

STEPHEN NELSON HASKELL

THE STORY OF
DANIEL
THE PROPHET



The Story of Daniel the Prophet

Stephen Haskell

Table of Contents

[Preface](#)

[Introduction](#)

[A Word to the Reader](#)

[Chapter 1... Daniel and His Fellows Tested](#)

[Chapter 2... A Controversy Between Truth and Error](#)

[Chapter 3... True Freedom In Worship](#)

[Chapter 4... The Most High Ruleth](#)

[Chapter 5... The Last Years of the Babylonian Kingdom](#)

[Chapter 6... The Handwriting of the Wall](#)

[Chapter 7... Daniel in the Lion's Den](#)

[Chapter 8... The Judgment Scene](#)

[Chapter 9... The Eighth Chapter of Daniel](#)

[Chapter 10... The History of the Jews](#)

[Chapter 11... The Sanctuary](#)

[Chapter 12... Introduction to the Last Vision](#)

[Chapter 13... The History of the Decrees](#)

[Chapter 14... The History of Greece](#)

[Chapter 15... The Fourth Kingdom](#)

[Chapter 16... The Mystery of Iniquity](#)

[Chapter 17... The Work of the Mystery of Iniquity](#)

[Chapter 18... The Closing Scene](#)

Preface

THE world is flooded with fictitious reading of all grades. The unreal is presented in the most fascinating style, while too often the living truths taken from God's Word are presented in a heavy, somber style. The Bible is the most interesting of all books. It is adapted to every mind. In the STORY OF DANIEL THE PROPHET, a few of the interesting facts in regard to God's dealing with His people have been gathered into a simple narrative.

The book is the result of much prayerful study. It is sent forth with an earnest prayer, that in the hands of parents it may be the means of making the study of the Bible in the family a blessing to young and old; and that the teacher in the schoolroom may see precious rays of light flashing from its pages, pointing both teacher and pupil to the Great Divine Teacher.

God grant that as it falls into the hands of the careless and unbelieving, they may be influenced to read, and as they read, may behold the beauty of our God, and be led to worship toward His holy temple.

We trust that while its simplicity will attract many who might not be inclined to read a deep argumentative treatise, the most studious will find food for thought, and thus become better acquainted with the character of our Heavenly Father. Those who wish to enter into a more comprehensive study, will find that the marginal references open up many veins of precious ore in the deep mines of God's Word.

We earnestly pray that even the skeptic may not cast it aside; but that he may give it a careful reading, and while tracing the fulfilled prophecy in the history of the world, learn to prize the Word of God.

Throughout the entire book the special providence of God over those who are faithful to Him is brought out in clear contrast to the fate of those who ignore His guiding hand. The truth is the same, whether in the history of nations or individuals.

As the STORY OF DANIEL THE PROPHET goes forth on its mission of love for the Great Master, may it prove a blessing to all classes, young and old, rich and poor, learned and unlearned.

S. N. H.

Introduction

THE prophecies of the Bible are like rare diamonds lying hidden in the solitude of the mine. The practiced eye of the prospector discovers the gems, and intuitively reads their value; and the skillful hand of the lapidary brings out their many-faced beauties in all their sparkling glory. Every facet shines like the sun. One can not exhaust a diamond; neither can one exhaust the prophecies. New facets remain to be polished, to add their brilliant reflection to the whole. In the prophecies as many features appear as there are different temperaments that men bring to their study.

The prophecy of Daniel is no exception. This book has lessons for all classes. Because the magnitude of the field of his vision is unlimited in extent, it may be studied from points of view which no man can number. The historian feasts upon his records. The chronologist delights in calculating his periods. The lover of the Messiah rejoices in the contemplation of the times and events that led to His first advent, and demonstrated His Messiahship. and the friend of God traces with pleasure the providential movements by which the course of events has been controlled, and men been put up, and cast down, just according as they have been instruments in God's hand to carry out His beneficent designs and purposes.

There are lessons in these respects for those who take an interest in such themes; but above, and greater than all, are the lessons to be drawn from Daniel's character, — his integrity, his devotion to duty, and his steadfastness in adhering to true principles, in the face of the greatest apparent danger, and in opposition to the dictates of worldly policy. These principles glow with undimmed luster through all his career, and have encouraged, comforted, and strengthened the servants of God in all ages.

Much has been written on the book of Daniel, and much more might be written, as long as principles of divine truth, and noble examples of adherence to them, form interesting and profitable themes of study. In the present work, lessons from this latter source have been especially drawn out. These will be found wonderful subjects for study, and many remarkable thoughts are presented on these points in the following pages. These are lessons which can be laid to heart with the most satisfactory and lasting profit. One who desires to master the philosophy of an acceptable Christian

life, and the means and methods by which a close connection with God may be maintained, can find no more competent text- book than is furnished in the record of the experiences of the prophet Daniel. Do you wish to acquire a vivid sense of God's care for His people, and His constant remembrance of them, and the easy means He makes use of to accomplish His ends, you will find the subject fully exploited in the prophecy of Daniel.

Example is a powerful factor in the promotion of the Christian life. "Be ye followers of me," says Paul, "even as I also am of Christ." 1 Cor. 11:1. He exhorts Timothy to be an "example of the believers." 1 Tim. 4:12. What higher standard can be raised to attain unto, than is shown in Daniel's relation to God? for it is said of him that he was a "man greatly beloved." Such was the emphatic testimony borne from God by the angel Gabriel to Daniel, coming as he did immediately from the court of heaven and the presence of God.

The occasion on which these words were first spoken, shows what relation the man thus addressed maintained to God, and God to him. It was when the prophet, burdened with anxiety in regard to a previous vision which he had not understood, appealed to God for help. He had been seeking the Lord, by earnest prayer, to learn the meaning of it. An angel had been strictly enjoined to make Daniel understand all the matter. And now when the angel came to complete his mission, and make the prophet understand the vision, which he had been prevented by Daniel's illness from doing in its completeness in his previous interview (Dan. 8:27), he says: "O Daniel, I am now come forth to give thee skill and understanding. At the beginning of thy supplication the commandment came forth, and I am come to show thee; for thou art greatly beloved; therefore understand the matter and consider the vision." Dan. 9:22, 23. The angel asserts that one reason, perhaps the leading reason, why he had now come to give him skill and understanding, was that he was a man "greatly beloved."

Think of the circumstances of this case. God was imparting truth to make known to the world what was to come thereafter. He was making use of one of His servants for this purpose. The process was temporarily interrupted. But Daniel had fixed his heart on understanding all that Godhead to reveal; and he lifted up his petition to the only source from which help could come. Now mark the answer borne from the throne of the universe, by the hand of a mighty angel: "At the beginning of thy supplication, the commandment came forth." The commandment referred to, was the commandment, or instruction,

to Gabriel, to go down to the earth, to this servant of the Lord, and clear up all doubts and uncertainty in his mind in regard to the truth on which he was perplexed.

Will anyone now raise the query, Does the Lord hear prayer? Is He attentive to the wants of His people? In view of this narrative how can we harbor the least vestige of doubt? No sooner does Daniel's prayer begin to ascend to the throne than instruction comes forth from God to Gabriel, to go down to the earth and complete his mission to the prophet. With alacrity he obeys. And the prophet says of him, "Being caused to fly swiftly." From the beginning of Daniel's prayer, as recorded in Daniel 9, to that point in the prayer when Gabriel appeared upon the scene (verse 20), could not have been over three minutes and a half, at the ordinary rate of speech. In this brief space of time the prophet's prayer ascended to heaven, it was heard, decision made, and the answer came. There is no loitering in heaven. The first whisper of want by the child of God, is instantly lodged upon the throne. The command to answer is given, and the return messenger is at once by the side of the prophet, with the response of comfort and joy. No earthly "rapid transit" can equal this. What a glimpse does this give us into the inner courts of the heavenly world! What a view of the divine telegraphy there employed, and waiting at the court's command! What assurance, encouragement, and comfort must these great facts impart to every true and trusting servant in the vineyard of the Lord!

In this story of Daniel, not only is one such incident given, but a whole series of them is woven together in this tapestry of truth. They begin with Daniel as prime minister in the court of the kingdom of Babylon — Babylon, the city of renown, clothed with such magnificence that inspiration has seen fit to describe it as the head of gold on the world's great representative image. Daniel 2. The Lord by the prophet has called Babylon "the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency." Isa. 13:19. In that city there were beauty, glory, and excellency combined in most striking and prolific forms.

Imagine a space (we must imagine it; for no such spot existed before, and has not existed since); — imagine this space containing two hundred and twenty-five square miles, situated in a fertile plain, wrought up by expert cultivation to the superb production of ornamental trees and shrubs; fragrant flowers, and substantial fruits, till the whole became a veritable paradise, as the garden of the Lord; imagine this space laid out in a perfect square,

watered by the magnificent Euphrates, and surrounded by a wall eighty-seven feet thick and three hundred and fifty feet high, fifteen miles in length on each side, and the great square of the whole area of the city, subdivided into lesser squares by twenty-five streets running from each side of the city, parallel with the opposite walls, and at right angles with each other, and adorned with palaces, porticoes, columns, colonnades, towers, monuments, and hanging gardens, arrayed with everything that art could embellish or money and labor produce, to make a spot pleasant to the sight and touch and every bodily sense.

Such was Babylon, glowing in the light of the Syrian sun, and fanned by the blandest zephyrs that ever blew, when Daniel entered to serve the long period of seventy years in captivity. But he was a captive only to political power. He served the Lord, and was spiritually free. From this point through all the personal experience of the prophet, and on through the scenes opened to his mind by the spirit of prophecy, the divine narrative runs. These scenes and experiences are woven together in this book into one connected whole, and the spiritual and practical lessons to be drawn from them are hung like banners of light all along the way.

No one can rise from the study of the prophecies without the conviction being deeply graven upon his heart that the end of the Christian course well repays all the toil and effort of the heavenly journey. The words of the hymn well voice this sentiment:—p. 11, .

“Then let us hope; ’tis not in vain; Though moistened by our grief, the soil;
The harvest brings us joy for pain; The rest repays the weary toil. For they
shall reap who sow in tears, Rich gladness through eternal years.”

After his long service and all his trying cares, the word to Daniel was, “Thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at the end of the days.” The outcome of the Christian service of the disciples in the latter days is expressed in a similar strain by the apostle John from henceforth: yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them.” Rev. 14:13. To Daniel, “Go thou thy way till the end be: for thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at the end of the days.” To John: “Surely I come quickly;” and “my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.” Rev. 22:20, 21. Rest follows the labor; and the end will come. Then follows the remainder of the promise: “Thou shalt stand in thy lot.” The rest is undisturbed, and the lot is sure.

What is the lot in which Daniel and all of like character are at last to stand? Who can describe it? for who can conceive of it? It must embrace the condition and all the circumstances of the people of God, when gloriously redeemed. And in reference to this, Paul utters the following living words: "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things that God hath prepared for them that love Him." 1 Cor. 2:9. That is, the boldest flight of the imagination, the most intense conception of the unseen glories of the heavenly world, have never formed, and can not form, in the human mind any tangible idea of what God has prepared and has in store for His people. "But God," the apostle continues, "hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit." Yes, the Spirit has revealed these things to those who are filled with that Spirit, and have received the Holy Ghost.

We are happy to give, by way of introduction, this word of commendation to this book, which has new phases for every earnest and spiritually minded reader; and which never grows old.

U. S. Battle Creek, Mich., April, 1901.

A Word to the Reader

IT has been with much prayer, and a deep sense of the importance of the subject, that these pages have been prepared. We are living in the closing scenes of this world's history. The Lord's own testimony, in the closing words of the book of Daniel, "Go thou thy way till the end be: for thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at the end of the days," should arrest the attention of all who are interested in preparing for the coming of Christ. Then the manner in which the Saviour Himself makes mention of the prophecies of Daniel should not be lightly passed by. He says, "When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand)." Daniel the prophet is the only one in the Bible to whom the Lord addressed, through the angel Gabriel, the words, "Thou art greatly beloved." Such words to any living mortal in the flesh are worthy of consideration by the devout.

We invite a careful perusal of the contents of this work, with the prayer that the Lord will impress minds by His Holy Spirit. The book is not designed to arouse controversy or awaken discussion upon theories, but to tell the truth as it is in Jesus Christ. From the beginning to the end we have tried to tell the story of the prophet and his writings in a brief, simple style, to create a religious interest in the things of God. To the Bible student we have suggested thoughts, both in the story and by the side references, that will encourage study in the home and in the school. Yours in the blessed hope, S. N. H.

1. Daniel and His Fellows Tested

ALTHOUGH Daniel lived twenty-five hundred years ago, he is a latter-day prophet. His character should be studied, for its development reveals the secret of God's preparation of those who will welcome Christ at His appearing. His prophecies should be understood, for in them is the key which unlocks history to the end of time. The Saviour himself bore witness to this. When the disciples asked, "What shall be the sign of Thy coming, and of the end of the world?" He said, "When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the prophet... whoso readeth, let him understand." In this we have the divine permission to read and understand the prophecies of Daniel. These prophecies are intended, therefore, to warn a people of the coming of Christ.

True, it was once a sealed book, for the prophet was told to shut up the words, and seal the book "to the time of the end," "for at the time of the end shall be the vision." And again, "The words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end." But the time of the end has come. It began in 1798, and though "none of the wicked shall understand," yet "the wise shall understand." With the book of Daniel in hand, and a heart open to hear the voice of God, man may come in touch with the Father of light. "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith."

Daniel begins the book with the simple statement that in the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, 607 B.C., Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, came unto Jerusalem and besieged it; that in the siege, Jehoiakim was given by the Lord into the hands of Nebuchadnezzar, but allowed to remain on the throne in Jerusalem, yet Nebuchadnezzar carried with him to Babylon, as tribute, a part of the vessels of the house of God, and, as hostages, some of the members of the royal household.

This act, with similar ones which followed in swift succession, was but the culmination of events which began years before. In order to appreciate this climax, it is essential that we study the causes which led to it. Since the captivity of Judah is an object lesson to people of the last generation, it is doubly necessary that we trace the relationship between certain causes and results.

God had an object in calling the Jewish nation to separate themselves from other nations of the world. It was that his people might stand before the world as light-bearers, as a beacon set on a hill, Israel was to send beams of light to the world. The plan of education made known to Israel through her prophets was the means of keeping that light burning. When this God-given plan was neglected, the light, as a candle deprived of the life-giving oxygen, burned dim. Then it was that the nation was pressed upon all sides by the foe. There is a Hebrew maxim which says that "Jerusalem was destroyed because the education of her children was neglected." The prophecies of Daniel and the connected history prove the truth of this maxim. It may be added that the Jews were restored to Jerusalem as the result of the proper education of a few Hebrew boys.

Just about one hundred years before the days of Daniel, Hezekiah was king of Judah. After a reign of thirteen years, he was on his deathbed, but he pleaded with God to lengthen his life. This was done, and fifteen years were added. On the king's recovery he was visited by ambassadors from Babylon, to whom he showed all his treasures. They came to hear of the mighty God, that could heal the sick: but he showed them only earthly treasure. He lost the opportunity to give them of the treasure of heaven. Then came a message from God by the hand of the prophet Isaiah, saying, "Behold, the days shall come, that all that is in thine house ... shall be carried into Babylon; nothing shall be left." He was also at the same time told that his descendants should be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon.

Here was portrayed the future captivity of the Hebrew race. The prophecy was placed on record, and repeated again and again by Jewish mothers as they taught their children. "Must my son be a captive in the court of a heathen king? Then let me so train him that he will be true to the God of his fathers." There were other mothers who lightly let pass the thought, and the history of their sons' lives is recorded for our instruction.

Three years after his life had been saved, a son was born to Hezekiah. Notwithstanding the recent prophecy, Hezekiah and his wife, Hephzibah, failed to teach the young Manasseh in the way of truth. He was but twelve years of age when he came to the throne, but if he had been trained in the fear of God, he would not have chosen the worship of the heathen.

The youthful Christ at the same age settled not only His own destiny, but the destiny of the universe. When twelve years of age, standing by the temple in

Jerusalem, His future work opened before Him, and He accepted His appointed mission. Why? Because Mary, His mother, had taught Him that heart service to God was His highest pleasure. Manasseh decided in favor of the heathen deities; did evil in sight of God; and “for the sins of Manasseh” came the captivity of Judah.

At the age of twelve years, Christ made a decision which saved the world; at the same age Manasseh chose a course which brought ruin to the nation. In the training of your child are you Hephzibah or Mary?

The long reign of Manasseh passed, and the prophecy sent to Hezekiah was not yet fulfilled. Men began to wonder if it ever would come to pass. “Since the fathers fell asleep,” said they, “all things continue as they were.”

It was in the days of Josiah, the grandson of Manasseh, that Jeremiah prophesied. Through this prophet, God pleaded with Jerusalem to return to Him. “Lo, I will bring a nation upon you from afar, O house of Israel, saith the Lord: it is a mighty nation, it is an ancient nation, a nation whose language thou knowest not.” Thus was Babylon described, and Jerusalem’s impending doom portrayed.

Josiah was spared the sight of the complete destruction of Jerusalem because of the reforms which he attempted. In his days there was kept by Judah, and by Israel also, the greatest Passover feast in the history of the nation. “Because thine heart was tender and thou hast humbled thyself before the Lord, ... behold I will gather thee unto thy fathers ... and thine eyes shall not see all the evil which I will bring upon this place.” In a peculiar way God gave Josiah an opportunity to avert the impending calamity. It was not yet too late to change the course of events. This opportunity was through the gifts of his sons. Josiah had three sons and one grandson, who were in turn seated on the throne at Jerusalem. Each, because of wrong training in youth, refused to take God at His word, and failing, hastened the final overthrow.

The three sons were Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, and Zedekiah. The grandson was Jehoiachin, who preceded his uncle, Zedekiah. The fate of each is a solemn warning to people living at the end of time. He who might have been the light of heathen nations was swallowed up by Egyptian darkness. Jehoiakim, the second, who, properly trained, would have been so charged with the power of God that the heathen king would either have united his forces with the king of Judah, or, opposing, would have been smitten as by a thunder-

bolt, failing, paid tribute to Babylon. His capital was entered. Treasures from the house of God were ruthlessly torn from their place and dedicated to heathen worship. Youth — bright, promising youth — were taken from the royal family to serve the king of Babylon. Jehoiakim beheld this, but was powerless to interfere. His life was gone; he was not connected with the throne of God. His mother and his father made a fatal mistake, for they did not give him the training which God had commanded them to give. Neither did he profit by these mistakes, but educated his son in courtly manners and in the philosophy of the world; and as a result his son Jehoiachin languished nearly thirty-seven years in a prison in Babylon. This was another lamp without the oil; another soul without the heavenly food; another son improperly trained to add to the disgrace of Judah. “Jerusalem was destroyed, because the education of her children was neglected.”

Zedekiah, the third son of Josiah, had still an opportunity to save Jerusalem. Part of the treasures of this city were already in Babylon. Daniel and his companions had been in the court seventeen or eighteen years when Jeremiah came to Zedekiah with the words: “If thou wilt assuredly go forth unto the king of Babylon’s princes, then thy soul shall live, and this city shall not be burned with fire. . . . Obey, I beseech thee: so it shall be well unto thee, and thy soul shall live.” In this time of peril, how did Zedekiah act? Did he deliver himself unto the Babylonians? God had commanded it; the city would have been saved by it; his own soul would have been saved. Zedekiah pleaded a most human excuse, saying, “I am afraid.”

In these three sons is revealed the weakness, the cowardice, the wickedness, and the final ruin of those trained for the service of the world and not for the service of God.

Living at the same time and in the same city with the princes already named, were others which the Scripture mentions by name. These were Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, children of Judah of the royal family — relatives of Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, and Zedekiah.

At the first siege of Jerusalem, 607 B.C., Daniel was not over eighteen years of age; about the age of the prince Zedekiah, who afterward ruled in Jerusalem. Daniel had a godly mother who knew of the prophecy concerning the destruction of their city. She repeated to her son the words of God, that some day Hebrew children must stand in the heathen court at Babylon. Carefully did this mother teach her son to read the parchment scrolls of the prophets. The history of Israel was studied; the story of Nadab and Abihu

was told and retold. The effect of strong drink was impressed upon the mind. The laws of his own being were studied. He knew that excess in eating and drinking would so dull the mind that the voice of God could not be heard.

The songs which these Hebrew children sang told the story of God's dealings with His people. It was in this manner that the image of God was engraven on their hearts. This education was not gained in the schools of the time, for they had departed from the plan of God; but holy mothers, living close to the everlasting Father, led their children by precept and example, by word and song, to form characters that would stand the test.

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.

It was the age when most of the young men in the capital of Judah were wild and reckless. They were excusing themselves because of their youth. But God chose from their midst certain ones whom He could trust in a foreign land. Daniel and his three companions were snatched from the shelter of home, and with others were placed under the charge of Ashpenaz, master of the eunuchs in Babylon.

Now can be seen the results of the home training. Pure food, clean thoughts, and physical exercise placed them on the list of "children in whom was no blemish, but well-favored." But what of their intellectual ability? They had not been educated in the schools of Jerusalem, much less in those of Babylon. Was there not great danger that they lacked in the sciences or the essential branches? On examination, these four passed as "skillful in all wisdom, and cunning in knowledge, and understanding science," and able to learn a difficult foreign language. God had fulfilled His promise in these children of the home school.

But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat nor with the wine which he drank. Dan. 1:8.

The crucial moment came when "the king appointed them a daily provision of the king's meat and of the wine which he drank." Daniel had unbounded confidence in the principles of temperance, not alone because he knew them to be scientifically true, but because they were God-given, and, in his case, had been put into practice. His education had a Biblical foundation, and he knew that it was in harmony with true science. It was a life and death question; but the principles were divine, and he would obey, walk by faith,

and leave the results with his Maker. "Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat, nor with the wine which he drank." The language of the prince of the eunuchs shows that there were other Hebrew youth who were selected, who did not make this request: "for," said the prince of the eunuchs, "why should he [the king] see your faces worse liking than the children which are of your sort?"

Daniel and his companions, after considering their dangerous and difficult position, took this matter to the Lord in prayer, and decided to be true to principle. Much was involved in this decision. If they sat at the king's table, they would partake of food which had been consecrated to idols; and the Hebrew children would thus dishonor God, and ruin their own characters by removing the safeguard of temperance, and allowing themselves to be influenced by corrupt associations. Even at the cost of appearing singular, they decided not to sit at the table of the king. They might have reasoned that at the king's command they were compelled to partake of the food at the royal table which had been dedicated to an idol. But they determined not to implicate themselves with heathenism, and not to dishonor the principles of their national religion and their God. Surrounded by perils, after having made a most determined effort to resist temptation, they must trust the results with God.

With true courage and Christian courtesy, Daniel said to the officers who had charge over them: "Prove thy servants, I beseech thee, ten days; and let them give us pulse to eat, and water to drink. Then let our countenance be looked upon before thee, and the countenances of the children that eat the portion of the king's meat; and as thou seest, deal with thy servants." It was no experiment with them; for they foresaw the result.

The officer hesitated. He feared that the rigid abstinence they proposed would have an unfavorable effect upon their personal appearance, and that, in consequence, they would lose favor with the king. The Hebrew children explained to the officer the effect of food upon the body; that overeating and the use of rich foods benumbs the sensibilities, unfitting mind and body for hard, stern labor. They urged most earnestly that they be allowed the simple diet, and begged that they be given a ten-days' trial, that they might demonstrate by their own physical appearance at the end of that time the advantages of plain, nutritious food. The request was granted: for they had obtained favor with God and with men. It was an act of faith; there was no feeling of envy toward those who were eating of the king's meat. The minds

of the four were filled with thoughts of love and peace, and they actually grew during those ten days.

God approved of their course; for, “at the end of ten days, their countenances appeared fairer and fatter in flesh than all the children which did eat the portion of the king’s meat.” The clear sparkle of the eye, the ruddy, healthy glow of the countenance, bespoke physical soundness and moral purity. The Hebrew captives were thereafter allowed to have their chosen food.

The pulse and water which they then desired was not always the exclusive diet of Daniel, for on another occasion in his later life he said: “I ate no pleasant bread, neither came flesh nor wine in my mouth.” But when entering upon the king’s of study and becoming connected with the royal court, he and his brethren voluntarily chose this simple, nourishing food. Likewise, when brought face to face with any difficult problem, or when desiring especially to know the mind of God, the record speaks of Daniel’s abstinence from flesh food, wine, and food which tempt the appetite.

The character of Daniel is referred to by Ezekiel, who was a contemporaneous prophet, as representing those who will live just before the second coming of Christ. People will be called to pass through experiences which require the keenest spiritual eyesight; therefore God asks them to give up all things which will in any way check the flow of the Holy Spirit through the mind. Herein lies the reason for strict adherence to the principles of health reform. Daniel and his companions gained the victory on the point of appetite. This was the avenue, and the only one, through which Satan was permitted to tempt Adam; and, had Adam proved true in the garden of Eden, and not eaten of the forbidden fruit, sin and suffering would never have been known. Appetite was the open door through which came all the results of sin, which, for six thousand years, have been so manifest in the human family.

As Christ entered upon the work of His ministry, He began where Adam fell. The first temptation in the wilderness was on the point of appetite. Here the Saviour bridged the gulf which sin had made. He redeemed the whole family of Adam, and wrought out a victory for the benefit of all who are thus tempted. In the last days God will prove His people as He proved Daniel. A voluntary self-control of appetite lies at the foundation of every reform.

It means much to be true to God. It embraces health reform. It means that the diet must be simple; it calls for the exercise of temperance in all things. Too great a variety of food taken at the same meal is highly injurious; and yet, how often this is forgotten. Mind and body are to be preserved in the best condition of health. Only those who have been trained in the fear and knowledge of God, and who are true to principle, are fitted to bear responsibilities in the closing work of the gospel.

Every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. 1 Cor. 9:25.

Daniel and his companions passed through a strange school in which to become fitted for lives of sobriety, industry, and faithfulness. Surrounded with courtly grandeur, hypocrisy, and paganism, they exercised self-denial, and sought to acquit themselves so creditably that the Israelites, their down-trodden people, might be honored, and that God's name might be glorified.

These children had the Lord as their educator. They were connected with the Fountainhead of wisdom, by the golden channel, the Holy Spirit. They kept continually in a living connection with God, walking with Him as did Enoch. They were determined to gain a true education; and, in consequence of their copartnership with the divine nature, they became in every sense complete men in Christ Jesus. While diligently applying themselves to gain a knowledge of the languages and sciences, they also received light direct from Heaven's throne, and read God's mysteries for future ages.

When at the end of three years, King Nebuchadnezzar tested the ability and acquirements of the royal princes whom he had been educating from other nations, none were found equal to the Hebrew youth, Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah. They surpassed their associates tenfold in their keen apprehension, their choice and correct language, and their extensive and varied knowledge. The vigor and strength of their mental powers were unimpaired. Hence they stood before the king. "And in all matters of wisdom and understanding, that the king inquired of them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and astrologers that were in all his realm."

These youth respected their own manhood, and their intrusted talents had not been enfeebled or perverted by indulgence of appetite. The good they wished to accomplish was ever in mind. They were faithful in the little things. God honored them; for they honored Him. God always honors

adherence to principle. Among all the most promising youth gathered from the lands subdued by Nebuchadnezzar, the Hebrew captives stood unrivaled. Their regard for nature's laws and the God of nature was revealed in the erect form, the elastic step, the fair countenance, the untainted breath, the undimmed senses. It was not by chance that they attained to their marvelous wisdom. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." The foundation of the highest education is religious principle. Faith had been developed in childhood; and when these youth had to act for themselves, they depended upon God for strength and efficiency in their labors, and they were richly rewarded.

Where are the parents who to-day are teaching their children to control appetite, and to look to God as the Source of all wisdom? Our youth are daily meeting allurements to gratify appetite. Every form of indulgence is made easy and inviting, especially in our large cities. Those who steadfastly refuse to defile themselves will be rewarded as was Daniel. The youth of today may bear a weighty testimony in favor of true temperance.

These principles, cherished, would fit young men who are rooted and grounded in the Scriptures, to enter worldly universities, and while taking a course of study, disseminate the truths of the gospel, and at the end of their course, come forth unsullied. There were consecrated youth among the Waldenses who entered worldly universities, and, while gaining their education, scattered the seeds of the Reformation. The papal authorities could not, by the most careful inquiries, find out who had introduced the so-called heresy; and yet the work had been accomplished, bearing fruit in the conversion of many who became leaders in the cause of Protestantism. Were these principles practiced, more young persons could be trusted as missionaries in responsible positions and in institutions of learning. Many will yet be called to stand before judges and kings. How are the children being educated?

The last words of the first chapter of Daniel are truly significant: "Daniel continued even unto the first year of King Cyrus." In other words, Daniel lived all the days of the Babylonian captivity, — over seventy years, — and had the pleasure of meeting that Cyrus whose name the prophet Isaiah had mentioned nearly two hundred years before he issued his wonderful decree for the deliverance of God's people.

2. A Controversy Between Truth and Error

“IN the second year of Nebuchadnezzar, Nebuchadnezzar dreamed dreams.” It is thus that we are introduced to the monarch of the greatest of earthly kingdoms in his own home. In chapter one, Nebuchadnezzar is referred to as the one who besieged Jerusalem; in chapter two he is spoken of as the ruler of every nation on earth. The kingdom which Nebuchadnezzar brought to the height of its glory can be traced in Bible history to its foundation. The history of Babylon is the story of the great controversy between Christ and Satan, begun in heaven, continued on earth, and which will end only when the stone cut out from the mountain without hands shall fill the whole earth.

Satan’s accusation against God is that the Father is unjust. “But give me a fair chance,” argued Lucifer, “and I can establish a kingdom on earth which will excel in glory the kingdom of God in heaven.” He was granted the privilege of making a trial. The plains of Shinar were chosen; the people whom God told to fill the whole earth were gathered into a city. Babylon grew, and its mighty walls, three hundred and fifty feet in height and eighty-seven feet thick, with the massive gates of brass, were designed to imitate the strength of the city of God. At the time of the founding of Babylon, Satan was still meeting with the council of the representatives of worlds, which was held at the gates of heaven. It was his design to counterfeit the plans of God. The earthly city was patterned after the heavenly. The Euphrates flowed through it as did the river of God through Paradise. The government was a absolute monarchy; a man occupied the throne, and as it grew, every knee of earth was caused to bow to its king. No power was tolerated above that of the monarch. Tyranny took the place of love. This is always true when man is exalted above God. It was to such a kingdom that Nebuchadnezzar fell heir, and the beauty and power of the kingdom were increased by him in every possible way, until it was spoken of by the Lord as “Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees’ excellency.”

Yea: have ye never read, Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise. Matt. 21:16.

Not only the power, but the wisdom also, of Nebuchadnezzar was

exceedingly great. The king favored education, and during his reign Babylon was the educational center of the world. Every art and science was taught in the schools of Babylon. The wisdom of the ancients was made known to the students who sat at the feet of her magicians and wise men. They reveled in the study of astronomy and the higher mathematics. There were linguists who could teach the language of every nation.

The king himself was highly educated, for it was he who examined the students on the completion of their course. Babylon was proud of her educational system; she trusted to it for salvation, but it was the cause of her ruin. “Thy wisdom and thy knowledge, it hath caused thee to turn away.” God Himself speaks, saying: “Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?” In the Babylonian court this was exemplified. Nebuchadnezzar and his counselors, -the wise men, astrologers, and soothsayers, — on one side represented the education of the world. Daniel, a youth, not over twenty-one years of age, a Hebrew and a slave, was chosen by God to confound the wisdom of the mighty.

The Scriptures give the story in language that can be readily understood. But why did God give Nebuchadnezzar a dream? How could the God of heaven reveal truth to this heathen king? Doubtless He could not during his waking moments; but Nebuchadnezzar had contemplated the glory of his kingdom, and fell asleep with a longing desire to know its future. He knew that life was short. Soon he must die; what would the future be? It was God’s opportunity, and while those eyes were closed to earthly things; while self was lost — dead, as it were — the future history of the world was spread before Nebuchadnezzar. On awaking, he found no language to express his thoughts. He who was acquainted with the world’s wisdom knew not the language of heaven. This he had never been taught. He tried to think what he had seen, but as his eye again rested on the glory about him, the vision faded away. Earthly things drew a veil over the things of God, and while he knew he had seen something, he knew not what it was.

The king demanded an interpretation, but the wisest men of the kingdom answered: There is not a man upon the earth that can show the king’s matter. ... There is none other that can show it before the king, except the gods, whose dwelling is not with flesh.” That the pretended knowledge of the wise men of Babylon might be exposed, the Lord had in His providence given Nebuchadnezzar this dream, and then allowed him to forget the details, while causing him to retain a vivid impression of the vision. The

king was angered because the wise men requested him to tell them the dream, saying, "I know of certainty that ye would gain the time, because ye see the thing has gone from me." That is, they would be able to agree on some interpretation if the king could tell the dream. The king then threatened that if they failed to tell the dream, they should all be destroyed. The wise men urged that the requirement was most unreasonable; but the more they argued, the more furious the king became, and in his anger he finally "commanded to destroy all the wise men of Babylon."

This decree was made in the second year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign. He had ruled two years conjointly with his father, Nabopolassar, and two years alone; so Daniel and his fellows were serving their first year as wise men in the court of Babylon, having finished their three-years' course in the schools. They were therefore sought out by Arioch, the king's captain, to be slain. Daniel asked: "Why is the decree so hasty from the king?" Then Arioch made the thing known to Daniel. Daniel alone had the courage to venture into the presence of the king, at the peril of his life, to beg that he might be granted time to show the dream and the interpretation. The request was granted.

"There are in the providence of God particular periods when we must arise in response to the call of God." The supreme moment had come to Daniel. For this very moment God had been giving him a preparation. From his birth every detail of his life had been pointing forward to this time, although he knew it not. His early education was such that at this moment when death stared him in the face, he would look up to God and claim His promise. Although Daniel when examined by Nebuchadnezzar had been accounted ten times wiser than his fellow students, he had not as yet been classed with the astrologers and wise men of Chaldea. Probably his youth and inexperience delayed such recognition. But God chooses the weak things of earth to confound the mighty, because the foolishness of God is wiser than men.

Four Hebrew youth bowed in prayer, and that night "was the secret revealed unto Daniel." How could God talk with Daniel? — Because the Spirit of the Lord is with them that fear Him. Daniel's education had acquainted him with the voice of God. He was in the habit of seeing eternal things with the eye of faith. God showed Daniel the same things which He had revealed to Nebuchadnezzar, but which were hidden from him by the glamour of worldliness.

The song of praise which rose from the lips of Daniel when the vision came,

shows how self-forgetful he was, and how close his heart was knit to the heart of God.

The schools of Babylon developed pride, love of pleasure, haughtiness, and self-esteem. They fostered an aristocracy, and cultivated the spirit of oppression and slavery. Contrast with this the native simplicity, the courtesy, gentleness, and self-forgetfulness of the child of God as he enters the court and is introduced by Arioch.

Years before this, when Egypt was the educational center of the world, God taught Egyptian senators by the mouth of Joseph, a boy no older than Daniel. When Babylon had outgrown the counsels of Heaven, another Hebrew meets the men of the schools. "Can not the wise men show the secret unto the king?"

Before Daniel was the king in his glory; around him stood the very teachers with whom he had studied three years. At this time were exemplified the words of the psalmist: "I have more understanding than all my teachers; for Thy testimonies are my meditation. I understand more than the ancients, because I keep Thy precepts."

Nebuchadnezzar was careworn from loss of sleep, and in great anxiety because the dream troubled him; but Daniel was calm, conscious of his connection with God, the King of kings. Daniel now had opportunity to exalt his own wisdom, but he chose rather to give all the glory to God. He plainly told the king that it was beyond the power of man to reveal the dream or give the interpretation; "but there is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets, and maketh known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days." The king's mind was directed to God alone.

There is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets, and maketh known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days. Dan. 2:28.

In one night God revealed the history of over twenty-five hundred years, and what the human historian requires volumes to explain is given in fifteen verses. The Scriptures explain themselves, and in divine records every word is well chosen and put in the proper setting.

In the image revealed to Nebuchadnezzar, the glory of the Babylonian kingdom is recognized by the Lord, and represented by the head of gold. But while giving due credit to the present state of things, the spirit of prophecy

with equal candor points out to the self-exalted king the weakness of the institutions in which he has placed his trust, and the inability of the Babylonian learning to save from impending destruction.

“Come down, and sit in the dust, O virgin daughter of Babylon, sit on the ground; there is no throne, O daughter of the Chaldeans; for thou shalt no more be called tender and delicate. Take the millstones and grind meal.” From being master of all, Babylon must become the most humble servant. Because these people had disregarded the God of heaven, and had said, “None seeth me,” evil would come from unknown sources, and Babylon should be cut off. She would make a desperate effort to save herself by turning to her educators and wise men. “Let now the astrologers, the stargazers, the monthly prognosticators, stand up and save thee from these things. ... Behold, they shall be as stubble.” When the trial came, there was nothing in all the realms of Babylon that could save it.

“The strength of nations and of individuals is not found in the opportunities and facilities that appear to make them invincible; it is not found in their boasted greatness. That which alone can make them great or strong is the power and purpose of God. They themselves, by their attitude toward His purpose, decide their own destiny.”

Nebuchadnezzar’s kingdom lasted only until the reign of his grandson, when the second or inferior nation represented by the breast and arms of silver came upon the stage of action.

Medo-Persia took the place of Babylon; Grecia followed the Medo-Persian kingdom, while Rome, the fourth kingdom, was to be broken into ten parts, which were to remain until the end of time. In the days of these kings the God of heaven would set up a kingdom which would never be destroyed nor conquered by any other people; it would break in pieces and consume all former kingdoms, and stand forever.

The image was a comprehensive outline of the world’s history. The “glory of kingdoms” formed the head of gold, all following kingdoms the head of gold, all following kingdoms deteriorated from Babylon as shown by the grade of metals forming the image. First gold, then silver, brass, and iron. In the latter part of the world’s history, a marked change was revealed by the iron being mixed with miry clay. There were to be no more universal kingdoms ruled by men; when the power of the fourth kingdom was broken, it was to remain divided until the end. In place of one kingdom there would

be several.

The clay mixed with iron also denoted the union of church and state. This combination is peculiar to the latter part of the world's history, to the feet and toes of the image.

Religion was the basis of government in the heathen nations; there could be no separation of the church and the state. When apostate Christianity united with the state, each remained in a sense distinct as the miry clay is separate from iron. The union continues until the stone smites the image upon the feet. The very fact that the "stone was cut out of the mountain without hands," shows that the last kingdoms on earth will not be overthrown by an earthly power, but that the God of heaven will bring upon them final destruction by giving them to the burning flames.

The king listened to every sentence Daniel uttered when telling the dream, and recognized it as the vision which had troubled him. When Daniel gave the interpretation, he was certain that he could accept it as a true prophecy from the God of heaven. The vision had deeply affected the king, and when the meaning was given, he fell upon his face before Daniel in wonder and humility, and said, "Of a truth it is, that your God is a God of gods, and a Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets, seeing thou couldst reveal this secret."

The youth of twenty-one was made ruler over all the provinces of Babylon, and chief governor over all the wise men of the kingdom. Daniel's companions were also given high positions in the government. It should be remembered that this dream as recorded in the second chapter of Daniel was given to Nebuchadnezzar in the second year of his sole reign. It was still during the lifetime of Jehoiakim, king of Judah.

