent and attitude of those in power in the time of Great Tribulation. (See Revelation chapters 6-18.)

1. Darius thought of himself as a god who might be petitioned for thirty days. The final *Gentile beast* poses as God, claims divine honors, and demands worship of his subjects.
2. The penalty for Daniel was death. The end-time beast will impose legislation upon the people of earth which inflicts the penalty of death for refusal to recognize his absolute supremacy and deity.
3. As Daniel refused to comply, so the Jewish remnant of the future will refuse to receive the marks of the beast.
4. God intervened to save Daniel, and God will intervene to preserve the Jewish remnant of the future, although many Jews will be martyred for their faith in Christ. (See Revelation 7:4-8; 14:5.)

We also see some prophetic aspects of the millennium for as Darius has a change of attitude, so at the end of the Tribulation, (when the Jewish remnant have come safely through the day of vengeance) the *Gentile nations will experience a conversion and will acknowledge the God of the Jewish remnant.*

Conclusive Truths:

1. Why are we left on earth after our salvation? That we might grow in Christ and become conformed to the image of Christ. (See Romans 8:28, 29.) Also to make Christ **known** through every phase of our earthly experience.
2. The lions were used of God as instruments to touch the heart of a lost man.
3. Those who live godly lives are bound to suffer persecution. Expect it!
4. Regular habits of a devotional life of prayer and the Word of God are the only safeguards to living in a corrupt society. We are there you know.
5. The Holy Spirit must have wanted us to see Christ in Daniel's life, it is not a coincidence.
6. God wants to use different instruments to build our lives. They might include the *den of tragedy, the den of pain, the den of financial reversal, the den of loss or of disappointment.*

***How will you face the den of providentially planned circumstances
wherein God desires to show His power and love?***

THE RISE OF THE WESTERN DICTATOR

Daniel 7

Lesson Aim: To watch the shifting scenes in which the kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of our God and His Christ; to establish the identity and activity of the little horn.

Related Scriptures: Revelation 11:7; 13:1-10; 15:2; 16: 2, 10, 13; Chapter 17; 19:19, 20; 20:10

Introductory Thoughts:

This is an unusual chapter. It reminds me of the Book of Revelation, which alternates between Heaven and earth. Sometimes we find ourselves in the highest height of Heaven and the next moment we find ourselves down in the deepest depths of earth. And here we begin with beasts -- and beastly beasts at that! -- then we suddenly find ourselves in the councils of Heaven; then we come back to these beasts on earth, and then we are back in Heaven, and so on through the chapter.

These beasts on earthly are kingly beasts for it is all about kingship. So this chapter is all about kings and kingdoms on earth and the King and the Kingdom in Heaven. The final point at which we arrive in this chapter is the last king of the *beastly regime* being dealt with by the first, only, and last King, the Lord Jesus Christ, who is KING of all that *glorious realm, Heaven*.

So here in this chapter history (of the former chapters) gives way to prophecy, and Daniel the sage becomes Daniel the seer. It is generally thought that chapter 7 of Daniel relates to the same subject of prophecy as that contained in chapter 2. The dream of chapter 7 adds certain details that were not introduced in chapter 2.

Note: His first dream occurred during the reign of Belshazzar after Nebuchadnezzar had passed from the scene (see chapter 5). The second vision (chapter 8) came two years later; the third occurred at the beginning of the reign of Darius the Mede (see chapter 6) and yet another came during the reign of Cyrus (chapter 10; see 6:28; and lesson 6 concerning Cyrus). You will note that the book is not written chronologically.

Questions to Consider:

1. About how old was Daniel at this time?
2. Make a list of everything that you learn of God, *the Ancient of days*, and the Son of Man as set forth in this chapter. How does this relate to your life?
3. Why do you think that God gives us these pictures of the events to come?

I. THE CONTENT OF DANIEL'S DREAM (Daniel 7:1-14)

Note: Animal traits are often employed by Scripture to depict certain features of a country or a people. By looking in a concordance you will find that various animals are associated with people; for example Gentiles are called dogs, and Jesus called Herod a fox.

Here God allows Daniel to have a dream he did not understand and an angel came to give him the meaning. Chapter 7 turns the clock back to the ascension year of

Belshazzar (vs 1) when Daniel was granted a series of divine revelations which came to him through the medium of dreams and visions. Actually the chapter consists of four visions: 1) the vision of the three beasts; 2) the vision of the fourth beast; 3) the vision of the judgment scene; and 4) the vision of the coming of the Son of Man.

Daniel had a vision of terrible monsters (vss. 1-8).

The beasts came out of a terrible tempest unleashed upon the area of the great sea (vs. 2). The four winds suggest all directions of the compass as violent agitation concentrates upon the territories bordering on the Mediterranean Sea. The angels who are responsible for restraining universal commotion and catastrophe (Revelation 7:1) are permitted to allow the storms to rage uncontrollably.

Out of the surging, billowing waters arose four tremendous monsters, each different, each grotesque and extraordinary (vs. 3). Daniel described each, beginning with the first that appeared like a **lion**, continuing with a **bear**, and a **leopard** and concluding with the mention of so **ferocious and unique a beast** that Daniel could compare it with no known creature. It had iron teeth and ten horns. In contemplating the ten horns, Daniel noticed the rise of an eleventh horn, occasioned by the uprooting of three of the other horns (vss. 4-8).

1. The **lion** compares favorable with the strength and majesty of the king of beasts, the mighty empire of Babylon. (See Jeremiah 49:19-22). This winged lion manifested its great ability and agility in conquest and control.
2. The **bear** is the animal symbolic of the Medo-Persia empire which had a reign of strength and terror.
3. The **leopard** or panther (vs. 6) which had four wings and four heads is an appropriate description of the Greek empire. The leopard is a picture of Greek elegance, refinement, grace and beauty. Alexander the Greek brought country after country under the orbit of his ever expanding dominion. Wings represent the speed with which he conqueror. It had four heads because it was divided into four parts after the death of Alexander, the great. Daniel chapter 8 clarifies more of these details.
4. The last animal was **horrible in appearance and wanton in action**. The iron teeth coincide with the two iron legs in chapter 2. This beast well describes the Roman empire that plundered mercilessly and cruelly. What they could not control they smashed and spoiled. Rome ruled with an iron fist and claimed all the area occupied by the former empires.

Daniel shares a vision of the Messiah in heaven as he beheld a governmental scene. (vs. 9-14). This compares with Revelation 4.

1. Seats have been arranged around a central throne on which sits the *Ancient of days*, Probably a picture of God, the Father. (Compared with Revelation 1:)
2. God is the chief justice who decides the affairs of men and earth. *Ancient* intimates the eternity of our Heavenly Father. The white hair is an emblem of purity and holiness, the fiery flame and burning wheels are indicative of severity and speedy justice. (See Ezekiel 1.)
3. A 100 million spirits beings who stand ministering before Him are angels (vss. 9, 10).
4. The sovereign of heaven and earth has decided to judge earth dwellers for their awful wickedness (vss. 10-12).

This judgment occurs before the millennial kingdom and especially concerns the

destiny of the fourth beast (vs. 11). The judgment proceeds on the basis of what was recorded in the books. God has a record of the deeds of men as evidence against them. God will judge righteously and not overlook the works men have done.

5. Then Daniel shares a vision of the Son of Man, the Lord Jesus Christ coming with the clouds of heaven (vs. 12). (See Matthew 24:30; 26:64) This is a revelation of Christ with special emphasis upon His humanity, His relationship to Israel as the Messiah and His role as the governor of nations (vs. 14).

He has proved Himself equal to rule and reign. He is worthy of glory, honor, and dominion. (See Revelation 4:6-11; 5:8-13 .) This kingdom will encompass *all people, nations, and languages, and it will endure as the earth itself*. This speaks of the 100 year reign of Christ when He will restore the Davidic kingdom.

II. THE CLARIFICATION OF THE DREAM (Daniel 7:15-28)

An angel came to assist Daniel in understanding the dream or vision. He was frustrated and troubled over the lack of understanding the meaning of what God was showing him.

Daniel was given the meaning of the fourth beast (vss. 15-23).

First, we note that the four beasts are mentioned. These were the successive empires we previously mentioned.

The ten horns are ten kings who will rule over the area that Rome had controlled at one time. This ten-nation confederated kingdom is the form which the fourth empire will take at the time of the beginning of the great tribulation period. These ten kings will arise at a time yet future and did not exist at the time Rome was in power in the past. The ten horns and ten toes are identical in meaning. They represent a future development in the Mediterranean world which will be controlled by ten united states. Rome will manifest some of all the animal characteristics of the other empires and will control all the combined areas of the previously mentioned empires (vs 12). This fourth beast is awesome to behold (vs 19).

This final stage is yet future and will be destroyed at the second coming of Christ (vs. 11, 26). It will be smashed by the *stone not cut out with hands*. (Daniel 2:34).

Now we look at the meaning of the little horn (vss. 24-27).

