

LESSON 1

Sabbath
September 29

Opportunity, Apostasy, Exile

As a background for studying the book of Daniel, this lesson reviews God's glorious purpose for Israel as His chosen people in Old Testament times, the situation that made the Babylonian exile necessary, and God's purpose in it. Attention is also given to His choice of Daniel to be Heaven's ambassador at the court of Babylon, and to be the recipient of timely messages for His people upon their return from exile and during future generations. Understanding what the visions and the words of Gabriel meant to Daniel and his contemporaries, we may discern in them a new vividness and beauty, and thus be better prepared to gather from them their deep lessons for ourselves today.

LESSON STUDY RECORD

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PART 1: A GLORIOUS OPPORTUNITY

**This people have I formed for myself; they shall show forth my praise.
(Isa 43:21)**

At Mount Sinai God invited Israel as a nation to enter into a special covenant relationship with Him. They accepted Him as their sovereign ruler and promised to be His people and to cooperate with His purposes for them.

**To what unique privilege and favored role did God call Israel of old?
Ex. 19:3–8; Deut. 7:6.**

“From a race of slaves the Israelites had been exalted above all peoples to be the peculiar treasure of the King of kings. God had separated them from the world, that He might commit to them a sacred trust. He had made them the depositaries of His law, and He purposed, through them, to preserve among men the knowledge of Himself. Thus the light of heaven was to shine out to a world enshrouded in darkness, and a voice was to be heard appealing to all peoples to turn from their idolatry to serve the living God. If the Israelites would be true to their trust, they would become a power in the world. God would be their defense, and He would exalt them above all other nations. His light and truth would be revealed through them, and they would stand forth under His wise and holy rule as an example of the superiority of His worship over every form of idolatry.” – *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p.314

“. . . they entered into a solemn covenant with God, pledging themselves to accept Him as their ruler, by which they became, in a special sense, the subjects of His authority.” – *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p.303

What unique blessings did God promise Israel through the covenant relationship? Deut. 28:2-13; Deut. 7:6, 9, 11-15

“God desired to make of His people Israel a praise and a glory. Every spiritual advantage was given them. God withheld from them nothing favorable to the formation of character that would make them representatives of Himself.

“Their obedience to the law of God would make them marvels of prosperity before the nations of the world. He who could give them wisdom and skill in all cunning work would continue to be their teacher, and would ennoble and elevate them through obedience to His laws. If obedient, they would be preserved from the diseases that afflicted other nations, and would be blessed with vigor of intellect. The glory of God, His majesty and power, were to be revealed in all their prosperity. They were to be a kingdom of priests and princes. God furnished them with every facility for becoming the greatest nation on the earth.” – *Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 288

**KEY
THOUGHT**

In what way is God’s purpose for modern Israel similar to His purpose for ancient Israel?

PART 2: CONDITIONAL BLESSINGS

A blessing, if ye obey the commandments of the LORD your God, which I command you this day: (Deu 11:27)

As with all of God's promises and warnings, the covenant blessings were conditional upon Israel's cooperation. Again and again we find the word "if" attached to the promised blessings. "It should be remembered that the promises and the threatenings of God are alike conditional." – *Evangelism*, page 695.

What conditions did God attach to the covenant privilege and blessings? What did He expect in return? Deut. 28:1,2,13,14; Jer. 18:7-10

Many Christians today try to claim the promises of God without first fulfilling the conditions. The consequence is that we have professed followers of Christ who are preparing to claim the crown, but will not bear the cross. God has never changed. He still will not acknowledge those as His, whose lives bring glory to Satan and declare that there is no power in God to keep us from sin. Victory over the world, the flesh and the devil makes a declaration to the universe that we are on God's side and makes it possible for God to demonstrate His power in blessing our lives.

Having poured out His blessings upon His people, what did God expect from them? Gen. 22:18; Deut. 28:10.

"God brought the Israelites from Egypt, that He might establish them in the land of Canaan, a pure, holy, and happy people. In the accomplishment of this object He subjected them to a course of discipline, both for their own good and for the good of their posterity. Had they been willing to deny appetite, in obedience to His wise restrictions, feebleness and disease would have been unknown among them. Their descendants would have possessed both physical and mental strength. They would have had clear perceptions of truth and duty, keen discrimination, and sound judgment. But their unwillingness to submit to the restrictions and requirements of God, prevented them, to a great extent, from reaching the high standard which He desired them to attain, and from receiving the blessings which He was ready to bestow upon them." – *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 378

That which God purposed to do for the world through Israel, the chosen nation, He will finally accomplish through His church on earth today. . . . Never has the Lord been without true representatives on this earth who have made His interests their own. These witnesses for God are numbered among the spiritual Israel, and to them will be fulfilled all the covenant promises made by Jehovah to His ancient people." – *Prophets and Kings*, p. 713

**KEY
THOUGHT**

The promises of God are still true and all who will fulfill the conditions may still claim the promised blessings.

PART 3: GOD'S PURPOSE FOR ISRAEL

I have sent also unto you all my servants the prophets, rising up early and sending them, saying, Return ye now every man from his evil way, and amend your doings, and go not after other gods to serve them, and ye shall dwell in the land which I have given to you and to your fathers (Jer 35:15)

“ . . . if God's people followed His instruction, their land would be restored to fertility and beauty. God Himself gave them directions in regard to the culture of the soil, and they were to co-operate with Him in its restoration. Thus the whole land, under God's control, would become an object lesson of spiritual truth. As in obedience to His natural laws the earth should produce its treasures, so in obedience to His moral law the hearts of the people were to reflect the attributes of His character. Even the heathen would recognize the superiority of those who served and worshiped the living God.” – *Christ's Object Lessons, p. 289*

What unique opportunity did Israel have for knowing and cooperating with God's infinite purpose for them as a nation? Rom. 3:1, 2

“To this people were committed the oracles of God. They were hedged about by the precepts of His law, the everlasting principles of truth, justice, and purity. Obedience to these principles was to be their protection, for it would save them from destroying themselves by sinful practices. And as the tower in the vineyard, God placed in the midst of the land His holy temple.

Christ was their instructor. As He had been with them in the wilderness, so He was still to be their teacher and guide. In the tabernacle and the temple His glory dwelt in the holy shekinah above the mercy seat. In their behalf He constantly manifested the riches of His love and patience.” – *Christ's Object Lessons, p. 287-8*

By what parable did Isaiah illustrate Israel's favored role in Old Testament times? Isa. 5:1,2; 27:6

This was the fruit that God desired from His people. In the purity of their characters, in the holiness of their lives, in their mercy and loving-kindness and compassion, they were to show that "the law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul." Ps. 19:7. Through the Jewish nation it was God's purpose to impart rich blessings to all peoples. Through Israel the way was to be prepared for the diffusion of His light to the whole world. The nations of the world, through following corrupt practices, had lost the knowledge of God. Yet in His mercy God did not blot them out of existence. He purposed to give them opportunity for becoming acquainted with Him through His church. . . .” – *Christ's Object Lessons, p. 285-6*

**KEY
THOUGHT**

Every Christian or Christian institution will follow Israel in failing God, unless they remain constantly aware of

PART 4: A DISMAL FAILURE

For the vineyard of the LORD of hosts is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah his pleasant plant: and he looked for judgment, but behold oppression; for righteousness, but behold a cry. (Isa 5:7)

"The warning was not heeded by the Jewish people. They forgot God, and lost sight of their high privilege as His representatives. The blessings they had received brought no blessing to the world. All their advantages were appropriated for their own glorification. They robbed God of the service He required of them, and they robbed their fellow men of religious guidance and a holy example. Like the inhabitants of the antediluvian world, they followed out every imagination of their evil hearts. Thus they made sacred things appear a farce, saying, "The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, are these" (Jer. 7:4), while at the same time they were misrepresenting God's character, dishonoring His name, and polluting His sanctuary.

The husbandmen who had been placed in charge of the Lord's vineyard were untrue to their trust. The priests and teachers were not faithful instructors of the people. They did not keep before them the goodness and mercy of God and His claim to their love and service. These husbandmen sought their own glory. They desired to appropriate the fruits of the vineyard. It was their study to attract attention and homage to themselves." – *Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 291-2

How did Israel's failure to obey God affect God's purpose for them? Ezek. 22:23-31

Instead of the mature fruit of character God sought from His people, they brought forth the same corrupt fruit as the nations about them. Occasional efforts at reform proved to be feeble and transitory, and as the centuries passed the nation lapsed ever deeper into the darkness of apostasy.

"But the Israelites fixed their hopes upon worldly greatness. From the time of their entrance to the land of Canaan, they departed from the commandments of God, and followed the ways of the heathen. It was in vain that God sent them warning by His prophets. In vain they suffered the chastisement of heathen oppression. Every reformation was followed by deeper apostasy." – *Desire of Ages*, p. 28

What was the ultimate result of Israel's continued apostasy? 2 Chr 36:15-17)

Again and again God warned His people that the result of continued disobedience would be exile from their homeland. These warnings were fulfilled when Nebuchadnezzar overthrew the kingdom of Judah and carried the Jews captive to Babylon.

**KEY
THOUGHT**

Should any institution on earth feel that God will continue to bless them, no matter how far they go in rebellion?

PART 5: BANISHED TO BABYLON

Even all nations shall say, Wherefore hath the LORD done thus unto this land? what meaneth the heat of this great anger? Then men shall say, Because they have forsaken the covenant of the LORD God of their fathers, which he made with them when he brought them forth out of the land of Egypt: (Deu 29:24-25)

The Hebrew people had inherited the Land of Promise by virtue of their covenant with God, but they came to think of it as theirs by right. As a last resort, and to impress them with the lesson that the covenant privileges and blessings, including the Land of Promise, were theirs only by virtue of the covenant relationship, God removed them from the land for a time.

“God removed his protecting care and support, and the Israelites were no longer able to contend with their enemies. Soon they were brought into subjection to the very nations whom through God they might have subdued.” {ST, June 2, 1881 par. 6}

What was God’s purpose for Israel in the Babylonian exile? Deut. 30:1-3; Jer. 30:11.