It was in the providence of God that His people should carry the light of truth to all the heathen nations. What they failed to do in the time of peace, they must do in time of trouble. Babylon was the ruling power of the world; it was the educational center. The Jews were comparatively a small people; they lost the power of God by neglecting the education of their children; they failed to let their light shine. From their midst God took a few who were trained in the fear of the Lord, placed them in the heathen court, brought them into favor with the ruler of the world, so making Himself known to the heathen king. He did even more: He revealed Himself to the king, and used these children of His to prove that the wisdom of God excelled the wisdom

of the Chaldeans. Having exalted true education, He put Daniel and his companions at the head of that vast empire that the knowledge of the God of heaven might go to the ends of the earth.

Many are called, but few are chosen. Matt. 22:14.

Having acknowledged the God of Daniel, Nebuchadnezzar was in a position to save Jerusalem instead of destroying it. It was because of these experiences that God could send word by His prophet a few years later that, should Zedekiah, king of Judah, deliver himself to the king of Babylon, Jerusalem would not be burned, and the world would receive the light of the gospel.

The history of the city of Babylon is put on record because it is God's object lesson to the world to-day. The book of Revelation, which is the complement of the book of Daniel, frequently uses the name Babylon, applying it to the modern churches. The relation of the Jews to the Babylon of Nebuchadnezzar is the same as that sustained by the remnant church, the true Israel, to the churches which, having known the truth, have rejected it.

The sins of ancient Babylon will be repeated to-day. Her educational system is the one now generally accepted; her government, with its excessive taxes, its exaltation of the rich and the oppression of the poor, its pride, arrogance, love of display, its choice of the artificial in place of the natural, and the exaltation of the God of science instead of the God of heaven, is the one toward which the world of to-day is hastening.

As God called Abraham out of the idolatry of Chaldea, and made him the father of the Hebrew nation; as he delivered to that people a form of government that would exalt God; as he gave them commandment so to teach their children that the Jewish nation might become the teacher of nations and might be an everlasting kingdom, so to-day He calls forth a people from modern Babylon. He has entrusted to them principles of healthful living which will make them mentally and physically a wonder to the world. He has given them educational principles, which, if followed, will make them the teachers of the world, and finally bring them into the kingdom of God. And to them He has delivered the principles of true government, which recognize the equal rights of all men, and which in the church organization bind all together — one body in Christ Jesus.

Only a few — four out of thousands — were true to these principles in the days of Daniel. How will it be to-day?

3. True Freedom in Worship

“NEBUCHADNEZZAR the king made an image of gold.” According to Usher’s chronology, it had been twenty-three years since the dream as recorded in the second chapter of Daniel had been given to this same Nebuchadnezzar. As a result of the experience at that time, Daniel was made counselor, sitting in the gate of the king, and Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were appointed rulers in the province of Babylon. Many opportunities had presented themselves to these men of God, and they had kept the knowledge of their God before the people of Babylon. Jerusalem had in the meantime been destroyed. The Jews, as a nation, were scattered throughout the kingdom of Nebuchadnezzar; their king, Jehoiachin, languished in one of the prisons of Babylon. It was a time of sorrow and mourning for the chosen people of God. Could it be that they were forgotten by Him who smote Egypt, and led the hosts across the Red Sea? As far as human eyes could see, it was true.

Nebuchadnezzar had been humbled when Daniel interpreted his dream; he had then worshiped God; but as the years passed, he lost the spirit which characterized true worship, and while in the mind acknowledging the God of the Jews, in his heart he was pagan still. He made an image of gold, patterning it as closely as possible after the image revealed to him in his dream, at the same time gratifying his own pride, for the entire figure was gold. There was no trace of the other kingdoms which were represented in the dream. It stood on the plain of Dura, rising at least one hundred feet above the surrounding country, and visible for miles in every direction.

The decree was issued by Nebuchadnezzar, calling to the capitol the governors and rulers of provinces from all over the world. He, the ruler of kingdoms, thus showed his authority. It was a great occasion, and subject kings and governors dared not disobey the mandates of this universal king.

Heaven was watching with intense interest, for this was the occasion when the highest worldly authority was to meet the government of God.

Babylon was not only the greatest and most powerful government in the days of Nebuchadnezzar, but it was a symbol of earthly governments of all time; and for that reason we have the record as given in the third chapter of

Daniel.

As a king, he had a perfect right to call his subjects together. As subjects, it was the duty of those who were called, to obey.

When that great company had gathered around the image on the broad plain, the voice of the herald was heard: “At what time ye hear the sound ... of all kinds of music, ye fall down and worship the golden image ...

Trust ye in the Lord forever: for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength. Isa. 26:4.

Whoso falleth not down and worshipeth shall the same hour be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace,” “God is a spirit and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit.” But of spiritual worship, paganism is entirely ignorant. Except there be some form, some image before which they can bow, there can be, to them, no worship. It was wholly in accordance with the religion, the education, and the government of Babylon, for the king to erect an image such as he did. It was wholly in harmony with the custom — educational, religious, and civil — for the people in general to respect a command to worship such an image.

While it was in harmony with worldly government, it was not, however, according to the principles of the heavenly government. Hence it is that again, in the person of the Babylonian king, Satan is challenging the government of God. When Lucifer and his angels refused to bow before the throne of God, the Father did not then destroy them. They were permitted to live until death should come as a result of the course they pursued. The Babylonian king, however, threatened utter destruction to all who refused to worship his golden image. The motive power in the heavenly government is love; human power, when exercised, becomes tyranny. All tyranny is a repetition of the Babylonian principles. We sometimes call it papal; it is likewise Babylonian. When the civil power enforces worship of any sort, be that worship true or false in itself, to obey is idolatry. The command must be backed by some form of punishment, — a fiery furnace, — and the conscience of man is no longer free. from a civil standpoint, such legislation is tyranny; looked at from a religious point of view, it is persecution.

The vast throng fell prostrate before the image, but Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego remained erect. Then it was that certain Chaldeans, teachers in the realm, jealous of the position and power of these Hebrews, having

waited for a chance to accuse them, said to the king, "There are certain Jews whom thou hast set over the affairs of the province of Babylon, ... these men have not regarded thee."

Can it be, thought the king, that when the image is made after the pattern of the one shown me by the God of the Jews, those men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, have failed to worship at my command? Can it be possible that when I have elevated those men, who were only slaves, to high positions in the government, they disregard my laws? The thought rankled in the heart of the king. Self-exaltation brooks no opposition, and the men were called forthwith into the presence of Nebuchadnezzar.

Can it be true, O Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, after all that has been done for you, that ye do not serve my gods nor worship the image which I have set up? The reason for making the image was doubtless explained, and another opportunity offered them in which they might redeem the past offense. But if it was wilful disregard of authority, the law of the land should be enforced. The furnace was pointed to by the king as awaiting traitors and rebels.

What a test of the fidelity of these three companions of Daniel! They realized that they were in the presence of not only the richest monarch of earth, and that disobedience meant death, and before the assembled multitudes on the plain of Dura, but they were a spectacle to God, to angels, and to the inhabitants of other worlds. The whole universe was watching with inexpressible interest to see what these men would do. The controversy was not between man and Satan, but between Christ and Satan, and eternal principles were at stake. Men were actors in the contest. They could stand as witnesses either for Christ or for Satan in this time of decision. Would they allow and unsanctified emotion to have possession of their lives, and compromise their faith? What could a religion be worth which admitted of compromise? What can any religion be worth if it does not teach loyalty to the God of heaven? What is there of any real value in the world, especially when on the very borders of eternity, unless it be God's acknowledgment of us as His children?

These Hebrew youth had learned from the history of God's dealings with the Israelites in times past, that disobedience brought only dishonor, disaster, and ruin; and that the fear of the Lord was not only the beginning of wisdom, but the basis of all true prosperity. They therefore calmly and respectfully told the king that they would not worship his golden image, and that they had

faith that their God was able to protect them.

The king was angry. His proud spirit could not tolerate this refusal to obey his decree. He ordered that the furnace be heated seven times hotter than usual, and that the most mighty men of his army bind these three Hebrews and throw them into the fire. This was done, but God in this act began to vindicate His faithful children. The furnace was so exceedingly hot that mighty men who cast the Hebrews into the fire were themselves destroyed by the intense heat.

God suffered not envy and hatred to prevail against His children. How often have the enemies of God united their strength and wisdom to destroy the character and influence of a few humble, trusting persons! But nothing can prevail against those who are strong in the Lord. The promise is, "The wrath of man shall praise Thee."

God preserved His servants in the midst of the flames, and the attempt to force them into idolatry resulted in bringing the knowledge of the true God before the assemblage of princes and rulers of the vast kingdom of Babylon. "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." All things are possible to those who believe. "What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them." God may not always work deliverance in the way that we think best, but He who sees everything from the beginning, knows what will bring honor and praise to His name.

Suddenly the king became pale with terror. He looked intently into the midst of the fiery furnace, and turned to those near him with the words, "Did we not cast three men bound into the midst of the fire?" They answered, "True, O king." The king then said, "Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God."

How did the king recognize the form of the Son of God? Evidently by the teachings of the Jews in the court of Babylon and in remembrance of his vision. Daniel and his companions had ever sought to bring before the king, the princes, and the wise men of Babylon, a knowledge of the true God. These Hebrews, holding high positions in the government, had been associated with the king; and as they were not ashamed of their God, they had honored and given glory to the Lord whenever opportunity afforded. The king had heard from their lips descriptions of the glorious Being whom

they served; and it was from this instruction that he was able to recognize the fourth person in the fire as the Son of God. The king also understood the ministry of angels, and now believed that angels had interfered in behalf of these faithful men who would yield their bodies to punishment rather than consent with their minds to serve or worship any God but their own. These men were true missionaries. They held honored positions in the government, and at the same time let the light of the gospel shine through their lives. This miracle was one of the results of their godly lives.

With bitter remorse and feelings of humility, the king approached the furnace and exclaimed, “Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, ye servants of the most high God, come forth, and come hither.” They did so, and all the hosts of the plain of Dura were witnesses to the fact that not even the smell of fire was upon their garments, and not a hair of their head had been singed. God had triumphed through the constancy of his faithful servants. The magnificent image was forgotten by the people in their wonder, and solemnity pervaded the assembly.

What the Jews as a nation had failed to do in proclaiming the truth to the nations of the world, God accomplished under the most trying circumstances, with only three men. The story of the miraculous deliverance was told to the ends of the earth. The principles were told to the ends of the earth. The principles of religious liberty and freedom of conscience were known. The history of the Jews was passed from mouth to mouth as those acquainted with the three Hebrews asked who they were and how they came into Babylon. The Sabbath was proclaimed. The story of Jewish education was made known. The glory of Babylon was for the time forgotten as the splendor of the heavenly kingdom and the principles of God’s government became the absorbing theme. Without doubt some men dated their conversion from that day, and forces were set in operation which paved the way for the return of the Jews a few years later.

Again the heathen monarch is brought to acknowledge the power of the King of heaven. When Daniel interpreted the dream, worldly wisdom and the learning of the Babylonian schools fell before the simple gospel teaching as carried out by faithful mothers in Israel. When the three Hebrews were saved from the heat of the furnace, the principles of God’s government — true Protestantism, as it would be called to-day — were proclaimed before the nations of the earth.

It was only a partial appreciation of these principles which Nebuchadnezzar

at first gained; nevertheless it led to the decree that throughout the whole dominion, wherever a Jew might be living, no man should speak against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. This gave freedom to every believer to worship unmolested. Satan, in attempting to destroy the Hebrews, had overstepped the bounds, and in place of the death of three, life was granted to thousands.

Usher's chronology gives the date of the issuing of this decree as twenty- six years after Daniel was carried captive to Babylon; but it is very probable that the exact date was the time the prophet Jeremiah told Zedekiah, king of Judah, if he would deliver himself into the hands of the king of Babylon's princes, Jerusalem would not be destroyed. Only a short time before the same prophet had come to Zedekiah, saying, "Thus saith the Lord; Deceive not yourselves, saying, The Chaldeans shall surely depart from us; for they shall not depart, for though ye had smitten the whole army of the Chaldeans that fight against you, and there remain but wounded men among them, yet should they rise up everyman in his tent, and burn this city with fire."

No doubt it seemed strange to Zedekiah that the same prophet a little later, should come to him again saying, "Thus saith the Lord, the God of hosts, the God of Israel, If thou wilt assuredly go forth unto the king of Babylon's princes, then thy soul shall live, and this city shall not be burned with fire; and thou shalt live and thine house."p. 52, .

Zedekiah walked by sight and not by faith, and for lack of faith to believe God, he lost everything. His sight beheld only the Babylonian army and the Jews, and he feared to obey. Faith would have led him to obey the command of God, irrespective of any obstacles that sight may have presented.

God never commands us to perform impossibilities; He always with the command prepares the way, if we by faith will go forward and obey. If Zedekiah had only known that a decree had been issued in Babylon forbidding any one to even speak a word against the God of the Hebrews, he would, no doubt, have quickly obeyed.

God had made every provision to spare Jerusalem, the city of His choice, and the temple where His visible presence had abode for so many years. But Heaven's plans were frustrated by the doubting heart of the one whom God had trusted with the oversight of His work in the earth. In vain did the prophet of the Lord plead, "Obey, I beseech thee, the voice of the Lord which I speak unto thee." But Zedekiah's eyes were blinded by earthly

things, he measured the message from God by his own mind. He saw only seeming contradiction in the message, which, if believed, carried the glad tidings of victory. If Zedekiah had gone forth to the Chaldeans no one would have dared lay hands upon him, but like many others he lost the opportunity of a life time by fearing to trust God. Notwithstanding the fact that the Lord's prophet told him plainly that if he failed to obey he would cause Jerusalem to be burned with fire, still he was afraid to obey the word of the Lord.

Zedekiah was a stranger to the faith that enabled Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego to enter the fiery furnace rather than dishonor their Lord.

The trial on the plains of Dura was the crowning act in the lives of the three Hebrews. Our God whom we serve is able to deliver us. Dan. 3:17. We are told that they were advanced to higher positions in the province of Babylon, but we hear nothing further of them. In the testing time they did not know that the Lord would deliver them from the furnace, but they had faith to believe that He had power to do it if it were His will to do so. In such times it takes more faith to trust that God will bring about His purposes in His own way than it does to believe in our own way. It is the absence of this faith and trust in critical times, which brings perplexity, distress, fear, and surmising of evil. God is ever ready to do great things for His people when they put their trust in Him. "Godliness with contentment is great gain."

Seldom are we placed in the same circumstances twice. Abraham, Moses, Elijah, Daniel, and others were sorely tried, even unto death, yet each test came in a different way. Every individual has an experience peculiar to his own character and circumstances. God has a work to accomplish in the life of each individual. Every act, however small, has its place in our life experience. God is more than willing to guide us in the right way. He has not closed the windows of heaven to prayer, but his ears are ever open to the cries of His children, and His eye watches every movement of Satan to counteract His work.

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were men of like passions with ourselves. Their lives are given to show what man may become even in this life, if he will make God his strength and wisely improve the opportunities within his reach. Among the captives of the king who had similar advantages, only Daniel and his three companions bent all their energies to seek wisdom and knowledge from God as revealed in His Word and works. Although they afterward held high positions of trust, they were neither proud nor self-sufficient. They had a living connection with God, loving, fearing,

and obeying Him. They allowed their light to shine in undimmed luster, while occupying positions of responsibility. Amid all the temptations and fascinations of the court, they stood firm as a rock in adherence to principle.

A direct compliance with Bible requirements, and a faith in God, will bring strength to both the will and the body. The fruit of the Spirit is not only love, joy, and peace, but temperance also. If these youth had compromised with the heathen officers at first, and yielded to the pressure of the occasion by eating and drinking according to the custom of the Babylonians, contrary to God's requirements, that one wrong step would have led to others, until their consciences would have been seared, and they would have been turned into wrong paths. Faithfulness in this one point prepared them to withstand greater temptation, until finally they stood firm in this crucial test on the plain of Dura.

The third chapter of Daniel may be studied with profit in connection with the message referred to in the thirteenth chapter of Revelation. The principles are the same in both. All the world was called to worship the image set up in the province of Babylon; refusing, they would suffer death. In Revelation there is brought to view an image to the beast, — governments on earth which will frame laws contrary to the requirements of God. Life and power will be given to this image, and it shall both speak and decree that as many as will not worship it will be put to death. All, small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, will be required to receive a mark in the right hand or in the forehead. Men will be disfranchised for not worshipping this image; for no one will be allowed to buy or sell who has not the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.

Who will be able to stand the test when this decree to worship the image to the beast is enforced? Who will choose rather to "suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season"? What children are now being trained and educated in these principles of integrity to God? From what homes will come the Daniels and Meshachs? This will be the final test brought upon the servants of God. The scenes portrayed in the third chapter of Daniel are but a miniature representation of those trials into which the people of God are coming as the end approaches.

4. The Most High Ruleth

THE fourth chapter of Daniel is, in some respects, the most wonderful chapter in the Bible. It is a public document written by Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, after his humiliation by the God of heaven. It was sent “unto all people, nations, and languages, that dwell in all the earth.” It therefore comes to us with as much freshness and vitality as though it were issued to the generation in which we live. The object was, says Nebuchadnezzar, “to show the signs and wonders that the high God hath wrought toward me.” Contemplating what had been done, he exclaimed in language similar to that of the apostle Paul, “How great are His signs! His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and His dominion is from generation to generation.”

Nebuchadnezzar’s reign had been one long scene of warfare. He was a man of war. This characteristic was so prominent in the life of the great king that prophecy calls him “the terrible of the nations,” and the “hammer of the whole earth.” He had met foes on every side and had been successful, because God had put His “sword into the hand of the king of Babylon,” and had made use of this monarch to punish other nations which had refused the light of truth. To illustrate: For thirteen years the city of Tyre resisted every effort made by Nebuchadnezzar. Finally he was successful, but gained no spoils, for Tyre, captured on the seacoast, removed to an island. Although Nebuchadnezzar knew it not, he was fulfilling prophecy in the destruction of Tyre. The lord rewarded him for this work by sending word to him through the prophet Ezekiel that he could have the spoil of Egypt as wages for his army while destroying Tyre, for Egypt as well as Tyre had rejected the knowledge of the true God. Then Nebuchadnezzar turned his arms against Egypt, and that nation, which years before had held Israel in bondage, now became a slave to the Babylonian power.

The prophet Ezekiel, one of the Hebrew captives, was given a view of the capture of Egypt by Nebuchadnezzar, and was told to send the testimony to Pharaoh, king of Egypt. In this prophecy Egypt is represented as a mighty tree towering above all the trees of the earth. Even the trees of Eden envied the splendor of this tree. All the fowls of heaven nested in its boughs; the hosts of earth dwelt beneath its branches. But this tree of Egypt was lifted up because of its greatness, and God sent Babylon to hew it to the ground.

The crash of its fall shook the earth.

This prophecy must have been known to Nebuchadnezzar, if not before, at least after his victory over Egypt, for it was familiar to the Jews, and there were Jews in the Babylonian court. This throws light on the fourth chapter of Daniel.

Having conquered the world, Nebuchadnezzar was at rest in his house, when one night he dreamed a dream. Success had followed him wherever he turned. At his feet bowed the representatives of all nations. Into his coffers flowed the wealth of the east and the west, the north and the south. About him was clustered the wit and learning of the age. Libraries were at his command, and art flourished. Why should not king Nebuchadnezzar flourish in his kingdom? But he had dreamed a dream which troubled him, and he called upon his wise men for an interpretation. They listened, but strange to say, could give no explanation. God always permitted the wise men of the earth to have the first trial. When these wise men failed, Daniel was called.

Daniel's name had been changed when he first entered the Babylonian court, and to the king and his associates he was known as Belteshazzar, a son of the heathen god Bel, but Daniel himself always retained his own Hebrew name. Years before this, however, the God of Daniel had said, "Bel boweth and Nebo stoopeth; ... they could not deliver the burden, but themselves are gone into captivity." Daniel again had an opportunity of proving the wisdom of his God and the weakness of Babylonian deities.

The dream, as repeated by the king in Daniel's hearing, is wonderful to contemplate. The tree was a familiar object and a striking symbol. The most magnificent specimens that the world afforded had been transplanted into the Babylonian gardens. The story of Eden and its trees had been handed down by tradition, and the people knew of the tree of life, and also of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The tree seen in the dream was planted in the midst of the earth, and as he watched, the kings saw it grow until the top reached heaven, and its boughs stretched to the ends of the earth. Strange that this tree, which grew toward heaven in spite of everything, which was watered by the dews of heaven and fed by God's own sunshine, knew only of the earth and earthly kingdoms!

As it had been with the Egyptian tree, so with this: fowls rested in the branches and beasts dwelt in its shadow. The king in his dream saw only the upper part of the tree, the branches, leaves, and fruit, but the roots of any

tree are as numerous and widespread as its branches; hence this mighty tree, whose top reached heaven, and whose branches spread forth to the ends of the earth, was supported by roots which, though hidden, ran through all the earth. Deep-rooted, it was drawing nourishment from hidden springs. In fact, the fair leaves and abundant fruit were dependent upon the condition of the roots.

As Nebuchadnezzar gazed upon the tree, he saw a “watcher, even an holy one,” — a messenger from heaven, whose appearance was similar to the One who walked in the midst of the fiery furnace with the Hebrew children. At the command of this divine messenger, the tree was hewn down, the stump alone remaining.

It is doubtful whether man ever received a message freighted with greater importance than this one given to Nebuchadnezzar.

In his former dream he was shown the shortness of his kingdom and given proof of the decline of the empire. Had he lived in harmony with what was then revealed to him, the experience about to come would have been avoided. The parting words of the angel as he left Nebuchadnezzar were, “This matter is by the decree of the watchers ... to the intent that the living may know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever He will.” More than that, “He setteth up over it the basest of men.” Because a man holds a position, it does not signify that he is better than others.

When Daniel realized the true significance of the dream, and foresaw the humiliation of the king of Babylon, “his thoughts troubled him.” He was encouraged by the king not to be troubled, but to give the true interpretation. He did so, plainly telling the king that the tree seen in the vision was emblematic of Nebuchadnezzar himself, and his dominion. “It is thou, O king, that art grown and reacheth unto heaven, and thy dominion to the end of the earth.” Great as was Nebuchadnezzar’s kingdom, it had grown from a small beginning. Gradually the principles upon which it was founded — principles much older than the king, for they originated with Lucifer, and were a perversion of heavenly truths — had taken root. In government it was the most rigid monarchy; the king held the lives of his subjects in his hands. Slaves bowed before him in abject subjugation; exorbitant taxes were forced from subject provinces; crowned heads were laid low and men enslaved that the king of Babylon might revel in the wealth of the world. The seeds of that form of government were sown wherever Babylon

established her power, and as she sowed, so she, as well as others, have reaped. When Babylon fell, the principles by which she had controlled others were in turn applied to her. Wherever there is tyranny in government in any nation of the earth to-day, it is an offshoot of that root which filled the earth, the stump of which was allowed to remain until the end of time.

Wherever Babylon laid her hand in conquest, the principles of her religion were implanted. The vilest forms of worship were practiced in that kingdom with all its outward glory. The heart was rotten. The mystery of iniquity held full sway, hidden by the outward glitter of gold. The mysteries of Greece in a later day were but a repetition of the Babylonian mysteries. From the golden cup which she held in her hand, and which was a familiar symbol in Babylonian secret societies, she made all nations drunk with the wine of her fornication.

Nations and peoples to-day, unconscious of their origin, are perpetuating Babylonian religious customs when they celebrate Christmas with feasting, lighted candles, holly, and mistletoe. It is in commemoration of Babylonian heathen gods that they eat eggs on Easter; and even the wild capers of Hallowe'en repeat the mysteries of Babylon. The root was not destroyed; her religious principles have sprung up afresh in every generation and borne fruit in every country.

The influence of Babylon in educational lines was no less marked than her influence in government and religion, and the educational root of the tree was as vigorous as the others. "Leave the stump of his roots in the earth, even with a band of iron and brass." We are in the habit of tracing the educational system of the world to Greece or Egypt; its principles are older than Greece. They belong to Babylon. The prominence given this phase of Babylonian life by the Spirit of God in the book of Daniel, and the fact that the leading educators and educational institutions of the world were brought in direct contact with the more simple principles of true education every time the Hebrews met the Chaldeans and wise men, shows the place which education occupies both in the false kingdoms of which Babylon is a type, and in the true, which the Hebrew government represented. The so-called "higher education" of to-day, which exalts the science of the world above the science of salvation; which sends forth students bearing worldly credentials, but not recognized in the books of heaven, students who love display, who are filled with pride, selfishness, and self-esteem, — this education is a plant which has sprung from that broad root which supported

the tree representing the Babylonian dominion.

Seeds of truth had been planted in Babylon. The Holy Watcher sought constantly for the growth of a tree which would bring life. All nations were gathered under the influence of Babylon in hopes that they might there be fed with fruit which would prove to be the bread of life; but instead, it was a mixture of good and evil, which poisoned the consumer.

The leaves of the tree were fair to look upon, and might have been for the healing of the nations; but the very odor they exhaled, intoxicated and led to excess. So with the plant which has sprung from those hidden roots. It may be fair to look upon, its fruit may be so sweet that the eater can not be persuaded that it is not truth, but the wisdom of God will stand long after that of the world has been destroyed. We should watch and guard against the evils which spring from the Babylonian root.

Aside from the general application to the entire kingdom, a part of the dream pictures the experience of Nebuchadnezzar personally. Because of his pride of heart, he would lose his reason, forsake the abodes of men, find his home with the beasts of the field, and remain in this condition for seven years — until he had learned “that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will.” Daniel exhorted the king, “Let my counsel be acceptable unto thee, and break off thy sins by righteousness, and thine iniquities by showing mercy to the poor.” There was yet time for repentance, and had the king heeded this counsel, it would have saved him from the great humiliation which came upon him. But when men’s hearts are set, the message to change, though given by an angel from heaven, remains unheeded. Consequently, “all this came upon the king Nebuchadnezzar.”

A year of probation was granted the king after this solemn warning had been given. At the end of this time the king, in his royal palace, thinking of his kingdom with pride and satisfaction, exclaimed, “Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom by the might of my power, and for the honor of my majesty?” He was repeating the thoughts, almost the exact words, of Satan, when he thought to exalt his throne above God. When proud thoughts were entertained, and these words were uttered, the sentence was pronounced with blasted the tree, and degraded the monarch whom the tree symbolized. It was God who had given the king his reason and ability to establish a kingdom like this. The same God could take away the judgment and wisdom upon which the king prided himself. And God did so. It is the mind which elevates man above beast. When the power of the mind is

removed, man sinks to the lowest level. Nebuchadnezzar became as the beasts. David says, "I have seen the wicked in great power, and spreading himself like a green bay tree. Yet he passed away, and, lo, he was not: yea, I sought him, but he could not be found."

When God can not save men in prosperity, he brings upon them adversity. If in all this they reject God, then they bring upon themselves destruction. Let the results be as they may, God is clear from all censure. This is illustrated by Nebuchadnezzar's case. The proud and powerful monarch no longer swayed the scepter. He became a maniac, and for seven years he was found with cattle, the companion of beasts, feeding as they fed. His reason dethroned, he was no longer regarded even as a man. The mandate had gone forth, "Hew down the tree, and cut off his branches, shake off his leaves, and scatter his fruit."

It is necessary in the cause of God and in the world, that men bear responsibility. But when men are lifted up in pride and depend upon worldly wisdom, God can no longer sustain them, and they fall. Nations and individuals alike have this experience. Even the professed Church of Christ, when it departs from the humility of the Master, loses its power, and will certainly be brought low. The people who glory in wealth, or intellect, or knowledge, or in anything save Jesus Christ, will be brought to confusion. In Christ alone "are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." Every brilliant thought, every intellectual idea, which in any way brings greatness, originates with our Lord. It is God who is dealing with humanity. He rules.

It should be remembered that in all of His dealings with king Nebuchadnezzar, God was working for the salvation of the ruler and those affected by his influence. God allowed him to suffer seven years of deplorable degradation, and then removed His chastening hand. After passing through this terrible humiliation, he was brought to see his own weakness; he confessed his guilt, and acknowledged the God of heaven. He sent to all the world the description of this experience as recorded in the fourth chapter of Daniel. He had learned that those who walk in pride, God is able to abase. In comparison with God and His universe, the inhabitants of the earth sink into insignificance, and are reputed as nothing. "He doeth according to His will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay His hand, or say unto Him, What doest Thou?"

5. The Last Years of the Babylonian Kingdom

THE history of the Babylonian nation reveals to one who searches for hidden principles, all that is necessary in order to understand the relation of earthly governments to God, the dealings of God with all the nations of the earth, and the attitude which men should assume toward God and toward earthly governments. These four principles can be learned from a study of the history of Babylon as recorded in the book of Daniel, and by the prophets who wrote concerning this kingdom. This is true, because in Babylon is seen in some respects the most complete development of the plans of Satan. Here were counterfeited the principles of the heavenly kingdom, and so much of the true metal was mingled with the alloy that an unusual strength was developed. In other words, the kingdom of Babylon was built and developed in accordance with laws which were in themselves divine; but since the greatest evil lies near to and is a perversion of the greatest good, so the perversion of the principles of the government of heaven made the strongest of earthly kingdoms. Built so that it was difficult for beings who were watching the progress of events to detect error, God, who never deals arbitrarily with men or angels, not even with Satan himself, allowed the Babylonian kingdom to run its natural course, that the world might have an object-lesson, and know forever after that truth brings life, but that the least perversion of truth, no matter how slight, brings death.

In order to vindicate Himself before the universe, God bestowed all manner of blessings upon this earthly kingdom which Satan boastingly claimed his own. Wisdom was given to the people of Babylon, the Holy Watcher protected the king on his throne, and God gave power to the ruler in battle, making him a conqueror. It was God who caused the tree to reach unto heaven, and gave strength and beauty to its branches. Everything by way of warning and entreaty was used by Infinite Wisdom to cause the Babylonians to see the difference between the true and the false, and lead them to choose the true. It is one of the most forcible commentaries in earth's history on the care of God for all, even the veriest sinner.

Had Babylon taken the proffered help, she would, in spite of all the power of Satan as prince of this world, have linked her throne with the throne of

God, and would have been an everlasting kingdom. How easily might the history of the world have been changed!

People living in these last days, whether they be Christians or not, need not remain ignorant concerning their duty toward the civil government. Nations can not plead ignorance concerning their duty toward Christians, toward other nations, nor toward God, for the prophecies of Daniel explain it all. It is a book for rulers as well as for the common people. Babylon is an object-lesson to the nations; her failures describe the failures which are made to-day, and her destruction is a description of the end of all earthly kingdoms.

Nations have a time of probation, as do individuals. A record is kept of national events, and when the cup of iniquity is full, destruction comes, and another power, more vigorous, because less corrupt, takes its place. "The Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men," whether He is recognized or not, and things which, to human eyes, appear to have happened by chance, are directly under the control of the Holy Watcher.

The study of the book of Daniel demands, therefore, that we take time to trace the history of Babylon as a nation.

A period of about twenty-five years intervenes between the close of the fourth and the opening of the fifth chapter. The reign of Nebuchadnezzar closed shortly after the restoration of his reason, as related in the fourth chapter. From a worldly point of view, his had been a long and prosperous reign, and at its close there were no signs of weakening in the empire. Nebuchadnezzar had a son of age to fill the place of his father. No one questioned his right to the throne, and while they mourned the death of Nebuchadnezzar, apparently the subjects had much reason to rejoice over the succession of the son. In the eyes of Heaven this history was a checkered one. There had been periods when a desire to know the right and rule justly were written opposite the name of the king. But these were followed by still longer periods when the voice of the Divine One was altogether unheeded. There was a record of wonderful providences, rich blessings, and bitter trials, all having one object, — to turn the minds of the world to the only Source of life and power. If Heaven ever grows weary watching the struggles of nations, what must have been the burden as they saw this kingdom repeatedly choose the course which was leading to inevitable ruin?

Evil-merodach, the son of Nebuchadnezzar, is mentioned but twice in the Scriptures, and in each case reference is made to one act of his life. It seems

strange that such a father should be followed by a son of whom so little is recorded, but it is gratifying to notice that when the silence is broken, it is to relate a deed of kindness. In the first year of his reign he took from prison Jehoiachin, the former king of Jerusalem, a man now fifty years of age, who had languished in bonds since a boy of eighteen. The Jewish ex-ruler was given clothing and a king's provisions, and exalted above other kings in Babylon all the remainder of his days.

Evil-merodach had been raised in the Babylonian court, and had known of the Jews and their history from his youth up. It would not be an impossible thing that Daniel, made chief of the Chaldean wise men by Nebuchadnezzar, had been the instructor of the prince. While details are omitted, true it is that for some reason the destruction of Babylon was delayed beyond the reign of Evil-merodach. His brief reign of two years was followed by an unsettled period, a most dangerous experience in a monarchy.

Finally Nabonadius, the son-in-law of Nebuchadnezzar, was seated on the throne, and about the year 541 he associated with him his son Belshazzar. The two reigned conjointly until the destruction of the kingdom in 538 B.C. This youth, the grandson of the great Nebuchadnezzar, soon proved himself to be headstrong, wayward, cruel, and dissolute.

Daniel was no longer retained in the court. The time of his dismissal is not stated, but in the third year of Belshazzar's reign, he was living at Shushan, the capital of Elam, some distance east of Babylon, and it was at that place that he saw the vision which the eighth chapter of the book of Daniel relates.

During the reign of Nabonadius and Belshazzar, events of the greatest importance occurred. To the Jews who accepted the words of the prophets whom God sent, rising up early and sending, the downfall of the kingdom in the near future was well known. In spite of their own oppression, there was a world to be warned, and as the host of the redeemed gather about the throne of God, made up, as it will be, of representatives of every nation, kindred, tongue, and people, there will be some souls from ancient Babylon, who, having heard the proclamation of the message, separated from her sins, and were saved.

As the knowledge of God was lost by the ruling monarchs, and God-fearing men were no longer among the counselors, the oppression of the Jews became almost unbearable.

On going into Babylon, they had been instructed by the Lord to build houses and plant vineyards, to marry and increase in numbers, and to pray for the peace and prosperity of Babylon, for their captivity would last seventy years. The people of God had the observance of the Sabbath of the fourth commandment to preserve their peculiarity and keep them from mingling with the heathen. The time came when the Babylonians, who were sun-worshippers, mocked the Jews because of the Sabbath. They were forbidden to celebrate their feasts; priests and rulers were degraded and persecuted. The Babylonians often demanded songs from the Jews. "They that wasted us required of us mirth, saying, Sing us one of the songs of Zion;" but their hearts were mournful. "Israel is a scattered sheep," wrote Jeremiah; "the lions have driven him away; .. Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon hath broken his bones." The Babylonians boasted that it was no sin to oppress the Jews, reasoning that God had placed the Hebrews in bondage because of their sins.

It is little wonder that the yoke was hard to bear and that the king was unrelenting. It was a time of trouble, a foretaste of the great time of trouble through which the people of God will pass before the second coming of the Saviour. Both periods are called by the same name, — the time of Jacob's trouble, — by the prophet Jeremiah. Under these trying circumstances the Jews were obliged to preach the gospel which they once had the opportunity to give with power from Jerusalem.

Groaning beneath oppression, they taught of the coming Messiah, the deliverer; they taught righteousness by faith, and the everlasting gospel, the hour of God's judgment, the fall of Babylon, and the destruction of those upon whom was found the mark of the Babylonian worship. The spirit of prophecy, as belonging to the Jews, was known to the Babylonians throughout the period of captivity. Daniel, in the presence of the king, had more than once received divine enlightenment. Ezekiel was sending messages broadcast from the Lord, and Jeremiah had received word from God with the command to make it known to all the nations round about. There was no hiding the fact that the God of the Jews had prophets among His people. It was in this way that not only the Jews, but Moab, Edom, Tyre and Sidon, Ammon, Egypt, Arabia, and even Media and Persia knew that the fall of Babylon was decreed. Many of these nations, and the Persians among the number, knew just what kingdom would be used to destroy Babylon, and the name of the man whom God had chosen to accomplish the overthrow.

Such are the messages which God sent, and thus it was that he made use of His people. Those whom He could not use when granted peace and prosperity and a city of their own, He used when slaves under the iron heel of Babylon. Babylon was like a city on the edge of a volcanic crater, but she believed it not. In the year 539 B.C., the combined forces of the Medes and Persians started toward Babylon. The news reached the city that the enemy was on the march. Then it was that the message came to flee from the city and be as goats upon the mountainside. Jews who heeded the word of the Lord, then withdrew from Babylon. But the Persian army did not come. History says that Cyrus was stopped by the death of a sacred white horse, which was drowned in crossing a river. Cyrus set his men to digging channels for the river, spending one year in this way. Prophecy says, "The walls of Babylon shall fall. My people, go ye out of the midst of her, and deliver ye every man his soul. ... And lest your heart faint, and ye fear for the rumor that shall be heard in the land; a rumor shall both come one year, and after that in another year, shall come a rumor, and violence in the land, ruler against ruler."

And so it was; one spring the rumor came, but the army failed to appear. The careless and unbelieving scoffed, but to the believing this was the opportune time. The next spring the rumor came again, but there was no time then to sell or prepare to leave, for the army came also, and the Babylonian and Medo-Persian forces met in open battle. The Babylonians were defeated, and retired within the fortifications of the city.

The gates were closed and the siege began. Those who were now in Babylon must live or die with the Babylonians, except God stay the hand of the destroyer.

The climax was reached by the greatest of earthly governments. All heaven was alive with anxiety. Only man was asleep to his impending destruction.

6. The Handwriting of the Wall

DANIEL CHAPTER 5.

IT was the last night of a nation's existence, but the people knew it not. Some slept in unconscious peace; some reveled and whirled away in thoughtless dance. In the dens of Babylon, men steeped in vice continued their wild orgies; in the palace Belshazzar feasted with a thousand of his lords. Music resounded through the brilliantly lighted rooms. The nobles lounged about the tables sumptuously spread. Court women and concubines of the king entered those halls. It was a feast of Bacchus, and they drank to the health of the king on his throne. He ordered that the sacred vessels be brought from the temple to show that no being, human or divine, could raise a hand against him, the king of Babylon. The golden cup filled with wine was raised and the blessing of Bel invoked, but it never reached the lips of the half-intoxicated king. His hand was stayed. Those vessels had been moulded by hands divinely skilled, and after heavenly models. Angels had watched them as they were taken from the temple at Jerusalem and carried to Babylon. Messengers divinely appointed had guarded them, and their very presence in the heathen temple was a witness of the God of the Jews. Some day the silence would be broken. The desecration of His temple would not always remain unpunished.

That time came when the king lifted the goblet filled with sparkling wine. His hand grew stiff, for on the opposite wall, over against the lights, was a bloodless hand, writing words of an unknown language. The wine-cup fell to the floor; the king's countenance grew pale; he trembled violently, and his knees smote together until the gorgeous girdle of his loins loosened and fell aside. The loud laughter ceased, and the music died away. Terror-stricken, a thousand guests looked from the face of the king to the writing on the wall.

The Chaldean astrologers and soothsayers were called, but the writing was meaningless to them. They who taught all earthly languages failed to recognize the language of heaven. The four strange characters remained as at first seen, emblazoned in letters of fire on the wall.

For days the siege of Babylon had been on. The gates were closed and her walls were considered impregnable, while within the city were provisions

for twenty years. But, however strong she might seem, God had said, “Though Babylon should mount up to heaven, and though she should fortify the height of her strength, yet from me shall spoilers come unto her.”

