

DANIEL

Author:

Some modern critics of the Bible have denied that Daniel wrote this book, but see 8:1,15,27; 9:2-4,20; 10:2,7; 12:5,8. These verses indicate that Daniel was the author. Further evidence for this is in Matt 24:15 where the Lord Jesus stated that the prophecy concerning “the abomination of desolation” (Dan 9:27) was spoken through “Daniel the prophet”.

Date:

Babylon was captured by the Medes and Persians in 539 BC. Daniel must have written this book a short time after that.

Themes:

Two themes appear together throughout the book – the experiences of Daniel (and sometimes his Hebrew friends) in the city of Babylon, and the prophetic visions which came to Daniel. Over both themes we see the sovereign God fulfilling His purposes. In the prophetic visions we can see the rise and fall of empires, the very powerful empire that will rule the world in the last days of this present age, the coming of antichrist, the destruction of man’s kingdoms and the establishment of Christ’s eternal kingdom.

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1 In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, came to Jerusalem, and besieged it. ²And the LORD gave Jehoiakim, king of Judah, into his hands, and some of the articles belonging to the house of God, which he carried away to the land of Shinar to the house of his god; and he brought the articles into the treasure house of his god.

³And the king ordered Ashpenaz the chief of his eunuchs to bring *some* of the children of Israel, and of the royal family, and of the nobles, ⁴young men without blemish, but handsome, with training in every *branch* of wisdom, well informed, and understanding science and who *had the* ability to serve in the king's palace, and whom they might teach the literature and language of the Chaldeans. ⁵And the king appointed for

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

⁶Now among these were Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah of the children of Judah. ⁷The chief of the eunuchs gave them names. He gave to Daniel *the name* Belteshazzar; and to Hananiah, Shadrach; and to Mishael, Meshach; and to Azariah, Abednego.

⁸But Daniel determined in his heart that he would not defile himself with *any* portion of the king's food or with the wine which he drank. Therefore he requested the chief of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself. ⁹Now God had brought Daniel into the favour and tender affection of the chief of the eunuchs. ¹⁰And the chief of the eunuchs said to Daniel, "I am afraid of my

1:1 "*Third year*"— Jer 25:1 indicates that this was the fourth year of Jehoiakim's reign. The difference can be accounted for like this – in Babylon the years of a king's reign were counted from the first new year's day after he became king, but in Israel the year he became king also was included in the reckoning. Jehoiakim began his reign in 608 BC. He ruled part of that year, the years 607 and 606, and part of the year referred to in this verse which was 605 BC. Daniel, writing in Babylon, used the Babylonian system of reckoning and so did not count the year Jehoiakim ascended the throne.

1:2 Chron 36:5-7. Daniel was taken to Babylon in that same year, Ezekiel eight years later.

"*Shinar*"— another name for Babylonia.

1:3-4 Only those regarded as the brightest and best were chosen. We should be glad that this is not God's way of choosing – 1 Cor 1:26-29. Yet God's good purpose was in the king's command. God had determined to raise Daniel to the highest place in Babylon, next to the king.

1:3 "*Eunuchs*"— or "court officials". It seems that officials in the king's court were sometimes called "eunuchs" even though they may not have been literal eunuchs.

1:4 "Understanding science" – or "quick to understand".

"*Chaldeans*"— Chaldea was the southern part of Babylonia but sometimes the name was used to indicate the whole country.

1:5 "*The king's food*"— a sign of the king's favor. So God does for believers – Ps 23:5; Isa 25:6; Luke 14:16; John 6:48-51; Rev 19:7.

1:6-7 The name Daniel means "My judge is God", Hananiah means "Jehovah is gracious" (Hebrew "Yah" = Jehovah, the LORD), Mishael means "Who is what God is?", and Azariah means "Jehovah helps". The new names given

to them were all connected with various gods of Babylon. Belteshazzar probably means "May Bel protect his life". Bel meant Lord in the Babylonian language and signified the god Marduk (Jer 50:2). Shadrach could mean either "the inspiration of Rach (the sun god)" or "the command of Aku (their moon god)". Meshach could mean either "devotee of Shach (their word for the planet Venus)" or "who is like Aku?". Abednego means "servant of Nego" (Nego = Nebo – another of the many gods of Babylon – Isa 46:1).

Why did the chief official give them these names? Possibly he considered the gods of Babylon more powerful and important than Jehovah the God of Israel, or perhaps he wanted these Hebrew youths to fit into the society of that country and thought that Babylonian names would help them in this.

1:8 Daniel would consider this food and wine defiling because portions of both would have been offered to false gods. Also the meat would not have been prepared according to the law God gave Israel (Lev 11:4-20; Deut 12:23-24). Daniel was a young man, far from his homeland and faced with the choice of offending God or offending the king. With great courage he chose to risk the latter. Holiness was more important to him than physical comfort or safety. Christians sometimes sin because they are afraid of offending others, or because of fear for their own safety or position. This is because the fear of God is not the controlling factor in their lives (Job 28:28; Ps 34:11-14).

1:9 "*God*"— God will work on behalf of those who take their stand for Him. This is seen all through the book of Daniel. See also the case of Joseph (Gen 39:2-4,20-23).

1:10 Daniel feared God, the official feared the king. This made a big difference in their behavior.

lord the king, who has appointed your food and your drink. For why should he see your faces looking worse than the young men who are of your age? Then you would make *me* endanger my head to the king”.

¹¹Then Daniel said to Melzar whom the chief of the eunuchs had set over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, ¹²“Please test your servants for ten days; let them give us vegetables to eat, and water to drink. ¹³Then let our appearance be inspected in your presence, along with the appearance of the young men who eat of the *appointed* portion of the king’s food. Then deal with your servants according to what you see”. ¹⁴So he gave his consent to them in this matter, and tested them for ten days.

¹⁵And at the end of ten days, in appearance they looked better and fatter than all the young men who ate the portion of the king’s food. ¹⁶So Melzar took away the portion of their food and the wine that they were to drink, and gave them vegetables.

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

¹⁸Now at the end of the days which the

king had specified for bringing them in, the chief of the eunuchs brought them in to the presence of Nebuchadnezzar. ¹⁹And the king talked with them, and among them all no one was found like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah. Therefore they served in the king’s presence. ²⁰And in all *the matters of wisdom and understanding* about which the king asked them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians *and astrologers* who were in his whole realm.

²¹And Daniel remained *there* until the first year of King Cyrus.

2 And in the second year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, Nebuchadnezzar had dreams, which made his spirit so troubled that his sleep left him. ²Then the king gave orders to call the magicians, and the astrologers, and the sorcerers, and the Chaldeans, to tell the king his dreams. So they came and stood before the king. ³And the king said to them, “I have had a dream, and my spirit is anxious to know the dream”.

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

1:11-14 Daniel began to show the wisdom for which he was later famous.

1:15 This was God’s doing.

1:16 God caused the guard to cooperate. So the temptation to eat of the king’s food and the danger of not doing so were overcome. Compare 1 Cor 10:13.

1:17 “*God gave*”— Job 32:8; Jam 1:5; 2 Pet 3:15. The ability to understand visions and dreams was a special gift of God over and above the other understanding God gave Daniel.

1:19 “*They served*”— God had been preparing them for His own service as well.

1:20 This was God’s doing and not merely a matter of their own intellect and study.

1:21 539 BC. This means that Daniel was still living when Cyrus made his proclamation that the Jews could return to Israel (2 Chron 36:22-23).

2:1 “*Second year*”— 603 BC. See note on the time of a king’s reign at 1:1. Daniel and his friends were trained for “three years” (1:5,18). This was probably a round figure including parts of years. Their first year (or part of a year) of training was the year Nebuchadnezzar ascended the throne, their second was his first full year as king, their third was in his second full year as king.

“*Dreams*”— God used this means to raise Daniel to a high position in Babylon and to reveal important truth through the interpretation of the dream.

2:2 See Deut 18:10-12. Babylon was overrun with such people as are listed here. It was in some ways probably much like India is today (western countries are certainly not free of them either). All through the book of Daniel these magicians, enchanters, sorcerers and astrologers are shown to be completely unable to find out the mind and will of the one true God. And this is as true of such people now as it was then.

“*Astrologers*”— the Hebrew word here signifies conjurers or enchanters.

“*Chaldeans*” (also vs 4,5,10) – Chaldea, the southern section of Babylonia, was noted for its astrologers and wise men – so much so that in some contexts, such as the one here, Chaldeans actually meant astrologers or wise men. Astrology is as empty a superstition now as it was proved to be in Daniel’s day. The so-called “fate” of men, or what happens to them day by day, has nothing to do with the position of the stars at their birth or at any other time. Their future is determined by the true and living God, and while they live on this earth the important thing is their relationship to Him and whether they trust and obey and serve Him, or not. See note at Gen 25:24.

2:4 The text from this verse to the end of chapter 7 is in the Aramaic language – the language of Aram (Syria). This language was very similar to Hebrew.

⁵The king answered and said to the Chaldeans, “The thing has gone from me. If you do not make known the dream to me, along with its interpretation, you will be cut in pieces, and your houses will be made heaps of rubbish. ⁶But if you tell the dream and its interpretation, you will receive from me gifts and rewards and great honour. Therefore tell me the dream and its interpretation”.

⁷They answered again and said, “May the king tell his servants the dream; then we will tell the interpretation of it”.

⁸The king answered and said, “I know for certain that you would gain time, because you see the thing has gone from me. ⁹But if you do not make known to me the dream, *there is but one decree for you*. For you have prepared lying and corrupt words to speak to me, until the time has changed. Therefore tell me the dream, and I will know that you can tell me its interpretation”.

¹⁰The Chaldeans answered the king, and said, “There is not a man on earth who can tell the king’s matter. So no king, lord, or ruler has ever asked such things of any magician, or astrologer, or Chaldean. ¹¹*It is a difficult thing that the king requires, and there is no one who can tell it to the king, except the gods, whose dwelling is not with flesh*”.

¹²Because of this the king was angry, *indeed* very furious, and gave orders to destroy all the wise *men* of Babylon. ¹³When the decree went out that the wise *men* should be slain, they sought Daniel and his companions to kill *them*.

¹⁴Then Daniel with *good* advice and wisdom answered Arioch the captain of the king’s guard, who had gone out to kill the wise *men* of Babylon. ¹⁵He answered and said to Arioch the king’s captain, “Why is the decree from the king so urgent?” Then Arioch revealed the matter to Daniel. ¹⁶Then Daniel went in and asked the king to give him *some* time, so that he could tell the king the interpretation.

¹⁷Then Daniel went to his house, and made the matter known to Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, his companions, ¹⁸so that they would ask mercy from the God of heaven concerning this secret, that Daniel and his companions would not perish with the rest of the wise *men* of Babylon. ¹⁹Then the secret was revealed to Daniel in a night vision. Then Daniel praised the God of heaven. ²⁰Daniel responded and said, “Blessed be the name of God forever and ever, for wisdom and might are his.

²¹And he changes the times and the seasons. He removes kings, and sets up kings. He gives wisdom to the wise, and knowledge to those who have understanding.

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

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

²⁴Therefore Daniel went in to Arioch, whom the king had appointed to destroy the wise *men* of Babylon; he went and said

2:5-13 No doubt the astrologers and other such people pretended to have supernatural insights. Now they are put to the test and their ignorance exposed. The true God arranged this to show the folly of looking for answers to such people, and to show Himself mighty in behalf of Daniel. **2:12-13** Anger often leads men to speak and act unjustly.

2:18 Daniel acted very wisely (vs 14-16), but he depended on God, not on his wisdom.

2:19 “*Secret*”– 2:27-30,47; 4:9.

“*Vision*”– in Bible days God often revealed truth in dreams and visions. Notes at Gen 15:1; Num 12:6.

“*God of heaven*”– the name is used 22 times in the Old Testament. Of these 17 are in Ezra, Nehemiah, and Daniel. The true God, the God of Israel, is transcendent, far higher than sun, moon, and stars, and all the so-called gods of

the world.

2:20 Daniel was as ready to praise as he was to pray. And he did not praise himself for having learned the interpretation of the king’s dream. He praised God Who gave it.

“*Wisdom and might*”– these are the twin themes of this prayer. In this way the true God is distinguished from the gods of Babylon, and all other gods.

2:21 The course of history and its political changes are in God’s hands (4:17; 1 Sam 2:6-8; Jer 27:5; Rom 13:1).

2:22 Job 12:22; Ps 139:11-12; Jer 23:24; Heb 4:13; Jam 1:17; 1 John 1:5.

2:23 “*I thank*”– notes on thanksgiving at Lev 7:12-13; Ps 7:17; 50:14-15; 56:12.

“*Wisdom and power*”– Daniel is not boasting but recognizing God’s good gifts and thanking God for them.

this to him: “Do not destroy the wise *men* of Babylon. Bring me into the king’s presence, and I will tell the king the interpretation”.

²⁵Then Arioch quickly brought Daniel into the king’s presence, and said this to him: “I have found a man among the captives of Judah who will make known to the king the interpretation”.

²⁶The king answered and said to Daniel, whose name was Belteshazzar, “Are you able to make known to me the dream which I saw, and its interpretation?”

²⁷Daniel answered in the presence of the king, and said, “The secret which the king has demanded, the wise *men*, the astrologers, the magicians, *and* the soothsayers cannot tell the king, ²⁸but there is a God in heaven who reveals secrets, and makes known to King Nebuchadnezzar what will happen in the latter days. Your dream and the visions of your head on your bed, were these:

²⁹“As for you, O king, on your bed you had thoughts of what will happen hereafter. And the one who reveals secrets makes known to

you what is going to happen. ³⁰But as for me, this secret is not revealed to me because of *any* wisdom that I have more than any living *person*, but for the sake of *those* who make known the interpretation to the king, and that you might know the thoughts of your heart.