“The remnant of Judah were to go into captivity, to learn through adversity the lessons they had refused to learn under circumstances more favorable.” -*Prophets and Kings*, p. 453.

“Had Israel been true to God, He could have accomplished His purpose through their honor and exaltation. . . . But because of their unfaithfulness, God’s purpose could be wrought out only through continued adversity and humiliation.” -*The Desire of Ages*, p. 28.

What did the future hold in store for Israel if they learned the lesson the exile was designed to teach? Jer. 32:37-42. See also Deut. 30:4-10; Zech. 10:6.

God purposed, after seventy years of exile, to restore His people to the Land of Promise, to renew His covenant, and to carry out His original plan for them. All that had been promised might yet come to pass if they learned the lesson that bitter experience was designed to teach.

“This promise of blessing should have met fulfillment in large measure during the centuries following the return of the Israelites from the lands of their captivity. It was God’s design that the whole earth be prepared for the first advent of Christ, even as today the way is preparing for His second *coming*.”-*Prophets and Kings*, pages 703, 704.

KEY THOUGHT

Though God must chasten and punish His people, His purpose in every adversity is always their good.

PART 6: GOD'S MAN FOR THE HOUR

Children in whom was no blemish, but well favoured, and skilful in all wisdom, and cunning in knowledge, and understanding science, and such as had ability in them to stand in the king's palace, and whom they might teach the learning and the tongue of the Chaldeans. (Dan 1:4)

“The greatest want of the world is the want of men-- men who will not be bought or sold, men who in their inmost souls are true and honest, men who do not fear to call sin by its right name, men whose conscience is as true to duty as the needle to the pole, men who will stand for the right though the heavens fall.

But such a character is not the result of accident; it is not due to special favors or endowments of Providence. A noble character is the result of self-discipline, of the subjection of the lower to the higher nature--the surrender of self for the service of love to God and man.” – *Education, p. 57*

What character and personality traits that qualified Daniel to be God's ambassador at the court of Babylon impressed his captors and won their confidence? Dan. 5:11,14; 6:3, 4.

“Only by faithfulness in the little things can the soul be trained to act with fidelity under larger responsibilities. God brought Daniel and his fellows into connection with the great men of Babylon, that these heathen men might become acquainted with the principles of true religion. In the midst of a nation of idolaters, Daniel was to represent the character of God. How did he become fitted for a position of so great trust and honor? It was his faithfulness in the little things that gave complexion to his whole life. He honored God in the smallest duties, and the Lord cooperated with him. . . .

As God called Daniel to witness for Him in Babylon, so He calls us to be His witnesses in the world today. . . .” – *Christ's Object Lessons, p. 356-7*

What were Daniel's qualifications for being entrusted with a revelation of God's purpose for His people after the exile? Dan. 1:17. See also Dan. 6:7-10; 9:2, 17-19, 23.

In addition to the basic character traits already mentioned, Daniel evidently had a thorough knowledge of God's will as revealed to His servants the prophets in times past. See Dan. 9:2, 6, 10-13. The mature philosophy of history reflected in his book characterizes him as a keen observer of God's dealings with the nations. He was wholly devoted to God's cause on earth.

**KEY
THOUGHT**

As God called Daniel to witness for Him in Babylon, so He calls us to be His witnesses in the world today. . . .”
– *Christ's Object Lessons, p. 356-7*

The Courage to Stand

God's people are often placed in difficult and even life-threatening circumstances. This has been the lot of God's faithful people in all ages. As the apostle Paul put it, "*Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.*" (2 Tim 3:12) Among the bright stars who have shone brightly for their faithfulness in standing up for God and His principles, Daniel and his three captive companions, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego are among the most prominent. In a time when it would have been easy to compromise, when no one would have blamed them for letting down their standards, when their entire nation was being punished for apostasy, the four young men refused to deny their faith and their God in even the slightest degree.

In this age when we are facing the greatest crisis that the world has ever seen, the word of God predicts that God's people are about to face circumstances equally challenging to faith as were those which Daniel and his friends had to face. It is important that we carefully examine the factors which enabled these young people to stand so unyieldingly for the things they believed in.

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PART 1: THE KING'S MEAT

And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible. (1 Cor 9:25)

While it is true that "the kingdom of God is not meat and drink," (Rom. 14:17) yet it is also true that there is a relationship between the way we treat our bodies and our ability to overcome sin. The body is the home of the spirit. It is the medium through which the mind of a person is able to interact with the world and to perfect character development. When a person's body functions below par for whatever reason, then the mind suffers. A person may be unable to concentrate or to think clearly or even suffer from poor memory or a weak will, simply because of poor health habits.

How was Daniel able, under the most difficult circumstances, when others about him were compromising, to stand so firmly for what he believed in ? Dan. 1:8

"Daniel valued his human capabilities, but he did not trust in them. His trust was in that strength which God has promised to all who will come to him in humble dependence, relying wholly upon his power. . . ."

"Daniel's parents had trained him in his childhood to habits of strict temperance. They had taught him that he must conform to nature's laws in all his habits; that his eating and drinking had a direct influence upon his physical, mental, and moral nature, and that he was accountable to God for his capabilities; for he held them all as a gift from God, and must not, by any course of action, dwarf or cripple them. As the result of this teaching, the law of God was exalted in his mind, and revered in his heart. During the early years of his captivity, Daniel was passing through an ordeal which was to familiarize him with courtly grandeur, with hypocrisy, and with paganism. A strange school indeed to fit him for a life of sobriety, industry, and faithfulness! And yet he lived uncorrupted by the atmosphere of evil with which he was surrounded." – *Christian Temperance & Bible Hygiene*, p. 23

What was the result of the Hebrews' faithfulness to God? Dan. 1:17

". . . Daniel . . . had an intelligent knowledge of the effect that the king's meat and wine would produce upon the human system; and he determined to adhere to the teachings of God forbidding their use by the Israelites, rather than receive the approbation of the king. The result was that God gave him great wisdom and understanding in all mysteries, so that at the end of the years of trial, when examined, he stood higher than any of the wise men in the kingdom." – *Historical Sketches*, p. 153

**KEY
THOUGHT**

Every principle that God has established, including the health laws, are intended to help prepare us for His kingdom.

PART 2: THE FIERY FURNACE

And whoso falleth not down and worshippeth shall the same hour be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace. Dan. 3:6

The king commanded that the men be brought before him. "Is it true," he inquired, "do not ye serve my gods, nor worship the golden image which I have set up?" He endeavored by threats to induce them to unite with the multitude. Pointing to the fiery furnace, he reminded them of the punishment awaiting them if they should persist in their refusal to obey his will. But firmly the Hebrews testified to their allegiance to the God of heaven, and their faith in His power to deliver. The act of bowing to the image was understood by all to be an act of worship. Such homage they could render to God alone. {PK 507.1}

As the three Hebrews stood before the king, he was convinced that they possessed something the other wise men of his kingdom did not have. They had been faithful in the performance of every duty. He would give them another trial. If only they would signify their willingness to unite with the multitude in worshipping the image, all would be well with them. . . .” – *Prophets and Kings*, p. 507

Would God have overlooked it if the Hebrews had bowed, considering the fatal consequences of refusing to do so? Dan. 3:17,18.

“If God abhors one sin above another, of which His people are guilty, it is doing nothing in case of an emergency. Indifference and neutrality in a religious crisis is regarded of God as a grievous crime and equal to the very worst type of hostility against God.” – *Testimonies For The Church*, Vol. 3, p. 289

How will God’s people survive the perils of earth when they refuse to break His laws? Dan. 3:25

“ . . . From the history of their fathers they had learned that disobedience to God results in dishonor, disaster, and death; and that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, the foundation of all true prosperity. Calmly facing the furnace, they said, "O Nebuchadnezzar, we are not careful to answer thee in this matter. If it be so [if this is your decision], our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and He will deliver us out of thine hand, O king." Their faith strengthened as they declared that God would be glorified by delivering them, and with triumphant assurance born of implicit trust in God, they added, "But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up." – *Prophets and Kings*, p. 507

" . . . We have nothing to fear for the future, except as we shall forget the way the Lord has led us, and his teaching in our past history." – *General Conference Bulletin*, Jan. 29, 1893

**KEY
THOUGHT**

As we prepare for the fiery furnace of the coming crisis we may learn much from the example of the steadfast-

PART 3: THE LION'S DEN

All the presidents of the kingdom, and governors, and the princes, the counselors and the captains, have consulted together to establish a royal statute, and to make a firm decree, that whosoever shall ask a petition of any God or man for thirty days, save of thee, O king, he shall be cast into the den of lions. Dan. 6:7

" . . . evil angels, fearing the influence of this good man over the king and in the affairs of the kingdom, stirred up the presidents and princes to envy. These wicked men watched Daniel closely, that they might find some fault in him which they could report to the king; but they failed. "He was faithful, neither was there any error or fault found in him."

"Then Satan sought to make Daniel's faithfulness to God the cause of his destruction. . . .The king's pride was flattered. He was ignorant of the mischief purposed against Daniel, and he granted their request. The decree was signed, and became one of the unalterable laws of the Medes and Persians." – *Signs of The Times, November 4, 1886*

What was the only fault which could be found against Daniel? Dan. 6:5

"These envious men did not believe that Daniel would be untrue to his God, or that he would falter in his firm adherence to principle; and they were not mistaken in their estimate of his character. Daniel knew the value of communion with God. With full knowledge of the king's decree, he still bowed in prayer three times a day, "his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem." He did not seek to conceal his act, although he knew full well the consequences of his fidelity to God. He saw the dangers that beset his path; but his steps faltered not. Before those who were plotting his ruin, he would not allow even the appearance that his connection with Heaven was severed." – *Signs of The Times, November 4, 1886*

What was Daniel's response to the plot against him? Dan. 6:10

"In all cases where the king had a right to command, Daniel would obey. He was willing to obey so far as he could do so consistently with truth and righteousness; but kings and decrees could not make him swerve from his allegiance to the King of kings. He knew that no man, not even his king, had a right to come between his conscience and his God, and interfere with the worship due to his Maker.