After the ten kings have asserted their authority over the vast empire of the future, another king will make his appearance. He has an insignificant arrival -- *little horn* -- but he soon make his authority felt. Note the following facts:

1. He overcomes opposition from three kings and is catapulted to absolute sovereignty over the reorganized empire (vss. 23-24).
2. He is remarkable for diabolical intelligence (vs 8, 20).
3. His eyes mesmerizes his audiences (vs. 20).
4. He is a master of persuasive oratory as he speaks great things vs. 20).
5. Primarily his effort is directed against the most high God and the tribulation saints. (vs. 21, 25).

6. He shall be given power of dictatorship for three and one-half years -- the last half of the seven-year tribulation (vs. 25).

Note: Revelation 13:1-10 gives the clearest analysis of the character and conduct of the little horn of Daniel 7 -- the European beast-dictator. In this vision John sees a beast rise out of the Mediterranean Sea -- a beast which already has ten horns. The empire of the future is comprised of what we saw here. John paints the same portrait of the beast that Daniel unveils--bestial, blatant, blasphemous, and belligerent (Rev. 13:4-7).

7. God shall act, for the *Ancient of days* bring judgment and the time will come that the saints will possess the kingdom. (vs.. 22, 26-27.) God will bring the *times of the Gentiles* to an end in that future time.

Questions to Ponder:

1. How do you see the *Ancient of days* compared with what you read of Christ in the book of Revelation 1:14-16?
2. What does the Bible teach in II Timothy 3:13 that is indicative of the day in which we live? Does this relate to this chapter, if so, how?
3. Why do you think that in chapter two we have the outward glory of these empires and here in chapter seven we see them as untamed jungle beasts?
4. Have the ten horns or ten toes been fulfilled as yet? Do we see preparation toward their fulfillment, if so, how?

Now Test Yourself:

Identify the following:

1. The great sea _____
2. The four winds _____
3. The *Ancient of days* _____
4. The ten horns _____
5. The little horn _____
6. The ministering thousands _____
7. The fourth beast _____
8. The everlasting kingdom _____
9. The saints of the most High _____

Thoughts: *God has mapped out your future, He will not make mistakes! Since God can handle the plans for nations, He can handle your needs! Life may appear to be a collage -- it is, in reality, the unfolding of a perfect pattern designed for God's glory.*

THE NORTHERN DESTROYER

Daniel 8

Lesson Aim: To distinguish the little horn of chapter 8 from the little horn of chapter 7; to explain the activities of the little horn of chapter 8 in the purposes of God and to mark his sudden end.

Related Scriptures: Isaiah 20:1-6; 29:1-8; and chapters 36, and 37; Ezekiel 38, and 39; Matthew 24:15-22; and Revelation 8 and 9

Introductory Thoughts:

Looking back into the book of Daniel through the eyes of history, chapters like this one may seem somewhat uninteresting and insignificant. But when we realize the the contents of the chapter were revealed many years -- hundreds of years -- before they actually occurred, we ought to be struck with a sense of renewed amazement.

God gave Daniel, the prophet, prophetic insight like no one else in this day and few others in all of time. Although interwoven with prophetic symbols and terminology, chapter 8 sets forth (in chronological order) God's scheme among the nations as it relates to the Jews.

The eyes of the world have been riveted on the Middle East. Again and again newscasters declare that it is the strategic center of that part of the world. Almost daily, Arabs and Jews have conflicts across the boundaries that divide them. Hostility has mounted ever since the Israeli victory in June, 1967.

Israel is to be trodden under foot until the end of the *times of the Gentiles*. Daniel 8-12 focuses our attention upon Israel, chapter 8 mentioning her sacrifices and sanctuary, her crime and chastening. Palestine will explode with invasion, and this chapter introduces us to it.

Questions to Consider:

1. Why does God permit the plans of the wicked to succeed so that the saints may be tried?
2. Why do you think that God has allowed so much time and so many world governments to precede the coming of Christ and the setting up of the millennial kingdom?
3. What contribution did Alexander the Great make to the spread of the gospel?
4. How does the present balance of power in Europe and the Middle East relate to the events of the end-time?

I. THE INGREDIENTS OF THE VISION GOD GAVE DANIEL (Daniel 8:1-14)

God intervenes in history; God acts in history. Don't forget that the sovereignty of God is one of the major themes of the book of Daniel.

Daniel consistently gives us the time, place and circumstances of divine revelations which came to him. The Biblical writers take special pains to link all events to calendar dates and geographic places. Time and history are thus connected to eternity and God's plan for the world.

Daniel received this vision as he was transported in vision to the palace at Susa in Elam, the capital of the Persian empire (vs. 2). Both Nehemiah and Esther many years later resided in this royal city. The vision came in the third year of Belshazzar's reign

and it antedates the events of chapter five.

When Daniel was asked to interpret the writing on the wall, he had already received this vision and was thus somewhat prepared to face the terrified Belshazzar.

Daniel envisions the ram and goat (vss. 1-8).

As Daniel was on the banks of the river Ulai, on which Susa was built, he was given this vision while awake.

1. He saw a ram standing on the side of the river, about to begin a westward assault in which it would crush every opponent in its path. The angel Gabriel interpreted the meaning (vs. 20).
2. The ram signifies the dual kingdom of the Medes and Persians. The shorter horn (vs. 3) is a fit emblem of Media because the Medes did not continue in power after Darius. The longer horn which came up later pictures the ascendancy of the Persians over the Medes under the leadership of Cyrus.

Note: The ram was the national symbol of Persia, and figures of this animal have been found on many ancient monuments and documents of Persia. The Persians came from the east and penetrated to Babylon, Syria, Asian Minor, Egypt, and Armenia, subduing all nations in their thrust for world power.

3. While Daniel was reflecting upon the ram, he saw a **goat** coming from the opposite direction and moving with great speed toward the East. The animal had a single horn protruding from its head, and with that fearful horn the goat charged into the ram in a blind fury, knocking the ram to the ground, and trampling upon it (vss. 5-7). The goat became mighty in power; but at the zenith of its strength the horn was broken and four other horns came up in its place (vs. 8).

Note: Gabriel gave the meaning of these details too (vs 21). The horn is the king of Greece. We know him as the famous son of Philip of Macedon-- Alexander the Great. The Persians had invaded Greek territories and had infuriated the Greeks by their blood thirsty deeds. Alexander died at 33 of a condition brought about by a wicked life; he had wept because there was no other parts of the world to conquer. His vast kingdom was divided among four generals at that time.

Daniel then tells of the little horn (vss. 9-14)

Out of the kingdoms came a little horn which moved to the South (Egypt) to the East (Babylon and Persian), and to the pleasant land (Palestine). Bible interpreters are almost all unanimous in their identity of this little horn. Most feel it is none other than Antiochus Epiphanies who usurped the Syrian throne and reigned for twelve years at Antioch in Syria (from 175 B. C. to 164 B. C.) . He was a tyrannical enemy of the Jews who came out of the northern division of the Greek kingdom of Alexander. ***This little horn*** -- (vss. 10-14)

1. brought suffering to the Jews that was literally Satan-energized.
2. brought Israel down to the dust (vss. 9-10). Israel here is referred to as stars.
3. magnified himself against the prince of the host -- Jehovah Himself.
4. ordered the discontinuation of the burnt-offerings, drink-offerings and sacrifices in the temple and he profaned the Sabbath.

5. outlawed the rite of circumcision and took the blood and broth of a sow and poured it over the sacred furnishings in the temple to show his utter contempt for the Jews and their God. This sacrilege continued for just under three and one-half years.

Thoughts to Consider:

1. Daniel predicted all of these events more than 375 years before they came to pass.
2. This is a remarkable proof of the precision and nature of prophecy. Human wisdom could not foretell such minute details even one day in advance.
3. Prophecy demands supernaturalism and for this reason the higher critics insist that the book of Daniel was written during or after the time of Antiochus.

II. THE INTERPRETATION OF THE VISION DANIEL SAW (Daniel 8:15-27)

We must realize that we have a double meaning in this portion about the little horn. Often in prophecy there is the immediate and then the secondary application that takes place at a later time.

Identification of the time is clear.

Daniel 8 is perfectly clear about the ultimate fulfillment of the prophecy of the little horn.

1. This prophecy will be consummated in a period just short of three and one half years (vs. 14), at a time when the Jewish temple has been rebuilt and the Mosaic ritual restored.
2. It will take place at the time of God's indignation -- in short, at the time of the end, (vs. 17, 19) and in the latter time of Israel's transgression (vs. 23). *The transgression* (vss. 12-13, 23) is an expression which refers to the crowning and final act of apostasy in the nation of Israel. An idol will be placed in the temple at Jerusalem and idolatry will be reintroduced to the land. The apostate Jews will worship the image. Jesus called it *the abomination of desolation* (Matthew 24:15).
The abomination of desolation refers to the ruination that the northern invasion will cause in Palestine on account of the idolatrous connection between Israel and the kingdom of the beast of Europe. Daniel 9:27 speaks of the *desolate* that is the *desolator*.
3. God's indignation will be poured out upon the Jews because of their transgression in returning to idolatry (vs. 19).
4. This also refers to the middle of the time of the Great Tribulation of Revelation.
5. This is the time of the end, (8:17, 19; 11:35, 40; 12:4, 9). *The end* refers to the final stage of Gentile government before Christ returns to rule and reign for the millennial kingdom period.