The strongest strongholds which man can build are crushed like a dying leaf when the hand of God is laid upon them. But this was a lesson which the rulers of Babylon had not yet learned. The father of iniquity, who was urging these rulers forward into deeper sin, had not yet owned the weakness of his cause. Heaven and unfallen worlds watched the progress of affairs in this great city, for it was the battle-ground of the two mighty forces of good and evil. Christ and Satan here contended.

Angels, unseen by human eyes, as when they gathered the animals into the ark before the flood, had mustered forces against Babylon. God was using men who knew Him not as God, but who were true to principle and wished to do right. To Cyrus, the leader of the Persian army, which was now outside the city walls, God had said that He held his hand to make him strong. Before you “I will loose the loins of kings.” I will open those two-leaved gates, and the gates shall not be shut; “I will go before thee and make the crooked places straight: I will break in pieces the gates of brass and cut in sunder the bars of iron.”

While Belshazzar and his lords drank and feasted, the army of Cyrus was lowering the waters in the bed of the Euphrates, preparatory to entering the city.

As the Chaldeans were unable to read the writing on the wall, the king’s terror increased. He knew that this was a rebuke of his sacrilegious feast, and yet he could not learn the exact meaning. Then the queen-mother remembered Daniel, who had “the spirit of the holy gods,” and who had been made master of the wise men in the days of Nebuchadnezzar as the result of interpreting the king’s dream.

Daniel, the prophet of God, was called to the banquet room. As he came before Belshazzar, the monarch promised to make him third ruler in the kingdom if he would interpret the writing. The prophet, with the quiet dignity of a servant of the most high God, stood before the gorgeous, terror-stricken throng that bore evidence of intemperate feasting and wicked revelry.

In Israel, children were named under the inspiration of the Spirit of God,

and the name was an expression of character. When God changed a name, as in the case of Abraham, Jacob, or Peter, it was because of a change of character in the individual. True to the name given him by his mother, Daniel — God's judge — again appears to vindicate the truth. Nebuchadnezzar had called him Belteshazzar, in honor of the Babylonian god Bel, but to the last this Hebrew, who knew the Lord, remained true to his God-given name, as shown in the twelfth verse of this chapter. He did not speak with flattering words, as the professedly wise men of the kingdom had done, but he spoke the truth of God. It was a moment of intensity, for there was but a single hour in which to make known the future. Daniel was now an old man, but he sternly disclaimed all desire for rewards or honor, and preceded to review the history of Nebuchadnezzar, and the Lord's dealings with that ruler, — his dominion and glory, his punishment for pride of heart, and his subsequent acknowledgment of the mercy and power of the God who created the heavens and the earth. He rebuked Belshazzar for his departure from true principles, and for his great wickedness and pride.

“And thou, his son, O Belshazzar, hast not humbled thine heart, though thou knewest all this; but hast lifted up thyself against the Lord of heaven; ... and the God in whose hand thy breath is, and whose are all thy ways, hast thou not glorified.” Straightforward and strong were the words of Daniel. Belshazzar had trodden on sacred ground; he had laid unholy hands on holy things; he had severed the ties which bind heaven and earth together; and there was no way for that life- giving Spirit of God to reach him or his followers. Day by day his breath had been given him, a symbol of the spiritual breath, but he praised and thanked the gods of wood and stone. His every motion had been by virtue of the power of the God of heaven, but he had prostituted that power to an unholy cause. “Then was the part of the hand sent from Him; and this writing was written.” What he could not see written in his own breath and muscles, what he could not read in his own heart- beats, God wrote in mystic characters on the palace wall, over, against the candlestick.

The people waited with bated breath as Daniel turned to the writing on the wall, and read the message traced by the angel hand. The hand had been withdrawn, but four terrible words remained. The prophet announced their meaning to be: “Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin: ... God hath numbered thy kingdom, and finished it: ... thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting: ... thy kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians.”

In dealing with men God always uses a language which appeals forcibly to their understanding. This is illustrated in the handwriting on the wall. It is a common belief among idolaters that the gods weigh deeds in balances, and that if the good deeds outweigh the evil, the individual enters into his reward; if the opposite result is obtained, punishment follows. The language, therefore, was familiar to King Belshazzar. "God hath numbered thy kingdom; ... thou are weighted in the balances, and art found wanting." To the magicians who stood within hearing, as Daniel gave the interpretation, the words came with peculiar force because of their familiarity with religious customs.

To the one who knows God, the attitude of the Lord toward the sinner is very different, and still the symbol of the weights and balances is applicable. That this subject might be understood, God had sent an explanation by the prophet Ezekiel. When a man sins and dies without repentance, he is cut off from God, because his iniquities separate between him and God, and he cannot be saved. If a man loves Christ and accepts Him and His righteousness, Christ's character is written opposite the name of that man in the books of heaven, and so long as a love of the truth is cherished, the man hides in Christ and is known by the character of Christ. God deals with men in the present. We may have been the worst of sinners, but if to-day we are hidden in Christ, heaven takes into account only our present position.

So it was that God dealt with the nations, and this answers the question why Nebuchadnezzar might one day be in favor with God and the next day be in condemnation; why Zedekiah's course of action was condemned once, and then again he was told that it lay in his power to save Jerusalem.

God gave the Babylonian monarchs, and through them the entire kingdom, an abundance of time to accept Him. He waited long. The Holy Watcher hovered long near the center of earthly governments; every blessing which Heaven could bestow was given to woo the kingdom to the side of right. But at last the slender cord which connected earth with heaven snapped; there was no channel for the flow of the Holy Spirit; death and death only could result. That there might be no misunderstanding, the last word read, "Thy kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians."

Scarcely had the scarlet robe been placed on Daniel and the golden chain hung about his neck, when the shouts of the invading army rang through the palace.

In the midst of their feasting and rioting none had notice that the waters in the Euphrates were steadily diminishing. The besieging army of Cyrus, which had long been held at bay by the massive walls, was eagerly watching the river. The river had been turned from its course, and as soon as the water had sufficiently subsided to allow the men a passage in the bed of the river, they entered from opposite sides of the city. In their reckless feeling of security, the Babylonians had left open the gates in the walls which lined the river-banks inside the city. So the Persians, once in the river-bed, easily entered the city through the open gates.

I will go before thee, and make the crooked places straight. Isa. 45:2.

Soon one post was running to “meet another, and one messenger to meet another,” to show the king of Babylon that his city is taken at one end.” But the news was received too late to save the king. God had numbered and finished his kingdom. The enemy made a rush for the palace. The pen of Inspiration describes the overthrow of the kingdom more vividly than any human historian. Of those guests at the banquet of Belshazzar it is said, “I will make them drunken, that they may rejoice, and sleep a perpetual sleep, and not awake. . . . I will bring them down like lambs to the slaughter.” Then as if the eye of the prophet failed to separate Satan from the kingdom which he had so long controlled, he exclaims, “How is Sheshach taken! and how is the praise of the whole earth surprised! How is Babylon become an astonishment among the nations!” Fire raged through the streets, and as the people realized that destruction was upon them, their cry reached heaven. It was a hand-to-hand fight with fire and sword until men grew weary and gave up the struggle.

“In that night was Belshazzar slain,” and the kingdom was given to Darius, the aged king of the Medes. Thus came to an end one of the proudest monarchies that has ever been upon the earth. When an individual or a nation fills up the cup of iniquity and passes the limit of God’s mercy, it is quickly humbled in the dust.

The question naturally arises, Why did not the conquering army destroy Daniel, who was the third ruler in the kingdom, at this critical moment? The answer is simple and natural. When the kingdom was taken and Belshazzar slain, Nabonadius, the first ruler, at the head of an army, was surrounded by the enemy in another part of the kingdom. This left Daniel sole ruler in Babylon. He, knowing that over one hundred years before, Isaiah had

prophesied that Cyrus should take the kingdom, was ready to welcome him whom God had said should build the house of the Lord at Jerusalem.

There is also good reason to believe that Daniel and Cyrus were not strangers, When excluded from the council of Belshazzar, Daniel had spent a portion of his time at Shushan, the capital of Elam. Elam had revolted from Babylon, in fulfillment of the prophecy of Jeremiah.

Daniel may have formed an acquaintance with Cyrus and showed to him, as the high priest did to Alexander on a certain occasion, the prophecy that pertained to himself, and also revealed to him the way God had said he should enter Babylon. It is evident from the wording of the decree given in the first chapter of Ezra, that Cyrus was familiar with these prophecies.

God gives continual opportunities for His people to prepare the way for blessings to come to them, when they are walking in the light. God is never taken by surprise, but His Word is a lamp to the feet and a guide to the life. This illustrates the importance of God's people "knowing the time" in which they live from the light of prophecy. There is a Witness in every scene of sacrilegious mirth, and the recording angel writes, "Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting." This same Witness is with us wherever we are. Although we may feel that we have liberty, and indulge in lightness and trifling, yet an account must be rendered for these things. As we sow, so shall we reap.

Nations to-day are repeating the history of the last years of the kingdom of Babylon. Medo-Persia was the instrument in the Lord's hands to punish Babylon. The next great overthrow of governments will usher in the kingdom of our Lord. For the final battle, nations are now mustering their forces. The cry has gone forth, "Flee out of the midst of Babylon, and deliver every man his soul; be not cut off in her iniquity; for this is the time of the Lord's vengeance."

7. Daniel in the Lion's Den

DANIEL CHAPTER 6.

THE first five chapters of the book of Daniel relate the history of the kingdom of Babylon. With the close of the fifth chapter, the government is transferred to the Medes, of whom Darius, known in history as Darius the Mede, a man of sixty-two years, is king. With him is associated Cyrus, the Persian, the leader of the army, and heir to the throne. The time represented by the golden head of the image has passed, and a baser metal represents the rising power. The Medes were not, however, a new or unknown power, for they are mentioned in chronology as descendents of Japheth, and as early as the eighth century B.C., when Israel was taken captive by the Assyrians, they were scattered through the cities of the Medes. This had brought the Medes into contact with the Jews two centuries before the fall of Babylon. To their knowledge of the God of the Jews may be attributed the purity of their worship, for while they were heathens, they had never fallen into gross forms of idolatry which were practiced by most of the nations of Western Asia.

The habits of both the Medes and the Persians, but more particularly of the Persians, brought them in close touch with nature, and in their worship they took the elements, —fire, earth, water, and air — as the highest manifestations of the Deity. They therefore sought a hill country, and kept a perpetual fire burning. They believed in the struggle between good and evil as represented by light and darkness, and doubtless the words of Isaiah, which are addressed to Cyrus, had this belief in mind, for the Lord says, “I form the light and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil; I the Lord do all these things.” In these words He places Himself above the gods of the Persians, and explains why He called Cyrus to his strange work.

The Persians at the time of the overthrow of Babylon were physically strong and rugged, due in great measure to the simplicity of their habits and their temperance in eating. Such were the conditions which made it possible for the Medes and Persians to be the rod in the Lord's hand for the punishment as effected by the Babylonian monarchs is given in the first verse of the sixth chapter, for Darius immediately placed one hundred and twenty princes over the one hundred and twenty provinces. This change in the

administration of the government of the provinces is highly important, since the strength of the ruling monarch is in proportion to the sympathy and co-operation of the subject princes. It was impossible to maintain a representative government where there were conquered provinces, and peace depended much upon the strength of the central organization. Over the one hundred and twenty princes were the three presidents, of whom Daniel was the first.

It was not after the order of the world that Daniel, belonging to a race held in bondage, should at once be given one of the highest positions in newly organized government. It will appear still more unusual when it is remembered that Daniel had been made third ruler of the Babylonian kingdom under Belshazzar. Reference to the first and second verses of the eighth chapter of Daniel shows that Daniel was not a stranger to the new government, for before the death of Belshazzar, he had lived at Shushan, in the province of Elam. to the fact of acquaintance it may be added that the excellent spirit and unsurpassed business ability of Daniel brought him into prominence.

Here is recorded the case of a man who was a devout follower of God, one whose honesty, accuracy, and skill in every particular were a wonder to the world. It is a powerful witness to the duties and privileges of every Christian business man. He was a noble statesman, an example for all office-holders, but not a politician. Enter not into the paths of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men. Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away. Prov. 4:14, 15. He fulfilled his duties under the Medes just as faithfully as under the Babylonians. He served the God of heaven, and not a man-made party. A business man does not necessarily have to be a sharp, policy man, but may be instructed by God at every step. When prime minister of Babylon, Daniel, as a prophet of God, was receiving the light of heavenly inspiration. The usual type of statesman, — worldly, ambitious, scheming, -is compared in the Scriptures to the grass of the field, and to the fading flower. The Lord is pleased to have men of intelligence in His work if they remain true to Him. Through the grace of Christ, man may preserve the integrity of his character when surrounded by adverse circumstances. Daniel made God his strength, and was not forsaken in his time of greatest need.

The very position which he occupied put Daniel to the severest test. As chairman or chief of the presidents over the princes, Daniel was obliged to

deal with all the under- rulers of the empire. One by one they were required to render an account to him. This was that the king might receive no damage. The king, then, was in danger; not in danger of losing his life, but these officials were scheming politicians who were robbing the government in every possible way. If they had taxes to gather, they turned a large per cent to their own account. There was bribery, cheating, wire pulling, and buying of positions in the Babylonian government, as there is in the world to-day. Dishonesty was found everywhere.

Inspiration does not describe the iniquity in detail, but it does say, “The godly is perished out of the earth; ...they hunt every man his brother with a net. That they may do evil with both hands earnestly, the prince asketh, and the judge asketh for a reward; and the great man, he uttereth his mischievous desire: so they wrap it up.” The princes and men in power not only work mischievously, but they work with “both hands earnestly.” If details are wanted, study the governments of to-day. They are the offshoots from that same root of Babylon, and by studying the iniquity of to-day, we can show the sins against which Daniel had to stand. Even in the best of earthly governments, hundreds of thousands of dollars are used annually in an unlawful manner. When \$3,500 is paid for a single vote, and the individual returns the money because he has an offer of \$3,700 from the other party; when the mayor of a city can afford to spend three or four times his salary to obtain an office, it must be known that money comes from some unlawful source.

Roman history, with its stories of trusts, monopolies, and corporations, its bribery in the senate and outside the senate, is the history of Babylon, for Rome was one of the governments which were built upon Babylonian principles. French history during the period of the Revolution repeats the story. The history of England, the continental countries, and the United States to-day repeat the same story. So in current history may be read in detail what had to be met by the prime minister in the city of Babylon. The sixth chapter of Daniel is left on record to show how a man of God, when elevated to such a position, can remain uncontaminated. It shows that attitude which any man of God must assume toward popular vice and corruption, and more than that, it shows what treatment a man who is true to principle must expect to receive from the hands of those who are corrupt.

Because Daniel did guard the king's interests, Darius was about to set him over the whole realm. But the honesty of one man is like a thorn in the flesh

of the unjust, and in their political meetings the princes and presidents sought to destroy the man who made accurate reports, and who was faultless in his dealings, “Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar’s,” is a principle of divine government, and from this principle Daniel could not be swerved.

One can imagine the language of the princes as they discussed the matter. Every scheme they had tried had been checked, and yet it was generally acknowledged that it would be useless to bring a complaint concerning the work of Daniel. There was but one possible way to condemn him, and that must be concerning his religion. Even on that point they dared not make open accusation, but must accomplish their end without revealing their object. Their contemptible, underhanded method of procedure brought them in conflict with the God of Daniel, not with Daniel as an individual.

With manifest respect for the king, and with words which flattered him, a committee of the princes waited upon Darius. The first words they spoke revealed that there was a plan on foot, for they said, “All the presidents of the kingdom, the governors,” and other officers had consulted together, when in truth they held secret meetings, and the chief of the presidents was kept in ignorance of the matter.

The king placed great confidence in his prime minister, and anything purporting to have his approval was accepted without further investigation. The form of a decree was presented to the king. It exalted Darius above all earthly monarchs, and attempted to place him above God. King Darius placed his seal upon the document, making it a law of the land, that for thirty days no man should bow down or worship or ask any petition, save of the king.

The heart of God was drawn toward Babylon. Heaven was bound very close to earth, notwithstanding the iniquity, for God’s chosen people were there, and the time of their deliverance drew near. While the Medes and the Persians knew about God, they did not know Him. An actual experience was needed, and God would manifest His power through that same faithful servant who had witnessed for Him sixty-eight years.

Daniel was true, noble, and generous. He was anxious to be at peace with all men, but would not permit any power to turn him aside from the path of duty. He was willing to obey those who had rule over him; but kings and decrees could not make him swerve from his allegiance to the King of kings.

He realized that compliance with Bible requirements was a blessing to both soul and body.

Daniel was aware of the purpose of his enemies to destroy his influence and his life; he knew of the decree, but it made no difference in his daily life. He did nothing unusual to provoke wrath, but in a straight-forward manner performed his accustomed duties, and three times a day, at his usual times for prayer, he went into his room, and with his windows open toward Jerusalem, earnestly pleaded with the God of heaven to give him strength to be faithful.

Daniel had a special meeting-place, and an appointed hour when he met the Lord, and these appointments were kept. There is a beauty in the thought of the soul connection between Daniel and Heaven. His spiritual life was an actual thing, a life which he lived as real and true as the physical life. The only life which his enemies knew or could comprehend was the physical life. To sever the intercourse with God would be as painful to Daniel as to deprive him of natural life; and as Christ withdrew to the mountains after days of soul-harrowing labor to be refilled with that life which He constantly imparted to the hungering multitudes, so Daniel sought God in prayer. It was only by these frequent times of spirit filling, as it were, that he had strength to meet the nervous strain of his official duties. When the outward pressure was greatest, then he had the greatest need of being filled, that the equilibrium might be maintained. Fifteen pounds to every square inch of surface on the body is the pressure under which we live physically. Why does it not crush us? Because the pressure is equal on all sides, and thus we are unconscious of it. It is but a type of the spiritual life. He who balances the clouds will so balance outward pressure with inward power, if we but let Him, that we never need be disturbed. If trials are great, open the soul to Heaven, and equalize the pressure by being filled from above.

Daniel did not and could not deny his Saviour by concealing himself in some corner of his room to pray. He knelt by the open window, toward Jerusalem. He did not pray in his heart, silently, he prayed aloud, as had been his custom before the decree was issued. Noble and true is the one who has God ruling in his heart. Underhanded and mean are the actions of those who yield to the influence of Satan. All that is noble in man is lost forever when such a leader is chosen. Satan was in the councils of those officials as they plotted against Daniel, and after the decree was signed, they set spies to catch him. They saw him kneel in his usual place of prayer;

three times each day they heard his voice raised in earnest supplication. It was enough; the accusation was made against that Daniel which is of the children of the captivity of Judah.”

For the first time the design of the counselors flashed across the mind of Darius. A decree signed by the king’s seal was unalterable in the kingdom of the Medes and Persians, yet the king spent the entire day pleading with those high in authority, and searching for some way of escape; but with Satanic smiles those princes met every argument with the words, “Know, O king, that the law of the Medes and Persians is, That no decree or statute which the king establisheth may be changed.”

When the hands of men are tied, when there is no power on earth to help, then is God’s opportunity. And Daniel’s prayer still ascended: “It is time for Thee, Lord, to work. Keep me in perfect harmony with Thee.” While his own heart was in sympathy with Heaven, there was no power on earth that could deprive him of his life, if God desired him to live.

Daniel and Darius met at the mouth of the lions’ den, but there was not another man in the realm so fitted to go inside as this same Daniel. Pressing the hand of his esteemed minister, Darius, said, “Thy God whom thou servest continually, He will deliver thee.” Daniel passed into the midst of the wild beasts of the forest, and a stone was brought and laid upon the mouth of the den. Probably some feared that friends and sympathizers of Daniel might come to the rescue, so the seal of the king was placed upon the stone, that the purpose might not be changed.

Satan exulted as he did years later when he saw the Son of God in the sepulcher, with a stone before the door, and the stone sealed with the Roman seal. But there was no more power to hold Daniel in the den of lions than to keep Christ in the grave. The angel came, not to the stone, but into the den, and one of the most precious times for Daniel was when he sat in the center of the cave, and those lions couched at his feet or fondly licked his hands.

There was a time when the lion and the lamb played together, and man was given dominion over the beasts of the earth. It was only after sin entered, and man took the life of the beasts, that they in turn sought to destroy man. Harmony with God will finally restore man to his God-given place as king over the beasts. Daniel’s heart was beating with the heart of God, and when he entered the den, the beasts were at peace with him. The unity of feeling is shown in the fact that an angel was visible, and Daniel talked face to face

with the heavenly visitor.

But the king's heart was sad, and he spent the night in fasting and prayer. Hastening to the den in the early hours of the morning, he called: "O Daniel, servant of the living God, is thy God, whom thou servest continually, able to deliver thee from the lions?" And from the recesses of the den came the words of cheer, "My God hath sent His angel, and hath shut the lions' mouths."

"He is not here, but risen." "Why seek ye the living among the dead?" said the angel, as the women came to the sepulcher of Christ. So no manner of hurt was found upon Daniel, the representative of Christ, "because he believed in his God," because innocency was found in him.

When Daniel's accusers were cast into the lions' den, they were crushed and devoured at once. Again the nations of the world saw the power of Israel's God to preserve His faithful people. Darius had his belief in God confirmed; and Cyrus had received a lesson he could not soon forget. It was a fresh token to the Israelites that God was in their midst to bless them. To Daniel came the voice of God promising patience and strength to perform his duties as a servant of God. Greater light came to Daniel, for it was after this experience that a large portion of the prophecies were given to him.

Darius published to "all people, nations, and languages, that dwell in all the earth," "that in every dominion of my kingdom men tremble and fear before the God of Daniel."

Thus God not only honored Daniel by a most miraculous deliverance, but his integrity was the means of publishing the truth throughout the world. From this time Daniel prospered — during the reign of Darius, and in the reign of Cyrus, who issued the wonderful decree for the deliverance of the Jews.

If sick at heart because of the seeming prosperity of the wicked and the increase of wickedness among men in high places, learn their fate from the sixth chapter of Daniel.

If oppressed because of adherence to the Word of God, remember that Daniel represents all such, and what was done for him will be done for all whom Heaven favors to-day. Though death claim the body, the promise of God is a speedy resurrection; and whether in death, in prison, or in a den of lions, Satan has no power over Christ. "I am come that ye might have life, and that ye might have it more abundantly."

8. The Judgment Scene

THE first half of the book of Daniel deals with questions pertaining particularly to the kingdom of Babylon as it existed in the days of the prophet. The last six chapters are devoted entirely to the history of the world as a whole, and in visions given at various times, the prophet is shown the great events until the end of time. Looking into the future, he sees, as it were, the mountain peaks lighted with the glory of God, and these striking features are noted with unerring accuracy to serve as guideposts, not to the Jews only, but to all people, that they may understand the times in which they live, and know what is about to come on the earth.

To the student of prophecy, the seventh chapter of Daniel is a most important record. By a continuous chain of events, the prophet gives the history from the days of Babylon to the great investigative judgment, which is the central theme of the chapter.

The fact that God could open the future to a heathen king was remarkable. To Nebuchadnezzar the future of earthly governments only was shown, because he himself was earthly, and was incapable of grasping higher things; but to Daniel God opened scenes in heaven. Although the prophet was shown the history of nations, the angel of revelation touched briefly on those subjects, but lingered on the soul- thrilling description of the investigative judgment.

The seventh chapter of Daniel reveals the future of God's people, not only of the Hebrew nation, but the true, the spiritual Israel. This vision was given to Daniel in the first year of the reign of Belshazzar, about 540 B.C. The mere giving of this view bears the strongest testimony to the results of Daniel's education when a youth, to his steadfastness of purpose, and his growth in spiritual things. At the age of eighty-five, after sixty-seven years of court life, with all its allurements, and the natural tendency of human nature to sink to a purely physical existence, his eye of faith was so undimmed that at the bidding of Michael, Gabriel could carry Daniel into heaven itself, there to behold the Father and the Son in the final work of the sanctuary above. Moses once saw these things from the top of Mount Horeb when the tabernacle was to be built, and so great was the glory that he had to veil his face before common people could behold him. Daniel's heart

was with God, hence things which eye hath not seen nor ear heard, could be revealed to him by the Spirit.

God said by the prophet Hosea, "I have spoken by the prophets, and I have multiplied visions, and used similitudes, by the ministry of the prophets." The kingdoms which have ruled the world were represented before Daniel as beasts of prey, which arose when the "four winds of the heaven strove upon the great sea." Winds are, in prophecy, a symbol of war and strife. The after-scenes of war and revolution, by which kingdoms come into power, are represented in the seventh chapter of Daniel by the four winds of heaven which strove upon the great sea. Sea or waters denote "people, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues." The beasts referred to represent kings or kingdoms.

Four great beasts came up from the sea; that is, they arose into prominence from the midst of the multitudes of earth. In other words, there was war among the nations, and four kingdoms arose, diverse from one another. Babylon, the first of these kingdoms, was represented to Nebuchadnezzar as the golden head of the great image. To Daniel the same power appeared as a lion, having eagles' wings. The strength of the monarch of the forest, to which is added the swiftness of the king of birds, is taken to represent the kingdom of which the city of Babylon was the capital. Over fifty years before, Jeremiah had spoken of the Babylonian power as a lion.

Before Babylon was known as an independent kingdom, while it was still a subject province of Assyria, Habakkuk, a prophet of Israel, had been given a view of its work which shows the force of the symbol of a lion with eagles' wings. Speaking to Israel, he tells them of a work so wonderful that they will not believe it when told. "Lo, I raise up the Chaldeans, that bitter and hasty nation, which shall march through the breadth of the land, to possess the dwelling places that are not theirs. They are terrible and dreadful.... Their horses also are swifter than leopards, and are more fierce than the evening wolves.... They shall fly as the eagle that hasteth to eat. They shall come all for violence; ... they shall gather the captivity as the sand. And they shall scoff at the kings, and the princes shall be a scorn unto them; they shall deride every stronghold."

This is Babylon as Habakkuk saw it. While Daniel watched the same kingdom in his vision, the noble lion with its wings, denoting power and rapidity of conquest, had been lifted up from the earth into an unnatural position, and made to stand upon its feet as a man, and a man's heart was

given to it. Man's heart without Christ is simply sin. The wings were shorn, and then Babylon was represented as it existed at the time of the vision, bereft of its strength, abandoned by God, with Belshazzar standing at the head of the government.

The prophet Habakkuk gives the reason for this sudden weakening of the mighty power of Babylon. He says, "Then shall his mind change, and he shall pass over, and offend, imputing his power unto his god." The history of the kingdom as given in previous chapters shows how and when this was done. Babylon committed the unpardonable sin by imputing the power and Spirit of God to the gods of the heathen. In this act the lion was shorn of its strength, the wings were plucked, and a man's heart was given to it. A few years after this vision, in the year 538 B.C., Daniel was a witness to the complete overthrow of the kingdom.

The Medo-Persian kingdom was bloodthirsty and cruel in its nature, and is represented by a bear. Darius was a Mede; and Cyrus, the leading general, a Persian. Darius the Mede took the Babylonian kingdom, and ruled for a short time. Cyrus the Persian was the leading spirit in the government after Darius had passed away. The bear, as well as the other beasts which followed the lion, represented kingdoms yet in the future at the time Daniel saw the vision. The bear of the seventh chapter of Daniel symbolizes the same power as the ram of the eighth chapter which the angel there tells the prophet represented the Medo-Persian empire. The history of this empire, given in the eleventh chapter of the book of Daniel, and the study of that chapter together with the thirteenth and twenty-first chapters of Isaiah and the book of Esther, will reveal the bear-like character of the nation which arose and devoured much flesh. The history of the second great kingdom covers the years from 538 to 331 B.C.

After the Medo-Persian kingdom arose and fell, there came forth another kingdom of an entirely different nature from that represented by the bear. In the explanation of the vision of the eighth chapter of Daniel, the angel plainly states that the nation following Media and Persia is Grecia. The Grecian kingdom, which followed Media and Persia, is compared to the sprightliness of a leopard in its natural state. This not being sufficient to represent the rapidity of the conquests of Alexander, the first king, the leopard had on its back four wings of a fowl. It also had four heads, which symbolized the division of Alexander's empire after his death, when four of his generals took his kingdom and dominion was given to them. Alexander's

power is represented by the goat with the notable horn, which stamped all beneath its feet, as described in the eighth chapter of Daniel.

The history of the first three kingdoms is but lightly touched upon in this chapter, but when the fourth beast, “dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly,” appeared, Daniel “would know the truth,” and the angel explained that power minutely.

The three preceding powers were symbolized by three of the mightiest beasts of the earth, but when the fourth beast was considered, there was no animal with a character to represent its terrible nature; so a beast without name having iron teeth, brass nails, and ten horns, was presented to the prophet.

The angel said to Daniel, “As concerning the rest of the beasts, they had their dominion taken away; yet their lives were prolonged.” Each one, before being destroyed, was merged into the succeeding one, and its characteristic principles are represented in succession until the end of time. This is clearly shown in the second chapter of Daniel, where the gold, silver, brass, iron, and clay are broken to pieces together and blown away like the chaff, when all earthly nations are destroyed. The same truth was represented in the fourth chapter, when the tree representing Babylon was cut down, but the roots remained in the ground. The roots represented the foundation principles upon which Babylon was built, and they have remained in the earth ever since. When Medo-Persia fell, she left her principles of government, education, and religion still alive, transmitting them to her posterity, the nations of earth. Greece did likewise, and with each succeeding empire those foundation principles, so clearly portrayed in Babylon, which were placed there by the prince of the power of the air, instead of appearing in a weakened state, sprang into life with renewed vigor. So it was that when the fourth kingdom appeared, those same principles of government, which were the counterfeit of heaven’s underlying principles, were so strong that no natural beast could symbolize even pagan Rome.

Rome in religion renewed all the religious errors of Babylon, and in education she perpetuated the errors of Greece, while in cruelty she followed in the footsteps of Media and Persia. But as the prophet watched, things still more wonderful appeared. The fourth beast, representing Rome, which succeeded Greece in 161 B.C., had ten horns, which, said the angel, “are ten kings that shall arise.” This fourth beast is identical with the legs of

iron in the image shown to Nebuchadnezzar, and the ten horns correspond to the mixture of iron and clay in the feet of that image. Each of the preceding kingdoms had fallen into the hands of some strong general who took the rule, but with Rome the case was different. The details of this history are given in the eighth chapter of Revelation under the symbol of the seven trumpets. Barbarian hordes from the north of Europe and Asia swept over the Roman empire between the years 351 and 483 A.D., crushing the government into ten parts. The ten kingdoms which arose as the result of the breaking up of the old Roman kingdom are: the Huns, the Ostrogoths, the Visigoths, the Franks, the Suevi, the Anglo-Saxons, and the Lombards. The connection between these and the nations of modern Europe, can readily be traced in the names, as France, England, Lombardy, Burgundy, etc.

There was a time when the Roman empire had a most wonderful opportunity to accept the true God. Rome was the universal kingdom during the life of Christ. To Babylon God sent His people, the Jews, to scatter the truths of His kingdom, and lead men to repentance. The Medes and the Persians received the gospel from this same people, and representatives from Greece went to Jerusalem, into the very temple, in touch with the priests, in order that there might be no excuse for their refusing Christ. But to the Roman kingdom heaven itself was poured out in the person of the Saviour, and it was Rome that nailed Him to the cross. It was a Roman seal on His tomb, and a Roman guard at His grave. The early church suffered persecution at the hands of this same power. Judgment came on Rome when these barbarians overran the empire with fire and sword, and the kingdom was divided into ten parts.

He shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time.
Dan.7:25.

But Roman history did not end with the division. Daniel watched, “and, behold, there came up among them another little horn, before which there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots.” A new power, one outside the empire, is here represented by the little horn. The three divisions which were plucked up were the Heruli in 493, the Vandals in 534, and the Ostrogoths in 538 A.D. Justinian, the emperor, whose seat was at Constantinople, working through his general Belisarius, was the power that overthrew the three kingdoms represented by the three horns, and the reason

for their overthrow was their adherence to Arianism in opposition to the orthodox Catholic faith. The details of the overthrow, and the religious controversy which was the root of the trouble, are fully given by Gibbon in the "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire," by Mosheim in his church history, and by others.

The little horn which gained power by plucking up three horns, was diverse from all the others. It had eyes "like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking great things;" his look also was more stout than his fellows.

Rome was dropping into ruin; her cities had been sacked, her government broken. As from the decaying log of the marsh the mushroom springs up in a night, gaining its life from the decay, so there arose in the Roman empire a power which was nourished by this national decay. This power was the little horn known as the papacy.

It is written that Babylon, the mother of harlots, fell because of imputing her power unto the gods of the heathen. Pagan Rome fell because she presumed to hold authority over the person of Christ and His followers. Then arose the little horn, and it "made war with the saints, and prevailed against them." "He shall speak great words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High, and think to change times and laws."

Rome in the days of Christ was the center of the world. Paul and others preached the gospel in that city. A church was organized there and for years this church of Rome ranked with the churches of Jerusalem, Constantinople, and others. Gradually but surely, worldliness took the place of the Spirit of Christ, and Roman bishops became exalted. The mystery of iniquity of which Paul wrote in his letter to the Thessalonians, was at work in Rome. At the time of the division of the empire the bishops were greedy for civil power, and in the time of national distress the church grasped the reins of government; the little horn had received power. This was in A.D. 538, when the last of the three horns was plucked up, and the decree made by Justinian in 533, recognizing the bishop of Rome as head over all the churches, went into effect. (See Gibbon, chapter 41.) Paganism on the throne had been cruel enough, but when those pagan principles which had lived since the days of Babylon took the name and outward form of Christianity, the power which bore sway was still more cruel. Not only would the little horn speak stout words against the Most High, but it would "presume to change the appointed times and the law." (Spurrell's trans.)

Unholy hands had been laid in years past upon the temple of God and the consecrated vessels in the temple, and upon God's people, but the little horn laid hands upon the very law of God, attempting to change the Sabbath of the fourth commandment. The little horn had all the power of Babylon. In government it was an absolute monarchy, holding authority over all the thrones of Europe. Kings rose and fell at the dictates of Rome. From a religious viewpoint, it was the ruling power, dictating to the consciences of men, bringing them before its tribunal and peering into their very thoughts. The rack and the inquisition were its instruments, and no man escaped the scrutiny of the man's eyes in the little horn. The means by which this power was maintained was its system of education, which kept Europe in darkness for over one thousand years.

This was a long-lived kingdom. "They [the saints, the times, and the law] would be given into his hands for a time and times and the dividing of time." [The reader is referred to Dan. 11:13, margin; also Dan. 12:7, and to Rev. 12:6; 13:5, and Num. 14:34 for different expressions giving the same time and referring to the same power.] This time -three and one-half years, or forty-two months, or twelve hundred and sixty days, as it is variously designated — began in 538, when three horns were plucked up to make way for the establishment of this one power, the little horn. It continued until 1798, when its dominion was taken away. Its power, however, is not yet destroyed.

Daniel in his vision was shown not only earthly kingdoms and powers, but after listening to the voice of the little horn, which spake great words against the Most High, his attention was called to scenes in the heavenly court which would transpire simultaneously with the fulfillment of the prophecy concerning the nations of the earth.

It was during the time when the fourth beast had dominion and power that the Saviour was crucified. He was the Lamb slain in the outer court, and on His ascension He entered the holy place of the heavenly sanctuary. There He was seen by John as described in the fourth and fifth chapters of Revelation. But this work in the holy place was only a part of the Saviour's ministry for mankind. The time came when He must perform in heaven that service of which the day of atonement in the earthly sanctuary was the type. Spurrell renders the ninth verse: "I beheld until the thrones were pitched [Revised Version, placed], when the Ancient of days was enthroned [or did sit] in judgment. His raiment was white as snow, the hair of His head like pure

wool, His throne was flames of fire, His rolling wheels the ardent flame.”

THE LAW OF GOD.

I. Thou shalt have no other gods before me.

II. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me, and showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.

III. Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain: for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.

IV. Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work: but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor the daughter, thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it.

V. Honor thy father and thy mother, that thy days maybe long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.

VI. Thou shalt not kill.

VII. Thou shalt not commit adultery.

VIII. Thou shalt not steal.

IX. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.

X. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife, nor his man-servant, nor his maid-servant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbor's.

THE LAW AS CHANGED BY THE PAPACY.

I. I am the Lord thy God: thou shalt not have strange gods before me.

II. Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.

III. Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath day.

IV. Honor thy father and thy mother.

V. Thou shalt not kill.

VI. Thou shalt not commit adultery.

VII. Thou shalt not steal.

VIII. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.

IX. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife.

X. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's goods.

Here within the holy of holies is the abiding place of the King of kings, God the Father, where thousands and tens of thousands of angels minister before Him. This, the throne of God, is the center of all creation; about it revolve the solar systems throughout the whole extent of space. Worlds circle about their suns, and suns with their attendant planets in turn circle about the throne of God. It is the wheel within a wheel which Ezekiel describes. Daniel said, "A fiery stream issued and came forth from before Him," for there all is life, a living, constantly moving throne.

God's power pervades space in every direction. Like beams of light, there radiates from Him a force which holds worlds in their orbits. The power man calls gravity is but a portion of the drawing power of God. It holds the orbs of heaven in their places, it balances the clouds, weighs the mountains, and measures the waters of the sea. The same power notes the fall of every leaf on earth, the death of the tiniest sparrow, and the pulse beats of every man. From Him comes all life: "in Him we live and move and have our being."

The Son was one with the Father, and it was from this glory that He stepped when He offered Himself at the foundation of the world. He was the Lamb slain, and the heart of God was broken in that offering. Every time the knife was plunged into a victim at the altar of the earthly sanctuary, the flowing

blood touched afresh the heart of the eternal Father. Every time a broken-hearted man or woman approaches the throne in penitence, the Father's heart is touched. "The broken and the contrite heart Thou wilt not despise, O God." Never, never, throughout all eternity, will that Son resume His former condition. What he assumed for fallen man He will retain forever. He is a man still in the heavenly court, touched by every human woe. The universe beheld the gift, and bowed in adoration.

The temple is filled with the glory. There seraphim and cherubim with their shining glory, as guardians, stretch their wings above His throne, veil their faces in adoration, and bow before Him.

"Oh, instruct us what we shall say of Him; we can not do justice because of our ignorance. ... If a man venture to speak, surely he shall be overwhelmed.

"We can not even now gaze upon the light of the sun when it shineth forth in the heavens; and the wind passing along hath cleared the sky. But what splendor from the holy of holies shall appear! With God is insufferable majesty! The Almighty! we can not comprehend Him!" — Spurrell's Translation.

The door into the holy of holies was opened in 1844, and "behold, one like the Son of Man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought Him near before Him."

No words could be framed that would give a more vivid view of the opening of the judgment, which occurred at the time of the announcement, "The hour of His judgment is come." In the seventh chapter of Daniel is the only description found in the Bible of the judgment scene announced by the first angel of the fourteenth chapter of Revelation. The message itself is the only announcement in the Bible that the time had arrived; and the fourteenth verse of the eighth chapter of Daniel is the only prophetic period given in the Bible which marks the time of the beginning of God's judgment. That period is the twenty- three hundred days, or literal years, which began in the year 457 B.C., with the decree to build and restore Jerusalem, and expired in 1844, A.D. It was at this latter date that the first angel of the fourteenth chapter of Revelation proclaimed the hour of God's judgment. The message went to all lands, and the islands of the sea heard it.