Daniel was true, noble, and generous. While he was anxious to be at peace with all men, he would not permit any power to turn him aside from the path of duty. . . Had he respected the king's decree in this instance, he would have dishonored God." – *Signs of The Times, November 4, 1886*

**KEY
THOUGHT**

It is not only in major crises but also in the smaller situations of ordinary life that God requires faithfulness

PART 4: MAN GREATLY BELOVED

At the beginning of thy supplications 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 9:23)

There are not many people in the Bible who were given the wonderful assurance that Daniel received. More than once he was addressed by heaven's messenger, Gabriel, as a man "greatly beloved." While we know that all God's children are precious in His sight, yet there must have been something unusual about Daniel to merit such a salutation, coming directly from the throne-room of God.

What was it that exalted Daniel to such a position before God? Prov. 9:10

"Except the one perfect Pattern, there is not described in the sacred pages a single character more worthy of emulation than that of the prophet Daniel. Exposed in youth to all the allurements of a royal court, he became a man of unbending integrity and fervent devotion to God. He was subjected to the fierce temptations of Satan, yet his character was not vacillating, nor his course changeable. He was firm where many would be yielding; he was true where they would be false; he was strong where they would be weak. Daniel was a lofty cedar of Lebanon. The angel of the Lord addressed this faithful prophet, "O man greatly beloved, thy prayer is heard." Would that the faith, integrity, and devotion of the prophet Daniel might live in the hearts of God's people of today. Never were these noble qualities more needed in the world than now. Never was there greater need of men who will stand firmly and fearlessly for God and the right." – *Review and Herald, November 7, 1882*

How does heaven view those who choose to follow God regardless of circumstances? Ps. 101:6

"With Satan at their head to imbue them with his spirit, men may afflict God's people, they may cause pain to the body, they may take away their temporal life; but they cannot touch the life that is hid with Christ. We are not our own. Soul and body, we have been bought with the price paid on the cross of Calvary; and we are to remember that we are in the hands of him who created us. Whatever Satan may inspire evil men to do, we are to rest in the assurance that we are under God's charge, and that by his Spirit he will strengthen us to endure. "He shall deliver the needy when he crieth; the poor also, and him that hath no helper. He shall spare the poor and needy, and shall save the souls of the needy. He shall redeem their soul from deceit and violence: and precious shall their blood be in his sight." – *Review and Herald, December 28, 1897*

**KEY
THOUGHT**

Daniel's relationship with God is available to all who will devote themselves to God as Daniel did.

PART 5: THEM THAT HONOUR ME

Wherefore the LORD God of Israel saith, I said indeed that thy house, and the house of thy father, should walk before me for ever: but now the LORD saith, Be it far from me; for them that honour me I will honour, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed. (1 Samuel 2:30)

God loves all men, but His blessings cannot come equally to all. The very nature of the great controversy between Christ and Satan demands that God respect the choices which men make. When a person chooses to live his life independently of God and to give his services to self-seeking, he really is choosing to serve Satan. Jesus said, "He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad." (Mat 12:30). Such a person will be treated differently by God, than the one who is loyal and faithful to Him. God will make a difference between the righteous and the unrighteous.

How does Jesus promise to represent those who honour Him? Matt. 10:32

"This statement will cause all who conscientiously desire to know the way of the Lord, to fear and tremble. They will carefully consider what it is to confess Christ. The only way to understand what is our duty is to study the Scriptures and to learn perfectly the lessons of Christ, and to make a good confession of faith, not with our lips only, but in spirit, words, and works. The Lord says, "Ye are my witnesses." We do not become witnesses for Christ by maintaining a mere form of godliness, but we are his witnesses when we make that confession of Christ which is approved and accepted of the Father. To make such a confession, we must represent Christ in a holy life and blameless conversation. Jesus says, "If a man love me, he will keep my words; and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." But no one can confess Christ unless the Spirit of Christ abides within him as a living principle. The conversation and deportment will manifest what is in the heart, giving visible expression to the grace and truth within, or revealing the corruption and unbelief of the soul." *Review and Herald, February 12, 1895*

In what specific way does the wise man Solomon admonish us to honour the Lord? Prov. 3:9,10

God's blessings are not only manifested in spiritual things but also in the temporal aspects of life. While the child of God should not expect more than his daily needs (Matt. 6:34), yet he may rest assured that as he endeavours to be faithful to God the hand of omnipotence will cover and direct his life. All his needs will be met. God will pour him out such a blessing that "there will not be room enough to receive it."

**KEY
THOUGHT**

God is faithful. No man has ever been faithful to God without realizing extraordinary benefits in his life.

PART 6: THE WISE SHALL UNDERSTAND

Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried; but the wicked shall do wickedly, and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand. Dan. 12:10

“The most desirable education is a knowledge of the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven. He who serves the world sees not the great things of eternal interest prepared for the one who opens his heart to the light of heaven. But he who enters this path of knowledge and perseveres in his search after the hidden wisdom, to him heavenly agencies teach the great lessons which through faith in Christ enable him to be an overcomer. Through this knowledge spiritual perfection is reached; the life becomes holy and Christlike.” – *Counsels to Parents, Teachers and Students*, p. 399

What promise of God, made to His faithful people may we claim as we seek to be among the wise who will understand? Psalm 25:14

“It was not the leaders in the church who had an understanding of this truth, and engaged in its proclamation. Had these been faithful watchmen, diligently and prayerfully searching the Scriptures, they would have known the time of night; the prophecies would have opened to them the events about to take place. But they did not occupy this position, and the message was given by another class. . . . Those who turn away from the light which God has given, or who neglect to seek it when it is within their reach, are left in darkness. But the Saviour declares, "He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." [JOHN 8:12.] Whoever is with singleness of purpose seeking to do God's will, earnestly heeding the light already given, will receive greater light. . . .” – *The Great Controversy*, p. 312

What process must the people of God go through in order to be adequately prepared for the last great conflict? 2 Tim. 2:15; Ps. 91:1

“Those who endeavor to obey all the commandments of God will be opposed and derided. They can stand only in God. In order to endure the trial before them, they must understand the will of God as revealed in his Word; they can honor him only as they have a right conception of his character, government, and purposes, and act in accordance with them. None but those who have fortified the mind with the truths of the Bible will stand through the last great conflict. To every soul will come the searching test, Shall I obey God rather than men? The decisive hour is even now at hand. Are our feet planted on the rock of God's immutable Word? Are we prepared to stand firm in defense of the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus?” – *The Great Controversy*, p. 593

**KEY
THOUGHT**

The reception of truth depends not so much upon the power of a person's intellect, but rather, upon the strength of his relationship to God.

LESSON 3

Sabbath
October 6

The Lord of kings

The first four chapters of the book narrate the steps by which God eventually won Nebuchadnezzar's wholehearted allegiance. Daniel, God's personal ambassador to the court of Babylon, is introduced as a man of vigorous health, giant intellect, tactful personality, and, above all, loyalty to principle. His outstanding character and ability won Nebuchadnezzar's esteem and confidence. Then came a series of providential episodes—the dream of the metallic image, the fiery furnace, and the seven years of insanity—through which God revealed Himself to the king. In the first of these experiences he learned that Daniel's God is “a Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets”; In the second, that He is able to protect those who are loyal to Him, and to change the king's word; and in the third, that “the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever He will.”

With all of this Nebuchadnezzar's grandson Belshazzar was acquainted, but he refused to humble his heart before God as his illustrious grandfather had done. As a result, Babylon was weighed in the divine balances, found wanting, and given by divine mandate to the Medes and the Persians.

LESSON STUDY RECORD

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PART 1: A LORD OF KINGS

All the kings of the earth shall praise thee, O LORD, when they hear the words of thy mouth. (Psa 138:4)

“In the land of their captivity these men (Christian patriots, among whom were Daniel and his friends) were to carry out God’s purpose by giving to heathen nations the blessings that come through a knowledge of Jehovah. They were to be His representatives.” -*Prophets and Kings*, Page 479.

What were the circumstances under which God first revealed Himself to Nebuchadnezzar. Dan. 2:1-25.

In order to convince Nebuchadnezzar that this dream was, indeed, a revelation from a God superior to all the gods he knew, it was first necessary to demonstrate that his gods and his wise men were powerless to provide him with the information he so eagerly desired. Things were therefore permitted to reach a climax in which the very lives of the wise men were at stake, yet honor or death, proved unavailing. In their extremity the wise men were finally compelled to admit that the solution to the king’s dilemma lay in the hands of a God of whom they had no knowledge and over whom they had no influence.

In what tactful way did Daniel introduce Nebuchadnezzar to the true God? Dan. 2:26-30, 36, 37.

Behold the Jewish captive, calm and self-possessed, in the presence of the monarch of the world’s most powerful empire. In his first words he disclaimed honor for himself and exalted God as the source of all wisdom. To the anxious inquiry of the king, "Art thou able to make known unto me the dream which I have seen, and the interpretation thereof?" he replied: "The secret which the king hath demanded cannot the wise men, the astrologers, the magicians, the soothsayers, show unto the king; but there is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets, and maketh known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days." . . . – *Conflict and Courage*, p. 250

What did Nebuchadnezzar learn about God through this experience? Dan. 2:47.

The fact that the wisest men of the realm failed to reveal the royal dream, but that Daniel was able to do so completely and accurately, convinced the king of the infinite superiority of Daniel’s God over his own gods. The first thing Nebuchadnezzar learned about the true God was that He is “a revealer of secrets” (ch. 2:47), not in the relatively simple sense of solving riddles, but in the deeper sense of providing the right answers to the major problems of life and empire.

**KEY
THOUGHT**

Today, the true answers to the deep questions of life are still only available from the One who revealed the dream

PART 2: THE KING'S WORD CHANGED

Nebuchadnezzar the king made an image of gold, whose height was threescore cubits, and the breadth thereof six cubits: he set it up in the plain of Dura, in the province of Babylon. (Dan 3:1)

"The words, 'Thou art this head of gold,' had made a deep impression upon the ruler's mind. The wise men of his realm, taking advantage of this and of his return to idolatry, proposed that he make an image similar to the one seen in his dream, and set it up where all might behold the head of gold, which had been interpreted as representing his kingdom.