³¹“You, O king, looked and saw a great image. This great image, of exceptional splendour, stood before you, and its form was awe-inspiring. ³²The head of this image was of fine gold, its chest and its arms of silver, its belly and its thighs of bronze, ³³its legs of iron, its feet partly of iron and partly of clay. ³⁴You watched until a stone was cut out without hands. It struck the image on its feet *that were* of iron and clay, and broke them to pieces. ³⁵Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, and the gold, were broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing floors, and the wind carried them away, so that no place was found for them. And the stone that struck the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth.

2:27-28 First of all, Daniel gives glory to God. And he indicates that Babylon’s astrologers, magicians, etc were not in touch with the true God. By all the means at their disposal they could not tell the king his dream. But God can reveal anything to His servants.

2:29 Notice this name for God – “the one who reveals secrets”. Let us always look to Him to interpret to us the mysteries of Himself and His Word. Compare Rom 16:25; 1 Cor 2:9-12; Eph 1:9,17-19; 3:3,9; Col 1:26-27; 2:2.

2:30 He put the emphasis where it belonged. God was revealing needed truth, not giving Daniel a reason for boasting. There are some who pride themselves in being able to interpret the Bible and tend to forget to praise the One Who gives all such ability.

2:31 Evidently Daniel saw in vision (v 19) exactly what the king had seen in his dream, and so could describe it in detail.

2:32-45 The statue represents four kingdoms of the world. It seems clear both from the Bible and from history which kingdoms are meant. The head is King Nebuchadnezzar and his Babylonian empire (vs 37,38). The chest and arms represent the empire which succeeded Babylon (v 39; 5:28) – the empire of the Medes and Persians established by Cyrus. The belly and thighs represent the empire which succeeded Medo-Persia (v 39; 8:21) – the empire of Greece and Macedonia under Alexander the Great. The legs and feet represent the kingdom which replaced all the others (v 40) – the Roman Empire. (In Luke 2:1 we are told that Caesar Augustus, the

Roman emperor, controlled the “world” – that is, the world of the Old and New Testaments.) The rock that struck the image is God’s eternal kingdom (vs 44,45).

There have been other great empires since Rome’s power waned. Why are they not mentioned here? Probably because they are not related to Bible times and are not of central importance in Bible prophecy.

2:34 “Stone” – or “rock”. In the Bible “stone” and “rock” sometimes symbolize Christ (Ps 118:22; Isa 28:16; Zech 4:7; 10:4; Eph 2:20; 1 Pet 2:7. For the destructive power of this “stone” see Matt 21:42-44). Here the rock is God’s kingdom (vs 44,45), in which, of course, Christ is the King of kings. The stone is cut out, but not by human hands. In other words it is established not by men, but by God Himself.

2:35 The rock striking the statue brings to an end, all at the same time, all the kingdoms mentioned. This indicates either that the first three kingdoms will be parts of the 4th at the time of its destruction, or that with the destruction of the 4th kingdom all the kingdoms of men (symbolized by the other three) will come to an end; or it may indicate both of these things. This verse surely speaks of sudden, overwhelming destruction. Not a trace of those kingdoms will remain after the rock has smashed them. The times of the Gentiles with their worldly kingdoms will have an utter end. God’s kingdom which will completely replace man’s kingdoms is compared to a mountain that “filled the whole earth”. Compare Isa 2:2-3; 11:9; Micah 4:1.

³⁶“This is the dream. And we will tell its interpretation in the king’s presence. ³⁷You, O king, are a king of kings, for the God of heaven has given you a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory. ³⁸And wherever the children of men live, he has given the beasts of the field and the birds of the sky into your hands, and has made you ruler over them all. You are this head of gold.

³⁹“And after you another kingdom will arise, inferior to yours; then another, a third kingdom of bronze, which will rule the whole earth. ⁴⁰And the fourth kingdom will be as strong as iron; for just as iron breaks in pieces and crushes all *things*, and as iron shatters, it will break in pieces and shatter all these *others*. ⁴¹And just as you saw that the feet and toes were partly of potter’s clay, and partly of iron, the kingdom will be divided. But there will be in it the strength of iron, just as you saw the iron mixed with common

clay. ⁴²And as the toes of the feet were partly of iron, and partly of clay, so the kingdom will be partly strong, and partly brittle. ⁴³And just as you saw the iron mixed with common clay, they will be a combination of the offspring of men, and will not hold together, just as iron does not mix with clay.

⁴⁴“And in the days of these kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which will never be destroyed. And the kingdom will not be left to other people, *but* it will break in pieces and bring to an end all those kingdoms; and it will stand forever, ⁴⁵just as you saw that the stone was cut out of the mountain, without hands, and that it broke in pieces the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver, and the gold. “The great God has made known to the king what will happen hereafter; and the dream is certain, and its interpretation sure”.

⁴⁶Then King Nebuchadnezzar prostrated

2:37-38 Jer 27:6-7. Daniel says king Nebuchadnezzar is the head of gold. This is because the king represented the kingdom (v 39). **2:40-44** More detail is given concerning the fourth kingdom than the other three. The same is true in chapter 7 where these same four kingdoms appear again.

2:40 Iron was a fit symbol of the Roman Empire – hard, strong, able to crush others. It is possible that the two legs of the statue symbolize the division of the Roman Empire into two parts in 394 AD (as the chest with its two arms may speak of the two “arms” of the empire of the Medes and Persians, and the belly and two thighs may speak of Greece and Macedonia in Alexander’s empire), but this is not certain. As for the toes, the number is not given but two feet certainly mean ten toes. And the toes surely must have the same interpretation as the ten horns of 7:7,24 and Rev 13:1; 17:3,12-14, since the same kingdom is in view in each of these visions. See notes on those chapters. The author of these notes believes that the final form of the Roman Empire is still in the future and that its sudden destruction will occur at the second coming of Christ (Rev 19:11-16).

2:41-43 We are not told what the clay may signify, only that there will be an inherent weakness and lack of true unity in this kingdom. The picture may suggest a very strong central government forcing diverse elements together for a time. Certainly the final world kingdom of man will be like this (Revelation chapter 13).

2:44 “*Kings*” – the context indicates feet with its toes, not kings. The word “kings” coming here is evidence that the toes signify kings. God will set up His kingdom “in the days of these kings”. “These kings” cannot refer to the rulers of the

kingdoms mentioned in the preceding verses (Nebuchadnezzar, Cyrus, Alexander), for God did not set up His kingdom in those days. In v 34 we are told that the rock strikes the statue on the feet – which must signify the final form of the Roman Empire. In any case, for the following reasons it seems clear the fulfillment of these things did not take place at the first coming of Christ but awaits the end of this age:

The Roman Empire and the kingdoms which preceded it were not suddenly smashed to pieces at the first coming of Christ, nor did they then disappear with “no place found for them”. And the whole earth is not yet filled with the kingdom of God (vs 34,35). Moreover, the kings symbolized by the ten horns of chapter 7 and Revelation chapter 17 (and no doubt by the toes of this chapter) were not in existence at Christ’s first coming (see Rev 17:12 – this is a very important fact which should keep us from thinking that the stone crushing the image in the way Daniel describes it means Christ at His first coming setting up this kingdom).

But has not the kingdom of God already come? Did not Christ set it up at His first coming? In a hidden and spiritual sense, yes, and all believers are in it. But it has not yet come openly, in its manifest form, in its outward glory and splendour, and believers are to look forward to its coming (Matt 6:10; 19:28; Luke 19:11-12; 21:31; Acts 1:6; Rev 11:15). Notes on God’s kingdom at Matt 4:17. **2:46** “*Prostrated*” – an amazing sight. The most powerful king on earth on his face before a mere youth who was an exile from a foreign land. The king was acknowledging the superiority of Daniel’s God and the supernatural revelation that had come to Daniel.

himself and paid homage to Daniel, and gave orders that they should present an offering and incense to him. ⁴⁷The king answered Daniel, and said, “Truly your God is God of gods, and Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets, since you could reveal this secret”.

⁴⁸Then the king gave Daniel a high position, and gave him many great gifts, and made him ruler over the whole province of Babylon, and chief of the governors over all the wise *men* of Babylon. ⁴⁹Then Daniel made a request of the king, and he placed Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, over the affairs of the province of Babylon; but Daniel *sat* in the gate of the king.

3 Nebuchadnezzar the king made an image of gold. Its height was sixty cubits, and its width six cubits. He set it up in the plain of Dura, in the province of Babylon. ²Then Nebuchadnezzar the king sent *men* to gather together the princes, the governors, and the captains, the judges, the treasurers, the counsellors, the magistrates, and all the officials of the provinces, to come to the dedication of the image which Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up. ³Then the princes, the governors, and captains, the judges, the treasurers, and counsellors, the magistrates, and all the officials of the provinces gathered together for the dedication of the image that Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up, and they stood before

the image that Nebuchadnezzar had set up.

⁴Then a herald proclaimed loudly, “This is the command given to you, O people of all nations and languages: ⁵When you hear the sound of the horn, flute, zither, lyre, harp, dulcimer, and all kinds of music, you must fall down and worship the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king has set up. ⁶Whoever does not fall down and worship will be thrown that same hour into the middle of a blazing fiery furnace”.

⁷Therefore at that time, when all the people heard the sound of the horn, flute, zither, lyre, harp, and all kinds of music, all the people of *all* the nations and languages, fell down *and* worshipped the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up.

⁸Therefore at that time some Chaldeans came near, and accused the Jews. ⁹They spoke up and said to King Nebuchadnezzar, “O king, live forever! ¹⁰You, O king, made a decree, that every man who hears the sound of the horn, flute, zither, lyre, harp, and dulcimer, and all kinds of music, must fall down and worship the golden image, ¹¹and whoever does not fall down and worship must be thrown into the middle of a blazing fiery furnace. ¹²There are certain Jews whom you have set over the affairs of the province of Babylon, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. These men, O king, have paid no attention to you. They do not serve your gods, or worship the golden image

“*Offering*” – we are not told Daniel permitted this actually to happen. It is very doubtful that he did. Compare Acts 14:13.

2:48-49 Compare Gen 41:41-43. Perhaps this is one reason why the Babylonian empire is compared to gold (vs 32,38).

3:1 “*Image*” – in the interpretation of the dream Nebuchadnezzar had been called the “head of gold”. Now he has an image made which is gold from head to foot (at least, gold-plated – Isa 40:19). He was a proud man with visions of grandeur (4:30). By making this image was he not showing what was in his heart? It seems he wanted the whole image of chapter 2 to be gold, to be his kingdom alone, with no kingdom ever succeeding his.

3:2-6 The king had started on the road to a knowledge of the true God (2:47). This matter of the image shows he had not come very far. At this time the true God to him was merely one of the gods and he was not about to abandon the ones he had always served (v 14). This is often the way with men – many are willing to add another

god to their list, if it does not mean leaving the gods they have. But God will have no part in this. See note at 1 Kings 18:21.

3:7 Fallen man will do almost anything to save his skin. Only a few, comparatively, will not (see note at Job 2:4-5). This will be demonstrated to the full at the end of this age when the antichrist rules the world (Rev 13:15-17).

3:8 “*Chaldeans*” – these astrologers (note on 2:2) had been saved from death by the Jews (1:12-21). This is how they tried to reward them (compare Ps 35:12-18). Daniel is not mentioned in this chapter. There are three possible reasons for this. He may have been away from the city of Babylon on official business; or if he was in the city he may not have been required, for some reason or other, to attend the dedication of the image; or if he was present at the dedication and joined with his friends in refusing to worship the image (as he certainly would have done had he been there), at that time the astrologers may have been afraid to accuse him because of his high position (2:48).

which you have set up”.

¹³Then Nebuchadnezzar in *his* rage and fury gave a command to bring Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. Then they brought these men before the king. ¹⁴Nebuchadnezzar spoke and said to them, “*Is it true*, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, that you do not serve my gods, or worship the golden image which I have set up? ¹⁵Now if you are ready when you hear the sound of the horn, flute, zither, lyre, harp, and dulcimer, and all kinds of music, to fall down and worship the image which I have made, *good*. But if you do not worship, in that same hour you will be thrown into the middle of a blazing fiery furnace. And what God will deliver you out of my hands?”

¹⁶Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego answered and said to the king, “O Nebuchadnezzar, we *have no need* to answer you in this matter. ¹⁷If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the blazing fiery furnace, and he will deliver *us* out of your hands, O king. ¹⁸But if not, be it known to you, O king, that we will not serve your gods, or worship the golden image which you have set up”.

¹⁹Then Nebuchadnezzar was filled with fury, and the expression on his face changed against Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. *Therefore* he spoke and commanded that the furnace should be heated seven times more than it was usually heated. ²⁰And

he commanded *some of* the strongest men in his army to bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, *and* to throw *them* into the blazing fiery furnace. ²¹Then these men were bound in their coats, their trousers, their turbans, and their *other* clothing, and were thrown into the middle of the blazing fiery furnace. ²²Therefore, because the king’s commandment was urgent, and the furnace exceedingly hot, the flames from the fire killed those men who took up Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. ²³And these three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, fell down bound into the middle of the blazing fiery furnace.

²⁴Then Nebuchadnezzar the king became astonished, and rose up hurriedly, *and* spoke, saying to his counsellors, “Did we not throw three bound men into the middle of the fire?” They answered and said to the king, “True, O king”.

²⁵He answered and said, “Look, I see four men loose, walking in the middle of the fire, and they are not hurt, and the form of the fourth is like a Son of God”.

²⁶Then Nebuchadnezzar approached the mouth of the blazing fiery furnace, *and* spoke and said, “Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, you servants of the Most High God, come out, and come *here*”. Then Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, came out of the middle of the fire. ²⁷And the princes, governors, and captains, and the

3:13 “*Rage*”— 2:12.

3:15 Those who have false views of God and religion sometimes resort to persecution and threats of torture or death to get their way (Acts 8:1; 9:1).