When God had taken His position over His law in the most holy place in the

heavenly sanctuary, then Christ came into plead before Him for His people. This coming could not have been when He ascended up on high; for then He ascended to the Father, and the judgment was in the future. It cannot refer to His second coming to this earth; for then He comes from the Father. It was His coming before the Father when He took His position in the judgment at the end of the twenty-three hundred days. He came before the father surrounded by the clouds of heaven; that is, with thousand of angels who, as ministering spirits, have watched the lives of men, recording their every word and deed and thought. Characters have been formed, and whether they are good or bad, they have been mirrored in the books of heaven. When Christ came before the Father, the books were opened and the cases of the dead began to be investigated. The deeds may have been committed in the light of day, or in the darkness of night, yet they are all open and manifest before Him with whom we have to do. Heavenly intelligences have witnessed each sin, and have faithfully recorded the same. Sin may be concealed from friends, relatives, and our most intimate associates. None but the guilty actors may have the least knowledge of wrong deeds, but these things are all laid bare before the angels and the inhabitants of other worlds. The darkest of all dark nights, the deepest-laid plot of individuals or nations, can not hide even one thought from the heavenly intelligences. God has a faithful record of every crooked dealing, of every sin and unjust practice. If the inward heart is full of hypocrisy, an outward appearance of uprightness can not deceive Him.

As one by one these names are read, the Saviour holds up His hands, still bearing the imprints of the nails of Calvary, and cries, "My blood, Father, my blood, my blood." Above His throne is the rainbow; mercy and justice mingle there. God's heart is touched by the pleadings of His Son, and pardon is written opposite the name. Then through the arches of heaven, a shout of triumph resounds. The angels cast their crowns before the throne, crying, "Holy, holy, holy!"

For over sixty years the work of the investigative judgment has been in progress. It is fast drawing to a close. Before it closes, it will settle the case of every living man and woman. Day by day we are making the record which will determine our future for weal or woe. How solemn the thought that words once uttered, actions once performed, can never be changed. The atoning blood of Christ is offered to-day. "To-day if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts."

The life of the fourth beast, especially of the little horn, was prolonged beyond the time of the investigative judgment. even after the thrones were set and the work in the holy of holies was begun, the great words of the little horn attracted the attention of the prophet. The greatest word ever spoken against God was the decree of infallibility issued by the ecumenical council in 1870. This was the attempt to seat a man on the throne beside the Son of God. While Christ stood as a slain Lamb before the Father, pleading for the salvation of the world, poor, frail man was exalting his throne above the stars of God.

Babylon fell because she imputed her power unto the gods. Of the fourth beast Daniel says, "I beheld till the beast was slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame." Thus at the end, instead of being conquered by some other power arising on earth, this power goes into the lake of fire. The other beasts which represent kingdoms, had their dominion taken away, yet their lives were prolonged for a time and a season; that is, each was merged into the succeeding kingdom. But not so with the fourth kingdom; its destruction will be complete.

The fifth kingdom, which is the heavenly, the kingdom of God, is not in human hands. God Himself will establish it under the whole heaven, and it will exist forever and ever. "The kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High." Those who are accounted worthy in the investigative judgment will come forth in the first resurrection, or will be translated without seeing death, and will reign with Christ forever and ever. Sin, with all who have clung to it, will be forever destroyed. The pride and arrogance of Babylon of old, her iniquity of every form which has been repeated by all the nations of the earth, together with the instigator of all evil, will at last be blotted out. The end of the controversy is reached. The triumph of truth is witnessed by all created beings. The scar which sin has made is gone forever. The discord which for six thousand years has marred the universe, is forgotten. The music of the spheres is taken up anew, and man reigns with his Creator. "Hitherto is the end of the matter." What wonder that the vision trouble Daniel, and that his countenance changed! The matchless love of Christ, who can understand?

9. The Eighth Chapter of Daniel

A PERIOD of two years had passed since the vision recorded in the seventh chapter of Daniel. The prophet's mind had dwelt often upon the scenes which his eye then beheld, and the subject of the judgment had been pondered again and again. He kept the matter in his heart, he himself says, for in the days of Daniel, as at the present time, only the few could comprehend and appreciate spiritual topics. Many changes of a material nature had taken place during those two years. Wickedness had increased in the kingdom of Babylon, and no reverence whatever was shown for God or His people. This saddened the heart of Daniel. He who for years had been the chief counselor in the empire, now no longer dwelt in the capital, but had his residence in the palace at Shushan. Shushan was the capital of Elam, which was formerly a subject province of the kingdom of Babylon, but as that empire began to weaken, and the strength of Cyrus, the Persian general, was recognized, Elam, under Abradates, the viceroy or prince, had revolted from Babylon, and joined the forces of the Persians. Years before this, the prophet Isaiah had said that Elam and Media would join forces in the conquest of Babylon. As Daniel lived in the palace of Shushan, he saw the way opening for the fulfillment of this prophecy. If Babylon was not already undergoing a siege at the hands of Cyrus and Darius, her downfall was so imminent that in this vision the history of nations begins with the rising kingdom of the Medes and Persians.

Daniel was transported to the river Ulai, by the side of which stood a ram having two horns, one higher than the other, and the higher came up last. In his previous vision the second kingdom had been represented by a bear which raised itself on one side and had three ribs in its mouth. Both symbols apply to the double nature of the kingdom of the Medes and Persians, but the uneven horns of the ram give a more specific description; for while the Median kingdom was the older of the two, the Persian excelled it in strength, and its position in history must be attributed to the line of Persian kings which began with Cyrus the Great. The definiteness with which this symbol is interpreted is an illustration of the fact that the Scriptures are their own best commentaries. Said the angel, "The ram which thou sawest having two horns are the kings of Media and Persia."

As the ram pushed westward, northward, and southward, and no beast could

stand before it, so the Medo-Persian empire extended its dominion in these directions. At the fall of Babylon one hundred and twenty provinces recognized the authority of Cyrus and Darius. These were held in subjection, and others added, so that in the time of the Ahasuerus of Esther, the kingdom controlled one hundred and twenty-seven provinces, extending from India on the east to the Mediterranean on the west, and from the Caspian Sea to Ethiopia. It was then called a glorious kingdom, and the monarch was spoken of as “his excellent majesty.” The same facts are made prominent in the eleventh chapter of Daniel, where Xerxes, the fourth from Cyrus, stirs up all the Eastern nations to war with Greece: “He did according to his will, and became great.”

Nevertheless, the greatness of the second kingdom did not insure length of life, and the prophet was shown a he goat coming from the west, and, as Spurrell’s translation gives it, “rushing over the face of the whole earth, without touching the ground.” The goat had a notable horn between his eyes. In the interpretation the angel said, “The rough goat is the king [or kingdom] of Grecia, and the great horn ... is the first king.” The kingdom of Greece was described in the previous vision (Dan. 7:6), but at the time now under consideration, the details of its rise are given. The eleventh chapter states that the fourth kingdom after Cyrus should stir up the nations against Greece. This was done when Xerxes crossed the Hellespont with a large army in 480 B.C. His army is said by Herodotus to have numbered over a million and a half. It was a gathering of nations, and so vast was the army that seven days were required to pass from Asia to Greek soil. But in spite of all preparations, the Persian army was defeated at Thermopylae, at Salamis, and at Plataea, and Xerxes, discouraged and disheartened, gave over the attempt to invade Greece. Prophecy had foretold that when Medo-Persia and Greece should contend, Greece would be the aggressive power.

Later, the he goat, Greece, came toward the ram, Medo-Persia, “and rushed upon him in the heat of his strength. And I saw him coming up close to the ram, and he was exceedingly embittered against him, and smote the ram, and brake his two horns, so that there was no strength in the ram to stand before him, for he threw him down to the ground, and trampled on him; neither could any one deliver the ram from his grasp.” — Spurrell.

No historian has ever given a more graphic account of the contest between the Greeks under Alexander the Great and the Persians under Darius. That kingdom which before had shown such wonderful strength, crumbled and

fell, and there was none to help. She had passed her probation and filled the cup of her iniquity. Michael, the Lord of heaven, had stood at the right hand of the Persian monarch on the throne to persuade him, and yet he had resisted the divine influence, and that kingdom which had been a rod in the hand of God to overthrow Babylon in its wickedness, repeated her sins, and in turn met the same fate. Although the Persians restored the Jews to Jerusalem, that could not save them. It is only as nations or individuals continue in a love of the truth, only as they partake constantly of the leaves of the tree of life, that their existence is prolonged.

The ram and the goat met on a river. The first successful battle fought by the Grecians against the Medes was on the banks of the Granicus, a stream of Asia Minor. This was in the year 334 B.C. Already the victory of Greece was recorded in the books of heaven. The battle at Granicus was soon followed by the defeat of the Medo-Persian forces at the pass of Issus, and the third and overwhelming defeat was on the plains of Arbela, 331 B.C. None could deliver the sinking cause of the Medo-Persian empire from the hands of the victorious Alexander.

Alexander stands without a rival for the rapidity of his conquests. He was but a young man of twenty when, by the death of his father, Philip of Macedon, he fell heir to a small dominion. He united the Greek states, placed himself at the head of affairs, and led her armies in a series of wonderful victories. In the space of a few short years he was the recognized master of the world. He who rose to the highest position the world could offer, fell equally as suddenly. He had conquered kingdoms, but was not master of his own passions. His love of praise led him to have himself proclaimed Son of Jupiter-Ammon in Egypt, and his love of drink caused his death at the age of thirty-two years, after a universal reign of only two years. Such was the fate of one who feared neither God or man. "The Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men."

"Promotion cometh neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south, but God is judge. He putteth down one and setteth up another."

"By strength shall no man prevail." There is no restraint of the Lord to save by many or by few.

"There is no king saved by the multitude of an host: a mighty man is not delivered by much strength. A horse is a vain thing for safety: neither shall he deliver any by his great strength. Behold, the eye of the Lord is upon them

that fear Him, upon them that hope in His mercy; to deliver their souls from death, and to keep them alive in famine.”

Truly the Lord “increaseth the nations, and destroyeth them; He enlargeth the nations, and destroyeth them; He enlargeth the nations, and straighteneth them again. He taketh away the heart of the people of the earth, and causeth them to wander in a wilderness where there is no way. They grope in the dark without light, and He maketh them to stagger like a drunken man.”

“When he was strong, the great horn was broken, and for it came up four notable ones toward the four winds of heaven.” Alexander left no heir capable of ruling the kingdom, and in less than twenty years of strife, his four leading generals succeeded in dividing the empire among themselves.

Ptolemy took Egypt and the southern territory; Seleucus took Syria and the eastern division; Lysimachus took Asia Minor and territory to the north; while Cassander took possession of Greece, the western division. These four men had not the power of Alexander. The prophetic history of these four divisions is given in the eleventh chapter of Daniel.

In the division under consideration, the prophet sees a little horn coming forth from one of these four divisions. Here is brought to view the power symbolized by the fourth beast of the seventh chapter of Daniel. In his first vision the fourth beast was so terrible and had such a strange appearance that Daniel asked for a clearer explanation of its work. In his second vision the little horn is not named, but its work as a kingdom is still further portrayed. One feels while reading both the vision and the interpretation of the little horn, that he is coming into the presence of a power greater and more terrible than any which had hitherto existed. The accumulated forces of the evil of past ages is concentrated in this rising power, which waxed exceeding great. It was in truth the masterpiece from Satan’s workshop. Four thousand years of trial had not passed in vain. As heaven was about to be emptied in the gift of the Saviour, so all the fiendishness of the lower world was brought into play to counteract the love of God and destroy the effect of the sacrifice. There is a world of meaning in the words of the angel.

Said Gabriel, “His power shall be mighty, but not by his own power.” No merely human power could do what this kingdom did. As light and love and power come from above to those whose eyes are directed heavenward, so a power from beneath takes possession of individuals and nations which

resist the love of God. This kingdom “waxed exceeding great, toward the south, and toward the east, and toward the south, and toward the east, and toward the pleasant land.” Rome extended her territory around the Mediterranean; there was no place where her arms were not victorious. Some of the greatest battles which history records were fought by the Roman armies. The pen of Inspiration says, “He [the little horn] shall destroy wonderfully.” Cities which dared resist the power of Rome were blotted out of existence. In describing the government, the angel said, “He shall prosper and practice,” and “through his policy also he shall cause craft to prosper in his land.”

But aside from the strong central government which was built up by Rome; which brought every other nation to her feet, and made slaves of the noblest of races; which was robbing men of God-given rights, and violating every principle of equity and justice, — aside from all this, the great arrogance of Rome was displayed when the nation magnified itself against the host (church) of heaven. “Yea, he magnified himself even against [mar.] the Prince of the host.” “He shall also stand up against the Prince of princes.”

God’s people are precious in His sight, and he who touches them touches the apple of His eye. Rome first deprived the Jews of the right to worship, grinding that nation beneath the heel of oppression. Then Christ came, when the oppression was the most severe, that Rome might see God in human flesh. He came to identify Himself with that downtrodden people, and to show to men that God is always on the side of the oppressed and enslaved. He came to illustrate the workings of the Spirit in the human heart, and to prove that it is possible to have a heaven within, although outward circumstances are to the contrary.

But Rome crucified Him whom Heaven sent. The dragon was wroth, and made war with the seed of the woman — Christ — who had been promised when sin entered the world. This was paganism in its greatest strength. It was in its dying throes, but even in the agony of death it smote the truth.

What Satan could not accomplish through open opposition, he sought to accomplish by policy and strategy. Silently, stealthily, the principles of evil crept into the church of Christ, which had grown up in spite of the pagan opposition. The humility of the Son of God at first characterized the body of Christians, and therein lay the power of the early church. Christian mothers gathered their children about them as the Jewish mothers had done in the days of their prosperity. From infancy the truths of God’s Word were

implanted in their hearts; sacred songs were on their lips; the Word of God was the test-book from which all lessons were learned. Parents dared not allow their children to remain in the pagan schools, for the very atmosphere breathed of the heathen worship; the air was heavy with the odor of sacrifices to idols. They dared not sit at the table with those with whom they had once been familiar, for the food had been consecrated to idols. In the most careful way the rising generation was educated, and Christianity took the place of paganism.

But Satan could not see his power overthrown without making a desperate struggle, and by stealth he insinuated his principles into the new church. Wrangles, disputes, theological controversies drove out the spirit of life. Self-exaltation put men in power; the equal rights of all fell before the rising power of a hierarchy. The principle of trusts and monopolies, of unions and leagues, which had always characterized pagan society, twined its tendrils about the new organization of Christians, and choked its life. Paganism — the “daily” of Dan. 8:12 — was taken away, it is true, and Rome became nominally a Christian empire. Her emperor professed the name of Christ, and carried before his army the banner of the cross. Decrees were issued causing men to worship according to the dictates of Rome. Then it was that man — the emperor — and the empire attempted to exalt themselves above the God of heaven. The principles of Lucifer himself had crowded out the truth of Christ, and, as was shown to Daniel, the truth was cast down to the ground.

To John this transfer from paganism to the papacy is represented as a transfer of power from the dragon to the beast. Rev. 13:7. The eleventh and twelfth verses of the eighth chapter of Daniel are parallel with the twenty-first and twenty-fifth verses of the seventh chapter, where the little horn makes war with the saints, and speaks great words against the Most High, attempting to change His times and law. Twice Daniel had been shown the twofold history of Rome: first as a pagan power, when it was more cruel than any pagan government before it; and later as a professedly Christian power, when its cruelty far surpassed all the workings of paganism.

The prophet was heart-sick as he beheld these scenes and the deep sufferings of the people of God. He was unable to grasp the idea of the time when these events should occur, and thought that his own people, perhaps the very ones who were at that time in bondage to Babylon, would be called to suffer these things. The investigative judgment had been revealed to him,

when the cases of men would be tried and the oppressor condemned. The end also of this oppressive power he had been shown was the lake of fire, when Roman authority should be broken without hands. In Nebuchadnezzar's dream the end would come when the stone cut out without hands should smite the image and finally fill the whole earth. As these scenes passed like a panorama before the eye of the prophet, angels also watched, for they are interested in all that affects God's people on earth.

The universe has waited now six thousand years for the final issue between truth and error. It is not strange that angelic hosts wonder when the struggle will end, and when the song of songs can be taken up by the choir of heaven. These times are hidden with the Father, but man may understand some of the secrets of the Almighty. The interest Heaven manifests in these scenes of earth is shown by the thirteenth verse. One angel called to Gabriel, asking, "How long shall be the vision concerning the daily sacrifice [pagan Rome], and the transgression of desolation [the papacy], to give both the sanctuary and the host to be trodden under foot?" And Gabriel answered, "Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed."

Daniel long for an understanding of what he had seen, and the close connection of what he had seen, and the close connection between human longing and Christ's heart is shown here; for Christ, appearing as a man, stood before the prophet, and to Gabriel He said, "Make this man to understand the vision." Gabriel drew near, and before his exceeding brightness Daniel fell upon the ground with his face to the earth. Then, as if to lift the strain from the mind of him who carried Israel on his heart, he said, "Understand, O son of man: for at the time of the end shall be the vision. ... I will make thee know what shall be in the last end of the indignation; for at the time appointed the end shall be."

Gabriel took up the history of the kingdoms one by one, and when he came to the two thousand three hundred days, he said, "The vision of the evening and the morning [Dan. 8:14, margin, same as the two thousand three hundred days] which was told is true. Wherefore shut thou up the vision; for it shall be for many days." Daniel fainted, for the crucifixion of the Saviour had just been revealed to him, and the view was more than he could endure. Further explanation was delayed until a later vision. The events which would take place during that period are noted in the following chapter of the book of Daniel.

In addition to the truth taught by the prophecy itself, there are connected with the eighth chapter of Daniel some underlying principles of wonderful beauty.

The spirit of prophecy is a gift to be coveted. God never leaves Himself without some representatives on earth, and among His people certain ones are prophets. The study of Daniel's life reveals the character which makes it possible for man to understand the language of God. A clean, pure soul is necessary. Gabriel is the angel of prophecy, the messenger who bears the light of truth to men. To the father of John the Baptist he said, "I am Gabriel, that stand in the presence of God." To Daniel he said, "There is none that holdeth with me in these things, but Michael your Prince" — Christ Himself. Gabriel is, then, the personal attendant of the Son of God, holding the position as light bearer which Satan occupied before his fall. It was Gabriel who announced the birth of the Saviour to Mary in Nazareth. It was he who led the angel choir on the plains of Bethlehem; he with others, as the star, guided the wise men to the Babe of Bethlehem.

It was Gabriel who brought strength to the Saviour at the close of the forty days' conflict in the wilderness of temptation, and he who lifted the prostrate form of the Son of Man in Gethsemane, and pillowed that aching head, wet with bloody sweat, upon sweat, upon his own bosom. Before Gabriel, the Roman guard fell like dead men, and his voice shook the earth as the Saviour came from the tomb. Taking his seat on the empty sepulcher, he met the disciples and the women, and bade them seek their Lord among the living.

The Saviour ascended to heaven, leaving His disciples alone, but not alone, for "behold, two men stood by them in white apparel." While heaven rang with songs of welcome to the returning Son of God, two angels stood on earth to comfort the lonely ones. One of these was Gabriel, Christ's attendant angel. Of all the angels of heaven none have been more closely connected with man than has Gabriel. Yet to John, who fell before him to worship, he said, "See thou do it not; for I am thy fellow-servant." Gabriel was only an angel, upheld by the same Power that sustained John, and he would not for one moment allow John to be deceived by thinking he was a part of the great Trinity of heaven, and worthy of the worship of mankind. He assured John that he was only one of the hosts of "ministering spirits sent forth to minister for them who should be heirs of salvation," by saying, "I am thy fellow-servant." So bound up in the affairs of man is this mighty

angel that he counts himself one with us. This is the one whom Christ has used to convey the light of future events to men upon earth. To every prophet, from Moses to John, the same angel came, and to the remnant church it is still Gabriel who reveals truth through the person of the prophet.

“The angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus.”

WHY should we tremble to convey The Christian to the tomb?

There once the flesh of Jesus lay, And left a long perfume.

The graves of all His saints He blest, And softened every bed;

Where should the dying members rest, But with their dying Head?

Thence He arose, ascending high,

And showed our feet the way:

Up to the Lord we all shall fly At the great rising day. — Isaac Watts.

Before his fall, Lucifer was the light bearer. Since that time he has used his power in bearing darkness to the sons of men. There always have been, and will be to the end of time, false prophets and seers. Men who might be used by God, were their hearts given to Him, often yield themselves to the influence of the counterfeit power. Herein lies the explanation of spirit manifestations. So great will be this power that before the end Satan himself, personifying an angel of light, will appear on the earth, deceiving, if possible, the very elect. The safety of God’s people will lie in heeding the voice of Gabriel as he speaks through some chosen instrument. Christ speaks through Gabriel to His prophet.

Daniel, though living in the palace of Shushan, was carried by the angel to the river Ulai. On the banks of the river he witnessed the contest between the ram and the goat — between the Medo-Persian empire and the Greeks. Ulai represents the river of time, which has its source in eternity. Time with which we have to deal is but an infinitely small fraction of eternity, as a drop in the bucket, as the stream to the ocean. But on the banks of this river all nations are located; there they rise and there they fall. Christ presides over the waters, and His voice was heard from between the banks of the

river calling to Gabriel, “Make this man to understand the vision.” Nation may contend with nation on its banks, but the “Holy Watcher” is ever near. This river contains the water of life for all who will drink, but all nations have built river walls exceeding the height of those of Babylon, to keep men away from the water, and to break the influence of Him who calls from between the banks.

“At the time of the end shall be the vision.” Dan. 8:17.

10. The History of the Jews

A FEW months only elapsed between the vision of the eighth chapter and the events which the first part of the ninth chapter records. The parting words of Gabriel had been that the things seen concerning the two thousand three hundred days were true. Daniel was unable to hear the explanation at this time; and while he went about the king's business, he thought often upon the vision. In the meantime he had been called from Shushan into Babylon, into the king's court, to interpret the strange writing on the wall. The fate of the nation had been read, and the words had scarcely died away before the slaughter of the Babylonians began. That same night Belshazzar was slain, and the king of the Medes was proclaimed monarch of the world. By Darius, Daniel had been made chief president, and occupied a position in Babylon next to Cyrus, the associate of Darius the king.

During the turmoil and bustle of all the change in affairs, while Daniel's hands were filled with court duties and business cares, he yet had time for prayer and study.

Prophecy had foretold that Cyrus would restore to the Jews their freedom; the time of their deliverance drew near, and Daniel searched carefully for an understanding of the time. The prophecies of Jeremiah were the only ones which told plainly the length of the captivity. Doubtless the mind of Daniel was perplexed over the two thousand three hundred days, of which Gabriel had spoken, for to the Hebrews the temple in Jerusalem was God's sanctuary, and the cleansing, to them, meant the removal of unholy hands from Mount Zion.

Twice in the book of Jeremiah the length of the captivity is stated. "These nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years. And it shall come to pass, when the seventy years are accomplished, that I will punish the king of Babylon." Again the prophet had said, "After seventy years be accomplished at Babylon I will visit you, and perform my good word toward you, in causing you to return to this place." Babylon had fallen, and Jerusalem had been desolate nearly seventy years. A crisis was near for God's people, and Daniel sought by prayer and fasting to understand the matter.

This is one of the instances in the Scriptures when a prayer is recorded. This one is given as an example of the fervent, effectual prayer of a righteous man, which availeth much. Daniel realized that sin had darkened the vision of many of God's professed people. Some who were in Babylon were careless and indifferent concerning the truths of God. Many had gotten them homes, and rested secure in the assurance that, when the captivity began, they were told to buy land and build homes. Some were content with present surroundings, and dreaded the difficulties which must attend the journey to Jerusalem, which was in the hands of hostile tribes, and where there were no pleasant homes. Jerusalem should be built, they agreed, but others should do it, not they.

A love of Babylon was strong in the hearts of many. Seventy years after the decree of Cyrus had given all the Jews liberty to return to Palestine, there were still thousands of them in Babylon. In fact, but a small per cent of the Jews ever returned. The youth, who had been educated in the city, had, many of them, like the daughters of Lot in Sodom, partaken so largely of its customs, that they lingered among the heathen, though angels bade them hurry out. The spirit of prophecy was passed by with a few remarks, or fell upon ears entirely deaf; although in bondage, present conditions were preferable to freedom with the effort necessary to obtain it. Daniel knew of this condition, and he confessed the sins of the people before God. He identified himself with his people. His is one of the most wonderful prayers on record.

This man, whom heaven called "greatly beloved," in whom no fault could be found, even by his bitterest enemies, placed himself beneath the load of sin which was oppressing Israel. Bowed before God, he met the Father with the words, We have sinned, and committed iniquity, and have done wickedly, and have rebelled;" "neither have we hearkened unto Thy servants the prophets." "O Lord, righteousness belongeth unto Thee, but unto us confusion of face, to our kings, to our princes, and to our fathers, because we have sinned;" "we have rebelled against Him; neither have we obeyed;" "the curse is poured upon us;" "all this evil is come upon us, yet made we not our prayer before the Lord our God, that we might turn from our iniquities;" "we obeyed not His voice;" we have sinned, we have done wickedly;" "because for our sins and for the iniquities of our fathers," "behold our desolations;" we do not present our supplications before Thee for our righteousnesses."

Before the Father we have One, even Christ, who “hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows,” “who His own self bare our sins in His own body.” Daniel was a representative of Christ, and he had lived so close to God, and knew Him so intimately, that the spirit which distinguished Christ from all others was manifested in Daniel also. He was a true shepherd in Israel, and his prayer is a rebuke to all self-righteousness; a cutting rebuke to those who say by word or act, “I am more holy than thou.”

“O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive; O Lord, hearken and do; defer not for Thine own sake, O my God, for Thy city and Thy people are called by Thy name.” Such was the entreaty of a burdened heart. Such were the words with which Daniel approached his God. He was acquainted with the Father, and knew that his words reached the throne of heaven. Faith and prayer are the two arms which mortal man may entwine around the neck of Infinite Love. Christ stooped to listen, and bade Gabriel speed earthward. We let go of the arm of the Lord too soon in our prayers. We should press our petitions higher and still higher. God sometimes tests the strength of our desires by delaying an immediate answer.

“Yea, whiles I was speaking in prayer, even the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, touched me about the time of the evening oblation.”

The very thing for which Daniel had asked, was first mentioned as Gabriel laid his hands upon the prophet. “O Daniel, I am now come forth to give thee skill and understanding. At the beginning of thy supplication the word [margin] came forth, and I am come to show thee.” Heaven was more interested than man could be in the very thing for which Daniel prayed, and as soon as the channel was open, the Spirit flowed in. In the spiritual as in the natural world, a vacuum is abhorred. As the air rushes into a vessel when a liquid is poured out, so the Holy Spirit fills the heart when it is emptied of self. If there was more room made for Christ in our hearts, the pentecostal experience would often be repeated.

God has many favorites among the sons of men. Indeed, every man is a special favorite, and highly honored by the King of heaven, but there are very few to whom angels have spoken the word, “Thou art greatly beloved.” The marginal reading of the twenty-third verse gives the Hebrew rendering as “a man of desires.” That man whose desires are heavenward, who longs for spiritual food as the hart panteth after the water brook, is greatly beloved of God, for God is in search of such to fulfill His will on earth. To

such Gabriel can speak.

Beginning with the twenty-fourth verse the angel explains the period of time, the two thousand three hundred days of Daniel 8:14. There are no preliminaries. Gabriel knows the thoughts of the prophet, and hence he says, "Seventy weeks are determined [or cut off] upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most holy." The entire future history of the Jews as a nation is contained in this one verse. No other history ever crowded so much into so few words. Here is given the exact date for the beginning of the work of Christ; the time allotted Israel as a nation for repentance, the time when type would meet antitype in all sacrificial offerings; the period when probation would end for the Hebrew race, and everlasting righteousness would be preached to the world at large. In this interview with Gabriel only that part of the two thousand three hundred days which applied to the Hebrew nation was mentioned. To Daniel had already been revealed the history of the nations of the world; the two thousand three hundred days has to do more especially with God's people, independently of national governments.

The period of seventy weeks, or four hundred and ninety days [$70 \times 7 = 490$], of prophetic time, covers a period of four hundred and ninety years, during which Jewish history as such would continue. This four hundred and ninety years did not begin at once, for the angel said they should begin to reckon from the going forth of the commandment to restore and build Jerusalem. The period of seventy weeks of Jewish history is thus divided by the angel: Seven weeks for building the walls and streets of Jerusalem; threescore and two (62) weeks till the work of the Messiah; and one week, which would cover the period of His ministry and the time following until the gospel should go forth to the Gentiles. This last week is devoted to the confirmation of the covenant.

For an understanding of the first division, the seven weeks or forty-nine years, we have the history as recorded in Ezra, Nehemiah, Haggai, and Zechariah. God raised up Cyrus and placed him on the throne, that he might restore the Jews to their native city. Long before the Babylonish captivity began, the prophet Isaiah (44:28) wrote of Cyrus, "He is My shepherd, and shall perform all My pleasure; even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built; and to the temple, thy foundation shall be laid."

In the first chapter of the book of Ezra is recorded the decree of Cyrus. The fulfillment by Cyrus of the prophecy of Isaiah is striking: "In the first year of Cyrus king of Persia ... the Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus, the king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it in writing, saying, Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, The Lord God of heaven ... hath charged me to build him a house at Jerusalem."

Then it was that every Jew in Babylon was at liberty to return to Palestine. If necessary, the expenses of going would be borne by the government of Cyrus. There was ample provision for all the poor and the sick. Such a decree had never before been issued. Israel should have arisen enmasse, taking with them all those of other nationalities, who, having heard the gospel, were willing to cast in their lot with the people of God. The land should have rung with shouts of praise and with the songs of the ransomed. The exodus from Babylon should have been a mighty witness to the nations of the earth of the power of the God of Israel. The exodus from Egypt, and the wonders attending the crossing of the Red Sea and the Jordan, and the feeding of the thousands in the wilderness, would have dwindled into insignificance had Israel taken advantage of the way which God had prepared.

What was the result of the decree? Daniel watched with anxiety the preparations which were made to depart, and at the end of the first year scarcely fifty thousand had journeyed from Babylon to Jerusalem.

Cyrus was discouraged and disgusted because of the feeble response, and relapsed into indifference. Later the angel of God with Michael's help pleaded with him for three weeks in order to touch his heart again.

The vessels taken from the temple to Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar were returned to the leaders of the Jews, who carried them back to Jerusalem. In the second year of their coming into Palestine, the work of restoring the temple was begun. The site of Solomon's temple, which had been burned by Nebuchadnezzar, was hidden by rubbish, the accumulation of nearly seventy years. The work of restoration was soon stopped by the Samaritans living in the country, and further progress was impossible until the issuing of a second decree by Darius, king of Persia, in 520 B.C. Work on the house of God stopped for fifteen years. Then the prophets Haggai and Zechariah rebuked the people for their inactivity.

It would seem that the Jews while professing to be God's people, yet built

their own houses, and delayed work on the temple, because there was no direct command from the king to proceed. But God wanted them to go forward, exercising faith, and when, in response to the word of the Lord by the prophet Haggai, they did go to work, the Lord stirred up the heart of the Persian king to help them. This will be further seen in chapter twelve. Men of the world, enemies of the Jews, openly complained to the king, but this, instead of hindering the work, occasioned a searching of the royal records, which revealed the decree of Cyrus. Then Darius, instead of rebuking the Jews, issued a decree that the work should go forward, and further commanded that the work of building be helped forward by money from the royal treasury.

Jerusalem was subject to the Persian government until the days of Ezra in the reign of Artaxerxes. In the seventh year of the reign of the king, 457 B.C., was issued the third decree concerning the rebuilding of Jerusalem. This decree (1) permitted all Jews who so desired to return to Jerusalem; (2) it allowed the taking of a free-will offering from all Babylon for the cause at Jerusalem; (3) it proclaimed perfect freedom to follow the commands of God in all the territory west of the Jordan; (4) it relieved all Levites and ministers from paying toll or tribute; (5) it directed that the walls of Jerusalem be rebuilt; (6) it arranged for the appointment of magistrates and judges in Palestine from among the Jews themselves, thus organizing a government of the people, a thing wholly foreign to the policy of an Oriental monarchy.

This was in the year 457 B.C., and is the time from which the period of seventy weeks should be reckoned, according to the words of Gabriel to Daniel. That it required the three decrees to constitute the commandment of Dan. 9:25, is evident from the words of Inspiration .. according to the commandment of Cyrus, and Darius, and Artaxerxes, king of Persia.” The three decrees are thus connected.

The “troublous times,” during which the building should be carried forward are described by the prophet Nehemiah. Full thirteen long weary years after the decree of Artaxerxes was issued, Nehemiah, who was a cupbearer for the king in Babylon, was mourning over the troubles in Jerusalem, and in answer to his petition he was permitted to go up to the city in behalf of the work. Under the direction of Nehemiah the people worked on the wall of Jerusalem with weapons fastened to their sides. “They which builded on the wall, and they that bare burdens, with those that laded, every one with one

of his hands wrought in the work, and with the other hand held a weapon. ... So we labored in the work, and half of them held the spears from the rising of the morning till the stars appeared.”

Nehemiah in these times of trouble was a wonderful leader for Israel. His lessons to the people on the taking of usury, wages, and rent should be followed by Christians to-day. The rebuilding of Jerusalem in troublous times is a fit symbol of carrying the gospel to all nations in the last days. Israel brought this trouble upon herself by her sins and lack of faith; and what she should have done by way of warning the world in peace and quietude, had to be done in great distress. Furthermore, it will be noticed that a few years of rest always found sin and iniquity abounding in Israel. The nation was scarcely from under the hands of Babylon till the people held their own brethren as slaves because of debt. A proclamation of freedom must come from within their own borders before there could be peace and help from without. When it should come from within, God’s Word pledged the support of even their enemies. These principles are true in the body of Christians to-day. The spread of the gospel will be an easy work, and it will be as the voice of a mighty angel enlightening the world, when God’s people proclaim liberty among themselves.

The twenty-three hundred days of Dan. 8:14 locates four important events in the history of God’s work for His people. The line of prophecy opened with the “going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem,” Dan. 9:25; Ezra 7:11-26. It required seventy-nine years for the execution of this command. It was first executed by Cyrus in 536 B.C., Ezra 1:1-4. Several years later Darius re- issued the decree. Ezra 6:1-12. The decree given by Artaxerxes in 457 B.C. completed the commandment. Ezra 6:14. The decree went into effect near the middle of the year, which would make the exact date 457 1/2 B.C. Ezra 7:9.

The second great event located by this line of prophecy was the anointing of Jesus, which was in connection with His baptism in the spring of 27 A.D., and marked the end of the 69th week.

The third event was the crucifixion of Christ which took place in the midst of the 70th week. The fourth important event was the investigative judgment which opened at the close of the two thousand three hundred days.

“From the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks and threescore and two

weeks” (7+62=69 weeks, or 483 prophetic days, or literal years). Messiah, in the Hebrew, and Christ, in the Greek, are the same as “anointed” in English. God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost. This anointing took place at the time of His baptism. The sixty-nine weeks, or four hundred and eighty-three years, reached to the baptism of Christ by John in the River Jordan.

From the decree of Artaxerxes, four hundred and fifty-seven years reach into the year 1 A.D., in the present dispensation. But twenty-six years remained of the sixty-nine weeks (483 - 457 = 26), which terminated with the baptism of Christ. Twenty-six years added to the year 1 A.D. bring us to 27 A.D., in the fall of which year Christ was baptized. (See Mark 1:10, margin; Luke 3:21-23, margin).

For years the Jewish nation had had the promise of a Deliverer. The close of the sixty-nine weeks found the Jews under the control of the fourth kingdom, the dreadful and terrible beast which Daniel had before described. The desire of every Jewish woman who was true to her God was to be the mother of the Saviour. Whenever a babe was presented to the Lord, it was with the hope that he might be the accepted One. The birthplace of the Messiah had been foretold. Malachi had prophesied concerning John, the forerunner of the Saviour, and for six months the voice of this witness had been heard throughout the land of Israel. The time of the preaching of John is established by six historical facts. (See Luke 3:1, 2). Israel and Judah flocked to the banks of the Jordan, and among them came Jesus of Nazareth. John recognized Him by a sign from heaven; and as he came out of the water, the heavens opened, and he saw the heavenly dove resting on His head, and heard the voice proclaiming Him the Son of God.

The sixty-nine weeks had closed. Those who were at that time studying the prophecies of Daniel were looking for the Messiah, and believed the words of John when he said, “Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.” Christ also said, “The time is fulfilled,” referring to the period of sixty-nine weeks of Daniel. But the nation as a whole was blind. “He came unto His own, and His own received Him not.” They might have known. The book of Daniel was for them to study. The same book, together with the book of Revelation, proclaims the hour of God’s judgment, and His second coming, but men will be taken unawares because they heed not the prophecies.

As the baptism of Christ was one sign given by Gabriel by which the Jews

might have known the Messiah, so His death was a second token. One week — seven years — remained of the allotted time for the Jewish nation. During one half of that time — three and one-half years — the Son of God walked among the people. The sick were healed; he comforted the broken-hearted, and preached the gospel to the poor. High and low, rich and poor, alike came within the circle of His influence.

“In the midst of the week,” said the angel to Daniel, “He shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease.” At the time of the passover feast, in the spring of 31 A.D., three and one-half years after His baptism, Christ was crucified by the very people He had tried to save. As His life went out, the inner veil of the temple was rent from the top to the bottom. The mercy seat, seen only by the high priest once each year, was laid open to the gaze of the multitudes. The knife fell from the hand of the priest, and the sacrificial lamb escaped. God had withdrawn His presence from the temple. The Lamb of God Himself had been slain, and sacrifice and oblation were forever done away. Those ceremonies which had shadowed forth the death of the Saviour, ceased at the cross. This was in the midst of the last week of the prophetic seventy weeks.

Mercy still lingered over the Jewish people; there was yet a little time in which to repent. What was not accomplished in the person of Christ, God, sending His Holy Spirit, sought to accomplish through His disciples. Humble fishermen imbued with the power of God taught the people concerning a crucified and risen Saviour. In one day three thousand accepted the message. When many believed, the enmity of Satan was again aroused.

In 34 A.D., Stephen was stoned, and as the result of the severe persecution which followed, the believers were driven from Jerusalem and “went everywhere preaching the word.” Israel had withdrawn from God, and His spirit could no longer protect them. In less than forty years the city was captured by the army of Titus, the temple was burned, and the Jews were scattered to the ends of the earth, there to remain until the consummation of all things at the time determined.

There can be no question as to the accuracy of the date 457 B.C., as the beginning of the seventy weeks, for it is established by four events: the decree of Artaxerxes; the baptism of Christ; the crucifixion; and the spread of the gospel among the Gentiles. History establishes the date 457 B.C. as the seventh year of Artaxerxes by more than twenty eclipses. The four

hundred and ninety years can be reckoned backward from the New Testament history, or forward from the decree to restore and build Jerusalem.

The angel has given the events during the first four hundred and ninety years of the two thousand three hundred days of Dan. 8:14. Eighteen hundred and ten years remains, $2300 - 490 = 1810$. The four hundred and ninety years ended in the year 34 A.D. To this add eighteen hundred and ten years, and we have the year 1844 A.D. Daniel had been shown the events which would mark this year. It was the investigative judgment, and the giving of the message of the first angel of the fourteenth chapter of Revelation.