"Pleased with the flattering suggestion, he determined to carry it out, and to go even farther. Instead of reproducing the image as he had seen it, he would excel the original. His image should not deteriorate in value from the head to the feet, but should be entirely of gold-symbolic throughout of Babylon as an eternal, indestructible, all-powerful kingdom, which should break in pieces all other kingdoms and stand forever." -*Prophets and Kings, pages 503, 504.*

What event reveals the fact that Nebuchadnezzar still had a very poor understanding of the true God? Dan. 3:4-15

". . . it is not surprising that in a land where idol worship was of universal prevalence, the beautiful and priceless image in the plain of Dura, representing the glory of Babylon and its magnificence and power, should be consecrated as an object of worship. This was accordingly provided for, and a decree went forth that on the day of the dedication all should show their supreme loyalty to the Babylonian power by bowing before the image." -*Prophets and Kings, p. 505*

By what series of events did God indicate to Nebuchadnezzar that he could not with impunity oppose the divine will? Dan. 3:16-29.

"From his royal seat the king looked on, expecting to see the men who had defied him utterly destroyed. But his feelings of triumph suddenly changed. The nobles standing near saw his face grow pale as he started from the throne and looked intently into the glowing flames. In alarm the king, turning to his lords, asked, "Did not we cast three men bound into the midst of the fire? . . . 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." -*Prophets and Kings, p. 509*

". . . the king of Babylon endeavored to spread abroad before all the peoples of earth his conviction that the power and authority of the God of the Hebrews was worthy of supreme adoration. And God was pleased with the effort of the king to show Him reverence, and to make the royal confession of allegiance as widespread as was the Babylonian realm." -*Prophets and Kings, p. 510*

<p>KEY THOUGHT</p>

Men may exalt themselves and make plans which seem unchallengeable, but it is still God's will which will be done ultimately.

PART 3: THE MOST HIGH RULES

The king spake, and said, Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty? (Dan 4:30)

Nebuchadnezzar forgot that his splendid accomplishments were not really his own, but that he was accountable to the God of heaven for the wisdom and skill that produced his brilliant military, architectural and administrative triumphs. Through Daniel he had learned much of the true God, but there were still some vital lessons for him to learn. God loved this heathen king and was not finished with him yet.

Through what difficult experience did Nebuchadnezzar learn the supreme lesson of his life? Dan. 4: 5-17, 28-33.

From supreme monarch, Nebuchadnezzar was to be reduced to the society of dumb beasts, to eat as they eat, and to lodge with them under the open sky. His brilliant intellect was to be reduced to the instinctive processes of their extremely limited minds. Could pride take a greater tumble?

Insanity descends upon the brilliant mind of the king, obliterating everything. Reason departs; the mental faculties fail. The light of intelligence fades from his eyes, and in its place there remains nought but the blank, glassy stare that marks the dumb brute, and with it an elemental desire for a few blades of grass to eat and a pile of straw on which to spend the night. No longer does Nebuchadnezzar envision himself as the builder of Babylon and the ruler of a vast empire whose borders touch the ends of the earth. He is an OX!

What did Nebuchadnezzar learn about God through this experience? Dan. 4:32, 34-37.

The once proud monarch had become a humble child of God; the tyrannical, overbearing ruler, a wise and compassionate king. He who had defied and blasphemed the God of heaven, now acknowledged the power of the Most High and earnestly sought to promote the fear of Jehovah and the happiness of his subjects. Under the rebuke of Him who is King of kings and Lord of lords, Nebuchadnezzar had learned at last the lesson which all rulers need to learn--that true greatness consists in true goodness. He acknowledged Jehovah as the living God, saying, "I Nebuchadnezzar praise and extol and honor the King of heaven, all whose works are truth, and His ways judgment: and those that walk in pride He is able to abase."
-*Prophets and Kings*, page 521.

**KEY
THOUGHT**

us better people.

Sometimes God takes through bitter experiences but always, these trials are only permitted to help to make

PART 4: WEIGHED AND FOUND WANTING

Belshazzar, while he tasted the wine, commanded to bring the golden and silver vessels which his father Nebuchadnezzar had taken out of the temple which was in Jerusalem; that the king, and his princes, his wives, and his concubines, might drink therein. (Dan 5:2)

"With reason dethroned through shameless intoxication, and with lower impulses and passions now in the ascendancy, the king himself took the lead in the riotous orgy. . . The king would prove that nothing was too sacred for his hands to handle. "They brought the golden vessels; . . . and the king, and his princes, his wives, and his concubines, drank in them. They drank wine, and praised the gods of gold, and of silver, of brass, of iron, of wood, and of stone." - *Prophets and Kings*, p. 523-4

What attitude on the part of Belshazzar sealed Babylon's doom? Dan. 5:22, 23.

"Belshazzar gloried in his power and lifted up his heart against the God of heaven. Many had been his opportunities to know the divine will and to understand his responsibility of rendering obedience thereto. He had known of his grandfather's banishment, by the decree of God, from the society of men; and he was familiar with Nebuchadnezzar's conversion and miraculous restoration. But Belshazzar allowed the love of pleasure and self-glorification to efface the lessons that he should never have forgotten. He wasted the opportunities graciously granted him, and neglected to use the means within his reach for becoming more fully acquainted with truth. That which Nebuchadnezzar had finally gained at the cost of untold suffering and humiliation, Belshazzar passed by with indifference. " - *Prophets and Kings*, p. 522-3

What divine decree was finally issued against Babylon? With what result? Dan. 5:25-31.

"Every nation that has come upon the stage of action has been permitted to occupy its place on the earth, that the fact might be determined whether it would fulfill the purposes of the Watcher and the Holy One. Prophecy has traced the rise and progress of the world's great empires, Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome. With each of these, as with the nations of less power, history has repeated itself. Each has had its period of test; each has failed, its glory faded, its power departed.

"While nations have rejected God's principles, and in this rejection have wrought their own ruin, yet a divine, overruling purpose has manifestly been at work throughout the ages." -*Prophets and King*', p. 535.

**KEY
THOUGHT**

If the moral character and spiritual advancement do not correspond with the opportunities and blessings, "want-

PART 5: GOD REVEALS HIMSELF TO DARIUS

Then the king commanded, and they brought Daniel, and cast him into the den of lions. Now the king spake and said unto Daniel, Thy God whom thou servest continually, he will deliver thee. (Dan 6:16)

The book of Daniel shows us more clearly than any other book in the Bible how God seeks to manifest Himself to the rulers of this world. In the case of Babylon, the successive rulers were able to receive a proper understanding of the true God because of the presence of Daniel and his three friends in the royal courts of Babylon.

What was Daniel's official position and reputation under the new government of Persia? Dan. 6:1-4, 28.

Darius the Mede, so Daniel relates, "set over the kingdom a hundred and twenty satraps," or local governors, to administer its affairs, and over these satraps, "three presidents, of whom Daniel was one." As 'night be expected, Daniel was soon "distinguished above all the other presidents and satraps, because an excellent spirit was in him." Dan. 6:1-3, RSV. His obvious sincerity, integrity, and faithfulness to duty, and his gracious personality won the confidence and trust of the Medes and Persians as it had that of the Chaldeans.

Through what experience did God make Himself known to Darius? Dan. 6:4-23.

God did not prevent Daniel's enemies from casting him into the lions' den; He permitted evil angels and wicked men thus far to accomplish their purpose; but it was that He might make the deliverance of His servant more marked, and the defeat of the enemies of truth and righteousness more complete. "Surely the wrath of man shall praise Thee" (Psalm 76:10), the psalmist has testified. Through the courage of this one man who chose to follow right rather than policy, Satan was to be defeated, and the name of God was to be exalted and honored. {PK 543.3}

Through this experience what did Darius learn about the true God? Dan. 6:25-27.

"In delivering Daniel from the lions' den, God demonstrated His power and authority before the rulers of the Persian Empire (see ch. 6:20-23; PK 557) as He had previously before those of Babylon. An edict of Darius the Mede acknowledged 'the living God' and admitted that He is 'steadfast for ever' (v. 26). Even 'the law of the Medes and Persians, which altereth not' (v. 8), was obliged to yield before the decrees of 'the Most High,' who 'ruleth in the kingdom of men' (ch. 4:32)." *S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, Vol. 4, p. 752.

**KEY
THOUGHT**

The LORD preserveth the strangers; he relieveth the fatherless and widow: but the way of the wicked he turneth upside down. (Psa 146:9)

PART 6: THE DECREE TO RESTORE AND BUILD

That saith 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. (Isa 44:28)

“The deliverance of Daniel from the den of lions had been used of God to create a favorable impression upon the mind of Cyrus the Great. . . . And now, just at the time God had said He would cause His temple at Jerusalem to be rebuilt, He moved upon Cyrus as His agent to discern the prophecies concerning himself, with which Daniel was so familiar, and to grant the Jewish people their liberty.” - *Prophets and Kings*, p. 557

What prediction had Isaiah made concerning Cyrus nearly two centuries prior to this decree? Isa. 45:1, 13.

“As the king saw the words foretelling, more than a hundred years before his birth, the manner in which Babylon should be taken; . . . his heart was profoundly moved, and he determined to fulfill his divinely appointed mission. He would let the Judean captives go free; he would help them restore the temple of Jehovah.” - *Prophets and Kings*, p. 358.

When enemies hindered the work of rebuilding, what providential decree was issued? Ezra 6:7, 8.

The Samaritans induced the False Smerdis (an unscrupulous impostor called Artaxerxes in Ezra 4:7), to issue a decree forbidding the Jews to rebuild their temple and city. The work came to a halt, and discouragement pervaded the hearts of the returned exiles. But God raised up the prophets Haggai and Zechariah to encourage them, and in faith they began to work on the temple again despite the harassment of the Samaritans and a royal edict to the contrary. Providentially, Darius Hystaspes, who had succeeded the False Smerdis on the throne of Persia, issued a decree ordering the rebuilding of the temple to proceed.