3:16-18 Like Daniel in 1:8 they courageously resolved to risk their lives rather than displease God by disobedience to His Word. They well knew what God thought of the worship of anyone or anything other than Himself. See Ex 20:2-6. They were also aware no doubt, that one of the chief reasons for the exile of the Jews to Babylon was idolatry (Lev 26:14-39; Deut 27:14-26; Jer 1:16; 9:13-14).

3:16 “*We have no need*”— this is what the Hebrew here literally means. The KJV translation here is surprising.

3:18 “*If not*”— they accepted God’s will no matter what it might prove to be, and they were ready for anything – certainly ready to escape fiery persecution and death, but equally ready to endure them if necessary. Their attitude is an example to all believers facing trouble now, and to all God’s people at the end of this age

when the great tribulation (Matt 24:21) looms on the horizon.

3:19 Verse 13; Prov 19:12,19.

3:25 “*A son of God*”— this could be translated also “a son of the gods” (the Hebrew word “Elohim” here can mean either God or gods. The word for ‘the’ is absent). Nebuchadnezzar meant some sort of supernatural being (v 28). He served many gods and knew nothing about the one Son of the true God. But in the light of the rest of the Bible we can say that this one who came to be with his servants was the “messenger” of Jehovah (note at Gen 16:7). This fiery trial brought the Son of God to their side. Welcome all trials and tribulations that bring a deeper experience of His nearness! Compare Isa 43:1-2.

3:26 “*Most High God*”— 4:2,34; 5:18,21; 7:18.

“*Come out*”— see Ps 66:8-12. They had passed this test of faith, had glorified God in the fire. Now they are brought out to a place of abundance. God does not always deliver His servants in a miraculous way; He calls on some of them to lay down their lives for Him (Heb 11:35-38). And whatever He decides in individual cases is best.

king's counsellors, being gathered together, saw these men on whose bodies the fire had no power. Not a hair of their head was singed, nor were their clothes affected, nor was the smell of fire on them.

²⁸ Then Nebuchadnezzar spoke and said, "Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who sent his angel, and rescued his servants who trusted in him, and frustrated the king's command and gave up their bodies rather than serve or worship any god, except their own God. ²⁹ Therefore I make a decree that the people of any nation or language who speak anything improper against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, will be cut in pieces, and their houses will be made a pile of rubbish. Because there is no other God who can rescue in this way".

³⁰ Then the king promoted Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego in the province of Babylon.

4 "Nebuchadnezzar the king to *all* peoples and nations of all languages who live in all the earth: Peace be multiplied to you.

² "I thought it good to tell of the signs and wonders that the Most High God has done for me. ³ "How great *are* his signs! And how mighty *are* his wonders! His kingdom *is* an everlasting kingdom, and his dominion *is* from generation to generation.

⁴ "I, Nebuchadnezzar, was at rest in my house, and flourishing in my palace. ⁵ I saw a dream which made me afraid, and on my bed *my* thoughts and the visions of my head troubled me. ⁶ Therefore I gave an order to bring all the wise *men* of Babylon into my presence, so that they might make

known to me the interpretation of the dream.

⁷ Then the magicians, the astrologers, the Chaldeans, and the soothsayers came, and I told the dream to them, but they did not reveal its interpretation to me. ⁸ But finally Daniel came into my presence. His name is Belteshazzar, after the name of my god. The Spirit of the holy gods *is* in him; and I told the dream to him, *saying*,

⁹ "O Belteshazzar, chief of the magicians, because I know that the Spirit of the holy gods *is* in you, and no secret troubles you, tell me the visions of my dream that I saw, and its interpretation. ¹⁰ These *are* the visions of my head on my bed: I looked and saw a tree in the middle of the earth, and its height was great. ¹¹ The tree grew, and became strong, and its height reached to the sky, and it could be seen to the ends of the whole earth. ¹² Its leaves *were* beautiful, and its fruit abundant, and on it was food for all. The beasts of the field had shade under it, and the birds of the heavens lived in its branches, and all flesh was fed from it.

¹³ "On my bed I looked in the visions of my head, and saw a watcher, a holy one coming down from heaven. ¹⁴ He cried out loudly, and said this: 'Chop down the tree, and cut off its branches. Shake off its leaves, and scatter its fruit. Let the beasts get away from under it, and the birds from its branches. ¹⁵ But leave the stump from its roots in the ground, with a band of iron and bronze, in the tender grass of the field; and let it become wet with the dew of heaven, and *let* his portion *be* with the beasts in the grass of the earth. ¹⁶ Let his heart be changed from *that of* a man, and let a beast's heart be given to him, and let seven times pass over

3:28-30 The king takes another step forward in the knowledge of the true God (2:47). Pharaoh in Egypt did not react like this when he saw God's wonders (Ex 8:15,32; 9:34). In Babylon God was being gracious not only to His servants but to the king.

3:29 "*No other God who can rescue*"— a true and powerful testimony from an idolatrous king. He well knew that none of the gods of Babylon had ever done anything like this. In 6:27 we have a similar testimony.

4:1-37 This chapter gives the record of how God brought the king to a deeper knowledge of Himself. The king himself wrote it down and, presumably, published it far and wide (vs 1,2).

4:3 2:44.

4:5 2:1.

4:6-7 Compare 2:5-9. This time the king was making it much easier for these "wise" men. But they failed once more, as they always must and will wherever they may be.

4:7 "*Astrologers...Chaldeans*"— see 2:2.

4:8 1:7.

"*Holy gods*"— or, possibly "holy God".

4:9 He had not yet understood that Daniel was not a magician at all, that the source of Daniel's wisdom was not any kind of magic, but the true God alone.

4:13 "*Watcher*"— (also in vs 17,23)— are there not, then, some angels appointed especially by God to keep watch over the earth?

"*Holy one*"— an angel.

4:16 "*Seven times*"— also verses 23,25,32. This almost certainly means seven years. See also 7:25.

him. ¹⁷This matter is by the decree of the watchers, and the decision by the word of the holy ones, so that the living may know that the Most High rules in the kingdom of men, and gives it to whomever he will, and sets over it the lowliest of men.'

¹⁸"This dream I, King Nebuchadnezzar, have seen. Now you, O Belteshazzar, declare its interpretation, since none of the wise men of my kingdom are able to make known to me the interpretation. But you are able, for the Spirit of the holy gods is in you.

¹⁹"Then Daniel, whose name is Belteshazzar, was astonished for one hour, and his thoughts troubled him. The king spoke and said, Belteshazzar, do not let the dream or its interpretation trouble you. "Belteshazzar answered and said, 'My master, may the dream be for those who hate you, and its interpretation for your enemies. ²⁰The tree that you saw, which grew and became strong, its height reaching to the sky, and its appearance to the whole earth, ²¹with its beautiful leaves, and its abundant fruit, and on which was food for all, and under which the beasts of the field lived, and on whose branches the birds of the sky had their dwelling place, ²²this tree is you, O king, who have grown and become strong. For your greatness has increased and reaches to the heavens, and your dominion to the ends of the earth.

²³"And as for the king seeing a watcher and a holy one coming down from heaven, and saying, "Chop down the tree, and destroy it, but leave the stump from its roots in the ground with a band of iron and bronze, in the tender grass of the field, and let it be wet with the dew of heaven, and let his portion be with the beasts of the field, until seven times pass over him".

²⁴"This is the interpretation, O king, and

this is the decree of the Most High, which has come against my master the king: ²⁵They will drive you from men, and your dwelling will be with the beasts of the field, and they will make you eat grass like oxen, and they will wet you with the dew of sky. And seven times will pass over you, until you know that the Most High rules in the kingdom of men, and gives it to whomever he will. ²⁶And as for their command to leave the stump from the tree roots, your kingdom will be assured to you, after you learn that heaven rules. ²⁷Therefore, O king, let my counsel be acceptable to you, and break off your sins by practicing righteousness, and your evil deeds by showing mercy to the poor. Perhaps your tranquility will long continue.' "

²⁸All this came on King Nebuchadnezzar.

²⁹At the end of twelve months he was walking in the palace of the kingdom of Babylon, ³⁰and the king spoke and said, "Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for a royal residence by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty?"

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

³³That same hour this word was fulfilled in Nebuchadnezzar; and he was driven from men, and ate grass like oxen, and his body became wet with the dew of the sky, until his hair had grown like eagles' feathers, and his nails like birds' claws.

4:17 In spite of the truth the king had heard in 2:36-45 he had not yet understood this fact (v 25).

4:19 Sometimes God's servants must speak unwelcome truth.

4:22 "Tree"— in the Bible individuals and nations are sometimes compared to trees (Ps 1:3; 37:35; 52:8; 92:12; Isa 17:6; Jer 11:16; Ezek 17:22-24; Rom 11:17).

4:26 "Heaven rules"— that is, the God of heaven rules. This is a fact clearly revealed in the Bible — Ps 10:16; 47:2 (note); 93:1; 96:10; 97:1; Isa 52:7; Rev 19:6. But how slow, how reluctant people are to acknowledge it! Much of man's history is the story of rebellion against heaven's authority.

4:27 Again we see Daniel's boldness and faithfulness in dealing with those in high places.

"To the poor"— God demands that those in positions of authority show justice and kindness.

4:30 The king had a whole year to think over the truth God had given through Daniel. But pride is a great enemy of truth and hardens the heart against it (5:20). God's attitude toward pride is seen in His Word — Prov 6:16-17; 8:13; Isa 2:10-18; 23:9; Jer 13:9; Jam 4:6.

4:31 "A voice fell from heaven"— another instance of God's remarkable dealings with this king.

4:33 God will always do as He has said (Prov 19:21; Isa 14:24; 44:26; 46:10; Matt 5:18).

³⁴“And at the end of these days I, Nebuchadnezzar, lifted up my eyes to heaven, and my understanding returned to me, and I extolled the Most High, and I praised and honoured him who lives forever, “Whose dominion *is* an everlasting dominion, and whose kingdom *is* from generation to generation.

³⁵And all the inhabitants of the earth count for nothing; and he does according to his will in the army of heaven, and *among* the inhabitants of the earth, and no one can hold back his hand, or say to him, ‘What are you doing?’

³⁶“At the same time my reason returned to me, and my honour and splendour returned to me for the glory of my kingdom. And my counsellors and my nobles sought me out, and I was established in my kingdom, and excellent majesty was added to me. ³⁷Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and extol and honour the King of heaven, whose works *are* all *in* truth, and whose ways *are* just; and those who walk in pride he is able to abase”.

5 Belshazzar the king made a great feast for a thousand of his nobles, and drank

4:34 “*Lifted up my eyes*”—an indication that reason and sanity were returning to the king. Men who will not look to God for help, who will not acknowledge God’s greatness and authority, are spiritually insane, and behave like the greatest of fools (Ps 14:1; Eccl 9:3). Here the king does what God said he must do. See the word “until” in vs 25,32.

4:35 “*Nothing*”—Isa 40:15-17.

“*According to his will*”—Ps 115:3; 135:6; Rom 11:33-36.

“*What are you doing*”—Deut 32:39; Job 9:4; Isa 45:9; Rom 9:20. The king learned what all men should learn. The one true God has absolute, eternal authority over the earth and the universe. If we rebel and live as we please without reference to Him, we will pay the price for such folly and sin.

4:36 This was altogether of God’s grace. The King of heaven is a God of love, mercy and kindness.

4:37 It is a great thing and shows a great work of God in the heart when a man stops praising himself and what he has done, and starts praising God.

“*Just*”—Deut 32:4; Ps 33:4-5.

“*Abase*”—Ps 18:27; Prov 3:34; 16:18; Jam 4:10.

5:1 Belshazzar means “May Bel protect the king”. But Bel (the Babylonian god Marduk) could not and did not do that – vs 30,31. In vs 2,11,18 Nebuchadnezzar is called Belshazzar’s father. As often in the Old Testament the word father here

wine in the presence of the thousand.

²Belshazzar, while he tasted the wine, gave orders to bring the gold and silver vessels which his father Nebuchadnezzar had taken from the temple which was in Jerusalem, so that the king, and his princes, his wives, and his concubines, might drink from them.

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

⁵In the same hour the fingers of a man’s hand appeared and wrote opposite the candlestick on the plaster of the wall of the king’s palace. And the king saw the part of the hand that was writing. ⁶Then the king’s expression changed, and his thoughts so alarmed him that the joints of his hips became slack and his knees knocked together.

⁷The king loudly called out *orders* to bring in the astrologers, the Chaldeans, and the soothsayers. *And* the king spoke and said to the wise *men* of Babylon, “Whoever reads this writing, and tells me its interpretation,

simply means ancestor. Nebuchadnezzar died in 562 BC and was succeeded by his son Evil-Merodach (2 Kings 25:27; Jer 52:31). Belshazzar came to power in Babylon many years later and after a brief reign was slain in 539 BC.

5:2 “*Wine*”—Prov 20:1; Isa 5:12; 21:5; (about Babylon) Jer 51:57.

“*Father*”—or “ancestor”, or “predecessor” (also in verses 11,13,18. See note on Gen 5:6-32).

“*Jerusalem*”—2 Kings 24:13; Jer 52:19.

5:3-4 They were not acting in ignorance of previous events (vs 22,23). They were showing their utter contempt for Jehovah, the God of Israel, the God of heaven, the only God there is. Having rejected the true God the only gods left to praise were those made by men – Ps 115:3-8.

5:5 “*In the same hour*”—God was fed up enough. His patience with these ungodly men was at an end. Compare Gen 6:3; Prov 29:1.

5:6 No doubt Belshazzar had seen the tricks and seeming wonders of his magicians. This was his first encounter with a true sign from heaven.

“*Expression*”—the Hebrew word (translated “countenance” in the KJV) literally means “brightness” or “bright appearance”.

5:7-9 In spite of their repeated failures (2:10-13; 4:7) such people retained their hold on Babylon. But neither threats of death, nor promises of power could get any wisdom out of them, any true interpretation of dreams or events. Such men are as useless today as they were then.

will be clothed in scarlet, and *have* a chain of gold *placed* around his neck, and will become the third ruler in the kingdom”.