This message was given within the memory of many who are still living, and is known as the advent message. About twenty years before the expiration of the prophetic period of the two thousand three hundred days, the attention of some men were called to the study of the prophecies. Foremost among these students was William Miller, who became thoroughly convinced that the prophetic period of Dan. 8:14 would close in 1844. The expression “unto two thousand and three hundred days then shall the sanctuary be cleansed,” was interpreted to mean that at the end of that stated period the earth would be destroyed by fire at the second coming of Christ. Consequently between 1833 and 1844 the personal coming of the Saviour was preached throughout the world. Men were warned according to the wording of the first angel’s message of the fourteenth chapter of Revelation, that the judgment was at hand, and thousands prepared to meet the Lord.

When the year 1844 passed, and Christ did not appear, many lost faith in the prophecies; but others, knowing that the word of God abideth sure, were led to search more diligently for the events which did take place at the close of the prophetic period. Further study corroborated the truth of the interpretation of the time, and revealed also the light on the sanctuary question.

For the first time men saw that the “sanctuary” spoken of in Daniel’s vision referred to the work in heaven rather than upon earth. An investigation of the typical service instituted in the wilderness revealed the work of cleansing the sanctuary on the day of atonement. It was seen that the work of the high priest in the earthly tabernacle was but a figure of the service upon which Christ, the great High Priest, entered in 1844. At that time He entered into the presence of the Ancient of Days, as seen in the vision of the seventh chapter of Daniel, and began the work of the investigative judgment in the

heavenly sanctuary, at the end of which work He will appear in the clouds of heaven. William Miller and others who preached the second advent in 1844 were mistaken in the event, but not in the reckoning of the prophetic time of Dan. 8:14.

The events which took place between 34 A.D. and 1844 A.D. are described in the next vision, which was given to Daniel, four or five years later than the vision of the ninth chapter.

Since Gabriel explained with such care and minuteness the history of the Jews, and as a nation they were without excuse in the rejection of the Son of God, we may expect that this same angel of prophecy will set the waymarks high and clear, that men in the last days may know the time of Christ's appearing in judgment, and of His second coming in the clouds of heaven.

Let us watch and be ready.

11. The Sanctuary

SINCE a misunderstanding of the sanctuary question led to the disappointment in 1844, it seems proper to devote one chapter to the consideration of this all-important subject.

Three sanctuaries, or temples, are brought to view in the Bible. The first is the heavenly sanctuary, where God reigns upon His throne, surrounded by ten thousand times ten thousands of angels. This temple was opened to the wondering gaze of the lonely seer on the Isle of Patmos, and also to Moses on Mount Sinai. The second, or earthly, sanctuary was a miniature model of the heavenly one, in which the priest served unto the example and shadow of the service in the heavenly temple. For more than fourteen hundred years, God designed that the service should be in the shadowy sanctuary. The time came when those following the shadow reached the substance.

Two days before the crucifixion, Christ slowly and regretfully left the temple for the last time. The priests and rulers were struck with terror as they heard His mournful words: "Behold, your house is left unto you desolate." The beautiful structure remained until A.D. 70, but it had ceased to be the temple of God. The Father showed by an unmistakable sign that the glory had departed.

When the words, "It is finished," were pronounced by the Sufferer upon the cross, the veil of the temple was rent from the top to the bottom by unseen hands. Terror and confusion prevailed. The knife raised to slay the sacrifice fell from the nerveless hand of the priest, and the lamb escaped.

Henceforth the sinner need no longer wait for a priest to offer his sacrifice. The great Sacrifice had been made. Every child of Adam could accept His atoning blood. The way into the heavenly temple was now made manifest. The heavenly had taken the place of the earthly sanctuary. Hereafter man's faith was to enter within the veil, where Christ officiated.

The third temple brought to view in the Bible is the temple of the human body. The Jews had lost sight of the fact that their bodies were to be the temples of the Spirit of God; and when the Saviour said, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up," they thought only of the massive

structure of marble and stone, and replied that it had taken forty-six years to build the temple, not perceiving that “He spake of the temple of His body.”

Glorious rays of light shine from the heavenly sanctuary upon those who study the typical work in the earthly sanctuary. These rays, when gathered into the temple of the body, reflect the character of our great High Priest in the heavenly courts.

In the beginning the body of man was created to be a dwelling place for the Holy Spirit; but Satan gained possession, and man partook of an evil nature. Before the body can again become a temple for the Spirit of God, the evil nature must die. Christ offered His life for the sinner; before the foundation of the world He was counted as a “Lamb slain.”

That man in his fallen condition might comprehend this gift, and understand the work of redemption, the sinner that longed to crucify “the old man,” the evil nature, was directed to bring an innocent animal, and take its life, as an object lesson of the Lamb of God, and also to illustrate the fact that the evil nature of the sinner must die, in order that the Holy Spirit may dwell within.

Before the gates of the garden of Eden, Adam and his family presented their offerings. Their clear minds grasped by faith the promise of the Redeemer, who would again open to them the joys of the garden. Adam by faith looked forward to the time when the Saviour would lead him once more to the Tree of Life, and bid him pluck and eat of its life-giving fruit. As he took the life of the innocent lamb, and saw by faith the “one sinless Man” suffering death for him, his heart went out in love and gratitude to God for his wonderful love, and for a time he forgot the terrible sorrow that weighed upon his soul. Every falling leaf, while it taught the death of Christ, was also a constant reminder to him that sin had brought death into the hitherto perfect earth.

While men lived near God, the altars were lighted by fire from heaven. But this perfect worship was marred. Cain’s mind became so blinded by sin that he failed to grasp the infinite sacrifice. Satan convinced him that God was an austere judge, demanding service. The love and sacrifice of the Saviour was overlooked. Cain and Abel each brought an offering to the gate of the garden; but the desires of the two hearts were greatly different. Abel brought a lamb, and as he took its life, his faith laid hold of the Lamb of God. The lamb was laid upon the altar, and fire flashed from the shining sword of the cherubim guarding the way to the Tree of Life, and the sacrifice was consumed.

Cain brought an offering of fruits. There was nothing in his offering that typified the dying Lamb of Calvary. No innocent life was taken in exchange for his forfeited life. He waited for the fire to consume it, but there was nothing to call forth the fire from the heavenly Watcher. There was no sweet love, no longing for deliverance from the thralldom of sin and death.

Cain and Abel are types of all worshipers from that time to the present. The followers of Cain multiplied ceremonies, and made offerings to the sun and various other objects. In it they overlooked the all-important principle that self must die, and that Christ must live in the temple of the human body.

Anciently each family erected its own altars. The father was priest of the household, and was succeeded by the eldest son. At times sin separated the eldest from the family, and character, instead of age, decided who should act as priest.

Jacob knew the character of the one great High Priest; and as he lay with his head upon the stone in Bethel, and watched the angels ascending and descending upon that glorious ladder, he also saw the Lord above it. He beheld His glorious vestments, and in imitation of those garments he made Joseph a "coat of many colors." The other sons of Jacob could not comprehend these beautiful truths. Even the coat was an object of hatred to them. When the brothers sold Joseph, they dipped the coat in blood, and its beauty was marred. The future revealed that Jacob had read aright the character of Joseph, for in the midst of Egyptian darkness he reflected the light of heaven. He was a temple for the indwelling of the Spirit of God.

When Israel came out of Egypt, their minds were so beclouded by sin that they no longer saw the promised Saviour in the simple offerings. God then said: "Let them make me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them." Six days were spent by Moses on the mountain side in deep searching of heart; then the thick cloud of glory covering Mount Sinai broke forth like devouring fire in the eyes of all Israel, and Moses was ushered into the presence of Deity. Before his wondering gaze was spread out the beauties of the heavenly sanctuary. Forty days the Lord communed with him, giving minute directions in regard to building a shadow of that heavenly structure upon the earth. In the midst of the idolatry of Egypt, Israel had lost the spiritual truth that the body is the dwelling place for the Holy Spirit. Neither could they form any conception of the work done in heaven for sinful man.

To reach man in his fallen condition, God directed the building of the earthly

tabernacle, that humanity might become acquainted with the nature of the work in the heavenly sanctuary. In this building, men divinely appointed were to perform in the sight of the people a shadow of the work that would be done in the heavenly sanctuary by the Saviour of mankind, when He should officiate as our High Priest.

The whole Jewish economy was a compacted prophecy of the gospel. Every act of the priest in the shadowy service, as he went in and out, was a prophecy of the Saviour's work when He entered heaven as our High Priest. "It was the gospel in figures," the Lord's object lesson or kindergarten for the "children" of Israel. They had become children in understanding, and in order to reach them God taught the gospel in a way that the senses could grasp.

Man finally became so depraved that he failed to see light flashing from the Levitical laws and sacrificial offerings, and when the Antitype of all their offerings came, they rejected Him.

Let us in imagination go back to the wilderness tabernacle, and see if we can discern the glorious gospel of Christ shining from the Jewish economy. A man enters the outer court with a lamb, which he brings to the door of the tabernacle. With solemn awe, and eyes raised to heaven, he lays his hand upon its head, while his moving lips, like Hannah's of old, betray the burden of his heart. Then he lifts the knife, and takes the life of the sacrifice. His faith lays hold of the bleeding Lamb of Calvary, and his sin rolls from off his burdened heart on to the great Sacrifice. The blood is carefully caught; every drop is precious, for by faith he views the real sacrifice. The priest meets him, takes the blood of the sacrificed life, and passes from sight within the first veil, while the worshiper awaits with anxiety his return.

In childhood his father had told him of the "ark of the covenant overlaid with gold, wherein was the golden pot that had manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant; and over it the cherubim of glory shadowing the mercy-seat;" that at times the bright glory of the shekinah above the mercy-seat shown out and filled the sanctuary.

He had been told of that mystical table, with its twelve loaves covered with frankincense; also of the beautiful candlestick, whose seven lamps were ever burning; how the golden-plated walls on either side reflected the light, and like great mirrors reproduced again and again the brilliant hues of the richly embroidered curtains with their shining angels. Before the second

veil, which concealed the ark, he pictured the altar, from which the fragrant incense constantly ascended.

By faith he sees the priest place the blood of the atoning sacrifice upon the horns of the altar. His faith looks past the shadowy service to the time when Christ shall plead His blood in the heavenly sanctuary. It is the gospel of a crucified and risen Saviour that he beholds in the object lesson he himself is helping to carry out.

Soon the veil is lifted, and the priest returns. The offering has been accepted. The priest has made atonement for him, and he is forgiven. In the joy and freedom of forgiveness he prays: "O that the influence of all my sins might be forever wiped away!" when lo, he sees the priest go to the brazen altar in the court, and "pour out all the blood at the bottom of the altar." As he sees that blood, precious to him, because it represents his own ransomed life as well as the sacrificed life of the Saviour, poured out upon the ground, his heart bounds with joy. He grasps the fact that the decree, "Cursed is the ground for thy sake," is met in Christ, and that the promised Saviour will finally cleanse the earth from all the effects of his sins.

The body of the lamb still lies near the door of the sanctuary, where the life was taken. He next turns to it, and with a sharp knife separates from the flesh every particle of fat — "all the fat that covereth the inwards," etc. "All the fat is taken away, and the priest burns it upon the altar of burnt offering for a sweet savor unto the Lord." The fat is burned as a type of the final destruction, when "the wicked shall perish, and the enemies of the Lord shall be as the fat of lambs; they shall consume; into smoke shall they consume away." Psa. 37:20. Every sinner that clings to sin will be destroyed with the sin. God has made provision for every one to separate from sin, that He may destroy the sin and save the sinner. The burning fat upon the altar came up as a sweet savor before God, for it represented sin that had been separated from the sinner and destroyed, while the sinner lived a new life through Christ.

The sinner separated the fat from the sacrifice; the priest received it and burned it, illustrating the truth that we must co-operate with the Lord; and through Christ who strengthens us we can do all things.

As the man carefully searched for the fat, he realized more fully than before that his body was to be a temple of the Holy Spirit, and that when his past sin is forgiven and he is accepted, it is that he may become a dwelling place

for the Spirit of God. When that Spirit enters a man, it, like a sharp knife, reveals one sin after another, and separates them from the sinner until the soul temple is cleansed. His faith grasps the promise of the “One” who dwells in the hearts of His people by faith. As he goes from the shadowy temple court, he realizes that he is a temple, not “empty, swept, and garnished,” ready to be again entered by the power of evil, but a temple in which the Spirit of God rules and reigns.

Another man brings an offering; and as the priest takes the blood, instead of entering within the veil, he pours it at the base of the altar of burnt offering. Then a portion of the flesh, which represents sin, is prepared and eaten by the priest in the holy place. In this act the priest taught the children of Israel the wonderful truth that Christ bore our sins in his own body on the tree.

Each separate offering presented some different phase of the work of Christ. The incense constantly ascending from the altar was an object lesson of the inexhaustible fund of perfect obedience accruing from the sinless life of our Saviour, which, added to the prayers of all saints as they are offered upon the golden altar in heaven, makes them acceptable before God. The perfume of the incense filled the air far beyond the temple court. Likewise the sweet influence of Christians who live a life of faith in God, is felt by all who come in contact with them.

The fire was replenished morning and evening, representing the morning and evening worship in the family. “The whole multitude of the people were praying without at the time of incense.” The lamps were a type of the seven lamps of fire before the throne of God in heaven, which are the seven Spirits of God. These “are the eyes of the Lord, which run to and fro through the whole earth.” Seven denotes the complete Spirit of God that enlighteneth every man that cometh into the world. Its life-giving rays lead the Christian to the celestial city.

The golden table held the “bread of His presence,” which represented man’s dependence upon God for both temporal and spiritual help and strength.

The ark was the center of all worship; it was the first article mentioned in describing the sanctuary. The law hidden in it was the great standard of judgment, and a perfect copy of that heavenly law before which the character of every child of Adam will be tried in the tribunal on high. If that law witnesses to a character cleansed from sin by the blood of the atoning sacrifice, then the name will be confessed before the Father and the holy

angels.

The continual burning of that which typified sin pointed forward to the time when sin and sinners would be consumed in the fire of the last day. As the ashes accumulated upon the altar of burnt offering, they were carefully collected by the side of the altar; and at a certain time the priest laid aside his priestly robes, carried the ashes without the court, and deposited them in a “clean place.” They were not thrown carelessly to one side, but put in a clean place. These ashes represented all that will be left of sin and sinners after the fires of the last day. “For behold, the day cometh that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble; and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch. But to you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise, with healing in His wings, and ye shall go forth and grow up as calves of the stall. And ye shall tread down the wicked, for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet in the day that I shall do this, saith the Lord of hosts.” Mal. 4:1-3. In that day the real ashes of the wicked will be left upon a “clean earth.”

As the Jewish father walked to the sanctuary with his child, the mind of the child would be attracted by the ashes in the clean place. He would ask, “Why are those ashes put in a clean place, when you throw the ashes from our fire upon the dunghill?” The father’s answer would explain the beauties of the new earth, when it shall be made like Eden, and sin and sorrow shall be forever removed. With it would come the gentle admonition to separate from sin, and keep the body temple pure, that in the great burning day the sin may be consumed without the sinner, and he be among the ransomed of the Lord.

Much of the service and many of the customs of ancient Israel were designed to call out questions from the children, that the spiritually minded parents might instruct them in the ways of God.

After speaking of the peculiar manner in which the passover should be eaten, God adds, “Your children shall say unto you, What mean ye by this service? showing that He intended that it should call forth questions from children of all ages, and thus the children become acquainted with the saving blood of the great Passover Lamb.

The sight of the pile of stones by the Jordan was to arouse inquiries in the minds of the children of future generations, which, if answered properly,

would acquaint them with the mighty power of God. The same was true of the whole Jewish service.

The leper that sought cleansing was to bring two birds alive and clean, and cedar wood and scarlet and hyssop. The priest commanded that one of the birds be killed in an earthen vessel, over running water. The live bird, cedar wood, scarlet, and hyssop were all dipped in the blood, and the leper was sprinkled with the blood; then the live bird was let loose in the open field. It flew through the air, bearing on its feathers the blood, which was a type of Christ's blood that will purify the air, and remove from it all the germs of sin and death. Now death comes in at our windows, but the blood of Christ will give us a new atmosphere.

Earth, air, and water are elements which compose our planet. All are tainted by sin. The earthen dish containing the blood held over the running water typified the time when earth, air, and water would be freed from the curse of sin by the blood of Christ. The cedar wood and hyssop represented the two extremes in vegetation, from the giant of the forest to the hyssop on the wall. They were dipped in the blood, thus teaching Israel that Christ's blood would free the entire vegetable world from the curse, and again clothe the earth in Eden beauty.

It might seem to man that the curse was so deeply marked upon the earth, air, and sea that it could never be removed; but the little piece of scarlet wool, dipped in the blood with the live bird, the cedar, and the hyssop, was a pledge that blood of Christ would remove the deepest marks from the sin-cursed earth.

We have the real sacrifice to study as well as the shadow. Type met antitype. The blood of Christ has been shed; the price has been paid that will restore the purity of the earth, air, and sea. The sin-cursed earth received the blood of Christ as He prayed in the garden. "From His hands and feet the blood fell drop by drop upon the rock drilled for the foot of the cross." Thus through the air passed the precious blood. From the wound in His side "there flowed two copious and distinct streams, one of blood and the other of water." The blood of Christ was brought in contact with the earth, air, and water. The two extremes in vegetation also met at Calvary. The cross was made of wood taken from the trees of the forest; "and they filled a sponge with vinegar, and put it upon hyssop, and put it to His mouth."

Was there an antitype of the scarlet while His blood was trickling from

those cruel wounds? — Yes. In Jesus as He hung upon the cross, bruised, mocked, and bleeding, the thief beheld the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world. Hope kindled in his soul, and he cast himself upon a dying Saviour. With full faith that Christ would possess the kingdom, he cried, “Lord, remember me, when Thou comest into Thy kingdom.” In a soft, melodious tone, full of love, the answer was quickly given: “Verily I say unto thee to-day, Shalt thou be with me in paradise.” As these words were spoken, the darkness around the cross was pierced with living light. The thief felt the peace and joy of sins forgiven. Christ was glorified. While all thought they beheld Him conquered, He was the conqueror. They could not rob Him of His power to forgive sins.

Type has fully met antitype; the price has been paid; the blood of the world’s Redeemer has been poured upon the ground. It has dropped through the air from the cruel cross. It has flowed with water from the wound of the cruel spear. The extremes of vegetation also came in contact with it, and he whose sins were as scarlet, experienced the peace of having them made white as snow by the precious blood, even while it was flowing from the open wounds.

The various feasts throughout the year typified different phases of the gospel. The passover was a type of Christ in an especial sense. Christ is our Passover. The first fruits offered the third day after the passover lamb was slain, taught the resurrection of Christ. Type met antitype, and was fulfilled when Christ, the first fruits of them that slept, came forth on the third day, and presented Himself before the Father.

Throughout the varied services of the year, everything pointed forward to the Lamb of God, while it also taught the lesson of cleansing the body, and keeping the temple pure for the Spirit of God.

In the autumn, on the tenth day of the seventh month, came the crowning service of the year. All other services were a preparation for this. All other services were a preparation for this. Day by day the sins of the people had been transferred in type and shadow to the priest and the sanctuary, and once each year these were to be cleansed, and the sins forever removed.

Gabriel revealed to Daniel the antitype of the time of cleansing the earthly sanctuary, “Unto two thousand three hundred days, then shall the sanctuary be cleansed.” This period of cleansing, we have found in the study of the ninth chapter of Daniel, began in 1844. The cover of the ark in the heavenly

sanctuary was then lifted, and the law of God was seen by the people, not broken, but entire. In the midst of the law they traced the words, "The seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work." They awoke to the fact that they had been resting upon the first day of the week instead of the seventh. As they gazed at the law, a halo of light seemed to encircle the fourth commandment, which for so many years had been trampled underfoot. Reverently they listened to the words, "If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on My holy day; and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honorable; and shalt honor Him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words: then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord." Isa. 58:13, 14.

They thought on their ways, and made haste, and delayed not to keep the commandments. The period of the investigative judgment opened in 1844, when every character was to be measured by the standard of God's law. As the work opened in heaven, it was the will of God that on earth His people should test their lives by the law of God, and come into harmony with His holy precepts. The day of atonement was the type of the judgment. This was the most solemn day of the year to ancient Israel.

When the sun gilded the western hills of the land of Judea, on the ninth day of the seventh month, the trumpet was blown throughout Israel. The solemn warning of the trumpet produced a marked effect in every home. All work was laid aside, and quiet reigned. It was not the ordinary rest of the weekly Sabbath, for no evening meal was spread. There was not the usual baking and seething customary on the preparation for the Sabbath. No food was prepared, for this was not a feast, but a fast day. The father of the household gathered his family about him, and read from the Sacred Scroll: "Ye shall do no manner of work: it shall be a statute forever throughout your generations in all your dwellings. It shall be unto you a sabbath of rest, and ye shall afflict your souls." With prayer, fasting, and deep searching of heart the day was spent by the Israel of God. With solemn awe they repeated, "Whatsoever soul shall not be afflicted in that same day, he shall be cut off from among His people."

In the Gentile homes around them were eating and drinking and all the busy activities of daily life, but quiet reigned in the homes of Israel. In the temple court all was activity. The bullock without blemish was brought, and the high priest laid his hands on its head, confessing his sins and the sins of his

household. Then it was slain, and with the blood he made an atonement for himself and his household, that he might be prepared to perform the solemn service of the day.

When he came out, after presenting the blood of the bullock before the Lord, two goats were brought, lots were cast, and one was chosen for the Lord's goat, while the other, Azazel, the scapegoat, represented the evil one. The Lord's goat was slain. With its blood and the golden censer, the priest entered within the second veil of the sanctuary. As he neared the mercy seat with the glorious light of the shekinah shining above it, he sprinkled "much incense" upon the coals in the censer, "that the cloud of the incense may cover the mercy seat that he die not." Then with his back toward the sun rising, he sprinkled the atoning blood seven times above and before that broken law within the ark. He paused in the holy place, and made atonement for it, and for the tabernacle of the congregation. The golden altar, that had so often during the year witnessed to the sins of Israel by the scarlet spots upon its horns, was now cleansed from all defilement by the blood of the Lord's goat. The people without listened attentively to the sound of the bells on his robes, as he moved about within the sanctuary.

"When he hath made an end of reconciling the holy place, and the tabernacle of the congregation, and the altar, he shall bring the live goat." The work of reconciliation ended, God and man were one. The at-one-ment had been made in figure. The separating sins had been removed. The people rejoiced in God that He had accepted them, and that their sins were all removed from before the Lord.

As they beheld the high priest lay his hands on the head of the scapegoat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat, and sending "him away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness," their hearts filled with the peace that passeth understanding. They praised God for the wonderful gift of His love in giving His Son to die for sinful man, delivering him from sin and death. It was not until the goat was sent away into the barren wilderness that this peace filled the hearts of the people, and they felt that they were forever free from their sins.

That was the type. What does the antitype mean to us? Since 1844 the world has been living in the great antitypical day of atonement. The investigative judgment has been in session in heaven. In the type the people were to control their appetites, and to hold their own business interests secondary to

the worship of God. This was shown by the day of atonement in the type being a rest and a fast day.

We are living in the time when our great High Priest is cleansing the heavenly sanctuary, removing the sin records. We are admonished to repent and be converted, that our sins may be blotted out “when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord.” When the reconciling is completed, and the last case is decided in the final judgment of heaven, the Saviour will pronounce the decree: “He that is unjust, let him be unjust still; and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still; and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still; and he that is holy, let him be holy still.” Every case will be decided for eternity. Satan, the great instigator of all evil, the antitypical scapegoat, will then come in for his part of the service.

In the type of the sins were laid upon the scapegoat in the presence of the congregation; in the antitype, the Saviour, in the presence of the Father, the angels of God, and all the redeemed host, will lay the sins of the righteous upon the head of Satan, and a mighty angel will lead him away to the desolate earth, where he will remain a thousand years. At the end of the thousand years, he will go into the fire which destroys the earth. Type will fully meet antitype when all the sins of the righteous are burned up with Satan, and nothing remains but the ashes in a “clean place.” It will then be seen that “Satan bore not only the weight and punishment of his own sins, but also the sins of the redeemed host, which had been placed upon him; and he must also suffer for the ruin of souls which he has caused.”

The sins of Israel will never again be found. The former things will not be remembered nor come into mind. Throughout eternity, joy and peace will forever reign. The prophet says, “He will make an utter end; affliction shall not rise up the second time.”

Type must meet antitype. The great High Priest in heaven is now performing His service. Are you performing your part? In homes scattered all over the earth faithful children of God will carry out the antitype in the way God directed the Israelites to spend the typical day of atonement.

The priest might have performed his part of the service perfectly in the temple; but unless the people in their homes fasted, rested, and prayed, the work was of no avail for them. Every Israelite who ate and conducted himself like the Gentiles around him on the day of atonement was cut off from among the people of God.

Is your home a place where the appetite is controlled? Do you hold your business interests secondary to the work of God? Are you heeding the Saviour's words, "Take heed lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting [eating to excess], and drunkenness [partaking of improper food], and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares?" There will be one hundred forty-four thousand who will heed the warning, and in the fear of God will fulfill the antitype. While Christ in heaven is faithfully interceding for them, they will present their bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, that God may be glorified.

12. Introduction to the Last Vision

[Daniel Chapter 10.]

THE last three chapters of the book of Daniel are inseparable, for they relate to the last recorded vision of the prophet. The tenth chapter is preliminary to a detailed history of the world, and is valuable because of the important spiritual lessons which it contains. Daniel was an old man, and nearing the end of a long and eventful career, but his last days were full of anxiety for his race; he still carried the burden of their captivity on his heart. Since the events recorded in the ninth chapter, he had been in the lions' den, thrust there because of the cruel hatred of men in high positions. His godly life was a constant rebuke to the corruption of men in office, and they sought to destroy him, but God put these men to confusion, and witnessed to the purity of Daniel's life. The prophet had been held in high esteem by Darius the Mede, and on his death and the accession of Cyrus, Daniel had remained in the court, a counselor of the king.

Cyrus, in the first year of his reign, had issued an emancipation proclamation to the Jews. The Spirit of God had pleaded with the heart of the king, and he felt that he was brought into power for that purpose. When, after every provision had been made for the return, but a small fraction of the Jews took advantage of it, Cyrus began to doubt the wisdom of the decree. It was with the Jews as with sinners to-day. Pardon is granted and freedom offered, but they choose to remain in sin until they receive the penalty — death. The sins of Babylon dazzled the eyes of the Jews who beheld them, and the voice of their God was but faintly heard. (Comp. Eze. 33:30-32.)

Daniel could not understand the situation. The spiritual condition of his own people weighed heavily upon him, and the changing attitude of the king worried him. He thought upon the previous vision, and wondered if it could be that his people — the Jews — would cling to the sins of Babylon until they were overtaken by the persecutions described as belonging to the latter days. He could not understand the times, although the words spoken by Gabriel seemed clear of comprehension.

Two years after the decree of Cyrus, Daniel determined to humble his heart

before God by prayer and fasting until he should understand the matter. He did not practice total abstinence from food, for this fast was not the fast of a day. But he withdrew from the king's table and partook of the plainest kinds of food, spending much time in prayer and study. It was his purpose to have his appetite so in subjection that physical wants would not crowd out his desire for spiritual insight. The spiritual life of man too often partakes of the earthly mold of his body by over-indulgence of appetite. The soul should control the body, and not be burdened by the body. This condition Daniel sought to attain. He sought also to strengthen the mind by retiring to a quiet spot on the banks of the river Tigris. He took with him a few men as companions. Doubtless there were Jews who also felt a burden for Israel. The solitude of the spot, the swiftly flowing waters of the river, the lofty trees, and the clear sky above, led the prophet's mind out after his God.

For three weeks he thus sought for light and truth. Then it was that he looked up and beheld the Son of God by his side, the same who appeared to John on the Isle of Patmos. The brightness which shone round about Michael was too great for the eyes of the companions of Daniel, and they hastened to hide themselves. The countenance of Christ was like lightning, and as he gazed upon the prostrate form of Daniel, the other men fled for their lives. But what would have been death to those who harbored sin, was life to the one whose character was pure. The dross had been consumed before, and the light shone upon the prophet as sunlight on a mirror.

So full of life is the Son of God that His eyes appeared as lamps of fire, flashing light. He it is who says, "I will guide thee with Mine eye." Daniel could bear the gaze, but his companions felt that those eyes burned into their very souls, and they hid from His gaze.

To the ears of Daniel, accustomed by long experience to heavenly sounds, the voice of the "One Man" was as the voice of the multitude, or as the sound of many waters, clear and beautiful. To human ears, dull of hearing, it is like thunder. The Jews, at the time that the Greeks came to Christ, had a similar experience to that of the companions of Daniel. As Christ sat in the temple court, the lightning played about His head and the voice, which to Him was the voice of God, to them sounded like the crash of a thunder bolt.

Daniel was left alone in the presence of the Son of God, and as he compared his own condition to that of Christ, he seemed to be a lump of clay, a broken vessel, uncomely and useless. "My vigor was turned in me into corruption, and I retained no strength." He clung close to the cold earth, his face to the

ground in a deep sleep, helpless in the hands of God. "What is man that Thou art mindful of him, or the son of man that Thou visitest him?"

Then Gabriel, the angel who had so often talked with Daniel, touched him with his hand, and lifted his prostrate form. He said, "O Daniel, a man greatly beloved, understand the words that I speak unto thee, and stand upright; for unto thee am I now sent." There was power in the touch of the angel's hand. There was power in the touch of the Saviour's hand. When on earth, virtue, life, the healing power of God, constantly radiated from Him. He could touch the leper, and a life-current flowed from Him to the diseased one.

So it was with Gabriel's touch. He who stood in the presence of God was so filled with life that as he laid his hand on man, a thrill of life was felt in every nerve. It may be so with beings to-day. The follower of Christ should have the life-current so strong within him that sin is rebuked, and disease driven from him. "A thousand shall fall at thy side and ten thousand at thy right hand, but it shall not come nigh thee," is the promise. Christ came that we might have an abundance of life, the cup full to overflowing. We do not half realize our privilege.

It was three full weeks since Daniel had begun to pray, and Gabriel explained the cause of the delay. From the first day of the fast his words had been heard, but their answer required the co-operation of Cyrus, the Persian king. So while Daniel waited, ignorant of the work of Heaven in his behalf, and little dreaming of the strivings in the heart of the king, Gabriel had been at the Persian court pleading with Cyrus.

One may wonder how Gabriel worked. Details are not given, but one thing is sure: until the moment of a nation's rejection, angels are always in the midst of their councils. Men will be led to take positions for the truth, not knowing the real reason for their own decisions. The Holy Watcher is a constant witness in legislative halls to-day, and every just decree is the result of an impulse from the throne of God. This influence was at work in the heart of Cyrus, and so pressing were the petitions offered by Daniel that Christ Himself came in person to help Gabriel. To Daniel doubtless it seemed that his prayer was unheard, but God was working out the answer in a way unknown to the prophet. Had he ceased to make intercession at the end of one week, or at the end of two weeks, the history of an entire people would have been changed. The promise is, "Before they call I will answer, and while they are yet speaking I will hear." God is often testing the strength

of our desires when He withholds an immediate answer to our prayer.

“Peace be unto thee, be strong, yea, be strong.” Dan.10:19

“Knowest thou wherefore I am come unto thee? Asked Gabriel. “I am come to make thee understand what shall befall thy people in the latter days: for yet the vision is for many days.” Daniel fell to the ground, and the breath went from his body. This was his condition when in vision. He was unable to speak until Christ touched his lips. Then He spoke to Gabriel, who stood by Daniel’s side to strengthen him, and to explain to him the history of the latter days.

God has had many prophets. The effect of the Spirit upon a human being when in vision is unexplainable. There is an overpowering presence which so pervades the physical being that it has no strength to act of itself. The breath leaves the body, and the voice of God speaks through the human instrument. The eyes remain open, as Balaam described his condition, but the person sees things outside the world. He is often taken far beyond the bounds of earth, as in the case of Ezekiel, John, and Paul. Earth’s attraction is broken, and with an angel guide the prophet visits other places, or beholds the future, reading there the history of men and nations. When the living coal from the altar is laid upon those lips, they speak words of heavenly wisdom. Isaiah had this experience.

For the third time Gabriel expressed the love of God for Daniel, adding, “Peace be unto thee; be strong, yea, be strong.” By word and by touch, Gabriel strengthened the gray-haired prophet. Then he was ready for the revelation, and said, “Let my Lord speak; for thou hast strengthened me.”

The things which are noted in the history of truth were related by this great revealer. Man sees not as God sees, and in his shortsightedness he often emphasizes the unimportant, and passes lightly over events of universal interest. But when history is given in God’s Word, it is a chronicler of those things which are “noted in the Scripture of truth.” This fact is noticeable in the history of the Persian kings, which is contained in the next few verses. In the most abbreviated manner, Gabriel touches the events of hundreds of years, but he brings into prominence things which are noted elsewhere in the Word of God, and which can be understood only by a careful study of other books of the Bible.

For an understanding of the history of Persia, it is necessary to study

carefully Ezra, Esther, Nehemiah, Haggai, and Zechariah. These books carry the history to the time of Persia's greatest strength, and through the time of Persia's greatest strength, and through the time when that nation worked for God and His people. Then, and not till then, is the record silent.

13. The History of the Decrees

[Daniel Chapter 11:1, 2.]

THE angel began with the history of the Persian kingdom, for at the time of the vision the Babylonian monarchy was entirely gone. It was the third year of the sole reign of Cyrus, and the fifth year since Darius the Mede had taken Babylon. It will be remembered that Daniel had seen the various nations, as they arose one after another on the stream of time. God is the only perfect, authentic historian; the only unbiased record of national events is found in the Scriptures. Men record acts, but only God can give those acts their proper setting in the great drama of life. There is one unbroken chain of events, a silken thread in the web of life, a perpetual spring in the tide of human affairs. This is the record of God's dealings with His chosen people. Egyptian history is noted in the Inspire Record of the world, but only as it played some part in connection with Jehovah's people. Likewise Assyria, Babylon, Greece, and Rome; whatever the nation and whatever its place in time, its history is noted by the divine historian only during the time when it has been an instrument in God's hand to spread His truth or to protect His people.

It was for such a purpose that the Medo-Persian kingdom came into existence, and when it had fulfilled that work, and the Spirit of God was withdrawn, it passed from the stage of action.

The Medo-Persian empire was born when the time was ripe for Israel's deliverance from the bondage of Babylon. The first king of the united empire was Darius the Mede. He was a man well advanced in life when he came to the throne; threescore and two years old, the record states. But throughout his reign, Gabriel stood by him "to confirm and to strengthen him." To Darius was given the opportunity to liberate the Jews. The Spirit of God pleaded with him, and it brought Daniel into his favor, so that he placed the prophet in the third position in the kingdom. Darius knew of God and His power, for it was he who spent the sleepless night in prayer while Daniel was in the lions' den. Darius, however, did no great work for the Lord. He reigned but two years, then Cyrus took the kingdom.

From the accession of Cyrus to the end of the history of Medo-Persia,

Gabriel worked with the kings. His first words to Daniel in this last vision are to this effect: "I will return to fight with the prince of Persia; and when I am gone forth, lo, the prince of Grecia shall come." When, therefore, the influence of God should be withdrawn from the king of Persia, no power on earth could help him. This thought was made emphatic when the rough goat was seen to meet the ram on the banks of the River Granicus. Wealth, arms, and influence were without avail.

Of the seven years of the reign of Cyrus, the third was already entered at the time of the vision. His first recorded act on taking the kingdom was to issue the proclamation of freedom to the Jews. Throughout the length and breadth of the land the tidings were heralded. It did not take over twelve months for the message to reach the most remote corners of the empire where the Jews might be found. Every inducement which monarch could offer was held out to that people. The slow movement on the part of a few, and the utter inactivity with the great majority, surprised Cyrus beyond measure. It is one of the saddest commentaries in the whole Bible on the perverseness of the human heart, and its desire to cling to sin.

When it is remembered that Babylon was the personification of all vileness; that injustice and oppression abounded, and that the decree of Cyrus was a call from God to liberty and purity of life, the effect of living long even in the sight of sin ought to appall one. This is a picture of the way the calls of God have been treated over and over again. Here is seen the exact counterpart of what people are doing to-day when asked of God to forsake modern Babylon.

One reason why the Jews were slow about withdrawing from ancient Babylon was because the children and youth had been neglected during the seventy years' captivity. Jewish homes should have been schools, training these children for the city of Jerusalem. Instead, Jewish children attended Babylonian schools, mingled with Babylonian society, wore Babylonian apparel, talked, ate, and acted like the Babylonians; and consequently, when the time came to leave Babylon, they had no desire to leave.

Had the Hebrew race been true to its privileges, they might have established schools of the prophets, from which light would have radiated to all parts of the kingdom. This opportunity was offered in the first days of the captivity, when Nebuchadnezzar was witness to the fact that all the Chaldean learning was not worth one-tenth what God could teach. Daniel and his companions were brought into favor because of their knowledge of true educational

principles; and had schools been established at that time, Chaldean youth would doubtless have been educated by the Jews, and in the religion of the Jews. God had always intended that Israel should be teachers of the world; and even after sin had led them into slavery, He gave them an opportunity to teach their captors and their captors' children. Did Israel do so? The end of the seventy years and the response to the decree of Cyrus answer, No. They did not teach other; they failed to teach even their own children. As a result, thousands perished with Babylon.

Those who did go up to Jerusalem were half-hearted in their service, and ready to give up before the least opposition. When the foundation of the temple was laid, the old men wept because it did not equal in splendor the temple of Solomon, and there was little influence exerted to bring others from Babylon. There is little wonder that after waiting two full years to see results, Cyrus was perplexed and astonished at the outcome. What wonder that Daniel had to wait three weeks for an answer to his prayer, while Gabriel and Michael pleaded with the disheartened Cyrus! Cyrus was ready, had the Jews done their part, to make Jerusalem the glory of the whole earth. As it was, we do not find any record of further work by this king. He died, the work he might have done but partially accomplished because of neglect and inactivity on the part of God's chosen people.

Satan had witnessed the workings of the Spirit of God on the hearts of men at the very center of the government he claimed as his own. It was due to his influence that the Jews did not make a grand entry into Jerusalem. Cyrus struggled between two influences, but was restrained by Gabriel from doing any act of violence. Cambyes, his son, reigned nearly eight years, but most of his time was spent in useless and expensive warfare in Egypt and Ethiopia. Cambyes is the Ahasuerus of Ezra 4:6. To him the Samaritans wrote letters of complaint against the Jews at Jerusalem. But Cambyes was too busy with his foreign wars to give heed to this matter, and hence no action was taken either for or against the work at Jerusalem. The Jews were still at liberty to leave Babylon, but such a time of national quiet was not conducive to great activity on their part, and they remained where they were. The time came when they wished with all their hearts that they had gone out during those peaceful years.

Cambyes was slain while in Egypt; and before the report was circulated throughout the Medo-Persian empire, an impostor took the throne which belonged to Smerdis, the son of Cambyes. The impostor, known in history

as Pseudo- Smerdis (the false Smerdis), is the Artaxerxes of Ezra 4:7. He reigned only seven months, but that gave him time to consider complaints from the Samaritans and the tribes about Jerusalem, and to issue a commandment for the building of Jerusalem to cease until further word should come from the throne. This letter of the false Smerdis is found in Ezra 4:18-22. This is the only act which the divine historian mentions in the life of this Persian monarch.