Then we have the identify of the tyrant (vss. 23-27).

The little horn of chapter 7 is not the same as the one in chapter 8. They both persecute the Jews, but the little horn of chapter 7 rises out of the ten-nation kingdom in the West; in chapter 8 he comes from the North. Daniel describes this invader in verses 23-25 and continues it in chapter 11, verses 40-45.

Study of the Book of Daniel

1. The moment in which the image of the beast is erected in the temple, God will bring the northern king of fierce countenance against the land of Israel (vs. 23).
2. God intends to send the king of the North down to Palestine to chastise Israel for its wickedness (See Isaiah 10:5, 6.)
3. His *fierce countenance* implies his imprudence and shameless disregard for God and man.
4. He is unmoving in his feelings and pursues a cruel course without reluctance.
5. *Understanding dark sentences* means that he knows how to use falsehood and dissimulation. He will say one thing and mean another. He phrases his words in such a way as to deceive.
6. He will be supported by another government (vs 24). The King of the North will be a confederate of Prince Rosh (See Ezekiel 38:2, 4-6.)
7. The king of the North will make the Jews think that they are safe, and while they are saying peace and safety, sudden destruction will come upon them from the North (vs. 25). (See Matthew 24:15-22.)
8. The armies of the North and other countries will invade Palestine. The results of the invasion will be devastating; many Jews will suffer death. (vs.. 24-25).

Note: Ezekiel gives the same conditions. He puts the invasion of Prince Rosh and all his confederate armies at a time when the Jews think they are perfectly secure. (See Ezekiel 38:8, 11, 14.) Israel is not safe, she only imagines it. She is depending upon the western dictator to defend her, and she has been listening to the *dark sentences* of the king of the North who has deceived her into trusting him.

We believe that the hostile kingdom immediately north of Palestine (Syria) will be backed by a government even further to the north. That power is Russia who has supplied arms and munitions to Syria and other Arab states now for some time.

God will step in and destroy this ruler.

He will be *broken without hand* (vs. 25). He contests the authority of the Messiah and meets his doom by a supernatural intervention of God. No human hand or army will defeat the king of the North and the Russian armies backing him. The prophets and John the revelator concur in their explanation of this destruction. (See Ezekiel 38:19-20; Revelation 12:16.)

The ground will literally open up and swallow up these godless leaders. Joel informs us that some will escape to the desert region where they will perish in the burning sands. Ezekiel suggests that a sixth of the army will return to its place in the North.

Praise God, He is in control!

Try to get the whole picture:

1. Through her representation -- the Jewish antichrist -- Israel will enter into a protective alliance with the western dictator who guarantees her territorial sovereignty for seven years.
2. In the middle of the seven year period the emperor-beast of Europe will demand that Israel stop observing the Mosaic ordinances in the temple and he will order the Jewish antichrist to erect instead a statue in the holy of holies.

Study of the Book of Daniel

3. In order to receive continued military protection from the allied West in the impending threat of a northern invader, apostate Israel complies with the beast's instructions and allows an image of the beast in the temple.
4. God will answer this sacrilege by sending down the army from the North to punish Israel for renewing idolatry in the land. That invader is Assyria to come, the fierce king of Daniel 8, and the king of the North, (Syria backed by Russia).

Now Test Yourself: (Fill in the blanks.)

1. Daniel's dream was interpreted by _____
2. The ram signified _____
3. The goat signified _____
4. The four horns depict _____
5. The transgression is specifically _____
6. The king of the North will be backed by _____

Is this not a common thing?

It is interesting that there is one common feature that characterizes these various human rulers: they all magnified themselves. The KJV uses different translations for the same Hebrew word, which occurs four times:

1. The ram *magnified* (vs. 4);
2. the goat *magnified very much* (vs. 8);
3. the little horn *magnified unto the Prince of the host* (vs. 11);
4. the king of fierce countenance *magnified in his heart* (vs. 25).

Instead of giving God the glory and magnifying Him, human rulers magnify themselves. They seldom recognize that God has established them in power. In His wisdom He knows the outcome of their kingdoms and is able to reveal this knowledge to His servants, should He so choose.

Kings and emperors cannot surprise God with what they do in history, and eventually they must all succumb to His power. ***Yes, God is in control.***

GOD'S TIMETABLE FOR ISRAEL

Daniel 9

Lesson Aim: To stress the necessity and value of prayer; and to understand the details of Daniel's seventy weeks.

Related Scriptures: Hosea 5:5-6:2; Isaiah 53; Zechariah 13:1-9;
Matthew 21: 33-46; 23:34-39; John 10:1-13

Introductory Thoughts:

The key to the understanding of all Old Testament prophecy is found in Daniel's prophecy of the seventy weeks in chapter 9. This chapter, more explicitly and concisely than any other in Scripture, outlines for us a chronology of coming events in the providence of God. For this reason, it is essential that the student of the Scriptures study this passage carefully.

The ninth chapter illustrates the fact that human history is the outworking of a divine program for Israel. The events of the calendar all contribute in some way to fulfill God's purposes for Israel.

This ninth chapter consists of the **prophet's prayer** and the **angel's answer**. The prayer and the answer follow almost entirely the same course, so it will be easy to divide the chapter. Both of these sections could be outline as such:

*The One who Prayed,
The Time of the Prayer,
The Reason for the Prayer,
The Manner of the Prayer,
The Substance of the Prayer.*

*The One Who Answered,
The Time of the Answer,
The Reason for the Answer,
The Manner of the Answer,
and the Substance of the Answer.*

Questions to ponder:

1. How can the people of our generation go about their daily routine completely indifferent to the trends and perils of our time?
2. Why do our diplomats sit in solemn council vainly trying to bring about national and international peace? Why is peace so illusive?
3. Why do presidential candidates promise a new and glorious era ahead for democracy? Do you think they sense the futility of their efforts?
4. Does God's plan for Israel effect the saved of the church age in which we live? If so, in what ways?

I. THE PRAYER CONFESSION (Daniel 9:1-19)

A study of the prophetic Word by the pen of Jeremiah motivated Daniel to prayer and penitence.

(See Jeremiah 25:11-12; 29:10.) He was turned to sorrow by what he learned about the future of his erring people. He learned from Jeremiah that the captivity would last for 70 years.

Note: The Jews had not observed the seventh year of Sabbath rest for 70 years, and so God sent them into exile and caused the land to lie desolate for the equivalent number of those unobserved Sabbaths years.

Daniel was the one who prayed, who was 85 - 87 years old at this time.

He was the Chief Minister of State once more, but now in a new world-empire which had overtaken Babylon. He still opened the windows every day toward Jerusalem as he prayed. This throws much light on Daniel's prayer-life. Here we see the value of *private* prayer and the value and virtue of *intercessory prayer*. *Daniel knew what it meant to pray persistently.*

The time of the prayer

was in the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus of the seed of the Medes, which was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans (vs. 1). (539 - 538 B. C.) This was right after Belshazzar's fall, and the *image of the head of gold was replace with the arms and breast of silver.*

The reason for the prayer or the circumstances involved are clearly given

(vss. 2-3). The knowledge that only a few months remained before the fulfillment of the prophecy struck Daniel with mingled grief and gladness. The Jews in captivity were in no condition of heart to receive the fulfillment of the promise. So Daniel set himself to prayer. He must have also known that the city of Jerusalem would be rebuilt under the sanction of Cyrus. (See Isaiah 44:26-45:4; Jeremiah 29:12, 13)

Note: Unbelieving and disobedient people can never expect the blessing of divine promises and provisions.

In this prayer we have a beautiful mingling of the sovereignty of God -- the thing would come to pass -- and the responsibility of man -- we must prepare our hearts to receive the blessing. (See Luke 24:49 for a similar illustration.)

The manner of the prayer is so wonderfully set forth. (vss. 3-19)

The features of the prayer are the features that all true effectual praying should include. Daniel set himself to a prayer of adoration, confession, intercession, and petition.

1. There was **determination** -- *I set my face unto the Lord . . .* " He was determined to seek the Lord through supplication, fasting, sackcloth, and ashes, or in other words with great humility and brokenness.
2. He **recognized the greatness** of God's person and power. Daniel worshiped the great and awesome God (vs. 4). He continued with testimonies of God's character -- God is faithful and does not break covenant for He is merciful.
3. Daniel **confessed** the sins of the nation, including himself. They run the gamut -- iniquity, wickedness, rebellion, departure, and defection from God's precepts. They had not hearkened, nor repented, and God was vindicated in judging Israel for their sins (vss. 5-14).

4. Consider the contrast between what the people were like and what God was like:

People:	God:
vs 5 sinfulness	vs. 4 faithfulness, loving kindness
perverseness,	
wickedness,	
turning aside,	vs. 7 righteousness
refusal to hear	
vs. 7 confusion of face	vs. 9 mercy and forgiveness
vs. 11 transgression	
disobedience	vs. 16 anger, wrath against sin
vs. 13 lack of entreaty	His holiness

5. **Israel deserved all the calamity and curses** which had come upon them. God had carried out His threat against the nation in faithfulness to His Word. They had broken the Mosaic law, but Daniel was still looking for the fulfillment of theocratic blessings on the basis of the Mosaic, Palestinian, and Davidic covenants. These he knew God would keep (vss. 15-19). Daniel pled the mercy of God and God's gracious pardon on the city and the sanctuary.