⁸So in came all the king’s wise *men*, but they could not read the writing, or reveal its interpretation to the king. ⁹Then King Belshazzar was greatly alarmed, and the expression on his *face* changed, and his nobles were astonished.

¹⁰Now the queen, because of the words of the king and his nobles, came into the banquet hall, *and* the queen spoke and said, “O king, live forever! Do not let your thoughts alarm you, or let your expression change. ¹¹There is a man in your kingdom in whom *is* the spirit of the holy gods; and in the days of your father light and understanding and wisdom, like the wisdom of the gods, was found in him. King Nebuchadnezzar, your father, your father the king, made him the head over the magicians, astrologers, Chaldeans, *and* soothsayers, ¹²because an excellent spirit and knowledge and understanding, the *ability* to interpret dreams and explain riddles and solve difficult problems were found in this Daniel, whom the king named Belteshazzar. Now let Daniel be called, and he will reveal the interpretation”.

¹³Then Daniel was brought into the presence of the king. *And* the king spoke and said to Daniel, “Are you that Daniel who *is one* of those captives from Judah, whom the king my father brought from Judah? ¹⁴I have heard of you, that the spirit of the gods *is* in you, and *that* light and understanding and excellent wisdom are found in you. ¹⁵And now the wise *men*, the astrologers, have been brought into my presence that they might read this writing, and reveal its interpretation to me, but they could not tell the interpretation of the thing. ¹⁶And I have heard of you, that you can give interpretations and solve difficult problems.

5:10 “*Queen*”– the wives of Belshazzar were already present (v 3). This one who came in later was probably either the mother or grandmother of Belshazzar, and so, in this case, queen means “queen mother”.

5:11-13 Evidently Daniel had been shoved aside from the high position he held in the days of Nebuchadnezzar (2:48), and almost forgotten.

5:16 Did Belshazzar think that only promises of great reward would move Daniel to declare the truth? How mistaken he was appears in the next verse. God’s true servants never need to be bribed or paid to declare God’s Word, and they do not do so for money or men’s rewards.

Now if you can read this writing, and make known to me its interpretation, you will be clothed in scarlet, and *have* a chain of gold around your neck, and will become the third ruler in the kingdom”.

¹⁷Then Daniel answered and said in the king’s presence, “Let your gifts be for yourself, and give your rewards to another. Yet I will read the writing to the king, and make known to him the interpretation.

¹⁸“O king, the Most High God gave Nebuchadnezzar your father a kingdom, and majesty, and glory, and honour. ¹⁹And because of the majesty that he gave him, all peoples, nations, and *men of all* languages, trembled and were afraid in his presence. He killed whomever he wished, and kept alive whomever he wished, and he elevated whomever he wished, and put down whomever he wished. ²⁰But when his heart was lifted up and his mind hardened with pride, he was deposed from his kingly throne, and they took his glory from him, ²¹and he was driven from the sons of men, and his heart was made like *that of* the beasts, and his dwelling place *was* with the wild donkeys. They fed him with grass like oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven, until he learned that the Most High God rules in the kingdom of men, and *that* he appoints over it whomever he will.

²²“And you, his son, O Belshazzar, have not humbled your heart, though you knew all this, ²³but have lifted up yourself against the Lord of heaven. And they have brought the vessels of his temple to you, and you, and your nobles, your wives, and your concubines, have drunk wine from them. And you have praised the gods of silver and gold, of bronze, iron, wood, and stone, which do not see or hear or know *anything*; and the God in whose hands your breath *is*, and all your ways, you have not glorified. ²⁴So the part of the hand was sent

5:17 This prophet was not for hire – unlike Balaam and many others since (2 Pet 2:15; 1 Tim 6:5).

5:20 4:29-30.

5:22 “*Son*”– here means “descendant”, or “successor” (see note on Gen 5:6-32).

“*Knew*”– this made Belshazzar’s action in vs 1-4 so much more worthy of condemnation. Compare Heb 10:26-27; 2 Pet 2:21.

5:23 “*Lifted up yourself*”– Jer 48:10; 50:29.

“*In whose hands your breath is*”– see Job 12:10. How insane it is to refuse to honor God Who has absolute authority over our lives now and over our eternal destinies.

from him, and this inscription was written.

²⁵“And this is the inscription that was written: MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN

²⁶“This is the interpretation of the words: MENE: God has numbered your kingdom, and put an end to it.

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

²⁸PERES: Your kingdom is divided and given to the Medes and Persians”.

²⁹Then Belshazzar gave orders, and they clothed Daniel in scarlet, and put a chain of gold around his neck, and made a proclamation concerning him, that he would be the third ruler in the kingdom.

³⁰In that night Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans was slain. ³¹And Darius the Mede took the kingdom, being about sixty-two years old.

6 It pleased Darius to set over the kingdom a hundred and twenty satraps, who would be over the whole kingdom, ²and over these, three presidents, of whom Daniel was one, so that the satraps might be accountable to them,

5:25 These words were in Aramaic, a language of same family as Hebrew. Only consonants in the words would have been written (as with Hebrew). They were written in such a way that the wise men of Babylon could not be sure what words were meant (v 8). Of course they could have no idea what the interpretation of them might be.

“*Upharsin*”— the “u” at the beginning of this word means “and” in Aramaic, and is omitted in some versions. Pharsin or Parsin is a plural form (the “in” ending of the word indicates the plural). The consonants which appeared on the wall were the Aramaic for MN, MN, TKL, PRSN. Vowels were not written in the original. The vowels now found in the Hebrew Old Testament Scriptures were not put there until many centuries had passed after the words were first written down.

5:26 Daniel revealed what the words were and what God meant by them. MN, signifying “mene”, means “numbered”, and the interpretation is that God had counted up the full time He would permit Babylon to be ruled by Belshazzar and the time was over.

5:27 TKL, signifying “tekel”, means “weighed”, but it was not some commodity or unit of money being weighed, but Belshazzar himself. Compare Job 31:6; Ps 62:9; Prov 16:2.

5:28 Daniel gives a double meaning to the three consonants PRS. “Peres” meant “divided”, “Paras” meant “Persia”. Divided here would mean

and the king might not suffer loss. ³Then this Daniel distinguished himself among the presidents and satraps, because an excellent spirit was in him. And the king considered setting him over the whole realm. ⁴Then the presidents and satraps sought to find a matter for an accusation against Daniel concerning the kingdom. but they could find no such matter or fault, because he was faithful, and no error or corruption was found in him. ⁵Then these men said, “We will not find any matter against this Daniel, unless we find it against him concerning the law of his God”.

⁶Then these presidents and satraps came together to the king, and said this to him, “King Darius, live forever! ⁷All the presidents of the kingdom, the governors and the satraps, the counsellors and the commanders, have consulted together about establishing a royal law and making a firm decree, that whoever makes a prayer to any God or man for thirty days, except to you, O king, will be thrown into the den of lions. ⁸Now, O king, establish the decree, and sign the document, so that it cannot be changed, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which is

broken up, ended. The end of the Babylonian empire was at hand, and the Persians would take it over.

5:29 Though the interpretation brought bad news to Belshazzar he did as he said he would in v 16. Daniel accepted the position probably with a view to the influence he might bring to bear on the new rulers of Babylon for the good of the Jews.

5:30 Babylon was a large city with very high and thick walls, and strongly fortified. But it fell to the Medes and Persians just as God said it would (2:39; Isa 13:1,17,18; Jer 50:1-2).

5:31 “*Darius the Mede*”— Cyrus was the chief ruler of the Medo-Persian Empire (1:21; 6:28; 10:1; Ezra 1:1-4; Isa 45:1-4). Darius must have been appointed by Cyrus to rule over Babylon.

6:2 No doubt Daniel came to his notice because of the position he already occupied (5:29).

“*Daniel was one*”— when used in a series (first, second, etc) the Hebrew word means “first”, otherwise it means “one”.

6:4 Envy lifted its poisonous head. See Prov 14:30; 27:4; Matt 27:18; Acts 7:9; 13:45; 17:5; Rom 1:29; 13:13; 1 Cor 3:3; Gal 5:26; Jam 3:14,16.

“*No error or corruption*”— the inability of enemies to find anything wrong in a person’s life is a great testimony for him. See also Mark 14:55; John 18:38; 19:4,6; 1 Pet 3:13-16; 4:14-16.

6:7 “*All*”— a lie. Daniel had not agreed to their plan, and they knew he never would agree to elevate any man to the place of God.

unalterable".⁹ Therefore King Darius signed the document *containing* the decree.

¹⁰ Now when Daniel knew that the document had been signed, he went into his house, and the windows in his room being open toward Jerusalem, he got down on his knees three times a day, and prayed and gave thanks in the presence of his God, just as he did before. ¹¹ Then these men came together, and found Daniel praying and making supplication before his God.

¹² Then they approached the king and spoke concerning the king's decree: "Did you not sign a decree *stating* that every man who requests *anything* from any God or man for thirty days, except from you, O king, will be cast into the den of lions?" The king answered and said, "The statement is true, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which is unalterable".

¹³ Then they answered and said to the king, "That Daniel, who *is one* of those captives from Judah, shows no regard for you, O king, or for the decree that you signed, but makes his prayer three times a day". ¹⁴ Then the king, when he heard *these* words, was deeply distressed, and set *his* heart on Daniel to rescue him; and he made efforts until sunset to rescue him.

¹⁵ Then these men came together to the king, and said to the king, "Know, O king, that the law of the Medes and Persians is this: no decree or statute which the king establishes may be changed".

¹⁶ Then the king gave an order, and they brought Daniel and threw *him* into the den of lions. Now the king spoke and said to Daniel, "Your God whom you serve continually, will rescue you".

¹⁷ And a stone was brought, and laid on the

den's mouth, and the king sealed it with his own signet ring, and with the signet rings of his nobles, so that the purpose concerning Daniel might not be changed. ¹⁸ Then the king went to his palace, and spent the night fasting; nor were instruments of music brought before him; and his sleep left him.

¹⁹ Then the king arose very early in the morning, and hurried to the den of lions. ²⁰ And when he came to the den, he cried out with an anguished voice to Daniel. *And* the king spoke and said to Daniel, "O Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God, whom you serve continually, been able to rescue you from the lions?"

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

²³ Then the king was exceedingly glad for him, and gave orders to take Daniel up out of the den. So Daniel was taken up out of the den, and no injury at all was found on him, because he had trusted in his God.

²⁴ And the king gave orders, and they brought those men who had accused Daniel and threw *them* into the den of lions, them, their children, and their wives. And the lions overpowered them, and broke all their bones in pieces before they got to the bottom of the den.

²⁵ Then King Darius wrote to all the peoples, nations, and *those of all* languages who live on the whole earth: "Peace be multiplied to you. ²⁶ I issue a decree that in every dominion of my kingdom men must tremble and fear before the God of Daniel. "For he *is* the living God,

6:10 Daniel did not close the windows and resort to secret prayer. In his faithfulness to God and courage in the face of danger he was an example not only to those of his own day but to all succeeding generations. If he considered something right to do, he did it regardless of consequences.

"Thanks"—notes on thanksgiving at Lev 7:12-13; Ps 7:17; 50:14-15; 56:12; Eph 5:20.

6:14 "Distressed"—v 18; Mark 6:26. Rulers often bring grief to themselves and others by foolish decisions.

6:16 Verse 20. Another testimony to Daniel's character (v 4).

6:20 "The living God"—a remarkable phrase from the lips of an idolater who had issued the decree of v 7. Was faith in the true God beginning to awaken in his heart?

6:22 Ps 37:3-6.

6:23 "Because he had trusted"—1 Chron 5:20; Ps 22:13, 21; 91:1-2, 9, 10, 13-15; Heb 11:33.

6:24 Ps 37:34; 91:8; 7:15-16; Prov 26:27.

6:25-27 Because of Daniel, some of the mightiest monarchs in ancient times wrote down professions of faith in the greatness of the God of Israel, and sent them everywhere. This is an example of what one man can do who boldly and openly stands for God in all circumstances. King Darius meant well in making this decree (v 26). He was trying to turn his whole kingdom to thoughts of the God of Daniel. It seems he little realized that fear and reverence for God cannot be a matter of a proclamation of a king no matter how powerful. These things must come from the heart made new by God's Spirit.

and continues on forever, and his kingdom will not be destroyed, and his dominion *will be* to the end.

²⁷He delivers and rescues, and he performs signs and wonders in heaven and on earth, *he* who has delivered Daniel from the power of the lions”.

²⁸So this Daniel prospered in the reign of Darius, and in the reign of Cyrus the Persian.

7 In the first year of Belshazzar, king of Babylon, Daniel, on his bed, had a dream and visions *came* to his mind. Then he wrote down the dream, relating the substance of the words.

²Daniel spoke and said, “I saw in my vision at night, and there appeared the four winds of heaven stirring up the great sea.

³And four great beasts came up from the sea, different from one another.

⁴“The first *was* like a lion, and had eagle’s wings. I watched until its wings were plucked off, and it was lifted up from the earth, and

made to stand on *its* feet like a man, and a man’s heart was given to it.

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

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

⁷“After this I was watching in the night visions, and then a fourth beast appeared, dreadful and terrible, and exceedingly strong, and it had great iron teeth. It was devouring and crushing, and trampling what remained with its feet. And it was different from all the beasts that preceded it; and it had ten horns.

⁸“I considered the horns, and then another horn, a little one, appeared, which came up among them. Before it three of the first horns were uprooted. And eyes appeared in this horn like a man’s eyes, and a mouth

6:28 “*In the reign of Darius and in the reign of Cyrus*”– this could possibly be translated “In the reign of Darius, that is, the reign of Cyrus”. See note on 5:31.