Under what circumstances was the temple finally completed? Ezra 6:13-15. Compare Jer. 39:1, 2, 8.

Through the prophet Jeremiah God had warned that the temple would lie waste and desolate for 70 years. (Jer. 25:11, 12). This prophecy was fulfilled exactly as Jeremiah had said. Jerusalem fell and was destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar in the eleventh year of Zedekiah, about July 19, 586 **B.C.** The temple was completed a little more than 70 years later in the sixth year of Darius the Great, or about March 12, 515 B.C.

**KEY
THOUGHT**

God’s purposes know no haste and no delay but they will surely be fulfilled at the appointed time

The Sure word of prophecy

One outstanding difference between the Bible and other religious books is the element of prophecy. While the Bible contains many hundreds of prophecies, many of them very specific and detailed, the religious books used as the foundation of the faith of other major religions are conspicuously silent in this area of prophecy. The Koran (Islam), and the Bhagavad Gita (Hinduism), are highly revered by those who believe in them, and are said to contain many deep and pious ideas and teachings. The God of the Bible, however, is the only who dares to foretell the future so frequently and in such striking detail as we see occurring in the Bible. This sets the Bible apart from all other religious books because in the Bible God has dared to put Himself to the test. These prophecies, some of them covering thousands of years are the proof of the authenticity of the Bible. They can be measured, examined, tested, proven. Thus, the sure word of prophecy should be an important part of any study of the Bible.

LESSON STUDY RECORD

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PART 1: A LIGHT THAT SHINETH IN A DARK PLACE

We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts.’ 2 Peter 1:19.

‘The prophecies present a succession of events leading down to the opening of the judgement. This is especially true of the book of Daniel. But that part of his prophecy which related to the last days, Daniel was bidden to close up and seal “to the time of the end.” Not till we reach this time could a message concerning the judgement be proclaimed, based on the fulfilment of these prophecies. But at the time of the end, says the prophet, “many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased.” Daniel 12:4.’ – *Great Controversy*, p. 355.

How does the psalmist describe the Word of God? Psalm 119:105.

‘Those who study the word of God with hearts open to the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit, will not remain in darkness as to the meaning of the word. “If any man willeth to do His will,” Christ said, “he shall know of the teaching whether it be of God, or whether I speak from Myself.” John 7:17, R.V. All who come to Christ for a clearer knowledge of the truth will receive it. He will unfold to them the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, and these mysteries will be understood by the heart that longs to know the truth. A heavenly light will shine into the soul temple, and will be revealed to others as the bright shining of a lamp on a dark path.” – *Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 35.

How does Peter describe the ‘more sure word of prophecy’? 2 Peter 1:19.

“Every child of God should be intelligent in the Scriptures, and able, by tracing the fulfilment of prophecy, to show our position in this world’s history. The Bible was written for the common people as well as for scholars, and is within the comprehension of all. The great truths which underlie man’s duty to his fellow men and to his Maker are clearly revealed; and those who really want the truth need make no mistake. The way is not left in uncertainty, as though we were standing where four roads met, not knowing which one to take. The truth is our guide; it is to us like a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night.” – *Counsels on Sabbath School Work*, p. 23.

There is yet much precious truth to be revealed to the people in this time of peril and darkness, but it is Satan’s determined purpose to prevent the light of truth from shining into the hearts of men. If we would have the light that has been provided for us, we should show our desire for it by diligently searching the word of God. . . .” – *Counsels on Sabbath School Work*, p. 25

**KEY
THOUGHT**

The study of Bible prophecy must form an important part of our preparation for the crisis of the last days.

PART 2: HE REVEALETH HIS SECRET

And now I have told you before it come to pass, that, when it is come to pass, ye might believe. (John 14:29)

“In the annals of human history, the growth of nations, the rise and fall of empires, appear as if dependent on the will and prowess of man; the shaping of events seems, to a great degree, to be determined by his power, ambition, or caprice. But in the word of God the curtain is drawn aside, and we behold, above, behind, and through all the play and counterplay of human interest and power and passions, the agencies of the All-merciful One, silently, patiently working out the counsels of His own will. In the history of nations the student of God’s word may behold the literal fulfilment of divine prophecy.” – *Conflict & Courage*, page 250.

What is God’s appointed way of keeping His people in touch with His workings and His purposes in this world? (Amos 3:7)

“In His providence the Lord has seen fit to teach and warn His people in various ways. By direct command, by the sacred writings, and by the spirit of prophecy has He made known unto them His will.”

“In ancient times God spoke to men by the mouth of prophets and apostles. In these days He speaks to them by the Testimonies of His Spirit. There was never a time when God instructed His people more earnestly than He instructs them now concerning His will and the course that He would have them pursue.”

“Of special value to God’s church on earth today--the keepers of His vineyard--are the messages of counsel and admonition given through the prophets who have made plain His eternal purpose in behalf of mankind. In the teachings of the prophets His love for the lost race and His plan for their salvation are clearly revealed.” – *My Life Today*, p. 40

How did Daniel show his awareness of this truth? Daniel 2:20-22, 27-28.

“In past ages the Lord God of heaven revealed His secrets to His prophets. The present and the future are equally clear to Him. The voice of God echoes down the ages, telling man what is to take place. Kings and princes take their places at their appointed time. They think they are carrying out their own purposes, but in reality they are fulfilling the word that God has spoken.” – *Youth’s Instructor*, December 1, 1903.

“Behold the Jewish captive, calm and self-possessed, in the presence of the monarch of the world’s most powerful empire. In his first words he disclaimed honor for himself and exalted God as the source of all wisdom. . . .” – *Prophets and Kings*, p. 494

**KEY
THOUGHT**

God has not changed. It is still as true today as in former ages that God reveals His secret unto His servants the prophets.

PART 3: THINGS BELONGING TO US

The secret things belong unto the LORD our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law. (Deu 29:29)

'The idea that certain portions of the Bible cannot be understood has led to neglect of some of its most important truths. The fact needs to be emphasised, and often repeated, that the mysteries of the Bible are not such because God has sought to conceal truth, but because our own weakness or ignorance makes us incapable of comprehending or appropriating truth. The limitation is not in His purpose, but in our capacity. Of those very portions of Scripture often passed by as impossible to be understood, God desires us to understand as much as our minds are capable of receiving. "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God," that we may be "thoroughly furnished unto all good works," 2 Timothy 3:16, 17.' *Education*, p. 170.

When was the message of the Book of Daniel to be clearly understood? Daniel 12:4, 9. Compare Daniel 8:26.

'His wonderful prophecies, as recorded by him in chapters 7 to 12 of the book bearing his name, were not fully understood even by the prophet himself; but before his life labours closed, he was given the blessed assurance that "at the end of the days", in the closing period of this world's history, he would again be permitted to stand in his lot and place. It was not given him to understand all that God had revealed of the divine purpose. "Shut up the words, and seal the book," he was directed concerning his prophetic writings; these were to be sealed "even to the time of the end." "Go thy way, Daniel," the angel once more directed the faithful messenger of Jehovah; "for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end. . . ." Daniel 12:4, 9, 13. – *Prophets & Kings*, page 547.

What should be our attitude to the book of Daniel in light of the fact that God has stated that these prophecies apply to the end-time? 2 Tim. 2:15

"As we near the close of this world's history, the prophecies recorded by Daniel demand our special attention, as they relate to the very time in which we are living. With them should be linked the teachings of the last book of the New Testament Scriptures. Satan has led many to believe that the prophetic portions of the writings of Daniel and of John the revelator cannot be understood. But the promise is plain that special blessing will accompany the study of these prophecies. "The wise shall understand" (verse 10), was spoken of the visions of Daniel that were to be unsealed in the latter days." – *Prophets & Kings*, page 547.

**KEY
THOUGHT**

Those who believe that the word of God is true will make the prophecies which apply to the last days an impor-

PART 4: A LITTLE BOOK OPEN

And I saw another mighty angel come down from heaven, clothed with a cloud: and a rainbow was upon his head, and his face was as it were the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire: (2) And he had in his hand a little book open: and he set his right foot upon the sea, and his left foot on the earth. (Rev 10:1-2)

“The book that was sealed was not the book of Revelation, but that portion of the prophecy of Daniel which related to the last days. The Scripture says, “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” (Daniel 12:4). When the book was opened, the proclamation was made, “Time shall be no longer.” (See Revelation 10:6.) The book of Daniel is now unsealed, and the revelation made by Christ to John is to come to all the inhabitants of the earth. By the increase of knowledge a people is to be prepared to stand in the latter days.” – *Selected Messages Book 2*, page 105.

What instructions were given to the prophet John concerning the little book, and what did these instructions signify? Revelation 10:8,9.

The symbolism of eating the little book is not hard to understand. There is really only one way in which a person may be said to “eat” a book and this is to study it carefully. Here, John is a representative of the people of God who would live down at the end-time, at the time when the moment would arrive for Daniel’s prophecies to be unsealed. The figure of the eating of the book represents the attitude of God’s people in completely absorbing themselves in the the book and carefully studying it line upon line.

According to the book of Revelation, what effect would understanding the book of Daniel have upon the people of God? Revelation 10:10,11.

The command to “prophesy” again before many peoples, nations, tongues and kings symbolizes a world-wide work. This indicates that the study of the book of Daniel would result in a movement which would have a vital message to take to the entire world.

“The advent movement of 1840-44 was a glorious manifestation of the power of God; the first angel’s message was carried to every missionary station in the world, and in some countries there was the greatest religious interest which has been witnessed in any land since the Reformation of the sixteenth century; but these are to be exceeded by the mighty movement under the last warning of the third angel.” – *The Great Controversy*, p. 611

**KEY
THOUGHT**

Has my understanding of the prophecies of Daniel given me a vision of a message to be taken to the entire world?