Although very little is said about him, God knew every move he made. This is seen as we follow the history of the decrees. As soon as the Jews at Jerusalem heard the reading of the letter from the false Smerdis, all work ceased. "For," reasoned they, "how can we go on?" After they ceased to build, God raised up two prophets, Haggai, and Zechariah, and from these we gain a knowledge of the condition of affairs in Jerusalem.

The people ceased to build the temple, and turned to building houses for themselves. When urged to continue the Lord's work, they complained that money was scarce. They sowed seed, but the harvest was less than the amount sown; their trees bore little or no fruit; there was drought, and the cattle died; men could not pay their rent or taxes, and became slaves because of debt, and sold their children into bondage. Then they complained to God. But all the time God was working for them, and they knew it not.

This is the way He worked: In the city of Babylon, six of the chief men of the empire suspected that the reigning king was not the rightful heir, and they banded themselves together to find out. Forcing their way into the presence of Smerdis, they recognized the impostor, and slew him, and Darius, the chief of the band, was made king. This is the man in history known as Darius Hystaspes, and is Darius the Persian spoken of in Ezra 4:24.

Gabriel still guarded the throne of the Persians, and while the weak-hearted Jews left off building the temple because of a little opposition, God was bringing a man to the throne who would carry forward the work of Cyrus. Haggai and Zechariah gathered the people together and urged them to resume the work of building, giving the word of the Lord that their poverty was the direct result of their own refusal to build in the face of difficulties. The Jews took up the burden, but presently Tatnai and others, governors of tribes in Palestine, came to Jerusalem and warned the Jews to cease. Haggai, Zechariah, Zerrubbabel, and Jeshua quoted the decree of Cyrus. Tatnai then wrote to Darius, expecting, of course, that he would put an end to the work. Darius, however, caused a search to be made, and found the

decree of Cyrus, with all its particulars concerning the building, the sacrifices, and the order for money for the same from the king's treasury.

Here is a manifestation of God's goodness and mercy. That which in the eyes of men looked like defeat was turned into a glorious victory. Darius issued a decree which covered all that was contained in the decree of Cyrus, and more also. Tatnai and the men who had entered complaint were commanded to help forward the work at Jerusalem by giving their own money to bear the expense.

Flee out of the midst of Babylon, and deliver every man his soul.

Watch those men, Tatnai, Shethar-boznai, and their companions, who raised such an outcry against God's work. When the decree of Darius was received, the accusers went with great speed to the Jewish leaders. Seeming defeat was turned into signal victory, because God was directing in the affairs of men. Bitter enemies became friends, or at least assistants, when the breath of Jehovah confounded their worldly policy. Again God especially favored Israel.

The warnings of Jeremiah were still heard: "Flee out of the midst of Babylon, and deliver every man his soul: be not cut off in her iniquity.... We would have healed Babylon, she is not healed: forsake her, and let us go every one into his own country.... The Lord hath brought forth our righteousness: come, and let us declare in Zion the work of the Lord our God."

"O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken." Israel heeded not. For thirty-six years — think of it, over a quarter of a century — Darius reigned, and Gabriel stood at his right hand to keep his heart tender toward the chosen people.

The angels of heaven watched intently to see Israel return and build Jerusalem. To the prophet Zechariah, in the days of Darius, was given a wonderful view of the future history of the people of God. Jerusalem was given an opportunity in those days to build so as to become an everlasting city. Said one angel to another in the hearing of Zechariah, "Run, speak to this young man, saying, Jerusalem shall be inhabited as towns without walls, for the multitude of men and cattle therein." Instead of walls of stone, such as Jerusalem and the cities of the world had hitherto been accustomed to build, God promised to be a wall of fire round about it. "Ho, ho, come forth,

and flee from the land of the north. ... Deliver thyself, O Zion, that dwellest with the daughter of Babylon.”

Abounding love, like the love of a mother for her firstborn, is heard in the words of Jehovah: “Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion! for lo, I come. I will dwell in the midst of thee.” Christ’s first and His second coming were both promised then, and would doubtless have followed in quick succession had Israel heeded.

Throughout all the world the glory of the Lord should be seen upon Zion, daughter of the living God. “I am returned unto Zion, and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem: and JERUSALEM SHALL BE CALLED A CITY OF TRUTH!” “Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion: shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee.”

To those who mourned because the new temple seemed less glorious than the former one, Christ, looking forward to the time when He Himself should enter there with the words of life for His people, said, by the prophet Haggai, “I will shake all nations, and the Desire of all nations shall come: and I will fill this house with glory.” “The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former, ... and in this place will I give peace.” This He said referring to His personal visit in the form of humanity.

And again, by the same prophet, He asked them to witness to the fact that the very day they began to build, the land yielded abundantly; the silver and gold flowed in, and there was general prosperity.

By Zechariah the latter rain was promised to Jerusalem; great clouds of His glory should overshadow them. In Jerusalem the weak should be as David, and David as the angel of the Lord. All this He told them by the prophet Zechariah. Read the entire prophecy for its glorious promises. If we had lived in Babylon in the days of Darius, would we have hearkened? The prophet as he looks still farther into the future, sees the Lord coming and all His saints with Him to crown Jerusalem, the city of our God, the bride of the apocalypse. It should be an eternal city, with sin and iniquity blotted from the earth.

Zechariah saw these things in the days of Darius, king of Persia; and had the Jews come out of Babylon, and followed where God would have led, such would have been the history of the world. They heeded not His voice, and after a lapse of nearly twenty-five hundred years, the people of to-day find

themselves heirs to exactly the same promises under precisely the same conditions. If the church of to-day follows the instruction of the prophets, every promise of Zechariah shall be theirs. If not, the history of the Jews during the reign of the king who followed Darius, will be repeated.

In giving this history to Daniel, these details were omitted, and Daniel did not live to see them carried out. To him the angel said, speaking in the third year of the reign of Cyrus, "Behold, there shall stand up yet three kings in Persia; and the fourth shall be far richer than they all."

The three kings who followed Cyrus were Cambyses, Pseudo-Smerdis, and Darius. These, and their part in the history of the Jews, we have already considered. The fourth king of Persia after Cyrus the Great was noted for his wealth, and the great army he raised against the Greeks. This king was Xerxes, who came to the throne on the death of Darius. Our interest lies in the record of his dealings with the Jews, and to that history one entire book of the Bible is devoted. Xerxes is supposed to be the Ahasuerus of Esther, and the book of Esther is the record of the acts of this king with reference to the people of God who were still living in the kingdom of Babylon, over which Xerxes was sole monarch.

The Medo-Persian kingdom was at its height during the reign of this king. He held in subjection one hundred and twenty-seven provinces, extending from India to Ethiopia.

His capital was at Shushan, in the province of Elam. Some estimate of the wealth at the disposal of this ruler may be gained from the fact that for six months the princes, rulers, and governors of all the provinces, representing the power of the Persian king in all parts of the realm, were entertained at the royal palace; and that when this gathering was over, the palace of Shushan was thrown open for a full week, during which time all the people were feasted in the gardens. There was drinking of wine and reveling. It was similar to the time when Belshazzar feasted with a thousand of his lords. The furnishings of the palace, with its marble walls and floors, its rich curtains and draperies of many colors, hanging by silver rings to the lofty pillars, told of the gratification of pride. The beds and couches were of gold and silver, and they drank from wine cups of gold. Truly Medo-Persia was the daughter of Babylon.

The story of Vashti is a familiar one. Ahasuerus commanded her to appear before his half-drunken company, and she refused. Then she was set aside,

and a Jewish maiden, her nationality being unknown, became queen of the Persian kingdom. This was Hadassah, known as Esther, an orphan of the house of Saul, whose parents had been among the royal captives in the days of Nebuchadnezzar. She had lived always with a cousin by the name of Mordecai, who treated her as his own daughter. Little did Mordecai and his wife think, when they took the helpless infant Hadassah, that she would one day stand for her people in the presence of the king. She was an obedient child, and consequently became an obedient woman. She was simple-hearted and unassuming, requiring little and demanding nothing. She loved her own people, although to be true to them meant that she must look death in the face.

Daniel was no longer living, and there were few if any to represent the worship of the true God in the court of the godless king. Mordecai sat at the king's gate, it is true, and in time of a conspiracy he reported the matter to the king; but there were few occasions when he could mingle with those in authority. Wickedness and injustice abounded, and Mordecai refused to countenance such principles, and would not bow before the haughty Haman, one of the king's counselors. This was pretext enough for the enemies of the Jews to work upon, for they were now a hated race throughout the empire. They had failed to take advantage of the time of national favor, and Persia had turned against them.

For about forty years mercy had been extended to Israel, and that people had turned a deaf ear to all entreaty. Forty years has often been called the allotted time for a generation to settle its destiny either for or against the truth. Moses was forty years in the wilderness, unlearning the things of Egypt, and being taught in the things of God; Israel wandered forty years in the wilderness, when only eleven days were necessary to make the journey from the Red Sea to the border of Canaan; forty days Christ endured severe temptation; forty years sealed the fate of the Reformation in Germany; and it was forty years from the preaching of the sealing message until the time of the loud cry.

So Israel was given forty years in Babylon while angels held the winds of strife. At the end of that time Xerxes yielded to the suggestion of Haman, and issued a decree against that "certain people scattered abroad and dispersed among the people in all the provinces." If entreaty would no longer attract the attention of the Jews, God would in His mercy let persecution come, that they might be compelled to flee to His side for

protection. But when persecution and hardship are approaching, the love of God is so great that He prepares the deliverance beforehand.

The angel of God had guarded Hadassah, and directed in her education. He had brought her to the kingdom “for such a time as this.” When there was no man to represent His cause, Jehovah used a woman, and she, a young woman. Her very beauty was consecrated to the Lord, and He made use of that. God loves young people, as the history of the Jews certifies.

Messengers were sent by post to carry the king’s decree to every province in the vast empire. It was sealed with the king’s signet, and the laws of the Medes and Persians were unchangeable. On a set day, every Jew in the kingdom was to be put to death by the sword; old, young, men, women, and little children — none were exempted. Satan triumphed in the thought that at last Israel was in his hand, and the cause of God should fall. “The king and Haman,” two of Satan’s servants, “sat down to drink.”

The city of Shushan first heard the decree, and consternation filled the hearts of the Jews. There was distress in every home. “The city of Shushan was perplexed.” Scarcely one year from the date of the decree, and death would be their lot. There was seemingly no way of escape. Years before they might have gone up to Jerusalem, but now it was forever too late. A bitter wail of agony reached heaven, and as those messengers of the king sped on, the cry grew louder. The voices of the Jews at Shushan were strengthened by sounds of mourning from thousands of Jews in all the provinces.

Esther, in the king’s palace, was ignorant of the decree, but Mordecai made known to her the universal distress, and sent her a copy of the king’s command. The crucial moment had come to her. Should she, could she, be true to her God? The Hebrews of Shushan put on sackcloth, and for three days fasted for the queen. Then she came forth in the strength of her God. Queenly, beautiful, trusting, she stood in the inner court over against the king’s house, awaiting the recognition of the monarch of earth, to cross whose will meant death. On one hand she saw death at the hand of Xerxes; on the other, the approval of her God. “If I perish, I perish,” she said, and God accepted her sacrifice.

God had prepared from afar for her deliverance. The very act of kindness done years before by Mordecai wrought in the deliverance of his people. Who says there is no record kept of man’s acts, or that man performs any deed of kindness unprompted by heavenly beings? God used Esther to save

His people; He also used Mordecai.

Haman, the one who proposed the decree, was hung on a gallows built for Mordecai; Mordecai was promoted to the position of chief counselor of Xerxes; and a decree was issued that on the day appointed for the slaughter of the Jews, every Jew should bear arms and defend himself against the Persians. And the fear of the Jews fell upon all the people. Again God defeated the schemes, not of men only, but of the arch-enemy. Truth triumphed in spite of the waywardness of His people. This decree of Ahasuerus, or Xerxes, is the counterpart of the decree which will soon be issued by the beast of the thirteenth chapter of Revelation against the followers of God. It will find a people situated as were the Jews in Babylon; it will find others who have withdrawn from Babylon, and as the enemy rushes upon this latter class to slay them, the swords will fall like broken straws, for angels of God will fight for His people.

This record, given in the book of Esther, is preserved in Bible history that men may know the future. God's dealings with the Jews reveal the principles of His government, and in this history is a graphic description of the sins and deliverance of spiritual Israel.

Xerxes was a cruel, arrogant man, and his character is shown not only in his dealings with the Hebrew race, but with other peoples as well. Not content with the extent of territory under his control, he mustered an immense army — over five million, historians state — and crossed the Hellespont to subdue Grecia. Defeat and disaster accompanied the effort, however, and he returned unto his own kingdom.

The Spirit of God was not yet withdrawn from the Medo-Persian court, and although Xerxes is the last king mentioned in the vision which Daniel saw, yet God was still holding out mercy to the Israelites; and it was during the reign of Artaxerxes Longimanus, the successor of Xerxes, that the final decree for the return of the Jews was issued. In like manner the grand jubilee will immediately follow Satan's last effort to destroy the people of God.

In the seventh year of the reign of Artaxerxes, the heart of Ezra was stirred by the Spirit of God, and he appealed to the king for assistance. In response to the appeal Artaxerxes issued the commandment recorded in the seventh chapter of Ezra. This is the decree of the year 457 B.C., mentioned in chapter ten, page 145, and is the date from which to reckon the beginning of

the two thousand three hundred days of Daniel 8:14, and the seventy weeks Daniel 9:24. The decree of Artaxerxes included all that was contained in the decrees of Cyrus and Darius, and gave further commandment to build the wall and establish a government.

Eighty years had passed since the decree of Cyrus — eighty years of forbearance; but even after experience of the days of Esther and Xerxes there was little interest manifested in the rebuilding of Zion, and the company who went with Ezra was small compared with what it should have been. The condition in Jerusalem was discouraging, for there the Jews had intermarried with the Canaanites, bringing in iniquity and confusion. The Sabbath was desecrated, and the services of the Lord's house were neglected. It was not until the twentieth year of Artaxerxes, after Ezra had labored for Israel thirteen years, that Nehemiah came from Babylon and stirred the people into activity. Then, and not till then, were the walls rebuilt. Even then it was fighting with one hand and building with the other, because of a multitude of enemies. It was only then that they began to pay tithe, and to cease from ordinary traffic on the Sabbath; it was then that they put away their heathen wives; but they did it only because threatened with God's wrath.

Truly, Israel was stiff necked and rebellious. A remnant was saved from Babylon, but it was only a remnant; and that remnant, after years of struggling and much halting, was as a brand snatched from the burning.

Jerusalem, which might have been the glory of the earth, fell a prey to each succeeding kingdom. Daniel's mind turned to the rising power of the kingdom of Grecia, and Gabriel next spoke of the mighty one who should rule with great dominion. Medo-Persia sank into a state of weakness, and the angel withdrew his sheltering wings; probation was passed for another nation. It, too, had been numbered and found wanting; and its name is dropped by the inspired penman.

The history of the Persian empire, until it passed its zenith, is the history of the decrees; and when that nation ceased to help forward the people upon whom God was bestowing light, it is lost sight of by the divine historian.

Time waits for neither man nor nation. The life of each individual may be read in the history of the years of Medo-Persian supremacy. Let us hasten our steps toward the New Jerusalem. Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God. 2 Peter 3:12.

14. The History of Greece

[Daniel Chapter 11:3-13.]

THE first two verses of the eleventh of Daniel outline the history of the second kingdom, Medo-Persia. That portion of the chapter included in verses three to thirteen records the history of the third kingdom, Greece. Those things which are “noted in the Scripture of truth” concerning Greece are the things which Gabriel made known to Daniel. The prophet had found it difficult to grasp the full significance of the symbols used in previous visions to represent the kingdoms of the world, and so in this last interview between the servant of God and the angel of prophecy, symbols are laid aside, and the history is repeated in plain language.

Notwithstanding the fact that Gabriel gives the prophecy in a plain narrative, the very words he uses, and the facts which he selects from the multitude of events which actually took place, have a significance. In reading God’s Word in any of its parts there is first to be found the story which lies on the surface; and secondly, the deeper meaning, which is just as truly there, but which must be sought for as with a lighted candle. It is hoped that the reader may at least catch a glimpse of the deep spiritual lessons while reading the plain narrative of events.

God had a purpose when He gave the history of the four kingdoms, Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome. There is an incentive to understand these prophecies in the very fact that each nation is represented in a variety of ways, revealing different characteristics. And since Daniel is a prophet for the latter days, there is an increased desire to read not only the history, but God’s purpose in tracing the history with such unerring accuracy. Babylon, as a nation, as has been seen from the study of Daniel in connection with Revelation, represents a condition of things which will exist in the church of the last days. Great was the splendor of that kingdom, but she was a harlot, and the mother of harlots. Above the city Heaven saw the words, “Mystery of iniquity,” for she made all nations drunk with the wine of her fornication.

Medo-Persia was a daughter of Babylon, and she played the harlot also; that is, she partook of the sins of Babylon, and departed from the living God. The principles of the religion of Babylon were carried out by the daughter,

though the wickedness was in a measure checked by the constant presence of angels in the court, who labored in behalf of the chosen people of God; but the constant tendency toward tyranny and oppression in the government is revealed in the decree of Ahasuerus in the days of Esther.

As Medo-Persia has an important part to play in connection with God's people, and while her part differed from the dealings of Babylon with that same people, so the Greek nation was called of God to do a work — a specific work. She, too, was a daughter of Babylon, partaking of her sins; but these sins, while the same, led to different outward manifestations than in Medo-Persia. Like children of the same family, each reproducing the character of the parents, yet differing widely from one another, so Greece, Medo-Persia, and Rome are three sisters, daughters of the same mother, but each endowed with special features and strong peculiarities.

Greece spans the gulf between the Old and the New Testament. Its principal work as a nation was done during the time when there was no prophet in Israel, the period between Malachi and Christ, hence the book of Daniel is the only portion of the Bible which deals with this nation. The history of Greece can be traced to Javan of the family of Japheth, who, with his sons, settled in the islands of the Mediterranean. The natural division of the country by the bays and mountains developed many independent or semi-independent tribes, but they had one common language and one religion.

It would seem that the principles of the worship of Jehovah, as known to the sons of Noah, were carried into the isles of Greece, for throughout the entire system is traceable a close resemblance to the ceremonial law with its types and shadows, as carried on in Jerusalem in the days of Solomon. Again, when it is remembered that the kingdom of the Jews, in the days of its prosperity, was visited by representatives from all nations, it is easy to understand how the forms and ceremonies of the worship of Jehovah were adopted by the Greeks. Even the architecture of Palestine, especially the temple of Solomon, became a model to the Greeks, who were lovers of the beautiful in the world has its origin in the mind of God.

The gross idolatry of Babylon and Egypt was replaced in Greece by a more refined worship, if there can be said to be degrees of refinement in licentiousness. At any rate, Greek customs were less revolting on the surface, and hence more subtle with nature. They studied nature, and not having God's Word as an interpreter, they worshiped the forms instead of the Creator. They recognized the power of life, but not knowing the source

of life, they were led into licentious practices, known as “the mysteries,” where things which are sacred were defiled with drinking and passionate indulgence.

There is a pathetic strain throughout their history. They came so close to the God of nature, and yet, not knowing Him, they wandered in such utter darkness. Theirs is a constant reminder of the fate of those students of to-day who seek to understand natural phenomena, but do not interpret nature by the word of its Creator. They, too, worship Zeus and Demeter, Pluto, or Poseidon, instead of the Christ. The fact is, that the children of to-day are fed upon the myths and traditions of this very people, who were groping in darkness, worshiping the gods of Olympus, and ignorant of the God whose voice shook the mountains in every storm, whose smile was in every sunbeam, and whose rivers watered the fields.

The Greeks offered sacrifices, but of what value were they when they accepted not the sacrifice of the slain Lamb of God? The spirit of prophecy was cherished, but while God’s prophets mingled with the people, the Greek prophetess, a maiden of questionable character, was secluded from the people, and received her inspiration from a vapor that poured from a rent in a rock over which the temple of Delphi was built.

There was a priesthood, the duties of whose members were to reveal the will of the gods. the sacred feasts of Jehovah’s people were replaced by the national games of the Greeks. As the passover and the feast of tabernacles called the Hebrew race together, and promoted unity and a love of God, so the Greek games gathered that people together, promoting one common language, religion, and law. God’s people met for spiritual worship; the Greeks for physical or intellectual enjoyment.

The history of Greece is the history of physical and intellectual culture. The people admired grace and beauty, and her literary minds worshiped the intellect. Plato, the greatest of Greek philosophers, lived about four hundred years before Christ, and his teachings have led the thoughts of writers in every age since then. The Jews mingled the teachings of the Bible with the philosophy of Plato, and that formed the traditions of men, against which Christ so often warned His followers. The false philosophy, and the “science falsely so called: of Paul’s time, was Greek teaching, which breathed the spirit of Plato and his students.

Plato’s writings have replaced the Bible with many, and a large number of

modern writers, of both prose and poetry, recognize him as their intellectual leader. The philosophy of this man was often good, and he admired truth; but the error lay in admiring or assenting to truth, and failing to live it out. His followers came under the condemnation of Christ, together with the Pharisees, of whom He said, "They say, but do not."

Here, in Greek religion and Greek learning, was the most subtle form of that mixture of truth and error which Satan offered at the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, which existed from the days of Eden to the time of Greece. Babylon enslaved the bodies of God's people, Medo-Persia made laws to slay them, but Greece captured their minds, and enslaved them to her ideas. She counterfeited so neatly, so adroitly, the spiritual teachings of the Old Testament; and so quickly, yet so surely, wound her tendrils about God's people, that her slavery was far worse than that of Egypt or Babylon. It is this influence which must be taken into consideration while following the history of the Greeks as given by Gabriel.

The angel said, "When I am gone forth [from Persia], lo, the prince of Grecia shall come." And of Greece, he says, "A mighty king shall stand up, that shall rule with great dominion, and do according to his will." It is in this language that Alexander is introduced in the divine records. He was not a Greek, but a Macedonian, the son of Philip of Macedon. He stands in history as one of those strong characters whom God uses in spite of the fact that they are unacquainted with Him, and know not His manner of working. Alexander, in Greek history, corresponds in some ways to Cyrus the Persian.

Alexander, as a boy, showed an indomitable will, and as he grew to manhood the trait strengthened. He was educated by Aristotle, the illustrious pupil of Plato, in the wisdom of the Greeks. When twenty years of age, Philip of Macedon died, leaving the government to Alexander. This was the year 336 B.C. Alexander united the independent states of Greece, and placed himself at the head of their amphictyonic council. The Greeks were ambitious, and the new general organized an army for foreign conquest.

The third kingdom was represented by a leopard with four wings on its back. This symbol covered the time not only that Alexander was king, but during its divided state as well. The swiftness of conquest is well represented by the wings of a fowl; the cunning, insinuating nature by the lithe form of the leopard; and the mingling together of truth and error in its doctrines and practices by the spots. "Can the leopard change his spots?"

No more could Greece give truth without a portion of the false; no more can truth and error be separated in that system of education founded upon the wisdom of the Greeks – her philosophy, her myths, and her nature teaching.

Again Daniel saw the progress of this third nation, as a rough goat coming from the west without touching the earth. This marks the rapidity of the conquests carried on by Alexander. It was Granicus, Asia Minor, Issus, Tyre, Gaza, with the surrender of all Egypt; Arbela, Babylon, Susa, Bactria, and India — all in the space of eight short years. Having conquered those who opposed him, he planned to unite the extensive territory over which he bore sway. He was an organizer and diplomat as well as a general. By marrying a princess of Babylon, and giving several members of the royal family of Persia in marriage to his generals, he sought to win the favor of the conquered races. It was while in Babylon, directing affairs in that ancient Eastern capital, that Alexander died, probably as a result of intemperance and excess. He was still a young man, but the nations of the world bowed at his feet.

In following the rapid conquests of Alexander, — symbolized by the goat which touched not the ground, — no mention has been made of the Jews. As God brought Nebuchadnezzar and Cyrus in direct contact with His people, that they might know the God of heaven, so He permitted Alexander to learn of Him. While that conqueror was passing from Tyre, after its surrender, toward Gaza, which guards the entrance into Egypt, he stopped at Jerusalem. Josephus states that great consternation filled the city when it was known that the Greek warrior was coming. But the high priest, Juddas, had a dream in which he was bidden to go out to meet Alexander, arrayed in his priestly garments, and accompanied by the temple officers clad in white.

When Alexander met this company, much to the surprise of his army and generals, he bowed to the ground to worship the God whose name was on the miter worn by the high priest. He then accompanied the high priest to the temple at Jerusalem, where the sacrifices were explained; also the prophecies of Daniel concerning the rise and fall of Babylon, the conquests of Medo-Persia and its subsequent fall, and the rise of a third empire. Daniel, who had in person witnessed before Nebuchadnezzar and Cyrus, was then quoted to Alexander. The mighty conqueror was in the presence of the Spirit of God, and was given the message that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will. Would he bow in submission, and let God conquer for him? This was the opportune moment

in his life.

Alexander acknowledged God, but left Jerusalem and pushed forward in battle. Gaza fell. Egypt was entered, and there, in order to gratify a selfish pride, he had himself proclaimed son of Jupiter Ammon. He who might have become a son of God chose rather to be called the son of Jupiter. The result of Greek education and learning is fully exemplified in this one act. The outcome of such a choice - -a fit consummation of all Greek teaching — was met at Babylon when the king, at his very prime, laid down and died with no hope of the future. It is a sad but impressive commentary for those who seek the ways of the world in preference to the truths of God.

One thing which the inspired historian notes, is, that he would do “according to his will.” When man makes such a resolution, it means that he has been offered a choice between God and Satan, and has chosen the latter. There are but two minds in the universe, and he who rejects God may claim that he exercises his own mind, but it means that he is swayed by the mind of the enemy of God. “Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus,” for it brings liberty. The spirit which wishes to exalt self is imitating the philosophy of the Greeks, and its result is death; for Greek philosophy is but a continuation of the philosophy used to deceive Adam and Eve in Eden, at the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

Alexander left no heirs to the throne who could hold the reins of government. His eldest son was a child of five. A number of strong men had acted as generals of the army during the march through Asia, and on the death of the emperor eight of these contended for supremacy. None, however, were strong enough to subdue all the others. Nearly twenty years were spent in war and contention. Finally it was decided the Ptolemy should hold Egypt; Seleucus, Syria and the east; Lysimachus Thrace and Asia Minor, and Cassander, Greece. The territory of Alexander was divided, but “not to his posterity;” neither was the strength of these four equal to that of Alexander, and the four partitions lasted but a few years.

Greece, which was under the rule of Cassander, was taken by Lysimachus, thus uniting the western and northern divisions.

In 281 B.C., after intrigues too numerous to mention, Seleucus met Lysimachus and slew him in battle. This reduced the four divisions to two, the rulers of which were afterward distinguished as kings of the north and the south. Seleucus, the king of the north, now held territory which had

formerly belonged to three generals, while Ptolemy retained the southern division. This agrees with the words of Gabriel to Daniel. The fifth verse, according to Spurrell, reads: "Then shall the king of the south, even one of his [Alexander's] princes, be strong; yet shall another exceed him in strength and have dominion; a grand dominion shall be his dominion."

The Ptolemy who gained Egypt was surnamed Soter, or Saviour, and on his death he was succeeded by his son, Ptolemy Philadelphus. The Seleucus who gained the three divisions was succeeded by his son Antiochus Sotor, who was killed by the Gauls in Asia Minor. The third in the line of Greco-Syriac kings was Antiochus Theos, who was reigning in Syria while Ptolemy Philadelphus reigned on the Egyptian throne.

There is, however, something aside from the mere succession of kings which is worthy of notice. Gabriel gave Daniel the framework of the history of Greece. We have in the inspired record something which corresponds to the skeleton in the human body, and the flesh and organs of life need to be put in. These nations which were then in existence were a shelter, perhaps, a scaffolding, built about God's people, offering them another opportunity to work. The Spirit of God was working in the courts of monarchs as faithfully as ever. At the same time the controversy between truth and error never for a moment abated.

It might seem to the casual observer that Greece was not in reality ruling power in the sense that Babylon and Medo-Persia were universal monarchies. Let us see. From the first it has been noted that Greece was an intellectual ruler rather than a power which was an intellectual ruler rather than a power which held the bodies of men in slavery. If we may personify Greek intellect in an abstract way, we may say that Alexander was the tool in God's hand for building up a kingdom where it might hold sway. Alexander did this work well; and while he individually fell, the Greek language, learning, and customs were introduced into all countries where his arms had opened the way. The Greek religion, with its mysteries, was accepted in Syria and Asia Minor; Greek games were celebrated in the eastern provinces. But Greek education took a position ahead even of her religion, and Greek teachers and scholars followed in the wake of the conqueror. The Greek language was almost universally used. and Greek books were in demand. The city of Alexandria, in Egypt, was founded by Alexander, and it became the center of Greek learning. Egyptian idolatry and Greek philosophy sat enthroned beside each other. As the Encyclopedia

Britannica states it, "In Egypt a Greek aristocracy of office, birth, and intellect existed side by side with a distinct native life."

Israel had once been miraculously delivered from physical bondage in Egypt. They had been warned against fleeing to Egypt for protection in the days of Nebuchadnezzar at the siege of Jerusalem. They may have escaped the bondage of those earlier times, but they were captured by the learning of the Greeks. In the days of Ptolemy Soter, hosts of Jews flocked into Egypt, and those who remained in Jerusalem and Palestine imbibed many of the ideas of the Greeks.

It has been stated that the history of Greece fills the time between the prophecy of Malachi and John the Baptist. We are now ready to appreciate the reason why Israel was so long without the sound of a prophet's voice. God gave Israel a system of education separate and distinct from the systems of all the other nations; a system which, if followed, would forever make it impossible for the people to go into captivity. But Israel often gave up her God-given system for the teaching of heathen nations.

When the Jews returned from Babylon, they were strongly tinctured with Babylonian ideas of education and religion. This prepared them to accept with readiness the teachings of the Greeks. The rabbis of Jerusalem mingled the principles of Greek philosophy so thoroughly with the statutes of Jehovah, which they were commanded to teach the children, that from the death of Malachi to the birth of John the Baptist there was not a family in Judah to whom the education of a prophet could be intrusted.

The Greek games were performed in Jerusalem itself, and Jewish youth, dressed only in the scarf and broad hat, in imitation of the god Hermes, wrestled like the Athenian athletes. It is stated by Dr. Mears that the priests, when the signal was given for the sports, left their work in the temple to watch the games. Greek names replaced the Jewish in many instances, and even priests intermarried with the Greeks. It is no wonder that Gabriel gave specific instruction concerning the name to be given the babe of Zacharis and Elizabeth, for although there was once a time when every child in Israel was named under the inspiration of the Spirit, the Israelites had now chosen Greece in the place of God.

The whole Jewish teaching was Hellenized; and when John the Baptist was born, his mother and father were commanded to leave the city of Jerusalem, and educate the child in the desert, away from the influence of the schools

and the society of the Jews. Christ himself never entered the schools of His day, because of the mixture of the truth of God with heathen philosophy. Greek teaching exalted nature; but the Son of God could not hear the voice of the Father in the teachings of the schools, and He wandered through the woods alone, or in company with His mother. Then it was that nature, the great object lesson of the Creator, was opened to His expanding mind. Other Jewish youth sat at the feet of the rabbis, learning what the spirit of the Greeks taught, and they crucified the Lord of life.

It is a wonderful thing to man, who is so limited in means, to watch the workings of God, who is so limitless in resources. When the Jews fled to Egypt, then God took advantage of their presence there, and turned it to His glory. Ptolemy Philadelphus founded the Alexandrian Library, and it was he who encouraged the translation of the Old Testament into Greek. Thus the prophecies concerning the promised Messiah were put into the universal language nearly three hundred years before the birth of Christ. The world might become intoxicated with the Greek philosophy, but God left man without excuse by placing the word of life in the household tongue of the nations. Satan may scheme, and his agents on earth may be wise, but they can do nothing against the truth without in that very act promoting the truth. While the dark wings of paganism were drawing closer and closer about the world, to shut out if possible the light of heaven, the word of God, as a lighted candle, was shining under that darkness, and proclaiming the advent of the Desire of all ages.

The first verses in the history of Greece (Dan. 11:3-5) bring the student face to face with that country as an intellectual power, and reveal the secret of her strength to be in her language and philosophy. She conquered the world by bringing all minds under her control. It was the plan of the enemy of truth to subjugate minds to a false philosophy; and since this was the scheme upon which he worked in Greece, it was under this same national influence that the truth which frees the mind was given to the world. How far-reaching, then, were the purposes of God.

Another great principle lies side by side with the one given in those first verses. This second, which is hidden in verses six to thirteen, has to do with the working out of those same principles through the government as a channel. The kingdom of Alexander resolved itself into two divisions, a northern and a southern. Both were Hellenized, but the northern represented more truly the Greek principles, while the southern division was strongly

tinctured with the old Egyptian ideas of both government and religion. It was the northern division which carried forward the work of the prophecy as symbolized by the leopard and the rough goat, and it was from the northern division that the little horn of Daniel eight proceeded.

Consequently it must be right to conclude that it is the Greco-Syriac division, rather than the Egyptian division, that will do the work of which Alexander was the forerunner. Nevertheless there will be throughout the ages until the end of time a strength rising from the south and opposing the northern power. This will again be seen in the Mohammedan work of the Middle Ages during the supremacy of the fourth beast. But we must watch the working out of the principle during the life of the third kingdom, as that is introductory in itself to the future work.

History reveals the fact that the greatest strength in government is found in those powers whose territory extends from east to west, and nations which try to govern territory extending far to the north and the south have trouble. It is in recognition of this fact that each universal empire has progressed mainly from east to west, and each succeeding kingdom has gone farther to the west than the preceding one. This continues until the globe is encircled, and all the kings of the earth finally meet in the great battle of Armageddon.

In spite of this controlling principle among nations, and in face of the decree of the Holy Watcher, the north and the south attempted to unite. Worldly policy of intermarriage was followed, and as Spurrell renders verse 6, "After some years they [the kings of the north and the south] shall be associated; for the daughter of the king of the south [Berenice, daughter of Ptolemy Philadelphus] shall come to the king of the north [Antiochus Theos] to make agreements." Antiochus put away his lawful wife, Laodice, in order to marry Berenice, and the results of this transgression of God's law are given by the pen of Inspiration: "The arm shall not retain its strength, neither shall their offspring be established; but she shall be given up, and her attendants, and her child, and her supporters at those times." Human pen can not make the history any plainer than did Gabriel in relating it to Daniel nearly two hundred years before it occurred. Berenice lost favor in the eyes of Antiochus Theos, who thereupon recalled Laodice. The jealous wife then caused Antiochus to be poisoned, and placed her own son on the throne. Through her influence, also, Berenice, her child by Antiochus, and her Egyptian attendants and supporters, were all murdered.

This aroused the royal house of Egypt, and a brother of Berenice advanced

into the territory of Antiochus with a large army. "He shall rule within the fortifications of the kings of the north, and shall war against them and shall prevail." Ptolemy Euergetes, son of Ptolemy Philadelphus, is here described. He not only invaded Syria, but went to Babylon, where he found some of the Egyptian gods and molten images which Cambyses had captured during his war in Egypt. These Ptolemy returned and for this was named Euergetes (benefactor) by his grateful people. It is said that he carried to Egypt forty thousand talents of silver and many vessels of silver and gold. Ptolemy Euergetes then returned to his own kingdom, where he outlived Antiochus Callinicus, the son of Laodice.

But trouble did not cease then. There was a natural jealousy and antipathy between the north and the south. Ptolemy Euergetes held much of Syria. On the death of Antiochus Callinicus, two sons of Callinicus undertook to regain the lost territory, and to redeem the honor of their father. The first was weak and inefficient; the younger, Antiochus Magnus, who took the throne in the course of a few years, was stronger. He is the "one" who advanced speedily, regaining much of the lost territory.

About the time of the accession of Antiochus Magnus to the Syrian throne, Ptolemy Philopater took the throne in Egypt. He manifested no disposition to invade the territory of the king of the north, being indolent, and a great lover of luxury and ease, but he was aroused by the prospects of an invasion of Egypt, his own throne being threatened by Antiochus Magnus. Antiochus was supported by an immense army, but it fell into the hands of Ptolemy Philopater, who, elated by his victory, returned to his capital to feast. Although he had cast down ten thousand soldiers, yet he did not profit by the victory. Nothing was gained; it was but a merciless slaughter of human beings, a contest for brute supremacy, which is hateful in the sight of God and man. The difference is striking between such warfare and the progress of the mighty generals whom God used to establish kingdoms and punish kings.

Ptolemy Philopater did even worse things, for in self-esteem he entered Jerusalem, and attempted to profane the temple by himself offering sacrifice. The restraint offered by the priests so incensed him that he began war against them, and history states that between forty and sixty thousand Jews, who then lived in Egypt, fell by the sword. Those Jews who had sought Egypt either for protection or for the advantages of her schools and libraries, withdrew from the sheltering hand of their God, and the time came

when they felt the wrath of the enemy. Through all these struggles the nation whom God had chosen might have stood as a beacon on a hill, instead of being trampled upon by every army in its marches between Egypt and Syria. Nay, more, the location of the Jews in Palestine and her capital was by divine appointment. They were at the gateway of the nations, and might have held the balance of power. Had they held aloft the word of God, all nations would have bowed before their kings and paid tribute into their treasury. It was so in the days of Solomon; it might have been repeated in the days of Greek history.

Alexander's act of reverence when he met the company of priests at Jerusalem should have been an object lesson tall Judea of what God by His Spirit would cause all nations to do. But so blinded by Greek teaching were those Jewish leaders, even at that time, that they failed to see this. Instead of flocking to Alexandria for the wisdom of Greece, nations should have sent their youth to schools of the prophets at Jerusalem, and scholars of the world should have sought wisdom from those who knew the God of wisdom.

Peace was finally concluded between Philopater and Antiochus Magnus, which lasted fourteen years, until the death of Ptolemy. Ptolemy Philopater was succeeded by his son Ptolemy Epiphanes, who was in his minority. Antiochus Magnus took advantage of this seeming weakness in Egyptian affairs, and made extensive preparations to invade Egypt with the design of conquering the entire dominion of the Ptolemies. But the Most High ruleth in the kingdoms of men, and Antiochus was brought to realize that there was another power on earth as well as in heaven.

In the fourteenth verse the voice of the fourth beast is heard; Rome placed itself on the side of the helpless king, and Antiochus found his ambition thwarted. The life of the Greek kingdom was spent. There were still many years of struggle, but it was a struggle for existence, not for added territory. But what Greece would not gain in territory she did gain as a teacher of nations, and although she finally lost all territorial supremacy, though, like the kingdom of Nebuchadnezzar, the tree was cut down, yet the roots remain unto this day. More than once, as an intellectual power, has Greece arisen. Throughout the intellectual world she has votaries bowing before her shrine — the mind of man. Her philosophy is to-day studied under the guise of modern writers; her ideas are instilled into the minds of children, from the kindergarten to the university, and students are graduated from the schools of

the land knowing much more of the mythology of Greece than they do of the religion of Jesus Christ; better acquainted with Greek heroes than with the man of Calvary. Greek learning still rules the world, and it will until the setting up of the everlasting kingdom of God — till the stone cut out without hands shall fill the earth.