7:1 “*First year*”– before the events of chapter 5. Giving dreams and visions was one way God revealed His truth to the prophets (Gen 15:1; Num 12:6).

7:2 The great sea here may indicate the Mediterranean, but it could indicate the nations and people of the world (compare v 17 – “out of the earth”, and Isa 17:12-13; Rev 13:1; 17:1,15).

“*Four winds*”– north, south, east and west – here may possibly symbolize the forces in the whole world that God uses to produce in the world the four kingdoms of this chapter.

7:3-7 The four beasts symbolize four kingdoms (v 17). They seem to be the same four kingdoms king Nebuchadnezzar saw in the form of a statue (chapter 2). In this vision God caused them to appear as wild beasts. By this symbolism something of their true nature is revealed. The following interpretation of the identity of these kingdoms is the one taught by most commentators who believe the book of Daniel. It seems more likely to be the right one than any other interpretation. For a possible reason why God gave different dreams about the same kingdoms see Gen 41:32.

7:4 The first beast symbolizes Nebuchadnezzar’s Babylonian empire. The prophets spoke of Nebuchadnezzar as both a lion and an eagle (Jer 4:7; 48:40; 49:22; 50:17; Ezek 17:3,12).

“*Like a man*”– with Nebuchadnezzar’s experience recorded in chapter 4 and his

acknowledgment of the true God, Babylon lost something of its beastly character.

7:5 The bear symbolizes the empire of the Medes and Persians. The bear was raised up on one side – that is, Persia was the more dominant power in this alliance. The three ribs may symbolize the three principal kingdoms conquered by the Medes and Persians – Lydia, Egypt, and Babylon.

7:6 The leopard symbolizes Alexander’s Greco-Macedonian empire. The leopard is a swifter beast than the others mentioned and the four wings add to the suggestion of very rapid movement. Alexander’s swift conquests were a marvel in the ancient world.

“*Four heads*”– after Alexander’s death what remained of his empire was divided into four parts.

7:7 This beast symbolizes the Roman Empire, the same kingdom symbolized by the legs and feet of the image of chapter 2. Just as in chapter 2 it is the fourth kingdom to arise beginning with Babylon. Other features of its description also suggest its identity with the fourth kingdom of chapter 2.

“*Iron*”– 2:33,40;

“*crushing*”– 2:40;

“*ten*”– 2:42,44; 7:24. These ten horns together with the description of the “little horn” and the judgment of God in the following verses indicate the Roman Empire in its final form at the end of this age (2:40,44). Revelation chapter 17 makes it clear that this beast is associated with the city of Rome (Rev 17:3,9,18), and Rev 17:12 states that the ten kings had not yet arisen in John’s day.

7:8 The ten horns are kings (v 24), so it is safe

speaking big things.

⁹“I watched until thrones were set in place, and the Ancient of Days sat down. His garment was as white as snow, and the hair of his head like pure wool. His throne was like a fiery flame, and its wheels like blazing fire.

¹⁰A stream of fire came out, issuing from his presence. Thousands upon thousands ministered to him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him. The court of judgment was seated, and the books were opened.

¹¹“I watched then because of the sound of the great words which the horn spoke. I watched until the beast was slain, and his body destroyed and given to the blazing flame. ¹²As for the rest of the beasts, they had their dominion taken away, but their lives were prolonged for a season and a time.

to assume that this “little horn” symbolizes a king. Though he is called “little” he is “more imposing” than the others (v 20. The Hebrew means “in sight greater”), and evidently he soon becomes the dominant figure (v 21). “Little” may indicate lowly beginnings or the comparative insignificance of the kingdom from which he comes. The eyes of a man suggest intelligence or cunning. The mouth that speaks boastfully suggests the person described in 2 Thess 2:4 and Rev 13:5-6, the antichrist who will arise at the end of this age and be the ruler of the Roman Empire in its final form.

7:9-14 Here is a picture of judgment. With the brutal and boastful form of the fourth beast man’s kingdoms will come to an end. These verses refer to the same time period as 2:34,44,45.

7:9 “Thrones” – a possible connection with the thrones of Rev 4:4.

“Set in place” – or “cast down”. Strange as it may seem, the Hebrew can mean either (see the note at Ps 14:7). If “cast down” is taken as the meaning, it refers to the thrones of earth’s kings.

“Ancient of Days” – the Hebrew means “one advanced in days” and would, except for the context, mean simply an old person. Here it means God Himself sitting in judgment.

“Wheels” – here are connected with the throne. Compare Ezek 1:15-21,26,27.

7:10 “Fire” – Ps 50:3; 97:3; Isa 29:6; 30:27-28,33; 2 Thess 1:7-8; Heb 12:29.

“Thousands” – Rev 5:11; Jude 14,15.

“Books” – 12:1; Ex 32:32; Ps 69:28; Mal 3:16; Rev 20:12-15.

7:11 God’s judgment will result in the total destruction of the fourth beast and the fiery punishment of the little horn who will head it up (Rev 19:20).

7:12 Before the death of the fourth beast the

¹³“I watched in the night visions, and then one like the Son of man appeared, coming with the clouds of heaven; and he came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought him near before him. ¹⁴And dominion, and glory, and a kingdom were given to him, so that all peoples, nations, and those of all languages, would serve him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which will not pass away, and his kingdom one which will not be destroyed.

¹⁵“I, Daniel, was grieved in my spirit within me, and the visions coming to my mind troubled me. ¹⁶I approached one of those who stood by, and asked him the truth about all this.

So he told me, and made known to me the interpretation of these things:

¹⁷“These great beasts, which are four, are four kings who arise out of the earth. ¹⁸But

first three beasts (vs 4-6) lost their power one by one, but the nations they symbolized were not immediately destroyed.

7:13 “Son of man” – Rev 1:13. This name the Lord Jesus often applied to Himself (Matt 16:13-15; 24:27,30; Luke 19:10. The name appears more than 80 times in the Gospels). The title indicates the Son of God’s true humanity.

“Clouds” – in the Old Testament signified the presence of God (Deut 33:26; Ps 97:2; 104:3; Isa 19:1. In the New Testament see Matt 24:30; 26:64; Mark 13:26; Rev 1:7). The picture here is of the one true God-man, the Lord Jesus Christ, coming into the presence of God the Father. The next verse speaks of all people “serving” (or “worshiping” – the Hebrew word means both) the Son of man. This is a further indication of His true deity.

7:14 This receiving of sovereign power seems to be at the time of the destruction of the 4th beast at the end of this age. It corresponds with the events described in 2:34-35,44. Revelation chapter 5 seems connected with these same events. It is true that the Lord Jesus has already received authority (Matt 28:18) and His kingdom is established in the hearts of His people. But the time to come to earth and reign openly as king has not yet come. He still waits until His enemies are made a footstool for His feet (Acts 2:35; Heb 10:13). When the time comes for man’s kingdoms to be judged and destroyed He will come and openly set up His own kingdom (2:45; Rev 19:11-16).

7:15 “Within me” – the meaning of the Hebrew word translated “body” here in the KJV is doubtful, but may mean “sheath” or “scabbard”.

7:16 “One of those” – an angel.

7:17 “Kings” – they represent the four kingdoms (v 23).

the saints of the Most High will take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom forever, forever and ever.’

¹⁹“Then I wanted to know the truth about the fourth beast, which was different from all the others, exceedingly dreadful, whose teeth were of iron, and whose nails were of bronze, which devoured, crushed, and trampled what remained with its feet; ²⁰and of the ten horns which were on its head, and of the other horn which came up, and before whom three fell, that horn which had eyes and a mouth that spoke big things, whose appearance was more imposing than his associates. ²¹As I watched, the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them, ²²until the Ancient of Days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the Most High, and the time came for the saints to possess the kingdom.

²³“He said this, “The fourth beast will be the fourth kingdom on earth. It will be different from all the kingdoms, and will devour the whole earth, and trample it down, and crush it. ²⁴And the ten horns are ten kings who will arise from this kingdom, and another will arise after them; and he will be different from the earlier ones, and he will subdue three kings. ²⁵And he will speak words against the Most High, and will wear out the saints of the Most High, and plan to change times and laws. And they will be given into his

hands until a time and times and half a time.

²⁶“But the court of judgment will sit, and they will take away his dominion to consume and to destroy it forever. ²⁷And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heavens, will be given to the saints, the people of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom; and all dominions will serve and obey him.’

²⁸“This is the end of the matter. As for me, Daniel, my thoughts greatly troubled me, and the expression on my face changed, but I kept the matter in my heart”.

8 In the third year of the reign of King Belshazzar a vision appeared to me, to me, Daniel, after the one which appeared to me the first time. ²And while I was looking in a vision it came about as I watched that I was at Shushan in the palace, which is in the province of Elam; and I saw that in the vision I was by the river Ulai. ³Then I lifted up my eyes and looked, and a ram appeared there, standing beside the river. It had two horns, and the two horns were long, but one was longer than the other, and the longer one came up last. ⁴I saw the ram pushing westward, and northward, and southward, so that no beast could withstand him, nor was there any that could rescue from his hands, but he did as he pleased and became great.

⁵And as I was considering this, a male goat

7:18 “Saints”– vs 22,27; Matt 5:5; 19:28-29; 25:34; Luke 22:29-30; Rom 4:13; Rev 2:26-27; 3:21; 20:4-6.

7:21 Verse 25; Matt 24:21; Rev 13:7,15.

7:22 The antichrist will persecute and slay God’s saints until the second coming of Christ. The “horn” can defeat the saints, but not their Lord.

7:23 Verse 7.

7:24 “Ten kings”– judging from 2:44 and Rev 17:12 these kings all live at the same time just before the return of Christ. So this vision of the fourth beast cannot refer to the Roman Empire as it was at the first coming of Christ.

7:25 “Speak”– v 8.

“Saints”– Rev 13:7.

“Given into his hands”– a time of great testing for God’s people. See note on testing at Ps 66:10-12.

“Time and times and half a time”– 4:16. In Nebuchadnezzar’s case seven times was a limited brief period, almost certainly seven years. Three and a half times obviously means only half of that. This same time period is referred to as 1260 days and 42 months in Rev 11:2-3; 12:6; 13:5. There is no good reason to think these figures are not to be taken literally. If not taken literally

no man can know how long or how short this time period will be.

7:26 Rev 19:19-21.

7:27 The kingdoms of the world are not said to be destroyed, but handed over to the saints. They will reign with Christ (references at v 18).

“Serve”– the Hebrew word also means “worship”– Ps 22:27; 72:11; 86:9; Zech 14:16-19; Rev 21:24.

8:1 551 BC.

8:2 “Shushan”– (sometimes written Susa) was the chief city of Elam and became the principal capital of the Persian empire.

“Palace”– or it might be translated “citadel”.

“Elam”– a mountainous region east of Babylon in what is now western Iran.

8:3 Verse 20 tells us what this ram symbolizes – the Medo-Persian kingdom. The larger horn represents Persia which was the dominant power in the alliance.

8:4 Medo-Persia became the most powerful kingdom in the world of its day.

8:5 According to v 21 this goat symbolizes Greece. The prominent horn was Alexander the Great, the first king of the Greco-Macedonian Empire.

appeared, coming from the west across the surface of the whole earth, without touching the ground. And the goat *had* a notable horn between its eyes. ⁶And he came to the ram that had *two* horns, which I had seen standing beside the river, and ran at him in his powerful anger. ⁷And I saw him come close to the ram, and he was moved with rage against him, and struck the ram and broke off his two horns. And there was no power in the ram to withstand him, so he threw him down to the ground, and trampled him. And there was no one who could deliver the ram from his hands. ⁸Therefore the male goat became very great. But when he was strong, the great horn was broken, and in its place four notable ones came up toward the four winds of heaven.

⁹And out of one of them a little horn came out, which grew exceedingly great, toward the south and toward the east, and toward the glorious *land*. ¹⁰And it grew up to the host of heaven. And it threw *some* of the host and of the stars to the ground, and trampled on them. ¹¹Yes, it set *itself* up to be as great as the Prince of the host, and it took away the daily *sacrifice* from him, and the place

8:6-7 Alexander crushed the Medo-Persian Empire in the years 334-330 BC, more than 200 years after this prophetic vision.

8:8 “Broken”— refers to the death of Alexander in 323 BC.

“Four”— these represent the four divisions of his empire that came about after Alexander’s death (7:6).

8:9 “Little horn”— there is a difference of opinion among commentators about this “little horn”. Some say he is the same as the “little horn” of 7:8,20-25. Others say he is not, because this one comes out of one of the divisions of the Grecian Empire, that one comes out of the Roman Empire after the Grecian Empire and all of its four divisions had lost their power. Most commentators agree that this “little horn” symbolizes a king who arose in Syria in the 2nd century BC and became a great enemy of the Jews. His name was Antiochus Epiphanes. He may be regarded in some ways as a type of the coming antichrist. See also 11:21-35.

Some students of the Bible are of the opinion that just as Antiochus was king in Syria so the antichrist at the end of this age will arise in Syria. It appears to be true that antichrist will arise from within the boundaries of the old Roman Empire (7:8), and Syria was once a part of that Empire. Others think, however, that the case of Antiochus is brought forward in Daniel to show only something of the character and deeds of

of his sanctuary was thrown down. ¹²And an army was given to it against the daily *sacrifice*, because of transgression, and it threw the truth down to the ground; and it was active and prospered.

¹³Then I heard one holy one speaking, and another holy one said to that *holy one* who had spoken, “How long *is the time* in the vision *concerning* the daily *sacrifice*, and the transgression that causes desolation, causing both the sanctuary and the army to be trampled under foot?”

¹⁴And he said to me, “For two thousand three hundred days. Then the sanctuary will be cleansed”.

¹⁵And it came about when I, Daniel, had seen the vision, and was seeking for the meaning, then someone appeared who looked like a man, standing before me. ¹⁶And I heard a man’s voice between *the banks* of the Ulai, which called out and said, “Gabriel, cause this *man* to understand the vision”.