PART 5: THAT YOU MAY BELIEVE

And when this cometh to pass, (lo, it will come,) then shall they know that a prophet hath been among them. (Ezekiel 33:33)

God is always trying to communicate with His people. From time to time He has chosen special messengers (prophets) to whom He has revealed His purposes for the world and in particular for His people. Some of the most profound truths and events of vital significance to the people of God are revealed in the prophecies of the Bible. Particularly in the books of Daniel and the Revelation. It should be obvious however, that no matter how wonderful these prophecies are and no matter how much good God intends to accomplish through them, they will never benefit us, unless we first believe that God has spoken through these prophets.

How did Christ explain the purpose of predictive prophecy? John 13:19.

'[We] should know the things that will come to pass before the closing up of the world's history. These things concern our eternal welfare, and teachers and students should give more attention to them. We should study the great waymarks that point out the times in which we are living. Those who place themselves under God's control, to be led and guided by Him, will catch the steady tread of the events ordained by Him to take place. We are to see in history the fulfilment of prophecy, to study the workings of Providence in the great reformatory movements, and to understand the progress of events in the marshalling of the nations for the final conflict of the great controversy.' *Last Day Events*, pages 14-15.

Against what danger are we warned by Peter? 2 Peter 1:20-21.

'The Lord has called out a people from among men, and has given them great light and knowledge in regard to His word. In Exodus 31:12-18 He declares the relation which they are to sustain to Him. God has not authorised us to exalt men, and keep the minds of students directed toward those who evidently do not bear the signature which He has placed upon His chosen people. "Verily My Sabbaths ye shall keep: for it is a sign between Me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am the Lord that doth sanctify you." Those who refuse to stand as God's chosen people, sanctified and made holy through doing His word, are as guideposts pointing in the wrong direction. So also are they who would encourage the youth to study as a pattern the so-called wise men, who have not been wise enough to know God and do His commandments.' *Counsels to Writers & Editors*, page 116.

**KEY
THOUGHT**

All the blessings in the world may be in these prophecies, but unless we study them carefully, we will not

PART 6: SO SHALL YE PROSPER

And they rose early in the morning, and went forth into the wilderness of Tekoa: and as they went forth, Jehoshaphat stood and said, Hear me, O Judah, and ye inhabitants of Jerusalem; Believe in the LORD your God, so shall ye be established; believe his prophets, so shall ye prosper. (2 Chronicles 20:20)

“The light of prophecy still burns for the guidance of souls, saying, “This is the way, walk ye in it.” It shines on the pathway of the just to commend, and on the way of the unjust to lead to repentance and conversion. Through its agency sin will be rebuked and iniquity unmasked. It is progressive in the performance of its duty to reflect light on the past, the present, and the future. If those who have received the light will appreciate and respect the testimonies of the Lord, they will see the religious life in a new light. They will be convicted. They will see the key that unlocks the mysteries that they have never understood. They will lay hold of the precious things that God has given them to profit withal and will be translated from the kingdom of darkness into God’s marvellous light.” – *My Life Today*, page 42.

What was the source of the prophets’ messages? 2 Peter 1:21.

“Some have neglected the Bible under the erroneous impression that the indwelling of the Spirit was preferable to the study and guidance of the Scriptures. Such will be exposed to Satan’s snares and fatal delusions. The Holy Spirit and the Word are in perfect harmony. The Holy Spirit inspired the Scriptures and always leads to the Scriptures. Everything in the religious world is to be tried by the Scriptures. “To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them” (Isaiah 8:20). The claimed enlightenment of the Spirit within is to be tested and tried by the Word of God, which is the detector of the pure wheat.” – *That I May Know Him*, page 195.

What striking example is there in the book of Jonah of the benefits of heeding the prophetic word? Jonah 3:4-10

“As Jonah entered the city, he began at once to "cry against" it the message, "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown." Verse 4. From street to street he went, sounding the note of warning.”

“The message was not in vain. The cry that rang through the streets of the godless city was passed from lip to lip until all the inhabitants had heard the startling announcement. The Spirit of God pressed the message home to every heart and caused multitudes to tremble because of their sins and to repent in deep humiliation. “ – *Prophets and Kings*, p. 270

**KEY
THOUGHT**

A prudent man foreseeeth the evil, and hideth himself: but the simple pass on, and are punished. (Proverbs

Principles of Interpretation

In approaching the study of the Bible our method of interpretation is extremely important. This is especially true in the area of prophetic interpretation. The Bible was written in the language of men, but it contains the thoughts of God. In approaching it, man must lay aside the attitudes, the perspectives, the values, the limitations, and especially the traditions of men. The biases of others must not be allowed to constrict our thinking. At the same time we want to be guarded against extreme and fanciful ideas. The question is, how can we achieve both an open mind and a balanced and cautious mind? The secret lies in a conscious and total dependence on God's guidance as we approach the study of the word. God will work outside of our rules of context, grammar, hermeneutics, exegesis, etc. because the understanding of the Scriptures is not for the most learned person, but rather, for the one who is most dependent on, and submissive to God. Dependence on God is the first, the most important and only inflexible rule of biblical interpretation

LESSON STUDY RECORD

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PART 1: THE HARMONY OF DANIEL'S PROPHECIES

And for that the dream was doubled unto Pharaoh twice; it is because the thing is established by God, and God will shortly bring it to pass. (Genesis 41:32)

In the experience of Pharaoh we find a principle which is helpful to us in studying the prophecies of Daniel. God gave Pharaoh the same message twice, using two separate dreams with different symbols. In interpreting the dream Joseph stated that both dreams represented the same thing, and that the reason for the dream being repeated was that "the thing is established by God." We can reason then, that one good reason why God would repeat the same lines of prophecy more than once in the book of Daniel is because of the fact that these things are firmly established by God and will surely come to pass.

How many lines of prophecy are there in the book of Daniel? Dan. 2:28; Dan. 7:1; Dan. 8:1; Dan. 10:1

Under the symbols of a great image, four beasts, a ram and a he goat, and the kings of the North and the South, God has given us four lines of prophecy in the book of Daniel. It is easy to see that these four visions cover the same ground, with additional details being given in each succeeding prophecy. Even though the prophecies grow more complicated with each succeeding vision, yet it is possible to follow and understand the events of each prophecy because the information given in the previous prophecy makes it easy to understand the one which follows.

What common elements in all four prophecies indicate that they all cover basically the same events?

- a) The same four great kingdoms are featured in all the prophecies (excepting for Babylon which was not mentioned again after it was overthrown by the Medes and the Persians and so passed from the scene).
- b) The common focus of all the prophecies is on a latter day desolating power. A great antichristian kingdom which would do great harm to God's people and His cause, but which would finally be totally destroyed without human help.
- c) The common end-point of all the prophecies is the intervention of heaven in the affairs of earth. Events take place in heaven which result in the forces of evil being overthrown and the inheriting of an everlasting kingdom by the people of God.

**KEY
THOUGHT**

When God repeats a prophecy several times it is an indication that it is very important that we should under-

Part 2: THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE JEWS

I call heaven and earth to witness against you this day, that ye shall soon utterly perish from off the land whereunto ye go over Jordan to possess it; ye shall not prolong your days upon it, but shall utterly be destroyed. And the LORD shall scatter you among the nations, and ye shall be left few in number among the heathen, whither the LORD shall lead you. (Deu 4:26-27)

What important principles of interpretation should we apply as we study the book of Daniel?

“Read the book of Daniel. Call up, point by point, the history of the kingdoms there represented. Behold statesmen, councils, powerful armies, and see how God wrought to abase the pride of men, and lay human glory in the dust. . . . “

“The light that Daniel received from God was given especially for these last days. The visions he saw by the banks of the Ulai and the Hiddekel, the great rivers of Shinar, are now in process of fulfillment, and all the events foretold will soon come to pass.”

“Consider the circumstances of the Jewish nation when the prophecies of Daniel were given.” – *Testimonies To Ministers*, p. 112-13

What were the circumstances of the Jews at the time when the prophecies of Daniel were given? Daniel 1: 1,2

The Lord could not work for the prosperity of his people, he could not fulfil his covenant with them, while they were untrue to the principles he had given them to maintain, that they might be kept from the methods and practises of the nations that dishonored him. By their spirit and works the children of Israel misrepresented the righteousness of God's character, and the Lord allowed the Babylonians to take them captive. He left his people to their ways; and in the calamities that befell them the innocent suffered with the guilty. {YI, May 14, 1903 par. 13}

What essential aspects of their identity and existence as a kingdom had the Jews lost? 2 Chron. 36: 15–20

The Jewish kingdom had lost (a) Their king (b) Their country (c) Their worship (the sanctuary) (d) Their people (they were in bondage). In order for true restoration of the kingdom to take place, all these aspects of the kingdom needed to be restored. However, the book of Daniel really speaks of the restoration of the greater kingdom, true spiritual Israel at the end of time. Yet it is evident that these aspects of the kingdom also need to be restored before antitypical Israel can receive their kingdom.

**KEY
THOUGHT**

In what ways are the circumstances of the people of God today similar to the circumstances of the Jews at the time of Daniel?

Part 3: THE FOCUS – THE LAST DAYS

Surely the Lord GOD will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets. (Amos 3:7)

In these last days there are many voices claiming to have the truth. Many people are confused and uncertain. However, God has made careful provision that none need be deceived. All who will earnestly, prayerfully and sincerely study the prophecies pertaining to the last days will discern the will and the purposes of God for His people at this time.