As the Jews during the days of Alexander and his successors were without excuse, so the Israel of to-day has set before it the wisdom of the Eternal in contrast with the wisdom of Greece. And the message is, “Choose ye this day” at which shrine ye will bow. Sitting at the feet of Jesus, learning of Him, taking His word as the authentic history of the world, His truth as the interpreter of nature, will insure eternal life. Accepting the writings of men, human speculations regarding the history of the world, its creation, its age, placing a human interpretation upon the works of nature, and seeking to find out by experiment and speculation what must be known by faith, — this brings death; for it leads away from Christ, the center of the universe, the source of all wisdom, the great drawing power of creation. The first is the system of God, of which faith is the motive power; the second is the Greek system, which exalts human reasoning. One may not bow down to the idols of Egypt, nor drink of the wines of Babylon, but if he is entrapped by the more pleasing sophistries of Greece, his fate is the same in the end.

For this reason Eternal Truth has shone along the pathway of men in all ages to guard against the enemy. In these last days, when all the evil of the past is renewed and presented to man in all its varied forms, then it is that Greek philosophy and skepticism come forth in full force. A heart filled with truth is the only safeguard against error.

15. The Fourth Kingdom

[Daniel Chapter 11:14-22.]

THE fourteenth verse of the eleventh chapter of Daniel, as we have seen, introduces a new power. Gabriel, in narrating the events connected with the history of Greece, brought that empire down to the time when the southern division was in the hands of a child, Ptolemy Epiphanes, and when two men, Philip of Macedon and Antiochus of Syria, although jealous of each other, were willing to unite their strength in order to subdue Egypt. From a political point of view a general weakness prevailed in the once mighty empire of Alexander. Without noticing the details, the angel of prophecy speaks of the first appearance of the fourth kingdom as it comes in contact with the divisions of the third kingdom, Greece. This fourth kingdom is thus introduced: "The violent opposers of thy people shall exalt themselves that the vision may stand." (Spurrell.)

Since every word is divinely given, there is a significance in the very introduction of what is about to become the mightiest kingdom of the earth, and at the same time the greatest enemy which the people of God have ever had to meet. Daniel had seen this kingdom before. In the vision of the seventh chapter, Rome was represented as a beast too terrible to name. Its characteristics were to devour, to stamp in pieces, and to break. During a part of its history it should speak great words against the Most High, it should wear out the saints of God, and think to change even His laws. So troubled was the prophet over this view in his first vision that he sought for a special explanation of this fourth kingdom.

In his next vision the fourth kingdom was again shown under the symbol of a little horn, which sprang from one of the divisions of Alexander's kingdom. In this view Rome was presented in no milder form than in the previous vision. It was as a king with a "fierce countenance," "understanding dark sentences," having mighty power — a power even more than human. It was to be a scheming, underhanded government, and its most cruel practices were seen to be against God's chosen people. Yea, against Christ, the Prince of princes, the Prince of the covenant, this power should stand up. Gabriel spoke of the robbers who should exalt themselves to establish the vision — that is, to fulfill the description just given.

Putting all these thoughts together, it will be seen that Rome, the fourth kingdom, the successor of Greece, would be noted for the decisive policy which it maintained. Each nation in the prophetic chain had some strong feature, and its history is recorded as an object lesson to the world, as in the days of its life it had been an object lesson to the watching multitudes of other worlds. Babylon was an example of Satan's power to establish a religion which counterfeited the heavenly worship. The result was the basest form of idolatry, a fornication which makes her the personification, among Bible writers, of all vileness. Medo-Persia was a type of Oriental despotism. "The law of the Medes and Persians changeth not;" this was a proverb among the nations. But it was with the kings of this nation that Gabriel and Michael wrought; it was the heads of this despotism who were kept in check by the power of the King of kings.

Greece was altogether different from the preceding two, and instead of gaining recognition because of the form of religion or government, she gained control of the world by the power of her intellect. With her education and philosophy she gained a foothold which no other nation ever held. When Babylon was overthrown and Medo-Persia was no more, Greece lived on in the minds of men.

But the fourth kingdom was "diverse from all the others." As represented to John, Rome, the beast of Rev. 13:2; combined the characteristics of the leopard, the bear, and the lion. There were united the false system of the religion of ancient Babylon, the governmental tyranny of Medo-Persia, and the mixture of good and evil in the intellectual culture of Greece. When the religion, the educational system, or intellectual statutes, and the governmental history of a nation are given, there remains little else worth relating. So in the one nation, Rome is embodied the strength of all the previous nations. What wonder that it was a terrible and dreadful nation, and that except the time of its supremacy should be shortened there should be none left to witness for the truth. It is to this power that we are introduced in the fourteenth verse of the eleventh chapter of Daniel.

When Babylon was overthrown and Medo-Persia was no more, Greece lived on in the minds of men.

It was in the year 201 B.C. that the child, Ptolemy Epiphanes, fell heir to the throne of Egypt, and the kings of Macedon and Syria planned his overthrow and the division of his empire. It was then that Rome arose to prominence before the prophet's eye. But Rome had already been in existence for years,

and during those years had been accumulating strength to enable her to enter the arena with a bound when the proper time should come. The traditional history of Rome dates as far back as the middle of the eighth century before Christ. That was before the days of Nebuchadnezzar and the glories of Babylon. In the days when Isaiah began to prophesy, then Rome was founded. It was said to be the home of a band of robbers and outlaws, and one of the first acts was the theft of the women of a neighboring city as wives for these early settlers. So if Romans are called the children of robbers, the character can not be denied. The Romans were a stalwart, sturdy race, and from the first began the development of a strong central government. In this undertaking men were aided by the prince of this world, the devil himself: for the dragon, that old serpent, called the devil and Satan, gave the fourth beast “his power, and his seat, and great authority.”

The force of all history is lost unless the student recognizes each nation as an actor in the great plan of redemption — one of the participants in the great controversy between Christ and Satan. As the plans of the arch enemy had failed to carry in the history of Babylon, Medo-Persia and Greece, he now attempted with redoubled vigor to thwart the plans of God. He chose for this purpose the seven-hilled city. His plans were deep laid, and the structure that he reared was builded on a firm foundation. Like a lighthouse off some rocky coast, the great planner hoped it would stand the mighty dashings of the waves of truth. It was his last, his supreme effort, for it is this kingdom in one of its manifestations which stands until the end of time.

In its earliest days Rome was ruled by kings, but it was impossible for a Western king to imitate the customs of the Oriental monarchies. Greek governments spanned the gulf between early despotism and the liberality of more modern Western nations. There were two classes of men in Rome, and they both demanded representation in the government. At the end of two hundred and fifty years the kings were dethroned, and consuls substituted. Two consuls from the wealthy class, the patricians, held the reins of government. For the next two centuries there was a struggle between patricians and plebeians for equal rights. The principles of republicanism were struggling for birth. Gradually the patricians lost power, until at last the government rested in the hands of the people — that is citizens of Rome. But there were conquered cities, especially in the peninsula of Italy. “Roman dominion in Italy was a dominion of a city over cities.” Finally rights of citizenship were granted to most of these.

God's government is a representative government, and while He sits as King of kings, He bears sway by common consent, and His subjects from all the worlds have representatives in the councils of heaven. Satan, as prince of this world, was a representative in those days in that council. In Rome he attempted to counterfeit that phase of the divine government.

It was as a republic that Rome began her career as a conquering nation. Her constitution was the result of a gradual growth of two centuries. Having her authority recognized throughout Italy, of which Rome was the center, she began acquiring territory by force of arms. Carthage, a rival city on the south of the Mediterranean, was the first point of attack, and for one hundred years Rome fought for supremacy. It was a bitter struggle, which could end in nothing less than the annihilation of one of the contending parties. Ridpath aptly expresses the policy of the government when he says. "They [the Romans] took what they could and then took the remainder."

During the years when Rome hovered over Carthage, like an eagle ready to descend upon its prey, she was always carrying on wars of aggression in other directions. Both the West and the East were invaded. Spain was made a subjected province; all the citizens were taxed; the silver and gold mines, the wealth of that county, were confiscated as state property, and no city was allowed to fortify itself without the consent of Rome. This was so-called republicanism — the equal rights of men — as understood and practiced by Rome.

The inhabitants of Corsica and Sardinia were sold in the slave markets of Rome, and so numerous were these slaves, says Livy, that "Sardinians for sale" became a proverbial expression for anything cheap. This also was Roman republicanism. Macedonia and Greece were in a state of turmoil, and Rome interfered. After conferences and wars, independence was proclaimed to all Greeks. This was one of the policy schemes by which the republic worked, but liberty lasted for only a brief space. A few years later all those Macedonians who were able to govern themselves were carried to Rome, while those left were inexperienced men who soon played into the hands of the Roman senate. One hundred and fifty thousand Greeks were sold as slaves, and the treasures taken paid all expenses contracted during the war. So high was the tribute exacted from subjected provinces that it relieved Roman citizens of all taxes for future wars. This was independence as granted subjected provinces by the republic of Rome.

The family of Antiochus was still bearing sway in the Eastern world. It was

Antiochus IV who proposed to unite with Philip V of Macedon against the young king of Egypt when Rome interfered. But mild interference was never enough for Rome, although she sometimes assumed to play that role for a time. Antiochus the Great in the single battle of Magnesia (B.C. 190) lost all his conquests in Asia Minor. He was obliged to pay three thousand talents, and an annual subsidy of one thousand talents, for twelve years.

Rome controlled Egypt because the education of the heir to the throne was in the hands of a Roman senator, and a Roman army stood ready to defend the country against all attacks from the north or east. Roman power thus encircled the Mediterranean.

The liberty granted to conquered nations was a myth. Rome was a republic only in name. It was as impossible for Rome to grant liberty to her dependencies as it would be for Satan himself to manifest the attributes of God. Any nation, that departs from the principles of liberty of conscience, it matters not what its pretensions, nor the wording of its constitution, nor the will of some of its people, will find it impossible to maintain a republic other than in name. This is true also in individual experience. Liberty is known only when Christ is enthroned in the heart.

There are always certain other results which accompany wars of conquest. For instance, this policy demands a large army. In the early days of Rome the army was made up of men who left the plow and the shop for the defense of their country, and when war was over, returned to their homes and their trades; but as war became a regular business, generals found it to their advantage to keep their soldiers in readiness. The army was not so much a servant of the state as an attaché to the person of some successful general whom it regarded as its patron. The way was thus open for military despotism, and Rome experienced that form of government more than once.

The senate, supposed to represent the people, became a corporation greedy for gain and enriched by the spoils of war. Senatorial favorites received rich provinces to govern, and bribery was almost universally practiced. "The power of the purse" was in the hands of the senate alone. To their influence may be added the constant and steady growth of the cities, and the decline of the rural population, a practice always ruinous to republicanism, and one always encouraged by a false system of education and religion.

Tradition made the Romans the descendants of the god of war, Mars, the Bruiser, and they were true to the character. Said the inspired penman, "It

shall break in pieces and bruise.” Christ came to Rome as the Prince of peace, the binder up of wounds, the healer of the broken- hearted.

The religion of Rome was secondary to its government. That is, the state was the one all-absorbing institution. A man in Rome was great, not because of any character he bore or deed he had done, but for the simple fact that he was a Roman citizen. Name took the place of character. Here is seen the reverse of truth. With God it is character which gives the name; with Rome it was name independent of character.

Although religion was subservient to the state, yet the form of religion in Rome played an important part in its history, especially in the second or papal phase. Since the papacy was a continuation of paganism, it is necessary to notice its leading features. There were no sweet singers, as David the Bethlehemite; the nature study of the Greeks was also lacking. There were gods many and lords many, but a sternness characterized all worship. Man was deified and canonized. The very name Augustus, which was applied to along line of emperors, meant divine.

In the Roman temples a body of priests performed the sacred rites, but they were appointed by the state. The highest religious officer during the life of paganism was the Pontifex Maximus, the pope of paganism, and he was a civil officer. The religious hierarchy, consisting of priests, augurs, vestals, and the Pontifex Maximus, paved the way for the papal hierarchy of later days, just as the transition from republicanism to imperialism opened the gate for papal supremacy.

In literature and education Rome borrowed largely from Greece, so that the intellectual supremacy of that nation must be traced to Greece, although the man of learning was often a slave sold in the markets of his captors.

It was, however, the education which prevailed in Greece, and which was copied by Rome, that trained a class of citizens for warfare, for tyranny, and for the papacy.

Roman law is extolled as the basis of all civil law today. It was developed gradually as before stated, and the wheat of truth was mingled with the tares of error. It was good and evil, like the tree of which Adam partook in the garden. This is seen in latter-day applications of those laws. The Greek worship of mind or reason, applied to Roman love of law, made the lawyer of Rome the forefather of that class of reasoners who to-day sway the world

by argument rather than by the rule of justice.

Satan has but one plan — that is the development of sin; God has but one — the unfolding of truth and love. All history is an object lesson, showing how God thwarts the thousand ways by which the devil tries to carry out his plans, and national history is but individual experience on a large scale.

Students very often read the story of nations, forgetting that they have before them a picture of their own lives. National history, rather than individual experience, is given in prophecy, because it is like a magnified view thrown on the canvas, revealing details that would be overlooked in the study of one man. It should be remembered that when principles, Protestantism, monarchy, papacy, liberty, or oppression, each has an application to man dealing with man, to church members dealing with one another, and to nation dealing with nation.

With these facts in mind, the prophecies of Daniel concerning Rome may be understood. It seems that Gabriel called attention to the fourth kingdom, not at the beginning of its existence, but at the time when all the principles previously set forth were well developed, and in just the stage to grow rapidly when the proper environments should be offered. The republic was in reality dead, although its corpse was yet unburied, and men were unwilling to acknowledge that life had really departed. During the transition period between the republic and the full-fledged empire of the twentieth verse, a number of actors took a prominent part. It was a time of severe contest between men to see who could best serve the purpose of the controller of affairs who stood behind the throne of earthly monarchs. As the republic lost power, a corporation composed of Caesar, Pompey, and Crassus took the reins of government. Crassus controlled the money, Pompey had the army, and Caesar was the master mind.

The Roman army, with Pompey as leader, swept through Asia Minor and Syria, and the entire kingdom of the Seleudicae fell at his feet. Antioch and every fortified station of the Eastern empire crumbled as he advanced. Pompey, called upon to decide between rulers of the Jews, entered Jerusalem, and, as in times past, the knowledge of the God of Israel was made known to the nation which was leading the world. Pompey, however, acted very differently from Alexander. He entered the city by force after a siege of three months; the walls were demolished and the Jews put under tribute to the Roman government. Rome now stood “in the glorious land which by his hand shall be consumed.” This was in B.C. 63.

The wisdom of God in choosing Palestine as the home of the Jews is recognized more and more as history progresses. There was no mistake in the location, and there was no lowering of the standard set for that nation. In the days of Roman supremacy, as in the days of Solomon, it was the divine will that Israel should be the light of the world. They were entrusted with the sacred oracles of truth, and each nation was brought to them as to a fountain of living water. Had the Hebrew race been true to its appointed duty, the history of the whole world would read differently. Rome came to Jerusalem — came because sent of God, but the well was a cracked and leaky cistern, and the soul-thirst of the nation could not be quenched. As a result, Rome enslaved the Jews: the power of life which repels the enemy was lacking.

It was during the rule of the first triumvirate that Egypt, the kingdom of the south, was again entered by Rome. The Roman senate, in whose charge Cleopatra and her brother, Ptolemy Dionysius, had been placed by their father, had requested Pompey to visit Egypt to settle difficulties. Pompey, however, was slain while crossing to the land in a small boat. Caesar entered Alexandria shortly afterward, and espoused the cause of Cleopatra, who had been obliged to flee from the capital. Caesar was victorious over the ruling faction in Alexandria, and before leaving the city, enthroned Cleopatra and graced his triumph in Rome with Arsinoe, a representative of the royal family of the Ptolemies. History states that Caesar spent some nine months in Egypt, which was unusual for this general, as his rapid movements from place to place were one secret of his success.

Caesar as a general stood in a position to accomplish for the fourth kingdom what Nebuchadnezzar, Cyrus, and Alexander had done for the former three, but we have no record that he even acknowledged God as a ruler of nations. He was fascinated and corrupted by the queen of Egypt. The seventeenth verse, which describes a particular event in history, also symbolizes the corrupting influence of Egypt whenever the north came in touch with the south. Egypt was a blight to men and nations alike, from the days of Abraham to Caesar and its influence still lives, a type of sin and bondage.

Leaving Egypt, Caesar passed along the coast of Palestine and Asia Minor, receiving the submission of all peoples, with such rapidity that he sent to Rome, where he altered laws, strengthened the senate, settle disturbances in the army, and later brought western Africa, which had revolted, into submission.

Caesar was an organizer as well as a warrior, and displayed greater liberality and breadth of ideas than any previous ruler. Roman franchise was granted to the citizens of many cities hitherto excluded, and all scientific men, of whatever nationality, were equally honored. Still greater plans for Roman improvement were found among his papers after his death. He was nearing the pinnacle of earthly fame when he fell, pierced by a score of daggers, in the presence of the senate which he controlled. He “stumbled and fell,” leaving no heir to the throne. Another great man had passed from the scene of action. Heaven was watching, for the birth of the Son of Man was near at hand.

It was the year 44 B.C. when the plans of Julius Caesar were cut short by his untimely death. Republicanism was so far gone that the government fell into the hands of the strongest men, those who had military support.

Lepidus, one of the second trimvirates, soon died; Antony, a second member, enamored by Cleopatra, and entrapped in the net of Egyptian darkness, cast himself upon his own sword and died; Octavius, an adopted son of Julius Caesar, alone remained. So man lieth down, and riseth not: till the heavens be not more, they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their sleep. Job 14:12. Says Gibbon: “A martial nobility and stubborn commons, possessed or arms, tenacious of property, and collected into constitutional assemblies, form the only balance capable of preserving a free constitution against the enterprises of an aspiring prince.” Rome had none of these; every barrier of the Roman constitution had been leveled by the ambition of Octavius, called Caesar Augustus. Furthermore, the provinces had so long been oppressed by the scheming ministers of the republic that they gladly welcomed a one-man power. Augustus restore the senate to its former dignity, it is true, but “the principles of a free constitution are irrevocably lost when the legislative power is dominated by the executive.” So Octavius was proclaimed emperor of Rome by the unanimous vote of that same servile senate.

Thus was Caesar Augustus, the raiser of taxes, brought to the head of the fourth kingdom.

After centuries of strife and turmoil, wars, bloodshed, and oppression, the world lay passive at the feet of the Roman emperor. One government encircled the Mediterranean; from the Atlantic to the Indian Ocean one power bore sway. It would seem that earthly government had achieved its

highest ambition. Satan exulted, and rested in the hope that at last victory was his. But the moment of his quiet resting was the calm preceding his greatest struggles. So quiet was the nation that the lifting of a hand in rebellion in any of its most distant parts would send a throb to the center, which would be answered by the return of the legions.

Then it was that in the little town of Bethlehem Ephratah, where Mary and Joseph, peasants of the hill town of Nazareth, had gone to be taxed in obedience to the command of this same Augustus, was born a Saviour, even Christ the Lord. The very condition which caused Satan to exult were the conditions most favorable to Christ when He came to tabernacle among men. He whom Satan had opposed since the rebellion in heaven; He, the Prince of the worlds throughout space, “was made in the likeness of man,” and came into the world a helpless babe. The simple shepherds on the hillside near Bethlehem, tending their sheep where David had often tended his flocks, heard the angel choir proclaim the birth of the world’s Redeemer. Wise men in the eastern limits of the vast empire of Augustus, having read the prophecies, were watching for His star, and they, too, beheld a shining company of angels, and knew that God dwelt with men. But the rest of the empire slept on unconscious of His nearness.

Bethlehem, the place of His birth, was dear to the memory of every true Jew. It was there that God met their father Jacob as he left home, a fugitive and alone. It was named Bethel, — the house of God, for said Jacob, “Surely God is in this place, and I knew it not.” Jacob came to the same spot and paid tithe of his gain while with Laban. Deborah, Rachel’s nurse, was buried there. It was in Bethlehem that Abraham pitched his tent when he first entered the promised land. David, the chosen of God, was anointed there. The well of Bethlehem was noted, a fit symbol of Him who was born in Bethlehem and offers the water of life to all.

“The story of Bethlehem is an exhaustless theme.” In it is hidden “the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God.” But in spite of the sacred memories which clustered about the place, when the Christ was born but few men knew it.

All that the sacred record gives concerning Augustus, the man who held universal sway, is that he was a raiser of taxes when the kingdom was at the height of its glory, and that after a reign of a few days or years, he should end his career in peace. He had unconsciously been instrumental in preparing the way for the Prince of peace, and having done that, he passed

from the scene.

“As in old time Cyrus was called to the throne of the world’s empire that he might set free the captives of the Lord, so Caesar Augustus is made the agent for the fulfillment of God’s purpose in bringing the mother of Jesus to Bethlehem. She is of the lineage of David, and the Son of David must be born in David’s city.”

Most of the life of the Saviour was spent during the reign of Tiberius, the successor of Augustus, whom Gabriel described to Daniel as a “vile person.” History substantiates the description. He was not a direct heir to the throne, and he was never honored by his subjects. The tyranny of absolutism began again to manifest itself, and the principles of the Oriental monarchies were repeated.

Popular assemblies entirely ceased, and the emperor usurped the right to put to death without trial. The governors of Judah reflected the character of the general government. The Jews were bitterly oppressed, and as they knew the time was near for the appearance of a Saviour, they placed all their hopes upon a temporal king, one who should break the yoke of Rome and establish for them a separate kingdom. A few, perhaps, but only a few, divined the spiritual nature of the promise of a Messiah, for it was Satan’s studied plan to blind men’s eyes to all spiritual truth.

In Babylon he had sought to make men drunk with idolatry; working through Medo-Persia he had hoped to slay those who were faithful to their God; through the teachings of Greece he had so fascinated man with the powers of his own mind that by works of righteousness which he might do, and philosophies of his own conjecturing, he was led to forget any higher power than that which he himself possessed. But through it all a few had clung to the promise delivered to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The world was ignorant of the Christ, but John the Baptist called many to repentance.

Christ’s ministry was during the reign of Tiberius, and while that vile person worked, planned, mistrusted, and killed, the Man of God went about all the towns of Palestine, healing the broken-hearted, and dispensing light to all who would accept. Angels watched Him, Gabriel attended Him, and in times of special danger, shielded Him from the enemy who tracked him incessantly. Finally they nailed Him to the cross; the Jews were responsible for it, but the Roman law upheld them in the act; and had it not been done by His own people, the Romans would have done it; for they had reached a

condition when the life of man was but lightly esteemed, and the spiritual kingdom which Christ came to set up could never have been understood by the reigning monarch. The officers of Rome nailed the Son of God to the cross. The Prince of the everlasting covenant was crushed by those who sought to confederate together; they placed Him in the tomb; they joined hands with Satan, as nation had never done before; but He broke those bands, and came forth triumphant.

Representatives from the four quarters of the globe stood near Him in His last hours. The Greeks met Him at the temple on the last great day of the feast; the thief hung beside Him on Calvary; Simon of Cyrene helped bear the cross, and the centurion, a Roman soldier, convicted, said, "Truly, this was the Son of God." The darkness which shrouded the dying form of Christ typified the condition of the Roman world. The light which shone about the tomb when the angels bade the Son of Man come forth, typified the power with which the truth should penetrate the empire as His followers went forth to preach salvation.

16. The Mystery of Iniquity

[Daniel Chapter 11:23-31.]

THE strength of paganism had been tested. Truth, eternal truth, had dwelt in the person of the Man of Nazareth. With the death of Christ, Satan lost hope. Looking forward to his crucifixion, Jesus said, "Now is the judgment of this world; now shall the prince of this world be cast out." Satan, after his fall, had met from time to time with the representatives of other worlds. Some in that assembly, not comprehending the hideous nature of sin, had felt to question God's wisdom in expelling Satan from the heavenly courts; but when Christ's life was over, and they had seen the taunting of the enemy and his final act of murder, "the accuser of the brethren" was forever cast from the council of worlds. "When the dragon saw that he was cast to the earth," he knew that his time was short, and with renewed energy he sought to overthrow the truth of God, and crush those who adhered to it. The remaining portion of the eleventh chapter of Daniel clearly reveals the true character of these statements.

After the ascension of Christ, His disciples spread the gospel throughout Judea and all Palestine, and many who heard the word spoken with power on the day of Pentecost went into their own countries to proclaim the truth as it was in Christ. In less than thirty years the world was warned. But the Jews were exclusive, even the disciples had not yet lost the idea that Christ was the Saviour of the Hebrew race, not the healer of all mankind. Persecutions in Jerusalem scattered the believers, and then they went everywhere preaching the salvation of God. Quietly, yet steadily, the life-giving current of the stream of Christianity penetrated to the remotest corners of the vast Roman empire. All nationalities were for the first time in all history united in Him, for with Him and His followers there was neither "Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free, but Christ was all and in all."

As the truth spread, it was the growth of an empire, a spiritual kingdom within the confines of earth's strongest monarchy. It was with the whole church as with each individual within the church, a spiritual life, a new man, circled about by a human form. Well would it have been for the progress of truth if all oppression of the spiritual by the temporal had been only when

the state opposed the church. Instead, the greatest, the only effectual, drawback to the spread of the truth has been caused in individual experience when the physical man has limited the developed of the spiritual.

The early church was zealous; their first love was strong, and the greatest difficulties were met and surmounted. Sometimes it meant an entire household, but often only one of two members of the home circle, stepped out of the darkness of paganism to stand for the truth of God against all the attacks of the enemy. Mothers watched their children with the greatest care, for every custom and practice of the people from their waking moment to the time when they committed themselves to sleep, from birth to death, was associated with the worship of some god.

One peculiar thing about the new sect, as they were viewed by the pagans, was the absence of images and forms which the senses could comprehend. When Christians gathered for worship, there was no altar, no god, no incense. When the Christians prayed, there was no priesthood, no vain repetition of words, no offerings, but a simple petition in the name of Christ. An invisible power seemed to have taken control of the new converts, a power which never quailed, and which no pagan votary could gainsay. The life which God had so long searched for among the Jews was found among the early Christians.

The enemy of truth had sought by every means to blind the eyes of the Jews to the love of God; he had worked through every government for their destruction, and when their nation was at its lowest point, when spiritual vitality was almost exhausted, Christ came in person to revive their fainting hope. Then Satan used every device to deceive the Son of Man. He tempted Him in all points where human nature can be tempted; he sought to ensnare Him with petty trials; he sought to induce Him to accept high worldly honors; but he failed in all, and when he thought he had gained the victory by His crucifixion, he found it was only the physical form which could be thus bound, and that only for a time. an eternal spirit dwelt in mortal clay, and the bands of death were broken by His resurrection. Now from the midst of that down-trodden people, that despised race, from the very foot of the ignominious cross, God chose a people and sent them forth to conquer the world. "Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I can not attain unto it." What wonder that the world awoke with a start, and that Satan sought new devices for the overthrow of truth.

Outward pressure, though tried again and again, had proved unavailing in

stamping out the truth. In the fiery furnace was seen the form of a Fourth; from the lions' den came forth a prime minister; from Joseph's new sepulcher arose a conqueror. Babylon, Persia, Greece, and Rome had attempted the overthrow of truth, but there had been a constantly increasing grandeur in place of defeat. A new plan was devised by Satan. If paganism could be placed in the heart, while Christian principles were acknowledged outwardly, the overthrow would be certain; for destruction worketh from within, outward. It was a repetition of Balaam's plan.

Paul, the great teacher of righteousness, as he visited from place to place among the saints, wrote thus to the Thessalonians: "The mystery of iniquity doth already work." "Let no man deceive you by any means; for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God." This is Paul's description of the mystery of iniquity, the fourth beast of the vision of the seventh chapter of Daniel.

Then it was that into that church, noted for its purity, crept the life of paganism. Sheltered in the folds of the Christian garb lay the serpent, the old dragon. As the birth of Christ, the incarnation of God, was a mystery, and is to-day a mystery which none can fathom, it was met by another mystery, a mystery of iniquity whose machinations are too strong for the human mind to understand. It will deceive if possible the very elect. Only he whose eye is lightened by truth, whose heart is the abiding place of the Son of God; in other words, only he who has within his own being the mystery of godliness, will stand against the mystery of iniquity.

In Paul's day, that is, in the first century after Christ, that power was at work. Hitherto the history as recorded in the book of Daniel dealt with earthly kingdoms, but from this time on history handles this "mystery of iniquity" which worked through the various kingdoms of the north and the south remains as it was in the past, but we pass from governments as governments to a power which is swaying these governments. On one side in this controversy is the church of God; on the other side is the mystery of iniquity, which often lays hold of earthly governments for the purpose of destroying the church.

The expression "church of God" does not refer to denominational names or lines. From the days of Christ until the present, there has been a true church.

Its members have often been scattered as far as human eye could discern, but on the record books of heaven they have been recognized as a single company.

The characteristic which marks the true church is adherence to the commandments of the God of heaven. Wherever a people have been true to these, God has honored them with his presence. Moreover, to each denomination which has arisen, there have been offered the same opportunities which were offered to the four succeeding nations as they arose; that is, the privilege of walking in all the light, and by that very act becoming an everlasting company. As truth was rejected by the nations and they fell, so truth has been rejected by one denomination after another, and they have fallen, another people taking the vacant place. This succession will be kept up until a remnant people who will keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus, shall be made up. They will enter the eternal city to reign with Christ. It is this struggle that was revealed to Daniel in the latter part of his last vision. The history of Rome becomes the history of religious controversy, and the struggle between truth and error is greater than ever before.

The history of the church, as given to John, contains more details than the words of Gabriel to Daniel. To His followers of the first century, God says, "Thou has left thy first love. Remember, therefore, from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works." Of the church in the second and third centuries, He says, "I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty (but thou art rich).... Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation." Christianity and paganism were in open conflict for three centuries following the birth of Christ, and at times the serpent reared his head to smite the truth to the ground. Some of the followers of Christ were persecuted, and others grew cold and indifferent. But there was a power in the gospel which the pagans could not withstand. As its followers increased, their influence was felt even in political circles.

The close of the third century of the Christian era found the government of Rome greatly weakened. The evils of the empire, its oppression and cruelty, made it almost impossible for the emperor to control affairs. Authority was in the hands of the army, which seated and unseated rulers at will. Barbarian hordes pressed the empire on all sides, and the downfall of Rome was imminent. Some radical change was necessary to prevent complete

disruption, and Diocletian, the reigning emperor, conceived the idea of partitioning the territory. Consequently he associated with himself a man by the name of Maximian, giving him the title of Augustus. Each of the two emperors chose an assistant, called a Caesar, whose duty it was to guard the frontiers. According to the plan of Diocletian, the Caesars should become emperors on the death of the Augusti, and then other Caesars would be appointed. For a while the four who stood at the head of the Roman empire worked together in harmony, but through a variety of complications war broke out.

Constantine was a Caesar in the western division of the empire, and marching toward the East, he subdued, one by one, all rivals in the government. It was about the year 312 A.D. when confronted by bitter foes, whose strength he recognized, this rising light assumed a policy never before followed.

There were many Christians scattered throughout the empire who refused to fight under the banner of paganism. With these Constantine made a league. The story of his conversion is variously told, and perhaps the details are unimportant. The fact remains that he acknowledged the God of the Christians, proclaimed himself a follower of Christ, and immediately Christians from all over the empire flocked into his army, devout followers of the general who now fought in the name of Christianity.

Speaking of the use of the cross. Gibbon says: "This same symbol sanctified the arms of the soldiers of Constantine; the cross glittered in their helmets, was engraved on their shields, was interwoven into their banners; and the consecrated emblems which adorned the person of the emperor himself were distinguished only by the richer materials and more exquisite workmanship." The standard which was borne before this (Christian) army "supported a crown of gold, which inclosed the mysterious monogram, at once expressive of the figure of the cross, and the initial letter of the name of Christ."

The humble followers of Christ, who immediately after His ascension had gone forth "conquering and to conquer," carrying with them His words, the sword of the Spirit, had been replaced by an army with helmet and sword, led by a commander who bound together the emblems of the cross and his own name.

The clothing of paganism in Christian garments was never more complete

than in the days of Constantine. The mystery of iniquity was hard at work. Constantine conquered the Roman world; he sat as sole monarch of the empire which had been tottering in the hands of his predecessor. The Praetorian guard, which had been the terror as well as the protection of other emperors, was forever suppressed by Constantine. The dignity of the senate and people of Rome received a fatal blow, and they were thereafter subject alike to the insults or neglect of their master, who resided in the new capital Constantinople.

The character of Constantine, that first Christian emperor, is aptly described by Gibbon. In discussing the reason why he delayed baptism until he was on his death-bed, he says: "The sublime theory of the gospel had made a much fainter impression on the heart than on the understanding of Constantine himself. He pursued the great object of his ambition through the dark and bloody paths of war and policy; and after the victory, he abandoned himself without moderation to the abuse of his fortune. Instead of asserting his just superiority above the imperfect heroism and profane philosophy of Trajan and the Antonines, the mature age of Constantine forfeited the reputation which he had acquired in his youth. As he gradually advanced in the knowledge of truth, proportionately declined in the practice of virtue; and the same year of his reign in which he convened the Council of Nice, was polluted by the execution, or rather murder, of his eldest son.... The gratitude of the church has exalted the virtues and excused the failings of a generous patron, who seated Christianity on the throne of the Roman world; and the Greeks, who celebrate the festival of the imperial saint, seldom mention the name of Constantine without adding the title of Equal to the Apostles." These words alone offer a sad commentary on the decline of Christian virtue since the days of Christ. He who claimed the power of Christianity was less virtuous than the heroic pagan Trajan, and such pagan philosophers as the Antonines.

The first religious laws ever passed by Christians were edicts of Constantine. In 312 the edict of Milan granted universal toleration; in 321 the first law for the worship of Sunday was published; in 325 was convened at Nice the first ecumenical council, which formulated a creed for the world. Then began the conflict which tore the church asunder and exposed it to open shame. About the reign of Constantine cluster events of the greatest interest, not to Rome only, but to the church of God and to the world. It was the first and perhaps the greatest object lesson illustrating the effects of the elevation of Christianity in name to the throne of the world.

In the wake of this reign followed the years of darkness for all Europe, when antichrist reigned supreme. Constantine indeed performed that which neither his father nor his father's fathers had performed. He left to his heirs "a new capital, a new policy, and a new religion." No one had before dared to think that the capital could be removed from Rome. Constantine selected the site of Constantinople with more than human wisdom. It is formed by nature to be the center and capital of a great monarchy. It has been the contested point among the nations of Europe since the continent has had nations to contend, and according to the prophecy of Daniel, it will be the bone of contention to the end of time. It is a fact worth noting that the city was founded in the year 330 B.C., exactly three hundred and sixty years, "a time," after the victory of Octavius over Antony at Actium, which placed him as sole ruler on the Roman throne.

THE FIRST SUNDAY LAW.

"Let all the judges and town people, and the occupation of all trades rest on the venerable day of the sun: but let those who are situated in the country, freely and at full liberty attend to the business of agriculture: because it often happens that no other day is so fit for sowing corn and planting vines: lest the critical moment being let slip, men should lose the commodities grant by heaven."

The new policy was the outworking of a union of church and state. The kingdoms of the past had followed a policy somewhat similar to one another. Government was with them the central object. This was seen in its strongest light in pagan Rome, but with Constantine the policy change. Paganism as paganism was laid low, and the "mystery of iniquity" was enthroned. The world was given Christianity, not as it came from the life of Him whose name it bore, but as it was corrupted and polluted by human and satanic minds. Gibbon says that hereafter the historian will describe "political institutions" before relating wars, and that "he will adopt the division unknown to the ancients of civil and ecclesiastical affairs." That is, future history must deal with church and state, and not with kingdoms such as Babylon, Medo-Persia, and Greece.

History has changed. The devil is going about seeking whom he may devour, and the calm, determined plans for conquering the world which marked the nations before the days of Christ, have been replaced by a desperation that means the utter destruction, if possible, of all who serve the God of heaven. Any means is lawful in the hands of the prince of this world, and the greater

the number who fall, the lighter the burden which he, the arch enemy, must bear in the days of the final reckoning. The acts of Constantine started a series of movements which developed rapidly into the antichrist of the Dark Ages.

The council held at Nice was an important gathering alike to the church and the nation, for since the two have joined hands, whatever affects one affects the other.

The Christian world was torn asunder by theological factions. Alexandria, the center of all philosophical study, was also the center of theological activity. Here is where the Greek influence was most forcibly felt. Athanasius, the leader of one faction, was archdeacon, and afterward bishop of Alexandria, and his opponent, Arius, was presbyter in the same city.

Paganism and Christianity met on the battlefield when Constantine contended for the throne of Rome; paganism and Christianity met in more deadly conflict in Alexandria, where Christian and pagan schools stood side by side. Here it was that such men as Origen and Clement, recognized Fathers of the church, adopted the philosophy of the Greeks, and applied to the study of the Bible the same methods which were common in the study of Homer and other Greek writers. Higher criticism had its birth in Alexandria. It was the result of mingling of the truths taught by Christ and the false philosophy of the Greeks. It was an attempt to interpret divine writings by the human intellect, a revival of the philosophy of Plato. These teachers, by introducing Greek philosophy into the schools which were nominally Christian, opened the avenue for the theological controversies which shook the Roman world, and finally established the mystery of iniquity.

So from this false teaching of the Word in Alexandria came two leaders — Athanasius and Arius. Each had his following, and yet no man could clearly define the disputed point over which they wrangled. So great was the controversy that the Council of Nice was called to settle the dispute, and deliver to the church an orthodox creed. The emperor Constantine called the council, and was present in person. At this council the creed of Athanasius was recognized as orthodox, and Arius and his followers were pronounced heretics.

But announcing a creed is one thing, and having it adopted is another. The orthodox creed was published to the world, and then began the fight. In this

strife armies fought and much blood was shed. But in spite of the fact that Arianism was heresy, the doctrine spread. It was popular among the barbarian tribes who invaded the western division of the Roman empire. The Vandals, who settled in Africa, were among the followers of Arius, and so also were the Heruli and Ostrogoths who settled in Italy. But while Arianism spread through Africa, Sardinia, and Spain, and was present at times in Italy, the recognized religion of the Roman emperor and the empire itself, the northern kingdom, which now had its seat at Constantinople, was the Catholic faith, as proclaimed at Nice. As Constantine was the representative of this northern division in his day, so later, between 527 and 565, Justinian became champion of the Catholic cause.

According to the vision of the seventh chapter of Daniel, the Roman kingdom would be divided into ten parts, represented by the ten horns of the fourth beast, and three of these kingdoms should be plucked up by another power. It is this part of the history of the fourth kingdom which is related in the eleventh chapter of Daniel, beginning with the twenty-fifth verse.

Justinian's reign was the most brilliant period of Byzantine history after the death of Constantine, and historians agree that among his greatest military achievements must be classed his exploits against the south. The success of Justinian was due to the services throughout the greater part of his reign, of the celebrated Belisarius.

He was the tool in the hands of the emperor for crushing out heresy.

The Vandals were Arians, but Hilderis, the grandson of their chief warrior, the noted Genseric, favored the Catholic faith. The disaffection of his subjects made it possible for Hilderis to be dethroned by Gelimer, who had some title to the Vandal throne. Under pretense of protecting the dethroned Hilderis, the emperor Justinian prepared for a war in Africa. While still undecided as to the advisability of making the attack because of the weakness of the Roman army and the cost of the undertaking, his purpose was confirmed by the words of a Catholic bishop. Said he in prophetic tones, "It is the will of Heaven, O emperor, that you should not abandon your holy enterprise for the deliverance of the African church. The God of battles will march before your standard, and disperse your enemies, who are the enemies of His Son. "This was sufficient, and the "holy" war for the extermination of Arianism was undertaken.