¹⁷So he came near the place I was standing; and when he came, I was afraid, and prostrated *myself* on my face. But he said to me, “Understand, son of man; for the vision *concerns* the time of the end”.

the coming antichrist and not the country of his origin. This is the opinion of the author of these notes. But we should be careful not to be dogmatic in doubtful matters such as these.

“Glorious land”— or “beautiful land”. The translation “pleasant land” though possible is not likely. The land meant is, of course, Israel (11:16,41; Jer 3:19; Ezek 20:6).

8:10 “Of the host and of the stars”— probably refers to believers in Israel seen as stars in this vision (compare 12:3). Antiochus swept down into Israel, captured Jerusalem, killed many thousands of people, desecrated the temple, and prevented the Jews from offering sacrifices.

8:11 “Prince of the host”— Jehovah of hosts.

8:12 The disaster to the Jews in the days of Antiochus was a result of their sin and rebellion against God.

“Army”— or “host” – the same word in Hebrew.

8:14 “Days”— literally, “Evening, morning”. This may mean 2300 days (compare Gen 1:5,8). This is a little more than six years – the period of time of the persecution by Antiochus (171-164 BC). But some scholars have thought the figure 2300 means 1150 days, this being the number of days it would take for 2300 sacrifices offered both morning and evening. 1150 days was the time between Antiochus’ desecration of the temple and its reconstruction by the Jews (168-165 BC).

8:16 “Gabriel”— 9:21; Luke 1:19,26.

8:17 “Son of man”— Ezek 2:1.

¹⁸Now as he was speaking to me, I was in a deep sleep with my face toward the ground, but he touched me and stood me upright.

¹⁹And he said, "Look, I will cause you to know what will happen at the end of the indignation. For the end *will occur* at the appointed time. ²⁰The ram which you saw which had *two horns represents* the kings of Media and Persia. ²¹And the rough goat is the king of Greece, and the great horn that is between its eyes is the first king. ²²Now as for that one being broken and four arising in its place, four kingdoms will arise out of the nation, but not with its power.

²³"And in the latter time of their kingdom, when the transgressors have reached their full extent, a king of fierce countenance, and understanding dark schemes, will arise. ²⁴And his power will be mighty, but not by his own power; and he will cause appalling destruction, and will prosper, and be active and destroy the mighty and the holy people. ²⁵And through his cunning he will also cause deceit to prosper in his hands. And in his heart he will exalt *himself*, and by peace will destroy many. He will also stand up against the Prince of princes. But he will be broken, but not by human hand.

²⁶"And the vision of the evenings and the mornings which was told *is true*. So seal up the vision, for it *will not take place* for

many days".

²⁷And I, Daniel, fainted, and was sick for days. Afterward I got up, and did the king's work. And I was astonished at the vision, but no one understood *it*.

9 In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, by descent a Mede, who was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans, ²in the first year of his reign, I, Daniel, understood by the books the number of the years according to the word of the LORD to Jeremiah the prophet, that he had specified for the completion of the desolations of Jerusalem, seventy years. ³And I set my face toward the Lord God, to seek *him* by prayer and supplications, with fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes.

⁴And I prayed to the LORD my God, and made my confession, and said, "O Lord, the great and awesome God, who keeps his covenant and mercy for those who love him, and for those who keep his commandments, ⁵we have sinned, and have done evil, and have behaved wickedly, and have rebelled, by departing from your precepts and from your judgments. ⁶We have not listened to your servants the prophets, who spoke in your name to our kings, our princes, and our fathers, and to all the people of the land.

⁷"O Lord, righteousness *belongs* to you,

8:19 In the context of the verses which follow, the time of wrath, the time of the end spoken of here probably means the end of the days covered by the vision of vs 3-14, especially the end of the time of Antiochus. But those days were surely a picture of the days of the antichrist at the end of this age.

8:23-25 Antiochus Epiphanes.

8:24 "*Not by his own power*"—compare 2 Thess 2:9; Rev 13:2.

"*The holy people*"— of Israel.

8:25 "*Prince of princes*"— God Himself.

"*Human hand*"— Antiochus was not killed in battle but by an act of God. Compare 2 Thess 2:8; Rev 19:20.

8:26 "*Seal up*"— preserve it.

8:27 "*No one understood it*"— prophecies of future events were often not understood even by those through whom they came. We should not rashly assume that we know all about them now.

9:1 5:31. This Ahasuerus is not the same as the one of the book of Esther.

"*First year*"— 538 BC.

9:2 Observe that Daniel regarded the writings of Jeremiah as inspired by God and authoritative. Twice Jeremiah spoke of 70 years – Jer 25:11-12

and Jer 29:10. The first invasion of Judah by the Babylonian armies was in 605 BC. The 70 years were nearly over.

9:3 The knowledge that the 70 years were nearing their end inspired Daniel to prayer, not to complacency. Likewise God's promises to us should move us to prayer, should inspire us to claim them, to act on them. Let us learn from Daniel's prayer how to seek God in time of need with humility, confession, repentance, pleading. Observe the great earnestness with which Daniel sought God. He was seeking according to Deut 4:29; Jer 29:12-13.

"*Fasting*"— Jud 20:26; 1 Sam 7:6; Neh 1:4; Esther 4:3; Ps 35:13; 69:10; Acts 14:23; 2 Cor 6:5; 11:27.

"*Sackcloth, and ashes*"— Gen 37:34; 2 Sam 13:19; Esther 4:1-3; Job 16:15; Ps 30:11; Lam 2:10.

9:4 "*Keeps his covenant and mercy*"— Deut 7:9,12; 1 Kings 8:23; 2 Chron 6:14; Neh 1:5; 9:32.

9:5 "*Sinned*"— 1 Kings 8:46-50.

"*We*"— Daniel includes himself (v 20). Compare Ezra 9:5-7; Isa 64:5-9; Jer 3:25.

9:6 2 Kings 18:12; Jer 7:13-15,25,26.

9:7 "*Righteousness*"— Ps 11:7; 119:137; 145:17.

but to us shame of face, as *it is* this day, to the men of Judah, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and to all Israel, *those near*, and *those far away* in all the countries where you have driven them, because of the unfaithfulness they have shown against you. ⁸O Lord, to us *belongs* shame of face, to our kings, to our princes, and to our fathers, because we have sinned against you. ⁹To the Lord our God *belong* mercy and forgiveness, though we have rebelled against him. ¹⁰We have not obeyed the voice of the LORD our God, to walk in his laws, which he set before us through his servants the prophets. ¹¹Yes, all Israel have transgressed your law by departing from you, so as not to obey your voice. Therefore the curse and the oath written in the law of Moses the servant of God have been poured out on us, because we have sinned against him.

¹²“And he has confirmed his words, which he spoke against us and against our judges who judged us, by bringing upon us a great disaster; for under the whole heaven nothing has been done like what was done in Jerusalem. ¹³Just as *it is* written in the law of Moses, this whole disaster has come on us. Yet we have not made our prayer before the LORD our God, that we might turn from our evil deeds and understand your truth. ¹⁴Therefore the LORD kept the disaster in view and brought it on us. For the LORD our God *is* righteous in all the deeds which he does, because we did not obey his voice.

¹⁵“And now, O Lord our God, who brought

your people out of the land of Egypt with a mighty hand, and made yourself a name, as at this day, we have sinned, we have behaved wickedly. ¹⁶O Lord, I beg you, according to all your righteousness, let your anger and your fury be turned away from your city Jerusalem, your holy mountain, because for our sins and for the evil deeds of our fathers, Jerusalem and your people *have become* an *object* of scorn to everyone around us.

¹⁷“Now therefore, O our God, hear the prayer of your servant, and his supplications, and, for the Lord’s sake, cause your face to shine on your sanctuary that is desolate. ¹⁸O my God, bow down your ear, and hear. Open your eyes, and look on our desolations, and the city which is called by your name. For we do not present our supplications before you because of our righteousnesses, but because of your great mercies. ¹⁹O Lord, hear! O Lord, forgive! O Lord, listen and take action! For your own sake, O my God, do not delay. For your city and your people are called by your name”.

²⁰And while I was speaking, and praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my supplication before the LORD my God for the holy mountain of my God, ²¹yes, while I was speaking in prayer, the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the earlier vision, flying swiftly, came and touched me about the time of the evening sacrifice. ²²And he gave *me* information, and talked with me and said, “Daniel, I am now come forth to give you insight and

“Shame”—Ezra 9:6; Ps 44:14-16; Jer 3:25; 31:19.

“Unfaithfulness”—Ps 78:57; Isa 1:4; Jer 3:6-10; Ezek 39:23-24.

9:9 Ex 34:6-7; Ps 4:1; 15:1; 86:5; 103:8,13; Isa 55:7; Jer 33:8; 42:12.

9:10-11 2 Kings 17:13-15; 18:12; 2 Chron 36:15-16; Jer 25:3-4.

9:11 “Curse and”—Lev 26:14,33; Deut 11:26-28; 27:15-26; 28:15,63-67.

9:12 Jer 44:2-6; Lam 1:12; Ezek 5:9.

“Judges who judged us”—or “leaders who led us”—the Hebrew means either.

9:13 “Not made our prayer”—Isa 9:13; 64:7. Observe that truly seeking God’s favor means to turn from sin and give attention to the truth He has revealed.

9:14 Gen 18:25; Neh 9:33; Ps 7:9; 19:9; 129:4; 145:17. It was because God is perfectly just that He brought disaster on them. Justice must punish unrepented and unforsaken sin. Instead of complaining against God everyone should humble himself or herself, and confess that God

is just (2 Chron 12:6).

9:15 Ex 14:26-31.

“Name”—Ex 9:16.

9:16 Daniel continues to place the emphasis where it belongs—on their sin and God’s righteousness.

9:17 “For the Lord’s sake”—1 Sam 12:22; Ps 23:3; 25:11; 31:3; 106:8; Isa 37:35; 43:14,25; Jer 14:7,21; Ezek 20:9; 36:22. God’s reputation was bound up with the people and the land and the city He had chosen.

9:18 “Not...because of our righteousness”—compare Luke 18:9-14. In this book we see that Daniel was a mighty man of God, pure and upright. However, in prayer he did not depend on any of that, but on God’s mercy alone.

9:20 “Holy mountain”—Mount Zion.

9:21 “In prayer”—v 23; 10:12; Isa 65:24; Luke 18:7-8.

“Gabriel”—8:16.

“Evening sacrifice”—Ex 29:39.

9:22 1:17; 7:16; 10:14; Amos 3:7.

understanding. ²³At the beginning of your supplications the command was issued, and I have come to tell you; for you are greatly beloved. Therefore understand the matter, and consider the vision.

²⁴“Seventy ‘weeks’ have been decreed for your people and for your holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for wickedness, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up vision and prophecy, and to anoint the Most Holy.

²⁵“Know therefore and understand that

9:23 “*Greatly beloved*”— the Hebrew verb from which this comes means “to desire”, “take pleasure in”, “delight in”. It is not from the Hebrew word meaning “love”. Heaven viewed Daniel with special regard, took pleasure in him, delighted in him. How could anyone receive a better commendation than this? How much better to be highly esteemed in heaven than on earth. **9:24-27** There has been, and is, much disagreement among scholars about the meaning of these verses. Some words and phrases in Hebrew are obscure in meaning and the interpretation difficult.

9:24 “*Weeks*”— in Hebrew “sevens”. It is clear that one “week” means seven years (4:16; 7:25). God had decreed 70 sevens for the accomplishment of six purposes. These purposes concern the Jews (“your people”) and Jerusalem (“holy city”). But, of course, the results of God’s work there would affect the whole world. Question: Were these six purposes fulfilled at the first coming of Christ and at His death? Or will they be fulfilled sometime in the future? The author of these notes believes that by the sacrifice of Christ the foundation was laid for the fulfillment of these purposes, but that as regards Israel as a nation and Jerusalem not all of them have been fulfilled. For example, Jerusalem remained sinful and in rebellion against God after the death of Christ and was destroyed in 70 AD. It remains in rebellion to this day.

The words “seal up prophecy” probably means here to completely fulfill it and to lay it aside as being no longer necessary (1 Cor 13:8). Certainly not all prophecies concerning the Jews and Jerusalem were fulfilled at the first coming of Christ. Another reason for thinking these six purposes were not all fulfilled at the first coming of Christ is this: 70 sevens are decreed to fulfill these purposes, but Christ was put to death after 69 sevens and before the 70th was finished (vs 25,26).

“*Finish*”— or, possibly, “restrain”.

“*The Most Holy*”— this may refer either to the Most Holy Place in the temple or to the Most Holy One (Christ).

9:25 The decree mentioned here was probably that of King Artaxerxes in 445 BC. See Neh 2:1-9. The temple had been finished and some other

from the issuing of the command to restore and build Jerusalem to the Messiah the Prince *will be* seven ‘weeks’, and sixty-two ‘weeks’. The streets and the wall will be rebuilt, but in troublesome times. ²⁶And after the sixty-two ‘weeks’ Messiah will be cut off, but not for himself. And the people of the ruler who will come will destroy the city and the sanctuary; and its end *will come as with a flood*, and to the end of the war desolations are decreed. ²⁷And he will confirm a covenant with many for one ‘week’, but in the middle of the ‘week’ he

buildings had been constructed in Jerusalem before then. But it could not be said that the city had been rebuilt, for Nehemiah said he wished to go and rebuild it, and he received permission to do so. Some of the troubles he had in rebuilding the city are recorded in Nehemiah chapters 4 and 6. From the time of the decree to rebuild Jerusalem until the ministry and death of the Messiah (the Lord Jesus) 69 sevens were to be completed.

If this time period is calculated according to the lunar year which the Jews used (360 days to a year), it reaches to the last days of Christ on earth. So we have here a prophecy of the time of the death of Christ given more than five centuries before.