What evidence is there that the prophecies of Daniel were intended to apply most fully to the last days? Dan. 8: 17, 19, 26; Dan. 2: 28

“As we near the close of this world's history, the prophecies recorded by Daniel demand our special attention, as they relate to the very time in which we are living. With them should be linked the teachings of the last book of the New Testament Scriptures. . . .” – *Prophets and Kings*, p. 547

Will there be people in the last days who understand the prophecies of Daniel? Dan. 12:10

“ . . . Satan has led many to believe that the prophetic portions of the writings of Daniel and of John the revelator cannot be understood. But the promise is plain that special blessing will accompany the study of these prophecies. "The wise shall understand" (verse 10), was spoken of the visions of Daniel that were to be unsealed in the latter days; and of the revelation that Christ gave to His servant John for the guidance of God's people all through the centuries, the promise is, "Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein." Revelation 1:3. – *Prophets and Kings*, p. 547

What instruction, given to Daniel, assures us that the book was not to be understood in his day? Dan. 12:4,9

Honored by men with the responsibilities of state and with the secrets of kingdoms bearing universal sway, Daniel was honored by God as His ambassador, and was given many revelations of the mysteries of ages to come. His wonderful prophecies, as recorded by him in chapters 7 to 12 of the book bearing his name, were not fully understood even by the prophet himself; but before his life labors closed, he was given the blessed assurance that "at the end of the days"--in the closing period of this world's history--he would again be permitted to stand in his lot and place. It was not given him to understand all that God had revealed of the divine purpose” – *Prophets and Kings*, p. 547

**KEY
THOUGHT**

God never changes. If we do not have the same relationship with God as these men did, it is because we

Part 4: ESTABLISHING THE CONTEXT

And now I have told you before it come to pass, that, when it is come to pass, ye might believe. (John 14:29)

Many of the biblical prophecies have been given by God through His servants in order that the faith of His people might be strengthened at a critical moment in time. The fulfillment of prophecy can be a great source of added strength to those who are facing discouraging circumstances. It makes a great difference when we realize that despite the negative circumstances, the reproaches of the enemy, the fact that the work of God does not seem to be making great progress, God is still in charge. His purposes are being fulfilled. Everything is taking place according to His plans. This is one of the great reasons for Bible prophecy. It helps us to locate our place in time and to recognize our duty.

“Not one cloud has fallen upon the church that God has not prepared for; not one opposing force has risen to counterwork the work of God but He has foreseen. All has taken place as He has predicted through His prophets. He has not left His church in darkness, forsaken, but has traced in prophetic declarations what would occur, and through His providence, acting in its appointed place in the world's history, He has brought about that which His Holy Spirit inspired the prophets to foretell. All His purposes will be fulfilled and established.” – *Maranatha*, p. 18

Though all of Daniel's prophecies cover much history, to what point is most attention given? Dan. 12:9

Never are we absent from the mind of God. God is our joy and our salvation. Each of the ancient prophets spoke less for their own time than for ours, so that their prophesying is in force for us. "Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come" (1 Cor. 10:11). "Not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into" (1 Peter 1:12). – *Selected Messages bk.3, p. 338*

Despite criticisms from liberal scholars, what clear evidence is there that the book of Daniel was written long before the time of Christ (6th Century B.C.)? Matt. 24:15; Ezekiel 14:14; Ezekiel 28:3

Jesus quoted from the book of Daniel and quoted him as an authority. Jesus knew that Daniel was a true prophet. God also spoke by the prophet Ezekiel and referred to Daniel by name, setting him up as an example of a godly man, along with Noah and Job. If we deny that Daniel was an authentic prophet, then we will also have to deny that Jesus knew what He was saying, and also reject the book of Ezekiel.

**KEY
THOUGHT**

In light of the fulfillment of so many of these prophecies in our day, is our response in keeping with the light which

Part 5: THE WISE SHALL UNDERSTAND

The secret of the LORD is with them that fear him; and he will show them his covenant. (Psa 25:14)

Lot was warned before Sodom was destroyed, Noah was warned before the world was overthrown by the flood, the disciples of Christ escaped the destruction of Jerusalem because of heeding the warning of Christ. God has always made special provision for those who “fear” him and today, in this time of global uncertainty and fear, the voice of God is still speaking to His people. Those who will study the prophecies and believe them will not only have stronger reasons for their faith, but will also be instructed as to how to be prepared to face the coming storm.

What are the necessary qualifications for understanding the prophecies of Daniel? Dan. 12:4

“There is need of a much closer study of the word of God; especially should Daniel and the Revelation have attention as never before in the history of our work. We may have less to say in some lines, in regard to the Roman power and the papacy; but we should call attention to what the prophets and apostles have written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit of God. The Holy Spirit has so shaped matters, both in the giving of the prophecy and in the events portrayed, as to teach that the human agent is to be kept out of sight, hid in Christ, and that the Lord God of heaven and His law are to be exalted. Read the book of Daniel. Call up, point by point, the history of the kingdoms there represented. Behold statesmen, councils, powerful armies, and see how God wrought to abase the pride of men, and lay human glory in the dust. . . .” – *Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 112

What method should we use in our study of the Bible? Isa. 28:9,10; Luke 24:27

“The Bible contains all the principles that men need to understand in order to be fitted either for this life or for the life to come. And these principles may be understood by all. No one with a spirit to appreciate its teaching can read a single passage from the Bible without gaining from it some helpful thought. But the most valuable teaching of the Bible is not to be gained by occasional or disconnected study. Its great system of truth is not so presented as to be discerned by the hasty or careless reader. Many of its treasures lie far beneath the surface, and can be obtained only by diligent research and continuous effort. The truths that go to make up the great whole must be searched out and gathered up, “here a little, and there a little.” Isaiah 28:10. – *Education*, p. 123

**KEY
THOUGHT**

The prophecies of the Bible will never be understood by those who are unwilling to spend much time in care-

Part 6: PAST AND FUTURE APPLICATIONS

Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. (2 Pet 1:20)

To what event did Jesus apply Daniel's prophecy concerning the "abomination of desolation?" Matt. 24:15 (compare Luke 21:20)

And the Saviour warned his followers: "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), then let them which be in Judea flee into the mountains." [MATT. 24:15, 16; LUKE 21:20.] When the idolatrous standards of the Romans should be set up in the holy ground, which extended some furlongs outside the city walls, then the followers of Christ were to find safety in flight. When the warning sign should be seen, those who would escape must make no delay. Throughout the land of Judea, as well as in Jerusalem itself, the signal for flight must be immediately obeyed. He who chanced to be upon the housetop must not go down into his house, even to save his most valued treasures. Those who were working in the fields or vineyards must not take time to return for the outer garment laid aside while they should be toiling in the heat of the day. They must not hesitate a moment, lest they be involved in the general destruction." – *The Great Controversy, preface (ix)*

What evidence is there that the "abomination of desolation" spoken of by Daniel, has another meaning than the one given to it by the Jews? Dan. 8:13, 14; Dan. 11:30, 31

Jesus applied the prophecy of Daniel concerning the abomination of desolation to the approach of the Roman armies in AD 70 just before Jerusalem was destroyed. However, in Daniel 8:17 the angel Gabriel told Daniel, "at the time of the end shall be the vision." It is very clear from the context that he was referring to the vision concerning the transgression of desolation which Daniel had just seen. This is not to suggest that Jesus was wrong in His application but it brings out the point that some prophecies may, in the wisdom of God have more than one fulfillment.

What prophecy concerning the end-time had a partial fulfillment on the day of Pentecost? Joel 2:28,29; Acts 2:16,17

"In immediate connection with the scenes of the great day of God, the Lord by the prophet Joel has promised a special manifestation of his Spirit. Joel 2: 28. This prophecy received a partial fulfillment in the outpouring of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost; but it will reach its full accomplishment in the manifestation of divine grace which will attend the closing work of the gospel." – *The Great Controversy, preface (ix)*

**KEY
THOUGHT**

While some aspects of these prophecies are already past, we must remember that the main application of

The Last Great World Empires

According to the Scripture record, Nimrod was the first human being who attempted to bring people together under his control and in subservience to him. However, since the time of Nimrod, thousands, perhaps millions have followed in Nimrod's footsteps in establishing earthly kingdoms. Among these earthly kingdoms, some stand out because of the fact that in extent, power and grandeur they exceeded all others. Some, in fact, reached the status of empires by subduing other kingdoms and subjecting them to their rule. Among these empires were the Egyptian, the Assyrian, the Babylonian, The Persian, The Greece and the Roman empires.

Great as these empires were, in some cases ruling over the entire known civilized world, the time came when each one passed from the scene of world dominion, its glory faded and it returned to relative obscurity and unimportance, or was completely removed from existence as a nation. This cycle of the rise and fall of world dominion will not continue forever. The remarkable prophecies of the book of Daniel reveals with great clarity that we are about to have the final overthrow, and the last great empire of the world is about to come to an end.

LESSON STUDY RECORD

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PART 1: THE GOLDEN KINGDOM

And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath He given into thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all. Thou art this head of gold. 2:38

“Every nation that has come upon the stage of action has been permitted to occupy its place on the earth, that it might be seen whether it would fulfill the purpose of “the Watcher and the Holy One.” Prophecy has traced the rise and fall of the world’s great empires--Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome. With each of these, as with nations of less power, history repeated itself. Each had its period of test, each failed, its glory faded, its power departed, and its place was occupied by another.

“While the nations rejected God’s principles, and in this rejection wrought their own ruin, it was still manifest that the divine, overruling purpose was working through all their movements.” – *Education*, p. 177

How is the Babylonian empire portrayed in the dream of the metallic image? Daniel 2:32, 37,38

Babylon dominated the world scene from 605 to 539 B.C. Gold was an appropriate symbol for the New Babylonian Empire. In wealth and splendor it surpassed all its predecessors. Its capital city, Babylon, was the envy of the ancient world, and today its ruins mutely confirm the Scripture narrative.

“The character of this empire is indicated by the nature of the material composing that portion of the image by which it was symbolized the head of gold. It was the golden kingdom of a golden age. Babylon, its metropolis, towered to a height never reached by any of its successors. . . . Never before saw the earth a city like that; never since has it seen its equal. And there, with the whole earth prostrate at her feet, a queen in peerless grandeur, drawing from the pen of inspiration itself this glowing title, “the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees’ excellency,” sat this city, fit capital of that kingdom which constituted the golden head of this great historic image.” – *Daniel and The Revelation by Uriah Smith*, p. 42

How is Babylon represented in the vision of the four beasts? Daniel 7:3, 4, 17

The Lion, the Babylonians own favorite decorative motif, was an appropriate symbol for ancient Babylon. Babylonian art often combined the king of beasts and the king of birds into a composite creature, usually a lion with eagle’s wings, and sometimes an eagle’s claws and beak as well. A lion is noted for its strength and an eagle for its powerful wings and swift flight, a fit allusion, here, to Nebuchadnezzar’s brilliant conquests. Various Bible writers refer to him as a “lion.”