Applications to Consider:

1. Is prayer crowded out of your life? Prayer is **essential** -- there is no substitute.
2. Daniel's prayer was no ritual -- it was *personal, honest, brief, but very specific*.
3. What do we know about disciplined and fervent prayer?
4. In prayer we are to sense God's right to have deal with us according to His character, with no blame and no bitterness.
5. What comes first? Our comfort, pleasure, ease, relief, **or God's name and glory?**

II. THE PROPHETIC CALENDAR: (Daniel 9:20-27)

God's response to Daniel's prayer was immediate as Gabriel was dispatched from Heaven with information about the nation's future. While Daniel was still praying for God to forgive and restore His people, the answer was on its way (vss. 20-23).

The source of the prophecy was God.

Because Daniel was a man *greatly beloved* of God (vs. 23), he was to be given a vision of the **future of Israel**. He would be given skill and understanding (vs. 22).

The *objects* of the prophecy were *thy people* and *thy holy city*. (vs. 24). That these refer primarily to Israel and Jerusalem hardly need to be demonstrated. As a Jew seeking light from Jewish prophecy, Daniel would certainly understand the words of Gabriel in this way (cf. 9:19). With an admonition to Daniel to consider the vision, the angel began to unfold a chronology of events to come.

The substance of the prophecy was clearly shared (vss. 24-27).

Here is a segment of Jewish national history during which God will carry out the six purposes of verse 24.

1. The history is restricted to 70 seven-year periods or 490 years.
2. This period has a specific point of beginning and ending. It commences with the decree of Artaxerxes to rebuilt the city of Jerusalem.
3. The earlier edicts of Cyrus, Darius, and Artaxerxes do not qualify as a starting point for this 490 year history because none of them relate to the city; they only provided for the rebuilding of the temple.
4. The 490 years are divided into three segments, and the angel indicates what activities will transpire during these three parts. During the first 7 weeks (39 years) the city and its streets, walls, etc., will be rebuilt; then 62 weeks (434 years) will be added to the 7 weeks before the Messiah arrives. From the king's commandment to Christ the King coming, then, a total of 483 years will expire.

Note: The termination of these 483 years came on the day of the triumphal entry on March-April, A. D. 30 when Jesus Christ for the first and only time presented Himself officially as Israel's Prince and Messianic King.

5. At the end of the 69 weeks (483 years) the Messiah is cut off (vs. 26). Instead

of entering into the era of His kingly reign, He is rejected by Israel. Israel rejects Christ's claims to the throne of David and sentences Him to death on the cross.

6. The six purposes which God intends to accomplish in the nation in the course of the 490 year period were deferred to the last week (6 years) Between the 69th and 70th week we have an indeterminate period, during which Jerusalem suffers from a flood of invaders.

Note: In this great gap we have what is known as the church age. The 70th week has been postponed. The prophetic clock will not tick again for Israel until the present church age ends at the rapture and God takes up His dealing with the nation of Israel again in the 70th week. That 70th week is what we know as the time of *Great Tribulation*.

During the long interval between the 69th and 70th week Jerusalem was destroyed by Titus in A. D. 70, and this destruction has been followed by a continual succession of Gentile rulers who have trampled the city and land under foot. This desolation will continue through the present church age and right into the tribulation period.

The events of the last week, the 70th week is also shared (vss. 26-27)

1. A Roman prince will appear who will guarantee Israel military protection from the *flood of the northern armies*.
2. This treaty will be ratified which pledges to Israel territorial sovereignty for 7 years (vs 27). It assures Israel of peace with her Arab neighbors.
3. Israel will rebuild the temple and reintroduce the Mosaic sacrificial system.
4. At the middle of the seven-year period the European bear-emperor will ban the Mosaic ordinances and instruct the Jewish antichrist to place an idol in the holy of holies. In order to get continued military protection, the apostate Jews will comply with the demand.

Note: Many saved Jews will refuse to worship the image and will not receive the mark of the beast. Their lives will be in jeopardy. The erection of the image will be a signal for these saved Jews to flee the city, for on the heels of the idolatry will come God's avenger -- the northern destroyer. (*Space will not allow us to cover this whole future event as we would like. This could take a small book, if we really did it justice.*)

Thoughts for Consideration:

1. Daniel was given a message of assurance that God *has not cast off His people*. While God permitted the captivity, there is a deliverance to be wrought in a day to come, even after great tribulation. *God will never cast off His people in any age, you can rest in the assurance of His mercy, long-suffering and grace.*
2. In Christ's first coming He was scorned and rejected, in the second He will be vindicated and accepted as the Messiah, for Israel will look upon Him whom they have *pierced*.
3. God deals in specifics -- He is a God of **details**.
4. God keep His promises -- He is a God of **integrity**.

Questions to Ponder:

1. What bearing does believing prayer have upon God's eternal purposes?
2. Does prayer change God's mind?
3. What relationships now exist between Israel and the West that you think have a bearing upon prophecy and the events of the future?

THE INVISIBLE WORLD OF SPIRITS

Daniel 10

Lesson Aim: To penetrate the veil that separates the visible from the invisible world, and to take account of the function of both elect and evil angels.

Related Scripture: I Corinthians 6:2-3; Galatians 1:6-9; Hebrews 1; I Peter 1:12; II Peter 2:4; Revelation chapters 4 and 9

Introductory Thoughts

There has been a tremendous rise of interest in the occult, which is obvious to all of us. It is seen in books, games, films, television programs, newspaper columns, fortune tellers, etc. It is said that over sixty million Americans are involved in some way with the occult.

Sensationalism and exaggerations about the occult run wild, and invariably one gets the distinct impression that we are pitiful victims, totally crushed beneath the load of demonic attention. When the world system attempts to communicate matters pertaining to Satan and his host of demons, the message is garbled. And most of the time it is false, and is loaded with the intent of bringing people to a responsive acceptance of the perversion of truth.

In this tenth chapter of Daniel, we are made aware of the unseen war against the saints. We also learn from this account that God's power within us is greater than the power of satan which is around us.

All the saved do believe in guardian angels. We also must become more aware of the unseen conflict in the heavenlies and enter into greater concern about what is taking place here on planet earth because of satanic power.

Daniel came to know what it was to be strengthened by God's might in his inner man. This lesson substantiates the truth of the promise of Isaiah 40:29: "*He giveth power to the faint: and to them that have no might he increaseth strength.*" (See also Psalm 27:1; Philippians 4:13; Ephesians 3:16; Romans 5:6.)

Questions to Ponder

1. Daniel is very precise about the times and places of his fellowship with God. Are you as concerned about your continued fellowship?
2. Solitude with God can be a very precious thing. Do you set aside time to speak in prayer to God and give Him time to speak to you?
3. Consider the following and their experience in solitude with God -- Abraham in Genesis 13:1; Jacob in Genesis 32:34; Moses in Exodus 3:1; Elijah in I Kings 17:1-7; and Paul in Galatians 1:17.
4. Why do people prefer the noise of the city, music, etc., to times of solitude with God?

I. THE EXPERIENCE OF DANIEL (Daniel 10:1-9)

This chapter is an interlude between the last prophetic portion and that which is to come. Possibly the most detailed and significant prophecies are yet to be studied in

chapters 11 and 12. This chapter is a preparation for Daniel to receive the final revelation from God about Israel's future. It introduces the last of Daniel's prophecies. The experience was so intense that he was mourning three whole weeks.

Chapter 10 is dated, as Daniel shares a very strange and unique experience as a man about 90 years of age. Daniel invariably began with dates, names and places (vs 1). Daniel reminds us of his Babylonian name to give further evidence of the fact that it was he who wrote this message.

Daniel was involved in his administrative work until the first year of Cyrus' reign. (See 1:21; and 10:1.) Daniel was probably now in semiretirement in the third year of Cyrus' reign (535 B. C.). Now it was the second year after the king had given the Jews the right to turn to their homeland.

He gives a fivefold explanation of what he was about to receive: 1) it was revealed 2) it was true 3) it was long or great 4) it was divinely given for it did not come by human reasoning, and 5) it was perfectly reliable (vs 1). (See Revelation 19:9; 21:5; 22:6.)

Daniel experienced great grief (vss. 2-4).

You would think that Daniel would be praising God for the Jew's right to return, and maybe he would be singing Psalm 126. But he was overcome with grief, and gave himself to mourning for three weeks (vs. 2-3). The sorrows of the prophet may have derived from his knowledge that only a relatively small number of Jews had returned to the homeland. Possibly his burden was over things yet to happen prophetically. He was so burdened that he could not leave off prayer long enough to care for his own needs.

Note: Daniel probably had heard of the privation of the 40,000 or so who had returned to Palestine. Maybe he knew of the opposition from the Samaritans. (Consider the book of Nehemiah.) Also, the aged prophet may have been burdened that most preferred their comfortable homes and positions in Babylon rather than to go to their homeland. He refrained from eating any pleasant food or refreshing himself with ointments, which would have been a symbol of contentment.