9:26 “*Cut off*”— this word was used in the Old Testament for the death penalty. See Ex 31:14; Lev 7:20-21,25,27; 20:2-3.

“*Not for himself*”— this could also be translated “have nothing” or “have no one”. Christ certainly did not die for himself, but for us, and on the cross, in the place of sinners, he was forsaken by both God and men (Matt 26:56; 27:46), and had received nothing that rightly belonged to Him as the Messiah of Israel.

“*The ruler who will come*”— probably means the final ruler of the Roman Empire at the end of this age, the antichrist, the “little horn” of chapter 7. It is important to observe that in this verse that coming ruler is said to belong to the same nation or people who destroyed Jerusalem.

“*Will destroy the city and the sanctuary*”— this probably refers to the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple in 70 AD by the Romans. This took place nearly 40 years after the end of the 69 sevens.

9:27 “*He will confirm a covenant*”— some have taught that this refers to the Messiah mentioned in vs 25,26. But how can one “seven” (almost certainly meaning seven years) have to do with the covenant Christ confirmed to His disciples just before His death (Matt 26:26-29)? That covenant was not for seven years, nor did it take seven years to confirm it.

What seems a better explanation is this: “he” is the coming ruler of the people who destroyed Jerusalem in 70 AD mentioned in the last part of

will put a stop to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations will be *one* who creates desolation, until the end that is decreed is poured out on the desolator”.

10 In the third year of Cyrus, king of Persia, a message was revealed to Daniel, whose name was called Belteshazzar; and the message was true, and *involved* a great conflict. And he understood the message, and had understanding of the vision.

²In those days I, Daniel, was mourning for three full weeks. ³I ate no pleasant food, and no meat or wine came into my mouth, and I did not anoint myself at all, until three whole weeks were over.

⁴And on the twenty-fourth day of the first month, as I was by the side of the great river, the Hiddekel, ⁵I lifted my eyes and looked and saw a man clothed in linen. He had a belt of fine gold of Uphaz around his waist. ⁶And his body *gleamed* like beryl, and his

face *had* the appearance of lightning, and his eyes *shone* like lamps of fire, and in colour his arms and his feet *were* like polished brass, and the sound of his words was like the sound of a multitude.

⁷And I, Daniel, alone saw the vision, for the men who were with me did not see the vision; but great trembling fell on them, so that they ran away to hide themselves. ⁸Therefore I was left alone and saw this great vision; and no strength remained in me, for my vigour changed in me to utter weakness, and I retained no strength. ⁹Yet I heard the sound of his words. And when I heard the sound of his words, I was in a deep sleep on my face, my face toward the ground.

¹⁰And, suddenly, a hand touched me, which placed me on my knees and the palms of my hands. ¹¹And he said to me, “O Daniel, O man greatly beloved, understand the words that I speak to you, and stand upright; for I have now been sent to you”. And when he had spoken this word to me, I stood trembling.

v 26 (the people of the Roman Empire). He has not yet appeared. When he comes to power he will confirm an agreement for seven years with many. The “many” probably refers to the majority of Jews living in Israel at the end of this age. In the middle of the seven, that is, after 3 and 1/2 years he will stop the rituals and worship of the Jews (compare 11:31; 12:11), and will try to make himself the only object of worship in Israel (and, for that matter, throughout the whole world). This will be the “abomination of desolation” that Christ warned about in Matt 24:15, and the act of the “man of lawlessness” Paul described in 2 Thess 2:3-4.

A difficult question which arises from this interpretation is this: Why is the 70th “seven” separated from the 69 “sevens” by a great many centuries (Christ was crucified after the 69th in the first century of this age, but the 70th occurs at the end of the age)? The answer may be that the book of Daniel is not at all concerned with the course of this present age. In chapter 2 four kingdoms are seen – Babylonian, Persian, Grecian, and Roman; then the thought leaps to the end of this age to the second coming of Christ. In chapter 7 the same four kingdoms are seen; then again many centuries are passed over in silence until the antichrist appears and is destroyed at the second coming of Christ. So we should not be surprised at the same way of treating events here in chapter 9.

“*On the wing of abominations will be*” – this may also be translated “will place abominations on a wing of” (the temple).

10:1 Chapters 10-12 form a unit and give things

Daniel saw and heard on the same occasion.

“*Third year of Cyrus*” – Daniel was an aged man. He had been brought to Babylon more than 70 years previously as a youth.

“*True and involved a great conflict*” – or it could be translated “true and concerned an extended conflict”, or possibly “true and burdensome”, or “true and the appointed time is a long way off”, or “true and covers a long period of time”, but the translation in the text above seems best. The problem with translating here is that the Hebrew words have more than one meaning and so the phrase is ambiguous. See note on the Hebrew language at Ps 14:7.

10:2-3 We are not told why Daniel fasted and mourned. Perhaps it was because of the troubles the Jews were having in Jerusalem (see Ezra 4:1-5). Perhaps it was because of the sins of those left in Babylon, or because of their lack of desire to return to Jerusalem to help in the work there.

10:5-7 A vision of a great and glorious person who can hardly have been anyone other than the Son of God. Compare v 6 with Rev 1:13-16. Concerning other appearances of the Son of God as the divine messenger see Gen 16:7.

10:8-9 Rev 1:17; Isa 6:5.

10:10 It does not say that “His” hand touched Daniel. This may refer to the hand of an angel. In the verses which follow, the speaker may be different from the one who appeared in such glory in vs 5-9. But it is not clear whether two beings or only one are with Daniel in this chapter – v 16. Certainly in chapter 12 (which was given at the same time as this) two others are seen (12:5-6).

10:11 “*Greatly beloved*” – note at 9:23.

¹²Then said he to me, “Do not fear, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart to understand, and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard, and I have come because of your words. ¹³But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me for twenty-one days. But, see, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, and I remained there with the kings of Persia. ¹⁴Now I have come to make you understand what will happen to your people in the latter days; for the vision *concerns* days still *future*”.

¹⁵And when he was speaking these words to me, I turned my face to the ground, and was speechless. ¹⁶And, suddenly, *someone* like the sons of men in appearance touched my lips. Then I opened my mouth and spoke and said to the one who was standing in front of me, “O my lord, because of the vision sorrows have overwhelmed me, and I have no strength left. ¹⁷For how can this servant of my lord talk with you my lord? For as for me, now no strength remains in me, no breath is left in me”.

¹⁸Then *the one who had* the appearance of a man came again and touched me and strengthened me, ¹⁹and said, “O man greatly beloved, do not fear. Peace be with you. Be strong, yes, be strong”. And when

he had spoken to me, I was strengthened, and said, “Let my lord speak, for you have strengthened me”.

²⁰Then he said, “Do you know why I have come to you? And now I will return to fight with the prince of Persia. And when I have gone away, see, the prince of Greece will come. ²¹But I will tell you what is inscribed in the true writings. (And *there is* no one who upholds me against these *powers*, except Michael your prince.

11 And in the first year of Darius the Mede, I stood up to support and strengthen him.)

²“And now I will tell you this truth: See, there will still be three kings in Persia who arise, and the fourth will be far richer than *them* all; and by his strength, through his riches, he will stir up everyone against the realm of Greece. ³And a mighty king will arise, who will rule with great authority, and act according to his will. ⁴And when he arises, his kingdom will be broken and divided toward the four winds of heaven, but not among his posterity, or according to the authority with which he ruled. For his kingdom will be uprooted for others instead of those.

⁵“And the king of the south will be strong, *along* with *one* of his princes who will gain

10:12 “*From the first day*”— Isa 30:19; 58:9; 65:24. Here is great encouragement for all those who, like Daniel, humble themselves and seek an understanding of God’s revelation. God delights to hear the prayers of such people.

10:13 This verse reveals something of what goes on in the unseen realm of spirits. It also gives a reason why the answer to a prayer may be delayed.

“*Prince*”— he is not the same as the king of Persia in the same verse. The king was Cyrus. Who was this “prince” (ruler)? It is said that he resisted God’s angelic messenger, so he was hostile to God. The angel Michael is also called a “prince”. It seems clear that the prince of the Persian kingdom was a fallen angel, an evil spirit who was trying to influence King Cyrus against the Jews. Verse 20 speaks of the “prince” of Greece. In v 21 Michael is called “your” (that is, the people of Israel’s) prince.

Evidently there is a war going on in the unseen world of spirits between those sent to do God’s will and those who oppose them. On angels see note at Gen 16:7. For other references to fallen angels see Isa 24:21; 1 Cor 8:5; 10:20; Eph 6:12; Rev 12:7. What goes on among the nations of earth is partly a result of spiritual battles fought in the unseen world – and praying believers have a part in it all. If our prayers are not immediately

answered we should not think no answer will come, but continue on in faith.

10:14 “*Your people*”— the Jewish nation. The rest of the book of Daniel, in large part, is concerned with what will happen to that people.

10:20 “*Prince of Greece*”— the most powerful of the evil spirits Satan had appointed to fulfill his evil will in that nation.

10:21 “*The true writings*”— apparently a heavenly record of those things that God had decreed should happen. This truth is revealed in some detail in the next two chapters.

11:1 “*Darius*”— 5:31.

11:2 From here to 12:4, beginning with Daniel’s day and going on to the end of this age, there is a remarkable glimpse into the future. The prophecies contained in verses 2-36 were fulfilled over a period of 362 years.

“*Three kings*”— Cambyses, Pseudo-Smerdis, Darius Hystaspis. The fourth was Xerxes (the Ahasuerus of the book of Esther). He launched an invasion against Greece in 480 BC which failed.

11:3 Alexander the Great (336-323 B.C.).

11:4 “*Four*”— 7:4-7; 8:8. After Alexander’s death his empire broke into four parts.

11:5-34 Gives us the struggle for predominance between two of the four parts of Alexander’s

power over him, and have dominion. His dominion *will be* a great dominion. ⁶And at the end of *some* years they will join together, for the daughter of the king of the south will come to the king of the north to reach an agreement. But she will not retain the power of authority, and neither he nor his authority will stand. But she will be given up with those who brought her *there*, and her father, and the one who strengthened her at *that* time.

⁷“But out of a branch of her roots *someone* will arise in his place. He will come with an army, and enter the fortress of the king of the north, and deal with them, and prevail, ⁸and will also carry away as captives into Egypt their gods, with their princes, *and* with their valuable articles of silver and of gold. And he will continue *more* years than the king of the north. ⁹So the king of the north will come to *his* kingdom, but will return to his own land. ¹⁰But his sons will be stirred up, and shall assemble a great many forces, and *they* will certainly come *like* an overflowing flood passing through, coming back then, stirred up *to wage war as far* as his fortress.

¹¹“And the king of the south will be moved with rage, and come out and fight with him, with the king of the north, who will muster a great multitude. But the multitude will be given into the hand of his *enemy*. ¹²And when the *king of the south* has taken away the multitude, his heart will be lifted up *with pride*, and he will overthrow *many* tens of thousands, but he will not remain in a position of strength *by it*. ¹³For the king of the north will return, having mustered a

multitude greater than the former one. He will certainly come after some years with a great army and much equipment.

¹⁴“And in those times many will stand up against the king of the south. Also the violent ones among your people will exalt themselves to fulfil the vision; but they will fall. ¹⁵So the king of the north will come, and build up a siege mound, and take the most fortified cities; and the arms of the south will not withstand *him*; nor *will* his chosen people; nor *will there be any* strength for withstanding. ¹⁶But the one who comes against him will do according to his own will, and no one will be able to stand before him. And he will stand in the glorious land, with destruction in his hands. ¹⁷He will also set his face to come with the power of his whole kingdom, and upright ones with him. He will do this. And he will give him the daughter of women, to ruin it. but she will not stand on *his side*, or be for him. ¹⁸After this he will turn his face to the coastlands, and take many. But a prince will put a stop to the scorn shown by him, and will make his scorn turn back on him. ¹⁹Then he will turn his face toward the fortress of his own land, but he will stumble and fall, and not be found.

²⁰“Then in his place will arise someone who imposes taxes *for* the glory of the kingdom. But within a few days he will be destroyed, but not in anger, or in battle.

²¹“And in his place a contemptible person will arise. They will not give royal honours to him, but he will come in peaceably, and obtain the kingdom by intrigue. ²²And with the

former empire. The king of the south is the ruler of Egypt. The king of the north is the ruler of Syria and lands allied with Syria. A very few commentators have taught that all these verses relate to the end of this present age. The great majority have taught that they give a succession of rulers of those two kingdoms over a period of roughly 160 years, beginning in 323 BC. This is the view given in these notes. The first king of the south was Ptolemy Soter, a Macedonian. The first king of the north was Seleucus. The land of Israel was directly between the kings of the north and the kings of the south.

11:6 “*Daughter*”– Berenice.

“*King of North*”– Antiochus II.

11:7 “*One from her family line*”– this was Ptolemy III.

“*King of the north*”– Seleucus II.

11:10 “*His sons*”– Seleucus III and Antiochus III.

11:11 “*King of the south*”– Ptolemy IV defeated Antiochus III in a battle at Raphia.

11:14 “*South*”– Ptolemy V.

“*Among your people*”– Jews who joined forces with the king of the north.

11:16 “*One who comes*”– Antiochus III.

11:17 “*Daughter*”– Cleopatra I. The Hebrew of this verse is very obscure and difficult to translate.

11:18 “*Prince*”– a Roman leader named Scipio Asiaticus.

11:19 Antiochus III perished in 187 BC in Elymais.

11:20 “*In his place*”– Seleucus IV.

11:21 Antiochus IV, also known as Antiochus Epiphanes. See 8:9-13,23-25. He seized power when the rightful heir to the throne was very young.

11:22-24 At first Antiochus IV was very successful in battle. But he was very treacherous toward those who had made agreements with him.

power of a flood they will be swept away from before him, and will be shattered, yes, also the prince of the covenant. ²³And after an alliance *has been made* with him he will act deceitfully. For he will come up, and become strong with a small *number of people*. ²⁴He will enter peaceably into even the richest places of the province, and will do what neither his fathers or grandfathers ever did; he will distribute among them the plunder, and loot, and riches. Yes, and he will devise his plots against the strongholds, but *only* for a time.