A force of Romans, the largest Belisarius could command from the

weakened empire, aided by recruits from the east, landed in Africa. The Vandal army numbered 160,000 fighting men. Belisarius was hastened in his march toward Carthage by enemies of Gelimer and friends of the Catholic creed. The armies met near the city, and victory came to the Romans through the folly and rashness of the brother of the Vandal king. Gelimer fled, and Carthage opened her gates and admitted Belisarius and his army. "The Arians, conscious that their reign had expire, resigned the temple to the Catholics, who rescued their saint from profane hands, performed the holy rites, and loudly proclaimed the creed of Athanasius and Justinian." The Catholic faith triumphed. Arianism fell, and Sardinia and Corsica surrendered, and the other islands of the Mediterranean yielded to the arms and creed of Justinian.

In the autumn of 534 Justinian granted a triumph to Belisarius. Gibbon thus describes the scene: "From the palace of Belisarius the procession was conducted through the streets to the hippodrome.... The wealth of nations was displayed, the trophies of martial or effeminate luxury; rich armor: golden thrones, and the chariots of state which had been used by the Vandal queen; the massive furniture of the royal banquet, the splendor of precious stones, the elegant forms of statues and vases, the more substantial treasures of gold, and the holy vessels of the Jewish temple, which, after their long peregrination, were respectfully deposited in the Christian church of Jerusalem. A long train of the noblest Vandals reluctantly exposed their lofty stature and manly countenance."

"The Arians deplored the ruin of their church which had been triumphant above a century in Africa; and they were justly provoked by the laws of the conqueror, which interdicted the baptism of their children, and the exercise of all religious worship." It is not much to be wondered at that those who remained plotted against the government and the general who represented Justinian. The loss of life was terrible in those wars for the supremacy of one creed above another, and the path to the papal crown was bloodstained. It is stated that five million Africans were consumed by the wars and government of the emperor Justinian.

For the sake of brevity, the wars between the Catholic empire and the Vandals may be taken as an illustration of the extermination of the other two kingdoms — the Heruli and the Ostrogoths. Justinian was reigning emperor, and most of the work was done by Belisarius, between the years 533 and 538.

The last contest with paganism was in 508 when the French and Britons accepted Christianity; the “daily” spoken of in Daniel had been taken away. By 538 the way was clear for the papacy to sit enthroned in Rome. The new capital established by Constantine left Rome free to be occupied by the head of the church. The new religion — Christianity — we have seen mingled with paganism, which it crushed, and gave birth to the papacy. The new policy, a union of church and state, gave civil aid to that paganized Christianity called the papacy. The harvest of the seed sown in the days of Constantine was reaped in the reign of Justinian, whose military and civil power supported “the abomination that maketh desolate.”

A striking feature of this history is the fact that the very code of law which Rome has bequeathed as a legacy to later times, is the work of this same Justinian. Is it to be wondered at that the laws of this emperor, who reigned at the time when the papacy was formed, and who was the one that supported it by arms, should contain some principles of the papacy? Fisher says, “Humane principles are incorporated into the civil law, but likewise the despotic system of imperialism.” The laws of Justinian form the basis of national laws to-day; likewise the religion of Justinian is the recognized religion of most countries to-day.

Constantine and Justinian were the two men instrumental above all others in forming the papacy, and giving it civil power. The contest between Arianism and the orthodox Catholicism was the means of enthroning the papacy. A power soon to be recognized as the personification of all tyranny swayed the scepter of Rome, and the followers of the One who proclaimed a covenant of peace to Israel, would for the period of 1260 years struggle for existence.

Every principle of truth was crushed, and with 538 was ushered in the Dark Ages.

17. The Work of the Mystery of Iniquity

[Daniel Chapter 1:32-45.]

AS THE year 457 B.C. was an important date in Jewish history, so 538 A.D. is a mile-post in the history of the Christian church. The former, dating from the decree to restore and build Jerusalem, marks the beginning of one great prophetic period, the 2300 days of Dan. 8:14. The latter, which witnessed the setting up of the papacy, is the date from which to reckon that other prophetic period, “a time and times and the dividing of time,” or the twelve hundred and sixty days of Dan. 7:25. It is the period during which the little horn, that plucked up three of the ten divisions of the Roman empire, should bear sway. It is to the beginning of this period, the year 538, that the thirty-first verse of the eleventh chapter of Daniel brings the history.

The fully developed papacy was not the work of one nor of two years any more than the universal power of Babylon, Medo-Persia, or Greece was an immediate acquisition. As those kingdoms grew in power, so papal Rome grew in power. According to Rev. 13:2, the dragon gave the beast his power for this new organization was parallel to the conquests of Cyrus, Alexander, and Caesar in their conquests for their respective nations. The seat of the pagan Roman government was removed to Constantinople, thereby giving room for the papacy to be seated on the throne in the city on the Tiber. As territory and a capital were gained gradually, so the authority of the papacy was a gradual acquisition. Each of the four universal kingdoms had a distinct policy, which was followed throughout its existence. Likewise the papacy had its policy just as clearly defined. The working of this policy in its inception is best seen in Alexandria. It was there that the two streams, paganism and Christianity, mingled their waters. The papacy had birth on the banks of the Nile: Egypt was the mother who nursed it, and as it grew, it breathed in the miasma of its surroundings. First, Christians interpreted the Bible according to pagan thought, and paganism, appearing to be vanquished, in reality became the conqueror.

Then the teachings of the Word were changed. In order to compromise with pagans, idol worship was introduced into the Christian church; the second

commandment was dropped from the Decalogue, and the tenth was divided to preserve the number. The fourth, the keystone to the law of God, a memorial of creation and redemption, was so altered as to exalt the enemy of God above God himself. Later, the whole Bible was discarded, and as that detector of sin was suppressed, vileness and iniquity became uncontrollable. This, however, was not the whole policy of the papacy, but only one of the stones in the foundation of the structure that was being reared.

The head of the church, who was likewise a civil ruler, was exalted more and more above his fellows, until a complete ecclesiastical hierarchy was formed. By decree of a general council the head of the church was declared infallible. But even before, this faith in the new church, and especially in the head of the church, took the place of faith in Christ. The Virgin Mary and saints became mediators for sinful man, and forgiveness was granted by the head of the church. Righteousness by works led to long pilgrimages, penance, and relic worship. Everlasting punishment was held as a threat above the heads of the common people. The darkness deepened. The inquisition was instituted to force men's consciences. Kings upon their thrones were compelled to recognize the superior authority of the power of Rome, and failure to do so meant the removal of their crowns. Subjects were absolved from allegiance to their sovereigns, and so complete was the obedience of nations to Rome, that no man dared lift his hand in opposition.

A darkness beyond comprehension settled over all the world. The light had been extinguished when God's word was banished. "The noontide of the papacy was the world's moral midnight."

The power which should speak great words against the Most High, and wear out the saints of the Most High, and was allotted 1260 years in which to work; but so cruel was that power that the time was shortened, lest none should survive the persecution. It was Egyptian or Babylonian bondage for the Christian church. But even as God has some in Egypt and Babylon who were followers of the light throughout the period of darkness, there was ever a little company of believers who held the Scriptures dear to their hearts, and who obeyed the commandments.

The Waldenses could trace their ancestry back to the days of Paul, and from Asia Minor, where that apostle first preached, to the wild retreat in the mountains of Italy, there were faithful Sabbath-keepers. The power on the throne might change the day of worship, but there were always some who

obeyed God rather than man. As Gabriel told Daniel, “They that understand among the people shall instruct many; yet they shall fall by the sword, and by flame, by captivity, and by spoil.” Though thousands fell because they dared lift the voice against the powers that be, yet God watched their numbers and counted each one who gave his life.

There is no more wonderful record of deliverance from bondage than that which God wrought for His church at the close of the period of persecution. Israel’s deliverance from Egypt, when a multitude marched through the Red Sea on dry land, was marvelous; the deliverance from Babylon was a wonder in the eyes of the world; but the birth of Protestantism — the deliverance from the darkness of the Middle Ages — surpassed all others.

In the twelfth chapter of Revelation, where the same deliverance is mentioned, it is stated that the earth helped the woman — the church. And it did indeed. Powers that were wholly unaccountable for the good they were doing, were used by the Father to break those bands that Satan had placed around the truth. The suppression of the Bible had led to the suppression of all learning. There were no schools for the masses; there were no books, no papers; physicians were forbidden to practice medicine, lest they should take money which would otherwise go into the coffers of the church. Should any man dare to advance learning, or cross the beaten paths made by the church, he was led to the stake. But it could not always be so. God made use of the Moors, who had accepted Mohammedanism, to help deliver His people. Schools were established by them in Spain and western Asia. The sciences were taught, and from these schools the light of learning broke into Europe.

Wycliffe, called “the Morning Star of the Reformation,” in the fourteenth century translated the Bible into English. He wrote tracts showing the fallacy of the papal system. In England, he like Daniel of old, was in close touch with the king, and the light of the gospel was having its effect. To the ruler on the throne and the students in the universities, Wycliffe gave the gospel. His followers, known as Lollards, were bitterly persecuted, but never wholly exterminated; and it was their descendants who, as Puritans, brought Protestantism to America.

Huss and Jerome in Bohemia lifted their voices against papal dogmas, and later Luther, the German monk, proclaimed liberty of conscience and salvation alone by faith in Jesus Christ. He had found a copy of the Bible chained in a cell of one of the German monasteries, and the spark there

kindled, lighted a fire which Rome was unable to extinguish.

The Word of God became the lesson book for the German nation. Luther was assisted in his work of reform by Melanchthon, the noted teacher in Wittenberg. Other schools were established throughout Germany; teachers were educated, and before the death of Luther the German nation sat at the feet of Protestant teachers; so rapid was the work when the Word of God was opened to mankind. The Reformation marched on to victory. Rome retreated into narrower and still narrower bounds, not before the sword, but before the onward march of truth. Into every nation of Europe the light shone, and America was founded upon the principles which had their birth in Germany.

The papacy quivered before the blow; and had each nation accepted the Reformation as it came to it, it would have been but a short time until history would have been at an end. God was in the Reformation, offering to modern nations the same deliverance which was held out to the Jews when they were granted an opportunity to return from Babylon to Jerusalem. The everlasting covenant was repeated, but men in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries treated it as the Jews did the decree to leave Babylon. When once the principles of the Reformation — liberty of conscience and the equal rights of all men — were presented to a nation, and were refused, that nation sank back into the arms of the papacy, and carried to their completion the principles of that government.

Such was the history of France. The experience of that nation stands as an object lesson to the world. Truth had been proclaimed within her borders, but again the papacy rose up to do according to his will. It is in that country that verses 36-39 of the eleventh chapter of Daniel were fulfilled. Having rejected light, the intensity of the darkness into which men fell was beyond description.

Scott, in the life of Napoleon, speaking of France in the year 1793, just a few years before the expiration of the allotted time (verse 36), says: "The world for the first time heard an assembly of men, born and educated in civilization, and assuming to govern one of the finest European nations, uplift their united voices to deny the most solemn truth which man's soul receives, and renounce unanimously the belief and worship of the Deity." "France stands apart in the world's history as the single state which, by the decree of her legislative assembly, pronounced that there was no God, and of which the entire population of the capital, and a vast majority elsewhere,

women as well as men, danced and sang with joy in accepting the announcement. This was atheism — the logical result of the position taken in Alexandria when Christians assumed the garb of pagan philosophers. God's Word was treated as a product of the human mind. Atheism in the individual is likewise the result of treating the Scriptures in the same manner."

Still further quotations from the history of those times will show how completely God was rejected, and the worship of the human intellect was substituted.

One day "the doors of the Convention were thrown open to a band of musicians, preceded by whom the members of the municipal body entered in solemn procession, singing a hymn in praise of Liberty, and escorting a veiled female, whom they termed the 'Goddess of Reason.'" On unveiling the creature, she was the fittest representation France could find of the reason which she exalted. Perhaps it was hard to understand, when noting the policy of Greece in elevating human reason, what the result of such a course would be. The history of France in the days of the Revolution is a thorough exemplification of that result.

Men to-day exalt reason above God; they deign to give private interpretation to the divine Word: they offer all sorts of theories contradictory to a "thus saith the Lord," and even professed Christians follow the Greek intellect, studying the philosophy themselves, and teaching it to their children, apparently unconscious of its ultimate result may be read in the awful annals of France.

Having enthroned the "Goddess of Reason," France passed laws which clearly reveal the result of such worship. The two institutions which date back to Eden, and which are inseparably connected with the worship of Jehovah, were defamed. The week was changed by a decree so as to completely abolish all resemblance to former times, and for a brief space France rested one day in ten instead of observing the weekly Sabbath. The law of marriage was repealed, and that safeguard to society completely disregarded.

The papacy in France was fast paving the road to self- annihilation. Human intellect worshiped brings death. The French Revolution of 1798, the Massacre of St. Bartholomew, and the Reign of Terror tell the dreadful story of destruction. The entire history of this period is an object lesson to the

world of the final destruction of nations when the Spirit of God is withdrawn, because those in authority refuse to worship Jehovah, choosing rather to exalt the "Goddess of Reason."

Complete overthrow stared France in the face until the control of affairs was assumed by the young military officer, Napoleon Bonaparte. Out of the chaos he led the nation through bloodshed to a place of honor among the nations of Europe.

The cause of the struggle, which cost thousands of lives, was the attempt to suppress both civil and religious rights. The Reformation in Germany in the sixteenth century struck a death-blow to feudalism and the monarchy. France was the battle-ground where papal tyranny wrestled with Protestantism and republicanism. Absolute monarchy always accompanies and supports the policy of the papacy, whether in a pagan or a nominally Christian nation. Democracy in principle is the form of government assumed by any nation when the light of truth is accepted.

When the Reformation was rejected by France, the tyranny of the monarchy knew no bounds. Two thirds of the land of the state was in the hands of the clergy and nobles; the king passed laws taxing his subjects against all protests from Parliament; warrants for arrest and imprisonment were issued by his authority alone; "famine prevailed in every province, and the bark of the trees was the daily food for hundreds of thousands." The oppression was unendurable, and men, frenzied until they were more demon than human, rose in revolt.

In America the principles of the Reformation had been put into practice with comparative ease. But France, having once rejected light, waded through blood in her demand for freedom.

Then appeared Napoleon. With the rapid movements of a master mind he carried victory for the French arms throughout Europe. The army was the controlling element; nobles and clergy were alike powerless, and the common people had exhausted themselves without avail during the terrors of the past few years. He defeated the Austrians and captured Milan; he forced the pope, and various cities of Italy, to purchase peace by giving up their art collections. He organized a republic in Northern Italy, and compelled Austria to cede its Belgian provinces to France. He conducted an expedition to Egypt, hoping to gain control of the eastern Mediterranean. On the way he captured Malta, and then gained a victory over the

Mohammedans of Egypt near the pyramids. Near the Nile, however, Bonaparte was met and defeated by Lord Nelson, the greatest of English naval officers. England, jealous of the rapid progress now being made by Napoleon, had opposed his progress in Egypt. Later he defeated the Turks of Egypt at Aboukir. In 1799 a constitution was adopted in France, and Napoleon was chosen First Consul, with two assistants. France had attempted to copy the Constitution of the United States, but the effort failed. The constitution of 1799 established a centralized government, and deprived the people of liberty and self-government. "Equality, not liberty, was all that the cause of France now represented."

The reforms of Napoleon are worthy of notice. Says the historian, "He personally participated in the religious ceremonies which attended the formal restoration of the old system of worship where the Goddess of Reason had been enthroned with atheistic orgies." "Full toleration was secured for non-Catholics." It was Berthier, who in 1798 made the pope a prisoner, thus fulfilling the prophecy concerning the 1260 years of papal supremacy.

The reforms of Napoleon, however, tended only toward monarchy, and while the people pleaded for republicanism, the pride of the man overruled, and he bent his energies toward his own exaltation. He was proclaimed emperor in 1804, and, in imitation of Charlemagne, he received a crown from Pope Pius VII in Notre Dame. Freedom seemed again to be defeated. Partial acceptance of truth brings only tyranny. This is individual as well as national experience.

The establishment of the principles of the Reformation, as seen in the adoption of the Constitution of the United States, was the result of Puritan faith and courage to follow in that light which led away from the papacy. The struggle of France is a warning to those who see no harm in harboring the principles of antichrist, or those who, having known the truth of civil and religious liberty, turn again to the bondage of error.

At the time of the end (1798), the kings of the north and the south again contended. From the founding of Constantinople by Constantine in 330, the power which held that city had maintained control of the Mediterranean, for Constantinople is recognized by all nations as the key to both Asia and Europe. In the time of the end, history will again center about this city.

As in times past, so again we are obliged to trace far back to find the source

of events which now appear in full view. About the time that the papacy was growing into a full-fledged monarchy, recognized among nations of the earth, another power had birth. This new work of Satan came in the form of Mohammedanism, which to-day holds about one-sixth of the world's population in its grasp. The new doctrine originated in Arabia, from whence it spread as a smoke from the bottomless pit. Syria fell under its power, but Egypt became the center of its influence. The banks of the Nile have fed every form of idolatry.

“God is most great; Mohammed is God's apostle. Come to prayer; Come to security.” The Mohammedan day-call to prayer.

Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith. Heb. 12:2.

Mohammedanism is but another form of Egyptian darkness. By the power of the sword the followers of Mohammed strove to enter Europe. The western horn of the Crescent, the Moslem symbol, was extended into Spain in the early part of the eighth century, and for a time all Europe was threatened, but the battle of Tours (732) stopped the progress of the conquerors. In 1453, however, Constantinople was captured, and has since remained in the hands of the Turks, the boldest advocates of the doctrine of Mohammed. As the founding of Constantinople is a guidepost in history, so the capture of that city in 1453 is another landmark. One of the greatest checks received by the papacy was due to the influx into Italy of Greek scholars, driven from Constantinople by the incoming Mohammedans. The discovery of America was due to the closing of the eastern passage to the rich islands of the Indian Ocean by the Mohammedans in Constantinople and Asia Minor, and so in more ways than is usually thought, God worked to advance truth through those who were ignorant of His truth.

God's plans are never defeated. While Satan closed the passage to the eastern world, God used that act as a key to open the door to the great western world. Thus it is in the Lord's work, from seeming defeat often comes the greatest victory. When the Saviour hung upon the cross, Satan exulted; but what he thought to be the hour of his greatest triumph proved to be but the death knell of his eternal ruin. The cross was the Saviour's greatest victory, and will be the science and song of the redeemed throughout the ceaseless ages of eternity.

Not only Egypt, but Syria and Turkey in Europe, belong to the Mohammedans, and he has entered the “glorious land,” and a Moslem

mosque occupies the site where once stood the temple of Solomon. This spot where Abraham offered Isaac, and David met the Lord, is sacred to every child of God; but it will be held by unholy hands until "He comes whose right it is to rule." Edom, Moab, and Ammon, however, escaped the hand of this conquering power, and these countries receive an annual tribute from the Turks who pass in caravans on their way to Mecca.

The ambition of Napoleon to establish the authority of Europe in Egypt might have been the beginning of the last struggle between the north and the south. Even in his day Russia and France made friends, but the time had not yet come for the Turk to take his departure from Europe, and England took the part of Egypt against the arms of Napoleon. Napoleon recognized the strength of Constantinople, so also did Russia, and there has been constant jealousy among the nations of Europe lest one should outwit the others, and become the possessor of that stronghold.

Every eye is centered on that spot, and has been for years. Turkey is known universally as the "Sick Man of the East," and the only reason he does not die is because intoxicants are administered, figuratively speaking, first by one nation then by another. The time will come when he will remove from Constantinople, and take up his abode in Palestine; that is, plant his tabernacle between the Mediterranean and Red Seas. Even the Turks themselves are looking forward to the time when they will have to remove their capital from Constantinople to Jerusalem. Time and again the world had been brought to realize that the end of all things is near at hand, for all know that when the Turk steps out of Constantinople, there will be a general breaking up of Europe. They may not name this impending conflict the battle of Armageddon, but God has so named it. In the Crimean war of 1853-1856, the world trembled for Turkey, and, lest the crisis should be precipitated, England and France came to the rescue, and Russia was bidden to stand back. In the Russo-Turkish war of 1877, the powers of Europe united to sustain the life of the sick man.

"I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the winds should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree, and I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God; and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads." These angels now hold the winds of strife, waiting for the

church of God to prepare for His coming. The sealing angel goes through Jerusalem (the church) to place the seal of the living God on the foreheads of the faithful, and while this work goes forward, Turkey stands as a national guidepost to the world, that men may know what is going on in the sanctuary above.

God's eye is upon His people, and He never leaves Himself without a witness in the world. No man knows when Turkey will take its departure from Europe, but when that move is made, earth's history will be short. Then the sealing angel that was commissioned to seal the servants of God will return to heaven with the message, "I have done as Thou has commanded me." Our great High Priest will then cast His censer into the earth, and pronounce the irrevocable sentence, "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still." To-day is "the day of preparation." The fate of Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome is recorded for the edification of the nations of to-day, and the lessons taught by all center in the events just before us. While the world watches Turkey, let the servant of God watch the movements of His great High Priest whose ministry for sin is almost over.

18. The Closing Scene

DANIEL, the man greatly beloved of God, was several times given a view of the history of the world; but the last vision covered the whole period in detail, and Gabriel did not leave the prophet until he had revealed to him the consummation of all things. Daniel is a latter-day prophet, and gave a history of the period intervening between his own day and the present time, but it was upon the closing events that special emphasis was laid. Four times in his prophecies the expression, “time of the end,” is repeated; “the latter days” is used twice, and the expressions “the end of the indignation” and “for many days” each appear once, the closing words of Gabriel were, “Thou shalt rest and stand in thy lot at the end of the days.” Thus nine times in the course of the book, attention is called to the fact that the prophecy pointed directly to the closing history of this world.

When the last vision began, the prophet was beside the River Tigris. It was the third year of the sole reign of Cyrus, the Persian. Beginning with the times in which he lived, Gabriel carried the prophet through the history of Persia; he spread out before his vision the conquests of Alexander and the division of his empire; he saw the workings of Greek literature and art, and watched this influence spread into Italy, there moulding the fourth kingdom, and finally blending with the truth in such a manner as to form the papacy. Daniel saw antichrist upheld by arms on the throne of Rome; he was carried through the Dark Ages; he watched, and lo, the darkness scattered before the truth as proclaimed by the Reformers. Like a sudden clearing after a storm, the clouds rolled back, and the Sun of Righteousness shone forth; but again the darkness gathered, and France, that nation of Europe which was a battlefield where Protestantism contended with the papacy, almost ceased to exist, so bitter was the struggle between the principles of truth and error.

The very existence of God was denied, and for a time eternal ruin hung like a pall over that country. God’s wrath was stayed, but as a person stricken by some loathsome disease may live, yet ever bear in his body the effects of the illness, so France coming out of the struggle is still scarred with the awfulness of her sin. The prophetic guide carried the prophet still farther, and revealed the contest between modern nations; he saw the final struggle between the north and the south, and pointed to Constantinople as the seat of contention in the last days. Nations should turn their gaze toward the present

occupants of that city and patiently await the removal of the Turk into the “glorious land.” For “he shall come to his end and none shall help him.”

The prophet had watched with intense interest the people upon whom had shone the light of heaven. From Babylon to the end of time a golden stream connected heaven and earth, as if the heavens were open and the dove of peace was descending. At times the stream narrowed to a mere hair- line of light, but it was never wholly extinguished; then the prophet saw it broaden until it lightened the whole world.

That light followed the Jews for hundreds of years, but in the days preceding the Saviour’s birth there were but a few souls that bound earth and heaven together. With the advent of Christ a flood of light filled the earth, but again the darkness almost covered the face of the sun. The streams of light were numerous as the Christians scattered throughout the earth, but gradually as the prophet followed these in vision, they grew dim and dimmer. In the days of Luther and the Reformers the stream widened, and again the light flashed like streaks of lightning, piercing the darkness. But days of clear shining were comparatively few.

The close of the prophetic period of 2300 days brought men to important changes in the heavenly sanctuary. Through all time Christ had pleaded for His people, and whether they were many or few, His love was always the same. Finally the great High Priest entered within the holy of holies. To Daniel the scene of the investigative judgment had been revealed. He had seen the Son approach the Ancient of Days; the books of heaven were opened and the records examined. Over and over again the nail-pierced hands had been raised before the great Judge, as the name as some repentant soul was read, and the Intercessor had cried, “Pardon, Father! My blood! My blood,” and the scarred character, the marred record, was covered by the life of the Son of Man. Daniel had seen this. He knew that God’s people must pass in review before the Judge of worlds, but at the end of the last vision there is another scene presented.

While men are watching the movements of nations; while they cry, “Peace and safety,” and yet prepare for war, the angel of God is seen by Daniel to pass through the earth, and place a seal upon the foreheads of those to whom these heavenly rays extend. So long as the angel finds any of these faithful ones, Christ still intercedes, but at last the messenger wings his way toward heaven. Throughout the vast kingdom of Jehovah echoes the sound, “It is done,” and Christ from the inner sanctuary rises and proclaims, “It is done.”

He lays aside His priestly garments, and prepares to set in order His kingdom.

His mediatorial work is over; the door from whence has streamed those rays of light and mercy is closed forever. Those who have been sealed must now stand wholly by faith, clinging to God alone during a “time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation.”

Daniel had watched men pass through trials. He had seen Israel tried, and men in all ages who were true to God tested on the point of faith, but in all previous instances the test had been lightened by a mediator. Now there is no intercessor, and man stands alone. Mercy is no longer sheltering him. It is another night in Gethsemane, another day of Calvary.

Again the words are uttered, not by one lone man, but by multitudes, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” The sweat drops of blood roll from other foreheads; the crown of thorns can be pressed unheeded into many a brow; Calvary’s nails can be driven without added pain. The burden of heart-searching is great among the faithful few, as they remember that one unconfessed sin means death. The mother of Zebedee’s children asked for her sons a place on the right and on the left of the King on His throne. The Saviour said that place belonged to him who should drink of the cup of which He Himself must drink. That is the cup which is drained to the bitter dregs by the remnant people in the time of trouble, for they are the ones who shall occupy the position mentioned by the mother of James and John.

The faithful sealed followers are not the only ones who know that probation has ended, for upon the wicked the seventh plague is falling, and from it none escape. The time of trouble to the wicked will be terrible, for they drink to the dregs the cup of God’s wrath. “A thousand shall fall at thy side and ten thousand at thy right hand,” but the righteous do not feel the effects of the plague. The mountains shall shake and the islands flee away. Then it is that the grave yields up part of its dead. At the resurrection of Christ a multitude from all ages came from their graves; they were seen in Jerusalem, and presented by Jesus as a wave-offering on His return to heaven.

So just before His second coming the earth gives up some of those who have slumbered in its bosom. Those who pierced Christ when He hung on the cross, those who mocked and derided Him during His trial, will arise to see Him as He comes triumphant with the host of heaven. Likewise those who

under the last message have fallen asleep in Jesus, will come forth to welcome Him for whom they looked and lived. These come forth to everlasting life, but the first class will be slain by the brightness of His coming.

The kingly garments are put on, and the Saviour prepares to gather His people. Throughout heaven the preparation goes on. Angels hurry to and fro, and the inhabitants of the unfallen worlds watch with eagerness. As the company forms to accompany the King, the law of God, the ten commandments, the foundation of His throne, is hung upon the sky in view of the startled multitudes of earth. "His righteousness hath He openly showed in the sight of the heathen." Men who have scoffed and derided those who obeyed this law, now see it written in the heavens.

Again the most brilliant rainbow is painted on the threatening clouds which overhang the earth. Mercy and justice mingled in all God's dealings with men until they utterly turned from Him. To the waiting company this is a renewal of the everlasting covenant made to the fathers that the inheritance should belong to the faithful. Over and over again that same symbol of the everlasting covenant has been hung in the sky, but men have not heard the voice of Jehovah as He spoke in the bow. "The heavens declare the glory of God," but while suns, planets, and systems have been studied by scientists, they have failed to see that in them all God has pictured the organization of His church, and the story of His love to man.

From the creation of the world, the very order and arrangement of the stars have told the plan of redemption, but man, devoid of the spirit of truth, can not understand the alphabet of celestial dome; and while the story has been repeated night after night, he has failed to see the law of God in the firmament.

Jehovah to-day points us to the stars that we may learn the lesson given to Abraham as he called him to his tent door, and traced the promise of the Saviour in the sky. The Star rose upon Israel, and wise men of the East, inspired by God, knew that it was the Christ star. Men, using God-given ability, have invented wonderful instruments for searching the heavens, and God has encouraged the effort in hopes that it would lead to an understanding of the divine story written there; but only the very few have seen or heard the spiritual lesson which was taught.

As each sun is encircled by the worlds of its system, so each teacher of

righteousness saved in the kingdom of God will be encircled by those saved by his efforts, and as every group of heavenly bodies with its suns revolves around one spot in the heavens, so shall all the redeemed will be gathered around Christ, the Saviour of mankind.

Daniel watched as Gabriel proceeded, and he saw the heavens depart as a scroll; he saw the sun burst forth in all its glory at midnight, a herald of the Sun of Righteousness. He heard the voice of the trumpeter as the sound rolled through the earth; he saw the righteous dead come forth in answer to the call of the God of heaven. They come forth glorified; the power of the grave is broken; the grave can not hold them. The whole earth resounds with a mighty shout of triumph as they rise to meet the Lord in the air. Multitudes from the days of Adam down to the end of time mingle with that little company who on earth were waiting and watching for His appearing. Together they pass toward the gates of heaven. The advance guard throw open the pearly gates, and again the angel choir chant the wonderful hallelujah which was sung when Christ returned with the little company on the day of His ascension.

From without come the words, "Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye uplifted, ye everlasting doors; that the King of glory may enter through." From within rings forth the challenge: "Who is this king of glory?"

The accompanying host reply:—

"Jehovah, mighty and victorious; Jehovah, victorious in battle, Lift up your heads, O ye gates; And be ye uplifted, O everlasting doors; That the King of glory may enter through."

"And I looked, and lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with Him an hundred forty and four thousand." In a hollow square before the throne are clustered those who were living when the Son of Man came in power. As they see the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, a song of triumph bursts from their lips. Heaven's arches ring, and, wonder of wonders, they whose experiences have seemed so varied, they who have been separated, crushed, degraded, upon whom sin had once placed its terrible hand, find that their voices blend in perfect harmony, and the song they sing is one of such pathos, such depths of joy and gratitude, that none others can join with them. Praise rings throughout heaven. Christ's image and character are perfectly reflected by this company. From the deepest depths of sin they have been raised to the pinnacle of heaven, each, like a stone in the

Master's crown, reflecting His character at some certain angle. The one hundred and forty-four thousand together complete the circle of perfection.

In addition to this company, who act henceforth as the bodyguard of the King, taking the place which had been vacant since the fall of Satan and his angels, was seen another company composed of those who were martyrs, and those who had been snatched from the pit of ruin. And again there is seen an innumerable company which no man can number, representing every nation, tribe, and tongue.

The number which would have peopled the earth had no sin ever entered, is gathered about the Father and the Son. Christ looks upon them, and in spite of the remembrance of the fall, and the pain and sorrow which the plan of salvation cost, when He sees the travail of His soul, He is satisfied. In the midst of His redeemed church the Saviour breaks forth into singing. The thought of sin and sorrow is blotted out. From the nail-prints in His hands stream beams of light which are "the hiding His power." Heaven bows in adoration, for the victory is gained.

Then it is that Daniel sees the language of the heavens interpreted. The universe is composed of suns, many of them mightier than our own, and each sun is the center of a planetary system. Each planet is accompanied by its satellites, a vast circle within a circle, moving in perfect order, performing its revolution in its allotted time, making, to the ear of Jehovah, the music of the spheres. The immensity of space is filled with universes, and all revolve about the throne of God; all are held in their orbits by rays of power from His throne of life; each shines with a light reflected from Him who is the fountain of life; each is guided in its path by the eye of Him who sits on the throne.

This is the type of God's order for His church upon earth. The perfect order of the heavenly bodies is a pattern for family and church organization. Each little company should shine as a star. God looks with pleasure upon the clusters of worshipers as they move in perfect order, each bending to the influence of the higher powers. As it is the power of God in the sun which holds the earth in its course, so His power, working through the highest organizations on earth, controls those of smaller power. In the family, children should obey parents, and parents should obey God, even as the earth follows the sun, and the sun circles about its center — God's throne.

The wise shall understand. Dan. 12:10.

The perfection of this system will characterize the last church, which will have developed the character that was looked for in ancient Israel. God's people are a peculiar people, and their peculiarities are derived from the virtues of Christ, which they reflect; this fits them to become a royal priesthood. To Daniel the angel said, "They that be teachers [margin] shall shine as the brightness of the firmament." And so the prophet had the privilege of seeing a nation or company of teachers among the saved, who carried forward the work which his own race might have done. As Christ was a teacher who spoke with authority which none could resist, so the remnant church will be teachers by virtue of the Christ-life within them.

It was a beautiful picture, that last scene which fell upon the eyes of Daniel. So many times disappointment had been the outcome when the beginning looked so promising, but in the end it is a glorious triumph. Those who are taken from the depths of sin will shine as the stars in the firmament.

"But thou, Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end." At that time "many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased."

The portion of time known as "the time of the end" is as distinctly marked as any other prophetic period. At its beginning the hand of oppression was removed from the law of God, which had been changed, and which, in the language of Revelation, had prophesied clothed in sackcloth. At the same time the persecution of the saints had ended. Civil and religious liberty was standing full-fledged before the world, and Gabriel, seeing the freedom granted to man, explained the effects by saying, "Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased."

Men living to-day see the fulfillment of the angel's words. Thousands of miles of railroad thread the globe, making it possible for messengers of truth to pass speedily from place to place. The ocean, once an almost impassable barrier between continents, is now crossed in a few days. The printing press daily sends forth thousands of tons of matter, so that the everlasting gospel can be scattered like autumn leaves to every nation on the face of the earth. The multitude of inventions also astonishes the world. Every day witnesses the birth of some new convenience. "Men have sought out many inventions," and still the work goes on. God allows it, that His truth may be spread with rapidity, for before His coming every nation, kindred, tongue, and people must hear the warning message.

The increased knowledge of the present generation is marvelous beyond description. There is no realm of science left unexplored. This is, that man may be led to see the wonders of creation, and so desire to know more of the Creator. As the closing of the Bible in the beginning of the twelve hundred and sixty years brought darkness, intellectual and moral, so the opening of God's Word has led to intellectual as well as moral advancement. From city to city messages fly on swifter wings than carrier pigeons, while through the mysterious depths of old ocean the words of man pass, unheeded by the myriads that people the ocean caverns.

While man looks on in amazement, angels watch with intense interest to see if man will co-operate with them in using these vast facilities to forward the gospel in the earth.

God from the beginning of earth's history, has offered life to that nation which would make His Word the basis of its education. The Jews were lost as a nation because of the failure to train their children according to its sacred truths; and when the Christian church inherited the promises made to the Israelites, it was upon the same condition that they should teach their children all the statutes of Jehovah.

But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words and seal the book, even to the time of the end, many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased. Dan. 12:4.

The time of the end is the period during which the remnant people will be developed. One great means for their education will be a return to true principles of education.

As Christian education and healthful living are revealed in the first glimpse given of the prophet Daniel and his work, so, as he is about to close his earthly career, as he views the last days of earth's history, he is pointed by Christ's special messenger to a people who are true to those same foundation principles. The people who pass safely through the time of trouble, which closes this last prophetic period, will be fortified physically by strict obedience through faith to all the laws of the physical man. And mentally they will be made strong by an education of faith which separates every family from the culture of Egypt, Babylon, and Greece, and instead turns the hearts of parents to their children, binding them all together in the love of Christ.

The time of the end, the period in which we now live, is a time when knowledge shall increase; and as the worldly wise trust more and more to their own wisdom, the faithful followers of God will separate entirely from worldly education. Now is the time for the truly wise to shine as the stars whose light is made more apparent as the darkness of iniquity deepens. It is evident that Daniel's whole attention had been centered on the events which Gabriel, God's historian, had related; and when the final triumph of truth was given, it was shown that Christ Himself was near the prophet, and that angels of heaven were also listening to the record of events.

So closely bound to earth are these heavenly beings, and so strong are the ties that unite their hearts and interests to man, that when Gabriel ceased speaking, one angel called to Christ, who was again seen on the waters of the stream of time: "How long shall it be to the end of these wonders?" That was the angel's question, and Christ Himself made answer. Holding up His right hand and His left unto heaven, He "sware by Him that liveth forever that it shall be for a time, times, and a half."

Angels have waited six thousand years for the completion of the plan; they have watched generation after generation for the final number to be made up, and have seen one century after another roll round, and still the inhabitants of earth loiter. What wonder is it that when the end is made known, they call out, "How long shall it be to the end?"

Daniel had heard this same period mentioned by Gabriel, and now it was repeated by Christ, but He says, "I heard, but I understood not." The prophet's heart was heavy as he followed the history of nations to the end of time; and fearing he should still be left in doubt as to the time for the fulfillment of all he had seen, like Jacob who, in his night of wrestling, clung to the angel, he pleaded, "O my Lord, what shall be the end of these things?" No request yet made by this man of God had been passed by without an answer. Neither was he now left in ignorance of the time. Gabriel answered the earnest inquiry in tender tones. Said he: "Go thy way, Daniel: for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end;" and then it was seen that "till the time of the end" meant the same as "a time, times, and a half," at the end of which period the great persecution should cease.

This prophetic period of twelve hundred and sixty years began in 538; the law of God was changed, and the Sabbath of the Decalogue was trampled under foot of men. Both the law of God and the saints of God were bound

for “a time, times, and a half” by the power which exalteth itself above Jehovah, as described in Dan. 7:25. The persecution tended only to scatter the power of the holy people; and at the time of the end both the law of God and the people were restored. The “time, times, and a half” ended in 1798. since that time the Word of God has been freely circulated among the people. The prophecies have been studied, the judgment message of the fourteenth chapter of Revelation has been proclaimed, and in 1844, at the close of the twenty-three hundred days, light shone from the sanctuary above, revealing the true Sabbath of the Lord.

As knowledge has increased, the wonderful truths for the time of the end have spread from country to country, preparing the way for the coming of the Son of Man.

That the two prophetic periods which had so puzzled the mind of the prophet might be more perfectly understood, Gabriel said, “From the time that the daily is taken away,” that is from 508 A.D., “there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days” until the time of the end, 1798. And again, “Blessed is he that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days.” There is then a blessing pronounced upon those who are living in 1843 ($508 + 1335 = 1843$), for the seal has been removed from the prophecies, and they are understood. True it is that “many shall be purified and made white and tried,” and that some will not understand, but that does not disprove the prophecies, for “the wise shall understand.” In the time when all may understand some will insist that the book of Daniel is still a sealed book. The words of Christ and Gabriel witness against all such. “Whoso readeth, let him understand.” “He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.”

DANIEL’S WORK WAS OVER. The story of the world was written. His prophecy would stand until the end. He slept with his fathers, after more than seventy years of faithful service in the courts of Babylon and Shushan. Men could find no fault with him except concerning the law of his God, and Jehovah called him a “man greatly beloved.”

In the last days he stands in his lot as a prophet, and the things revealed to him, together with the Revelation given to John on Patmos, and the warnings sent of God through the spirit of prophecy in the remnant church, will guide the faithful company of believers through the time of trouble, and prepare them for the appearing of Christ in the clouds of heaven.