Daniel experienced a scene of glory (vss. 5-9).

There appeared what seemed to be a man, a *certain man clothed in linen* (vs. 5). Debate continues as to the identity of the heavenly visitor. But the description of verses 5 and 6 compared with Revelation 1:13-16 would cause one to be convinced that this was an Old Testament revelation of Christ in His pre-incarnate form. (vss. 5, 6.)

Consider:

1. The linen speaks of Christ's perfect righteousness, His absolute sinless humanity.
2. The golden girdle is an emblem of Christ's deity and glory. It also signifies His permanence, preciousness, and purity.
3. The word *girded* denotes His sovereignty, strength, position, and rights.
4. His body was like beryl (vs 6). The gems could speak of Christ's glory, beauty of person, and grace.
5. Lightning could well speak of His appearance or His arrival with power. His eyes were like lamps of fire, speaking of His omniscience and severity against sin. All the rest of the picture sets forth Christ's omnipotence and authority. (Some feel that the angel of verse 5 was Gabriel. Others take the position that

the angel of verse 10 is not the same as the personage of verse 5.)

Daniel was alone in God's presence.

His companions fled in terror, possibly they were dazzled by the light and moved by the thunderous tones (vs. 7). Daniel was without strength, on his face before God as he slept, probably overcome with great emotion (vss. 8, 9).

Questions to Ponder

1. Does our generation need a new consciousness of God's holiness?
2. Do Christians have the *fear of the Lord* that was manifested among God's people in the early part of this century? If not, why not?
3. In what ways do Christians live or act that would indicate that they have failed to understand God's awful hatred of sin?
4. In what ways does God show His hatred of sin?

II. THE EXERCISES OF THE ANGELS (Daniel 10:10-21)

This section of the chapter clearly stresses the spiritual powers behind earthly nations and rulers. Notice that three such creatures are mentioned:

- vs. 13 *The prince of the kingdom of Persia*
- vs. 20 *The prince of Greece*
- vs. 21 *Michael your (Israel's) prince*

Note: The *prince of Persia* (an angel) stood against Michael for twenty-one days. Something of the fierceness of the conflict is thus implied. Another such battle is portrayed in Revelation 12:7, where *Michael and his angels* war against the *dragon and his angels*. Whenever Michael appears in Scripture, he is pictured as fighting in defense of the people of Israel.

Angels struggle in the unseen battle (vss. 10-12).

For the second time Daniel felt an angelic touch (vs. 10; see 8:18). The Lord of glory is not the subject of verses 10-14; instead, Gabriel - a subordinate and servant angel of the Lord-- ministered to Daniel, helping him to a crouching position, assuring him of divine favor, and encouraging him to get to his feet (vss. 10-11).

The trembling Daniel listened while Gabriel explained the reason for his delayed answers to prayer (vss. 12-13). The angel had begun his journey to earth 21 days earlier. At the same time that Daniel had abandoned himself to grief and prayer, the angel was intercepted en route by the *prince of Persia* and was not able to continue his flight earthward. The archangel, Michael, had to come to his defense and release him from the clutches of the adversary. *You see, Gabriel was about to disclose to Daniel what would occur to the kingdom of Persia (Daniel 11:2), and the demon angel in charge of Persia did not want that information to leak out -- hence the conflict.*

Note: Here the veil between the physical and spiritual world is lifted momentarily. Only rarely does the Word of God take us behind the scenes of world events to the invisible world of spirits. (See Genesis 32:1-2; II Kings 6:17; Matthew 16:18; Matthew 4:8-9; Ephesians 6:10-13.)

1. The Apostle Paul reminded the churches that Satan is the prince of the power of the air. The airways above earth seem to be the special theater of his activity.
2. The Word of God gives us every reason to think that demonic intelligence's govern world powers behind the scenes. Paul calls them *rulers of the darkness of this world* -- literally, *world-rulers of darkness*. (Ephesians 6:12.)

3. Daniel 10 is the first reference to the fact that the empires of earth are influenced by satanic personalities in the demon world.
4. Human government is subject to demon manipulation. Satan has assigned certain fallen angels to political activities among the nations in order that his program can be carried out in an organized and systematic way.
5. The devil is not omnipotent nor omnipresent; so he depends upon demons to help him carry out his plan.
6. Without doubt, whenever legislative bodies meet to determine policy, Satan has his emissaries on hand to influence men in authority to play right into the hands of the adversary. Satan influences people in their minds.
7. We need to pray for those in authority, for they are continually bombarded by demon powers. They are under attack and don't even know it. Many references in the Word of God seem to indicate that a mighty conflict rages behind the scenes of world events between the forces of good and evil. (See Jude 9; Revelation 12:7)
8. Gabriel expected another assault from the demon prince of Persia on his heavenward flight. He intimated also that he would have to fight with a principality who was responsible to influence the Greek government (vs. 20).

The angel strengthens Daniel (vss. 14-21).

The impact of the information and the angel's message combined to strip Daniel of his strength, for at times he seemed stupefied by it all (vss. 15-16). The angel had come to share with Daniel what would befall his people in the latter days. Probably this message was almost too much to accept.

Gabriel is in view in verses 18 and 19, because he touches Daniel and addresses him as the man greatly beloved, as he did before in verses 10 and 11. The work of calming, consoling, and caring for God's people is certainly the work of angels. They are ministering spirits sent to minister to God's own. (See Psalm 91:11-12; Luke 1:30; Acts 27:23-24; Hebrews 1:14.) The angel commanded Daniel to be strong.

Gabriel had come to reveal to Daniel that which is noted in Scripture (vs. 21).

The events that will come to pass are already written in the decrees of God, and therefore they are sure and final. The course of events cannot be altered. Daniel was strengthened to receive the forthcoming details of the end-time events -- or matters which concerned his people (Israel) in the latter days (vs. 14). The last two chapters of this book of Daniel will unfold these momentous events.

Questions to Ponder

1. What good does it do to tell a man to be strong? (Cf. Joshua 1:8, 9; Ephesians 6:10.)
2. Do you see any evidence in the present condition of our nation that demon powers are involved?
3. What nations of the past were obviously controlled or strongly influenced by satanic powers? Do we presently see this take place? If so, how?
4. Has the Supreme Court of the United States made any decisions that foster the program of the devil? If so, what and why?

Thoughts to Consider

The devil is worthy of some honor; he minds his business and is wide awake in this apathetic, indifferent age.

Study of the Book of Daniel

*We should not be amazed at the presence of the unseen forces around us, but we ought to be **driven to persistent, biblical praying** for our nation and for the countries of the world.*

*Missionaries are caught in the middle -- as we are -- for they are **warriors** in the midst of an unseen battle. We should realize the same is true for us!*

*We should be encouraged at the power of great invincible might **within us**.*

THE INVASIONS SWEEP THE MIDDLE EAST

Daniel 11:1-35

Lesson Aim: To see the Middle East invasions of the past a remarkable detailed fulfillment of prophecy; to mark again the faithful few who stood against heathen politics and religion.

Related Scriptures: Ezra 4-7; Nehemiah 2:1-10; Esther 1-2; Zechariah 9:1-8

Introductory Thoughts

Inside mankind there is a selfish, self-centered nature. Yes, it is the power of **Sin!** (Read James 4:1-4.) It reveals itself in strife, quarrels, and fights both **personally**, in **families, nationally, and internationally**. This is seen in the path of human history which is strewn with the destruction of rebellion, revolutions, assassinations, and wars that seemingly never cease. Part of *Daniel 11* outlines that ultimate war that is commonly referred to as **Armageddon**.

This portion (chapter 11) may seem to be very monotonous. It is an account of wars, plots and counter plots, losses, victories, accessions and assassinations, and alliances based on lies and intrigue. What we are to study here is pure history, written in advance of its fulfillment, for the *thus saith the Lord* will always come to pass! It is a remarkable picture of the actual fortunes and misfortunes of the Persian and Greek kingdoms (especially the latter) between the years of 536 B. C. and 162 B. C. It was written as prophecy, thereby claiming to foretell the future.

This is the Word of God forever settled in heaven and given as prophecy in Daniel's day prior to its fulfillment. Diligent research of this portion, while maybe boring, helps us to see God's will and plan **does come to fruition**.

Questions to Ponder

1. What do we learn from secular history? Or is it true that man does not learn or change based on what he learns from history?
2. What do you think is behind man's determination to conquer other nations?
3. Why has the nation of Israel been the *scapegoat* for the troubles that many other nations have had? Why are they blamed?

I. TWO CENTURIES OF INVASIONS (Daniel 11:1-20)

There are some things we ought to note at the very beginning:

1. The definite objects of these historical accounts are the fulfillment of prophecy.
2. God will not desert His people in the changing circumstances that take place among the nations of the world.
3. The people of God should not be persuaded by flattery, pressure or force, intrigue, or persecution.
4. Even without human allies, God's people will be victorious in the end. We are

on the winning side and we know the final score.

5. The heathen world will not go on forever, nor will they achieve any enduring stability. Their will is thwarted in the end! They are under God's judgment to come.