²⁵“And he will stir up his power and his courage against the king of the south with a great army; and the king of the south will be stirred up to battle with a very great and mighty army. But he will not stand, for they will devise plots against him. ²⁶Yes, those who eat of the food he provides will destroy him, and his army will be swept away, and many will fall down slain. ²⁷And both these kings’ hearts *will be* set on evil, and they will speak lies at the same table. But it will not succeed, for the end *will still come* at the appointed time. ²⁸Then he will return to his land with great riches. And his heart *will be set* against the holy covenant, and he will take action, and return to his own land.

11:25 “*King of the south*”– Ptolemy VI.

11:26 “*Army*”– Ptolemy’s army.

11:27 “*These kings*”– Antiochus IV and Ptolemy VI.

11:28 “*Against the holy covenant*”– Antiochus hated Israel. In 169 BC he came to Jerusalem, killed many Jews, and plundered the temple.

11:29 “*Appointed time*”– the time appointed by God to fulfill His purposes through Antiochus.

11:30 “*Ships*”– Roman ships commanded by Papilius Laenas.

“*Those who forsake*”– apostate Jews who sided with Antiochus (v 32).

“*Holy covenant*”– v 28.

11:31 In 168 BC Antiochus sent troops to take possession of Jerusalem. They attacked people on the Sabbath day and took captive many women and children. The temple was taken and Antiochus ordered the Jews to stop all sacrifices. He had an altar to the Greek god Zeus erected in the temple court on the altar of burnt offering. This was the state of things for more than three years. This abomination of desolation was not the same of which Jesus spoke in Matt 24:15, but was a type, a picture of it. See Dan 9:27; 12:11.

11:32-33 The Jews were divided. Some wicked and ambitious persons came under the influence of Antiochus. Other Jews were strong to resist him, taught the people the truth, and endured great persecution at his hands. They were Jews who knew God and were willing to suffer for

²⁹“At the appointed time he will return, and come to the south. But this latter *time* will not be like the former. ³⁰For the ships of Kittim will come against him; therefore he will be disheartened, and return in fury against the holy covenant, and take action. Yes, he will return and be favorable toward those who forsake the holy covenant.

³¹“And forces of his will arise and defile the sanctuary stronghold, and will take away the daily *sacrifice*; and they will put *there* the abomination that causes desolation. ³²And he will corrupt by flattery those who act wickedly against the covenant, but the people who know their God will be strong, and do *exploits*.

³³“And those among the people who understand will instruct many. Yet *for many days* they will fall by the sword, and by flame, by captivity, and by plundering. ³⁴Now when they fall, they will be aided by a little help, but many will join them who are not sincere. ³⁵And *some* of those who have understanding will fall, to refine them, and to purify *them*, and to make *them* white, until the time of the end. For *it will still come* at the appointed time.

³⁶“And the king will do just as he wishes.

Him. Compare Heb 11:36-38.

11:34 “*Not sincere*”– in every age there will be hypocrites who say one thing and do another.

11:35 “*Fall*”– the very “falling” of the wise will be, in God’s hands, a means to their further refinement and purification. The Hebrew word here translated “fall” means to stumble from lack of strength. The truly wise through stumbling in their weakness will learn to seek and find their strength in God. Then there will be no stumbling (Isa 40:31). On refining see Ps 66:10-12.

“*The time of the end*”– perhaps the end of that particular time of persecution. Or the phrase may point suddenly to the end of this age. The verses which follow actually do so – v 40-45. As in chapters 2,7, and 9 many centuries are passed over in silence and the end of this age is brought into view.

11:36-45 The king here is not Antiochus Epiphanes whose doings are described in vs 21-32. There is no evidence that he magnified himself above every god and showed no regard for the gods of his fathers (vs 36,37). And the death of Antiochus was different from that described in verses 44,45. Antiochus was but a type or picture of this one who will come at the “time of the end” (v 40).

The language of v 40 is obscure in Hebrew, so it is difficult to know whether the king of v 36 is attacked by both the king of the south and the king of the north, or whether he himself is

And he will exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god, and will speak extraordinary things against the God of gods, and will be successful until the *time of indignation* is fulfilled. For what is decreed will be done. ³⁷He will not have regard for the God of his fathers, or for the *one* women desire, or have regard for any god; for he will exalt himself above all. ³⁸But in their place he will honour a god of fortresses, will honour a god unknown to his fathers, with gold, and silver, and with precious stones, and desirable things. ³⁹Thus he will do in the strongest fortresses with a strange god. He will give great honour to those who acknowledge *him*, and he will cause them to rule over many, and will divide up the land for gain.

⁴⁰“And at the time of the end the king of the south will push at him, and the king of the north will come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, and with horsemen, and with many ships; and he will invade countries, and overwhelm *them* and pass on through.

⁴¹“He will also invade the glorious land,

the king of the north who attacks the king of the south. If he is the king of the north, vs 41-45 refer to him. If he is not the king of the north they do not refer to him. Since the language is obscure we should be careful not to be dogmatic and make statements which cannot be proved. The fulfillment will make the prophecy clear. **11:36** 7:8; 2 Thess 2:3-4; Rev 13:5-6. Here is the essence of sin – self-will and self-exaltation. It began with Adam’s one act of self-will in the garden of Eden. It will end with one man of utter self-will ruling the earth and the vast majority of people bowing down to him.

“*Time of indignation*”– Isa 26:20-21; 30:27-28; 34:2; Jer 30:4-8; Dan 8:19; 12:1; Joel 3:12-16; Matt 24:21-22.

11:37 “*God*”– or, perhaps “*gods*”. This future king may possibly be either an apostate Christian or an apostate Jew.

11:38 “*God of fortresses*”– he will honor the person who helps him to be victorious in war. This will be the only “*god*” for whom he will show respect. Though the language of verses 36,37 suggests this king may be the “*man of lawlessness*” of 2 Thess 2:3-4 and the first beast of Revelation chapter 13, he may be the second beast of Revelation 13 (Rev 13:4,11-17). We should not be dogmatic about this.

11:39 “*The land*”– Israel. No other country could be designated here simply “*the land*”.

11:40-45 The king of the north is in view here. He may or may not be the same as the king of v 36.

11:40 He will make many conquests (vs

and many *countries* will be overthrown. But these will escape from his hand: Edom, and Moab, and the leaders of the children of Ammon. ⁴²He will also stretch out his hand over *other* countries, and the land of Egypt will not escape. ⁴³But he will have power over the treasures of gold and silver, and over all the desirable things of Egypt, and the Libyans and the Ethiopians *will be* at his feet. ⁴⁴But news from the east and from the north will trouble him, therefore he will set out with great fury to destroy, and do away with many. ⁴⁵And he will pitch his palace tents between the seas in the glorious holy mountain. Yet he will come to his end, and no one will help him.

12 “And at that time Michael, the great prince who stands *guard* over the children of your people, will arise. And there will be a time of trouble such as never occurred since there was a nation until that same time. And at that time your people will be delivered, everyone who is found written in the book. ²And many of those

41-43). Compare Rev 6:2; 13:4,7.

11:41 “*Glorious land*”– Israel (v 16; 8:9; Ezek 20:6).

“*Edom*”, “*Moab*”, “*Ammon*”– countries east and southeast of Israel.

11:44 “*East*”– and “*north*” – compare Ezek 38:1-9; Rev 16:12-16. At the end of this age the armies of all earth’s great nations will be marching toward Israel (Joel 3:9-16; Zech 12:2-3; 14:2-4).

11:45 “*Between the seas*”– the Mediterranean and the Dead Sea.

“*Holy mountain*”– Ps 48:1-2.

“*To his end*”– 2 Thess 2:8; Rev 19:19-20.

12:1 “*Michael*”– 10:13.

“*Your people*”– Daniel’s people were Jews. They will be at the center of that time of trouble called in the New Testament “*great tribulation*” (Matt 24:21; Rev 7:14). But this does not mean that non-Jews will not suffer at that time. It will be a time of trouble for some from every tribe and nation (Rev 7:9; 12:17; 13:7-8; 20:4).

“*Trouble*”– a time of trouble is coming which will be worse than any the world has ever seen. The Lord Jesus warned about it in Matt 24:21. Verses 29,30 of the same chapter make it clear that He was speaking of the end of this age.

“*Delivered*”– Isa 45:17; Jer 30:7-9; Zech 12:8-9; 14:3; Rom 11:26-27; Rev 7:1-8; 12:13-17. This probably speaks of the physical deliverance from danger of those Jews whom God has chosen. It is not the same as the resurrection spoken of in the next verse.

“*Book*”– Ex 32:32; Luke 10:20; Phil 4:3; Rev 20:12.

who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame *and* everlasting contempt. ³And those who are wise will shine like the brightness of the *heavenly* expanse, and those who turn many to righteousness like the stars forever and ever. ⁴But you, Daniel, shut away the words, and seal the book, until the time of the end. Many will travel here and there, and knowledge will increase”.

⁵Then I, Daniel, looked, and saw two others standing there, the one on this side of the bank of the river, and the other on that side of the bank of the river. ⁶And *one* said to the man dressed in linen, who *was* above the waters of the river, “How long *will it be* to the end of these wonders?”

⁷And I heard the man dressed in linen *speak*, the one above the waters of the river, as he held up his right hand and his

12:2 “*Will awake*”—refers to the resurrection of the dead. Does this teach a general resurrection of the saved and unsaved at the same time? Nothing is said about the saved and unsaved dead rising at the same time – only the fact is given that both classes of people will rise. Rev 20:4-6 seems to teach clearly that there will be two resurrections separated by a thousand years. The prophets of the Old Testament spoke of events separated by long periods of time without indicating that those events would be so separated. There are other examples of this in the book of Daniel. See the closing remarks in the note on 9:27.

12:3 “*Wise*”— v 10; 11:33; Job 28:28; Ps 111:10; Prov 1:7; 3:35. There are not two separate classes of people here. The wise are those who will lead many to righteousness – that is one way their true wisdom is revealed. See Prov 11:30. By their teaching and righteous living many will be turned to the God of righteousness and be made righteous themselves. This verse gives only a hint of the eternal reward and glory which await those who live such a wise and righteous life.

12:4 “*Seal...until the time of the end*”— 8:26. The book of Daniel has now been preserved for more than 2,500 years.

12:5-6 A continuation of the vision which begins at 10:4-5. The question in v 6 seems to be, not how long will it be before those events are fulfilled? but, how long will it take to fulfill them once they began to take place? The events meant seem to be those of 11:35—12:1.

12:7 This taking of an oath indicates the man is referring to a very solemn and important matter. Compare Deut 32:40-41; Ps 110:4; Heb 6:13-18; Rev 10:5-6.

“*Time, times, and half a time*”— see 7:25; 9:27; Rev 12:14.

“*Holy people*”— the nation of Israel is called a

left hand to heaven and swore by him who lives forever that *it will be* for a time, times, and half a *time*, and *that* when the power of the holy people has been fully shattered, all these *things* will be finished.

⁸And I heard, but I did not understand. Then I said, “My Lord, what *will be* the result of these *things*?”

⁹And he said, “Go your way, Daniel, for the words *are* closed up and sealed until the time of the end. ¹⁰Many will be purified, and made white, and refined. But the wicked will behave wickedly, and none of the wicked will understand, but the wise will understand.

¹¹“And from the time *that* the daily *sacrifice* is taken away, and the abomination that causes desolation is set up, *there will be* one thousand two hundred and ninety days.

¹²Blessed *is* the one who waits, and comes to the *end* of the thousand three hundred

holy people because God separated it from all other nations to be His special treasure (Ex 19:6; Deut 7:6). Now believers in Christ are called a holy nation (1 Pet 2:9-10). Who is meant here in Daniel? Israel and the holy land have been at the heart of the prophecy to this point (10:14; 11:30-31-34,45; 12:1). Here the meaning seems to be that the end will come when the nation of Israel is crushed and brought to its lowest condition.

12:8 He did not understand the meaning of the words in v 7. He wanted to know the end result of the things of the prophecy given to him.

12:9-10 It was not necessary for Daniel to understand anything further, and the Lord did not attempt to satisfy his curiosity. The heart of the prophecy related to the time of the end. Then the wise would be able to know all they would need to know. As the events unfold they will be able to understand what is happening. As for the wicked, their wickedness will blind them, and they will worship the antichrist.

12:10 “*Refined*”— 11:35; Zech 13:9; Mal 3:2-4. See Ps 66:10-12.

12:11 The abolishing of sacrifices and the appearance of the abomination of desolation are referred to also in 9:27; and 11:31. This verse does not say what will happen at the end of 1290 days. The persecutions by antichrist are said to be a time, times, and half a time (1260 days, 42 months). We are not told here what happens during these 30 extra days.

12:12 The meaning of this too is now hidden from us. Those who reach the end of those days will understand the blessedness of it. If we do not understand now it should not trouble us. Let us remember in the study of prophecy an important matter or two – living a life of love for God and man is far more important than understanding

and thirty-five days.

¹³“But you, go *your* way until the end. For

you will rest, and rise *to receive* your allotted portion at the end of the days”.

all prophecy (1 Cor 13:2), and knowledge has a tendency to puff us up but love to build us up (1 Cor 8:1). But if we ask God in faith He will give us all the understanding we need to live lives of integrity and faithfulness in whatever time we may live. And to faithful believers who

are living when prophecies of the end time at last have their fulfillment He will surely give all the understanding they will need to have.

12:13 “*Rest*”– here means death. “*Rise*”– v 2.

“*Allotted portion*”– Matt 5:5; Acts 20:32; Rom 8:17; Eph 1:11; Col 1:12; 3:24; Heb 9:15.