So accurate and precise are these predictions that critics feel it was all written after the fact. Of necessity we will need to be brief as we write of these coming events. We begin with the silver part of Nebuchadnezzar's image.

Gabriel touches upon the Persian and Greek conflicts (vss. 1-4)

This chapter contains an amazing and accurate account of the wars between the Greeks, and Persians and between the Syrians and Egyptians.

The angel Gabriel first outlined the immediate successors to Cyrus. (vs 2). The book of Ezra identified them as Ahaserus, Artaxerxes, and Darius. They were followed by Xerxes, a king of vast resources who raided Greece in 480 B. C. (vs. 2).

There is a time lapse of about 150 years between verses 2 and 3. Verse 3 is speaking of the mighty king, Alexander the Great, whose sprawling empire was divided at his death among his four generals because he had no posterity (vs. 4). (This is the brass part of the great image of chapter two.) To be *plucked up* describes the gradual disintegration of the Greek empire and the final transfer of sovereignty to Rome in 31 B. C.

Then the angel Gabriel wrote of the Syrian and Egyptian conflicts. (vss 5-20)

Verses 5-20 focuses the spotlight upon the northern and southern divisions of Alexander's territories. The king of the South represents the several Ptolemies of Egypt. The passage presents an amazing and detailed summary of the campaigns which Syria and Egypt waged against each other. In the military invasions northward and southward, Palestine usually became the battlefield of the warring factions and suffered the brunt of their revenge. Syria is referred to in this portion as the *king of the North* and Egypt as the *king of the South*.

The prince of verse 5 was Alexander's Syrian general Seleucus I Nicator, who found it necessary to accept asylum in Egypt when Antigonas -- an early Phrygian contender from Alexander's empire -- routed him from the North. The king of the South was Ptolemy Lagus. With Ptolemy's help, Seleucus regained his authority and subsequently increased his dominion until his territories exceeded Ptolemy's.

Several years later an attempt was made to cement alliances between Egypt and Syria. Ptolemy Philadelphus of Egypt prevailed upon Antiochus II of Syria to marry his daughter Bernice. Antiochus put away his own wife Laodice (Laodicea was named after her) and pronounced her children illegitimate. When Philadelphus died, Antiochus II took Laodice back, and she promptly murdered Bernice and her children. Later she poisoned her husband and put her son Callinicus on the throne of Syria. The marriage alliance proved an utter failure. (vs. 6).

Wars between these two empires continued over the years -- here is a brief running historical:

1. Bernice's brother, Ptolemy III Euergetes, then invaded Syria in order to avenge his sister's death.
2. Civil disorder erupted in Egypt, and Euergetes hastened home with a tremendous plunder (vs 7-9).

3. The sons of Callinicum wanted revenge against the attack of Euergetes. Antiochus III and his armies poured out of the North like a flood and deluged Palestine (vs 10).
4. Later Syria and Egypt settled down to a kind of cold war for 13 years (vs. 12).
5. Antiochus III the Great launched another campaign as soon as Ptolemy Philopator of Egypt died. He managed to build an even larger army than he had before (vs. 13).
6. Antiochus secured the assistance of King Philip of Macedon and of the apostate Jews in Palestine who were glad to get free from Egyptian control (vs. 14).
7. Antiochus was frustrated in his plan to conquer Egypt by the interference of Rome. He thereupon decided to take diplomatic measures by giving his daughter Cleopatra to Ptolemy Ephiaphanes, heir apparent to the Egyptian throne. Antiochus depended upon Cleopatra's allegiance, but she repudiated her father and supported her husband. (vs. 17).
8. Antiochus the Great then contended himself with plundering the coastlines and islands of the Mediterranean until Rome drove him out of Greece and later defeated him at Magnesia in 190 B. C. (vss. 18-19). Antiochus reigned between 223 - 187 B. C.
9. Antiochus's son, Seleucus Philopator, had to increase the tribute money which Rome exacted of his father. He was poisoned shortly after he sent Heliodorus his treasurer to pilfer the temple treasures at Jerusalem (vs. 20).

II. TEN YEARS OF INTRIGUE (Daniel 11:21-35)

The first era of Syria deals with many rulers and involves about 130 years. The last period is marked by the reign of one man and a decade of his conspiracies against Egypt and Israel. Much space in Scripture is given to Antiochus Epiphanies, younger brother of Antiochus the Great. (vss. 21-24). *Why?*

1. Because of his daring wickedness which he perpetrated against the Jews. No atrocity was so enormous for him to perform. The word *vile* suggests Antiochus Epiphanies' degraded, unnatural, and wicked practices, (vs. 21)
2. because he obtained the kingdom by intrigue for he was not the rightful heir,
3. because some of his subjects called him a *madman*.
4. Verse 22 traces his military successes which were many.

Antiochus Epiphanies builds relations with Egypt. (vs. 23-29).

He feigned that he had only a small following in order to fool the Romans. (vs 23). His plan was to march against Egypt. He owed his successes to intrigue, giving expensive gifts to friends, and using every deceptive means he could invent. When Antiochus heard that Egyptian forces were preparing to invade Coele Syria, he forestalled them by crossing the frontier in 169 B. C. and drove them to Pelusium. He continued to Memphis where he concluded a treaty with Ptolemy Philometor. He had every intention of establishing a overlordship at Alexandria.

Antiochus was obliged by the lateness of the season to withdraw his troops. His operations had cost him enormously. He had to raise revenue, and so enroute to Syria he sacked the temple at Jerusalem.

In 168 B. C. Antiochus pushed his forces against Egypt again, but Ptolemy Philometor and Physcon had solved their differences by this time and reigned jointly with Cleopatra (vs. 27). Antiochus ravaged the Egyptian temple and sent his

troops to besiege Alexandria, hoping that Rome would be too busy in Macedonia to take much notice. Things did not work out and Antiochus reluctantly bowed to Rome and was frustrated in his endeavor to conquer Egypt the second time (vs. 30a).

Antiochus used his opportunities to make the Jews suffer.

The Jews in Jerusalem had to suffer the brunt of his wrath. He outlawed the Jewish rituals, the Sabbath observance, the dietary laws, and the rite of circumcision (vs. 30b).

He erected an altar in honor of Zeus (a heathen god) and burned offerings of swine flesh upon it. What followed was a thoroughgoing campaign of persecution, for the pious Jews refused to submit to Antiochus regardless of the penalties he imposed upon them for their resistance (vs. 31). This took place because of the rage Antiochus vented upon Israel because of his loss to the Egyptians. At the same time the apostate Jews aided and abetted Antiochus in his endeavor to introduce an idolatrous system of worship (vs. 30). ***The following took place:***

- 1 Armed troops occupied the citadel of Zion.
- 2 The king stationed his garrison in their heights (vs. 31).
- 3 He used persuasive speech, lies, smooth talk, and deceitful promises to trick the Jews.
- 4 The faithful Jews defied his encroachments with the many exploits that are recorded in Hebrews 11:34-38. One of the priests, Mattathias and his sons valiantly resisted these enemies. They were strong and did exploits for God (vs. 32). They fought to the death to liberate Israel from tyranny. *The Jewish Hanukkah celebration commemorates this victory.*

This closes with prophecy and insights about the future.

Verses 33-35 form a transition and carry us across the years to the time of Christ. All of this period -- called the *times of the Gentiles* -- will be characterized by persecution, peril, and wars. This portion of chapter 11 presents a picture of Jerusalem under siege and the people under Gentile domination until the end of the age. During his long interval there will be a few who will understand and will instruct others (vs. 33). This is a reference to the godly remnant like Zacharias and Simeon at the time of Christ's birth and also to the remnant at the time of the Great Tribulation. Many of the events and struggles that the Jews faced during this period of time is indicative of what the Jews will face in the time of *Jacob's trouble or the time of Great Tribulation*.

Questions to Ponder

1. How is Daniel 11:27 typical of our politicians today?
2. The 400 silent years between the Old and New Testaments was a period of waiting for the Jews. Do you think they felt God was at work? Do we today, or do we become weary of waiting for the consummation of God's future plans?
3. Today, do we see God's people standing strong for Christ in the midst of uncertainty, wars, and world turmoil?
4. How do you think Malachi 3:16-18 relates to us today? This was written by one of the prophets during Israel's captivity. Are the thoughts of these verses meaningful to you?

Closing Thoughts

*What is our response to our God who is in charge of His entire plan? **He is Lord**, do we bow to **Him**?*

"What are all histories but God manifesting Himself, shaking down and trampling under foot whatever He hath not planted."-- Oliver Cromwell

The Scriptures are unerringly precise. They predict events with the greatest, and most perfect accuracy.

Prophecy is the greatest convincing evidence that the Word of God is supernatural.

THE ANTICHRIST FACES AN EMERGENCY

Daniel 11:36-45

Lesson Aim To attempt to determine who the antichrist is; to define who his enemies are and outline the events leading to their collapse.

Related Scriptures: Genesis 4:1-17; Psalm 5:1-12; 7:11-17; Isaiah 30:1-14; 31:1-9; Jeremiah 46-49; Matthew 24:15-26; I John 2:22

Introduction

Israel has been at the center of world history for some time, and in many different ways. Israel is a tremendous attraction to the world powers. They grapple for possession of this relatively small strip of land called Palestine.

Consider: Palestine is the land bridge between the continents of Africa, Asia, and Europe. In many ways, whoever controls this territory controls the destiny of billions of people and has great wealth in his grasp. Europe and the United States gets two-thirds or more of its oil from the Middle East. All the nations of the world would be crippled without the oil from this source. And the Dead Sea is probably worth more than the total wealth of the United States. Considering we are a debtor nation, maybe that is not saying a lot.

All the wealth that Israel controls or seeks to control makes this part of the Middle East a coveted prize for world leaders. In time, many feel that whoever gets this wealth will be in power without any serious contenders.

Questions

1. Why do you think Israel is constantly in the news?
2. What rulers in modern time have claimed to be deity or the messiah?
3. In what ways has the United State endeavored to be Israel's protector? Do you think there is a reason for this?
4. Why is there so much anti-Jewish sentiment in the world?
5. Do think that the recent change in Russia and its communist regime of the past is so great that they will figure into prophecy differently than previous thought?
6. What do you think will take place in Russia and the procommunist block countries? Do you feel that communism is really an ideology of the past?

I. THE ELEVATION OF THE ANTICHRIST (Daniel 11:36-39)

There are many wicked end-time personalities who figure into prophecy. Among them, who should be called *the antichrist*? It is very hard to find many writers who agree about all the details of the future or who harmonize all that has been written on the subject. We could possibly say, *Will the real antichrist, please, stand up!*

What are the distinctive marks of an antichrist or *the antichrist*? John the apostle is the only biblical writer who uses the term, *antichrist*.

1. In John's day many antichrist were or had been on the scene. (I John 2:18)
2. John speaks of the antichrist as if it could be a spirit, a system, a philosophy, and/or a person.

3. The antichrist is foremost a liar and a deceiver. (See I John 2:22; II John 7.)
4. In prophecy his distinctive mark is his deceit and fraudulent claims to be the Messiah.
5. Also because of his tremendous hatred of God, and all that pertains to God or Christ, **the antichrist** does all he can to destroy God's people.
6. In the book of II Thessalonians 2:9-11 Paul describes one who is a deceiver and a liar. Paul calls the antichrist the *man of sin* because he is the epitome of all wickedness and lawlessness; He also calls him the *son of perdition* because he is destined for eternal ruin. (vs. 3).
7. **The antichrist is the culmination of all evil in this world of men.** Human selfishness is concentrated and consummated in the Devil incarnate -- the antichrist.

Note: To help us understand the personages that Daniel writes of in chapters 7, 8, 9, and 11 we need to understand that the **little horn** of chapter 7 is the first beast of Revelation 13 -- the European dictator. The **little horn** of chapter 8 is the king of the North, and now in this chapter we have the antichrist come into view. These three are the ones in power in the end times as set forth in Revelation chapters --

The antichrist will exalt himself (vss. 36, 37). To help us see some characteristics of this one who will seek total control, power, and worship we need to also look at Revelation 13:11-19.

1. He will pawn himself off as the Son of God, -- the Messiah -- to the Jews.
2. He will seek to occupy the holy of holies in the restored Jewish temple in Jerusalem and demand divine honors and titles (See II Thessalonians 2:4)
3. He will perform great wonders and signs.
4. Miracles will be accomplished to authenticate his claims to be Israel's prophet and king.
5. The antichrist is clearly an imitation of Christ, a false Christ, the false prophet.
6. In every respect he is a substitute Christ -- even to posing as a lamb. (vs. 11)
7. The fact that the antichrist originates out of the earth (vs 11) may suggest that he derives from Israel -- the earthly people. Many feel that he is a Jewish king whom the nation of Israel will receive and own as their protector and friend in the tribulation period. This antichrist will give dramatic evidence of his right to shape all religious policy because of his miraculous doings.
8. As an economist he will control world commerce so that none can buy or sell without his approval -- a mark put upon his followers. It is visible proof that mankind (and Jews) will be worshipers of the antichrist's ally in Europe (vs 17).

But the antichrist will also share his power with another he esteems (vss. 38, 39).

1. The antichrist is not the sole ruler of the future. He will share with the beast out of the sea -- the European dictator. (See Revelation 13:1.)

2. The first beast professes to be God almighty, and the second beast acknowledges the first beast. (See Revelation 13:12.)
3. One will control in Europe and the other in Palestine. They both claim divine attributes and honors and both support the other.
4. The king of Daniel 11:36 is the second beast of Revelation 13:11.
5. This one makes a military treaty with the first beast for the protection of the Palestine against the northern invasion.
6. This European dictator wants universal worship. He requires that the Jewish king set up an image in the temple at Jerusalem and enforce idolatry (vs 39). In order to maintain cordial relationship this Jewish king (antichrist) will comply. The antichrist will be so ardent in promoting the worship of the European political and military dictator (beast) that he will do all he can to acknowledge him as deity. (See Matthew 24:15.)
7. The antichrist secures Western protection by plundering the vast resources of Palestine and sending them to his ally in Europe (vs. 38).
8. The relationship between the antichrist and the first beast as described in Revelation chapter 13 is exactly the same as the relationship as described in Daniel 11:36-39.

II. THE ENEMIES OF THE ANTICHRIST (Daniel 11:40-45)

We need to understand that the signal for persecution of the pious Jews (who are unwilling to receive the mark of the beast) is the erection of the image in the temple. Jesus warns the Jews to flee the city at the time when they hear of renewed idolatry. (See Revelation 24:16.)

During the tribulation the Jews will suffer from many directions -- from the south, from the north and from the antichrist within.

A. The Jews will suffer an invasion of Palestine for in the tribulation period the armies of Egypt will make another attempt to destroy the State of Israel.

This is the battle that finally will lead to the battle of *Armageddon*. Russia cannot afford to allow Egypt gain sole control of the Middle East, so as soon as Egypt marches northward, Russia (and Syria also) will march southward.

The Jewish antichrist will be faced with an invasion on both fronts (vs 40). The King of the North is obviously the victor. Many other countries will be included with the northern aggressor in his drive through the Holy Land (vs. 41). Ezekiel 38 gives a list of many countries which will be involved in the war effort. The antichrist will probably flee for his own safety and leave his followers to endure the horrors of this invasion.

There will be an invasion of North Africa also as seen in verses 42-45.

1. Isaiah 19 and 20 tell us that Egypt and Ethiopia will fall to the king of the North.
2. The Russian armies will not stop until they have penetrated into North Africa (Daniel 11:41-42).
3. Egypt will capitulate to a king of fierce countenance according to Isaiah 19:4; compared with Daniel 8:23.

4. Ezekiel predicted that Persian, Ethiopia, and Libya will be involved in the Russian invasion (Ezekiel 38:5).
5. Daniel tells us that the king of the North will conquer Egypt, Libya and Ethiopia (vs 43).
6. Much of what takes place will be the work not only of Russia, but also the Assyria aggression in harmony with Russia.
7. After the Russians have conqueror North Africa they will hear some news that will cause them to hurry back to Russia. Maybe this will take place because of the potential of an Oriental invasion or they will hear that the European beast has brought in allies to war against them.

Note: En route the Prince of Rosh will decide to destroy Israel completely. Maybe he wanted to repay Israel for all they had suffered. (In this he resembles his ancient predecessor Antiochus Epiphanies who was thwarted in Egypt and took his wrath out on the Jews.)

The Russian armies will have God to reckon with.

God will not permit the enemy to destroy the Jews. These northern armies will set their sights on Jerusalem. They will get no further than the mountains south of the city. There God will literally bury the armies of Gog and Magog. A mighty earthquake will cause the ground to swallow up the infantry (11:45). (See 8:25.) Those who escape will flee into the desert regions south of Israel and perish in the sands. (See Joel 2:20.)

Questions to Consider

1. The battle of Armageddon is not an imaginary event -- it is predicted by God. Why do you think so many people have heard of this event, but put so little stock in what God says?
2. Jonathan Swift wrote, *War -- the mad game the world so loves to play!* Why do you think that this is a truth?
3. Good and evil has been growing together all through the world's history, why do you think things must come to such a climax, to this end as God's Word predicts?
4. What does the Millennial reign of Christ mean to you in this total picture?
5. How do the parables of the leaven and the mustard seed figure into the coming events? (See Matthew 13:31-33.)

Closing Thoughts

God will care for His people -- Israel -- even though He will allow all these things to take place which will be devastating to them. God will judge many of the Jewish people for their idolatry, apostasy, and cooperation with the antichrist.

While God is merciful, and long-suffering, He hates apostasy and will judge any such action and attitude in a severe manner. (See II Peter 2; Jude.)

The antichrist will come to his final end when he is put into the Lake of Fire that burns forever. (See Revelation 20:10.)

God will resurrect those who pay the price of their lives during the tribulation -- who do not worship the beast, nor his image, no receive his mark, and they will reign with Christ a thousand years. (See Revelation 20:4,5.)

THE ANTICHRIST FACES AN EMERGENCY

Daniel 12

Lesson Aim: To consider the final events of the tribulation period; to distinguish the resurrection of life from the resurrection of condemnation

Related Scriptures: Hosea 13:14; Amos 8:12; II Corinthians 5:1-21;
I Thessalonians 4:13-18; Hebrews 11:35

Introduction:

Nearly fifty years ago Orson Welles broadcast a drama which depicted an invasion of earth by spacemen from Mars. Until the public realized that it was only fictitious, pandemonium broke loose. The program was so realistic that thousands of Americans thought that the end of the world had come. Some lost their sanity; others committed suicide so real was this melodrama.

Men have talked of a doomsday and the end of the world for many generations, but any Bible believer knows that God has great plans for the world. There cannot be a doomsday until Christ has reigned on the earth for a thousand years. Doomsday will come at the end of that reign when all that is in the earth will be burned up to prepared for an entirely different order in the heavens and the earth. God will renovate this earth by fire and create a new heavens and a new earth. (See II Peter 3:10-13; Revelation 21:1.)

When Daniel writes of the end of the age, he does not mean a global collision, or some geological catastrophe, unnatural phenomenon or some interplanetary invasion. The *end of the age* means the termination of the *times of the Gentiles*, the end of Russian aggression, then will be the ruination of the European beast and the false prophet of Jerusalem. There will be an end of wars and bloodshed. There will be end of Israel's dispersion among the nations and an end of all Christ rejectors and God-haters.

Questions

1. What does the *end of age* mean -- the end of the Jews, the end of the world, or the end of Satan?
2. Why is it important that we understand prophecy?
3. It is true that civilization, as we know it, will be destroyed during the time of great tribulation. (Read Revelation chapter 6-18.)
4. What will be Israel's destiny and why?

I. THE DISTINCTION OF THE TIME TO COME (Daniel 12:1-9)

Here Daniel shares with us the final details of the last half of the tribulation. The expression -- *time of the end* -- is used twice (vss. 4, 9) for we are understand that he is writing about the period immediately prior to the *kingdom age* -- *the age of the Messiah's glory*. (See 11:45.)

It will be a time of wrath and wailing (vs. 1,2).

It will be a time of terrible devastation for the Jews. Russia's defeat will prepare the way for the reign of the European beast and his Jewish confederate in Palestine -- the Antichrist.

Note: Michael the archangel, is very prominent here. Michael will assert himself

in Israel's defense in that terrible hour of their trial -- the second half of the Great Tribulation which will come upon the earth. This is the time when God will visit the earth with terrible wrath that is directed without abatement upon a godless society.

Those who see it through to the end of the desolation are declared to be *every one that shall be found written in the book.* (vs. 1).

Notes about Michael!

- 1 He is the guardian of the nation of Israel -- their protector and preserver.
- 2 He is responsible for the continuation of this ancient people who are the only nation to survive from ancient antiquity.
- 3 He is somehow involved in resurrection for every time a resurrection occurs he is on hand to contribute (See Daniel 12:2; I Thessalonians 4:16; Jude 9).
- 4 He is the initiator of a great war in Heaven between his angels and the devil with his demon hosts. Revelation puts this conflict at the midway point in the tribulation time. (See Revelation 12:7-12.) (Note also Matthew 24:29.)
- 5 The casting down of Satan to earth and the confinement of his activities here will commence the second half of the tribulation -- called by Jesus, *the great tribulation.* (See Matthew 24:21; Revelation 7:14; and Daniel 12:2.)

While there will be a ruination of Russia, yet Israel's trouble is not over . There will be an alliance between the first and second beast -- or the European beast and the Jewish confederate in Palestine. This enemy in Palestine will sorely afflict the Jewish people. While the armies from the north are destroyed (12:16) yet satan will move against Israel through the alliance of these enemies. (See Revelation 13:1, 7, 11, 16.)

In this chapter Daniel wraps up his thoughts as he summarizes several scenes in a sweeping portrayal of four different types of people. These are -- 1) those found written in the book, 2) those who died during the tribulation, 3) those who have insight, and 4) those who lead many to righteousness (vss. 1b-3).

The many who die during the tribulation will awake either to everlasting contempt or to everlasting life (vs. 2). Those who are raised from the dead out of the tribulation are those who are participants of the first resurrection. (See John 5:29; Revelation 20:4-15.) Those bodies that are not raised at that time (the lost) will later be raised to appear at the great white throne judgment after the thousand year reign of Christ.

Daniel 12:3 alludes to a special group of saved Jews called the wise and a time of witnessing and wondering (vss. 3-9)

1. These are among the saved remnant who take the gospel to the masses during the tribulation time. They are saved Jews who become children of the kingdom.
2. There will be a distinguished group of 144,000 Jewish preachers and teachers who will be commissioned to spread the gospel of redeeming grace. These will be saved and sealed and the Spirit of God immediately after the church saints have been resurrected and raptured. (See Revelation 7; 14:1-7.)

Note: In verse 4, Daniel is telling the Jews that the book -- the book of Daniel -- will be a closed volume for the unbelieving Jews from that time until the time of the end. The Jews read Daniel and other books of prophecy today without understanding. Today that nation suffers from spiritual blindness -- a condition that will be altered at the time of the rapture of the church. They live in Judicial blindness for they rejected Christ as Messiah when He was here. Blindness in part has taken place as divine judgment. The Spirit of God will later illumine their hearts and they will understand the truth. (Read Romans 11.)

Then we read of the inquiry of the man clothed in linen (Most feel that this will be

Christ.) and how long the tribulation events would continue. The Nation of Israel will be broken in three and one half years according to verse seven. Daniel did not understand the answer and he was told that the meaning will not be understood until the time of the end. (vs. 6-9). The words are sealed -- they will come to pass!

Some Key Thoughts

1. God's ways are different than man's ways! Man honors the famous and soon forgets -- God honors the **unknowns** who serve Him and **never** forgets?
2. Man gives his reward **now** -- God reserves His rewards until **later**.
3. Man's methods are connected with **time** -- God's methods are connected with **eternity**.

II. THE DURATION OF THE TIME (Daniel 12:10-13)

Verse seven puts the terminal point of the time at 1260 days after the erection of the idol in the temple at Jerusalem. This length of time **coincides with** the reign of the European dictator-beast (Daniel 7:25; Revelation 13:5), with the Gentile control over Jerusalem (Revelation 11:2), with the ministry of the two witnesses of Revelations 11:3 and with the hiding of Israel in the wilderness as referred to in Revelation 12:14.

Christ will come in 1290 days -- thirty days later -- to destroy the hordes from the land after the introduction of idolatry in the land. He will personally come to slay the armies of the enemy hosts.

This will be a time of purifying and wickedness (vs. 10).

This last half of the tribulation will fulfill many purposes of the program of God -- one of the chief being the salvation and sanctification of a people to whom God can fulfill the covenant promises made to Abraham, Moses and David. God will use the fires of tribulation to take away the dross and prepare His Old Testament people to accept their Messiah. During this time many will be cleansed. God will regenerate them and work His own righteousness in them (vs. 10). Many others will be all the more confirmed in their wickedness, including the apostate Jews and the satanic leader and the beasts (rulers). These work their wickedness in unrepentant until God's judgment will come upon them.

It will also be a time of waste and waiting for many (vss. 11-13).

Again Daniel reminds of them of the amount of time that elapse from the day that the daily sacrifice is taken away and the *abomination of desolation* is set up (vs. 11). He goes on to write of a special blessing is to be pronounced upon those saved Jew who patiently wait for the Messiah to come to deliver them from the distresses of the hour of their trials (vs. 12). They will enter into the millennial age with all its prosperity, peace, righteousness and joy. They will be present at the wedding feast celebrated on earth at the beginning of the millennium. Christ and his bride, the church, will have joined at the wedding ceremony in Heaven and now the ladies in waiting (Israel), the friend of the bridegroom (John the Baptist) and the servants (saved Gentiles) will all participate in the joy of the festive occasion when Christ comes to reign.

The waiting regenerated Jews will be blessed because the ancient promise of a restoration of the kingdom of David will be fulfilled to them. They will be given positions of leadership in the kingdom government as a reward for their faithfulness to Christ during the terrors of the beasts' joint reign. (See Matthew 24:44-47; 25:10; 25:20-23 and Luke 12:35-40.)

Daniel was also waiting -- waiting his death -- his reward for service -- and the fulfillment of all these things yet to take place. He is still waiting! (See vs. 13).

Closing Thoughts:

When we are disturbed, confused, unable to piece things together -- how often do we ask the same questions -- *Lord, how long? or When will this be over?, or Lord, what will be the outcome?* **Stop worrying -- God is control!**

When we ask **why** -- we ought to realize that God's way are **inscrutable** -- they are without **comprehension** -- His plan is **supreme** and the final outcome will be only for His glory?

Used in preparation of these studies:

Daniel -- by Geoffrey R. King;

The Book of Daniel, Bible Study Guide -- by Charles R. Swindol;

Devotion and Destiny, Studies in Daniel -- by Moody Press;

Biblical Viewpoint, Focus on Daniel, Bob Jones University Press;

Dream and Destiny, Study in Daniel, Accent Press.