**KEY
THOUGHT**

All the glory of Babylon could not withstand the prophetic word. All the kingdoms of earth stand or fall at

Part 2: THE SPLENDOR OF PERSIA

And after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee, and another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth. (Dan 2:39)

Medo-Persia was represented by the belly of brass. (Daniel 2:32, 39). It appears in four of the five prophetic passages of Daniel (chapters 2, 7, 8 and 11). The fifth (chapter 9) covers the Persian era as well as the eras of Greece and Rome, but without mentioning or alluding to any of them. Persia, which eventually controlled a considerably larger territory than Babylonia, ruled the world from 539 to 331 B.C.

What additional information about Medo-Persia is provided by the vision of the four beasts? Daniel 7:5

The second Beast, the bear, represented Medo-Persia, which followed Babylon. Daniel saw that it "raised up itself on one side." This unusual posture is doubtless a reminder of the historical fact that the Persian Empire was, in truth, a union of Media and Persia, though by the time Babylon fell to Persian arms, Persian influence had become dominant and that of Media gradually vanished. Daniel also saw "three ribs in its mouth between its teeth," which spurred it on to "devour much flesh." It has been suggested, appropriately, that these three ribs represent conquered countries such as Babylon, Lydia and Egypt.

Each new victory naturally spurred the Persians on to ever greater conquests, until eventually their empire extended from central Asia to Egypt and from India into Europe—3,300 miles from east to west and 1,500 from north to south. It is less than 2,500 air miles from New York to San Francisco. Persia certainly did "devour much flesh," far more than any nation that was before it.

How is Persia pictured in the vision of chapter 8? Daniel 8:3, 4, 20

We are left in no doubt as to the identity of the second kingdom in the prophetic lineage. In chapter eight of Daniel the angel Gabriel specifically identifies the ram as representing the kings of Media and Persia. The identity of this second kingdom is further established by the fact that Daniel chapter five tells us that the kingdom of Babylon was taken by "Darius the Median." (Daniel 5:31)

What further facts concerning Persia are given in chapter 11? Daniel 11:2-4

Cambyses, the False Smerdis, and Darius I followed Cyrus on the throne of Persia. The fourth was Xerxes (the Bible Ahasuerus), who led the great invasion of Greece in 480 B.C.

**KEY
THOUGHT**

The striking accuracy and minute details of the symbols representing Medo Persia reveal a knowledge of

Part 3: THE GLORY OF GREECE

And after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee, and another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth. (Dan 2:39)

Greece was represented by the belly and the thighs of brass. (Daniel 2:32, 39). Through Alexander's conquests Greek language and culture spread throughout the eastern Mediterranean world and the ancient East, from about 331 B.C. to 168 B.C. Greek influence constituted the unifying force that bound the kingdoms of his successors together in one great civilization.

"The prophecy represents the kingdom of Greece as following Persia, because Greece never became united into a kingdom until the formation of the Macedonian Empire, which replaced Persia as the leading world power of that time."—*SDA Bible Commentary* on Daniel 2:39

How is Greece represented in the vision of the four great beasts? Daniel 7:6

Here we find Greece represented as a leopard with four heads and four wings. The four wings represent the rapidity with which Greece conquered the civilized world, Alexander's armies accomplishing this feat in five years, while the four heads represent the later division of Alexander's empire into four parts.

What further information is given about Greece in chapter 8? Daniel 8:5-8, 21,22.

The eighth chapter identifies Greece as the successor of Persia, not the Greece of the classical period, which was contemporary with Persia, but the Greece of the time of Alexander the Great and after. The symbols of chapter 8 are altogether different from those of chapter 7, but the correspondence between the ram and the he-goat of the one and the bear and the leopard of the other is so close as to leave no doubt that the same powers are represented in both. Both, for instance present the dual aspect of the Medo-Persian Empire, and the fact that one of the two component nations eventually dominated the other. Both likewise envision a fourfold division of the power identified in chapter 8 as Greece.

What is said of Greece in chapter 11? Daniel 11:2-4

The eleventh chapter presents a detailed outline of the Hellenistic era of Greek history. Like chapter 8, it identifies Greece by name, and mentions its first "mighty king" and a subsequent fourfold division. In verses 5 to 15 the number of contestants for Alexander's dominions is narrowed down to the "king of the north" and the "king of the south," and in verse 16 the former prevails over the latter.

**KEY
THOUGHT**

Once again the description of the Greek kingdom is so strikingly accurate, there can be no doubting the divine

Part 4: THE GRANDEUR OF ROME

And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron: forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things: and as iron that breaketh all these, shall it break in pieces and bruise. (Dan 2:40)

The legs of iron of the great image represented the kingdom of Rome. (Daniel 2:33). While Daniel identifies three of the four great empires of antiquity by name—Babylon, Persia and Greece. Rome is not thus clearly identified; nevertheless in a unique way the Roman Empire fulfilled the prophetic specifications for the fourth power represented as following Greece, and we assume, on the basis of history, that it is the nation here described.

Iron was an appropriate symbol for the Roman Empire. Her famed legions ranged at will over the entire Mediterranean world and over practically all of western Europe and much of western Asia as well. As Daniel had predicted, Rome literally crushed all other nations, to become by all odds the largest and strongest empire the world had ever known.

How is Rome represented in the vision of the four beasts? Daniel 7:7, 19,23

As in the metallic image of Daniel 2 the iron followed the brass, here in Daniel 7 “a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible and strong exceedingly,” with “great iron teeth,” follows the leopard. Like iron, the fourth metal of Daniel 2, which is said to break to pieces, shatter, and crush all things, the fourth world power of chapter 7 was to “break and crush” all others. A more fitting figurative description of the invincible Roman legions marching to and fro over Europe and the Mediterranean world could hardly be imagined.

Under what symbol is Rome represented in the eighth chapter? Daniel 8:9, 23-25.

There is no clear counterpart in Daniel 8 for the fourth, fearful beast of Daniel 7. The “little horn” of chapter 8 apparently represents both the fourth beast and the little horn of chapter 7. In chapter 8, for instance, the little horn causes Daniel the same concern which he felt for the fourth beast of chapter 7. Furthermore, the same fearful destruction that chapter 8 attributes exclusively to the little horn, the seventh chapter attributed to the fourth beast instead of to its little horn. The fourth beast of chapter 7 and its little horn exist together to the close of time. They are judged and destroyed together, the fourth beast being punished for the “great words” its little horn speaks. In chapter 8 however, the beast representing Greece disappears before the little horn comes upon the stage of action.

**KEY
THOUGHT**

Rome is the last of the great world kingdoms and according to the prophecies of Daniel, will continue to the

Part 5: DIVIDED ROME

His legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay. (Daniel 2:33)

The last part of the image of Daniel 2, the feet of iron and clay, should not be regarded as being totally separate from the previous kingdom, Rome. In fact, as was stated in yesterday's lesson, according to the prophecies of Daniel, Rome continues in one form or the other until the end of time. The feet of iron and clay should therefore not be described as the divided nations of Europe, but more properly as divisions of Rome.

"From this, its divided state, the first strength of the empire departed; but not as that of the others had done. No other kingdom was to succeed it, as it had the three which went before it. It was to continue in this tenfold division, until the kingdom of stone smote it upon its feet, broke them in pieces, and scattered them as the wind does the chaff of the summer threshing-floor! Yet, through all this time, a portion of its strength was to remain. And so the prophet says, 'And as the toes of the feet were part of iron, and part of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong, and partly broken.'" – *Daniel and The Revelation*, p. 60

What was the meaning of the symbolism of the iron mixed with miry clay? Daniel 2:33, 41-43

"With Rome fell the last of the universal empires belonging to the world in its present state. Heretofore the elements of society had been such that it was possible for one nation, rising superior to its neighbors in prowess, bravery, and the science of war, to attach them one after another to its chariot wheels till all were consolidated into one vast empire, and one man seated upon the dominant throne could send forth his will as law to all the nations of the earth. When Rome fell, such possibilities forever passed away. Crushed beneath the weight of its own vast proportions, it crumbled to pieces, never to be united again. The iron was mixed with the clay. Its elements lost the power of cohesion, and no man or combination of men can again consolidate them." – *Daniel and The Revelation*, p. 60

How is the dividing of the Roman empire represented in Daniel Chapter 7? Daniel 7:7

Daniel chapter 7 gives us an even clearer representation of the latter day state of Rome. Here we see that the ten divisions (the ten horns) actually are on the head of the beast (Rome). They are not separate and distinct from Rome but are actually just an extension of Rome. Just the form in which Rome manifested itself when its world dominion as a single "universal" kingdom was broken.

**KEY
THOUGHT**

All the efforts of the great nations of the world cannot change the word of God. Never again will any single

Part 6: THE IMMUTABLE ROCK

And 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, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him. (Daniel 7:27)

“We here reach the climax of this stupendous prophecy; and when time in his onward flight shall bring us to the sublime scene here predicted, we shall have reached the end of human history. The kingdom of God! Grand provision for a new and glorious dispensation, in which his people shall find a happy terminus of this world's sad, degenerate, and changing career. Transporting change for all the righteous, from gloom to glory, from strife to peace, from a sinful to a holy world, from death to life, from tyranny and oppression to the happy freedom and blessed privileges of a heavenly kingdom! Glorious transition, from weakness to strength, from the changing and decaying to the immutable and eternal!” – *Daniel and The Revelation, p.64*

When will another universal kingdom be once again established on the earth? Dan 2:44; Dan. 7:26,27

“But when is this kingdom to be established? May we hope for an answer to an inquiry of such momentous concern to our race? These are the very questions on which the word of God does not leave us in ignorance. . . . We do not say that the exact time is revealed (we emphasize the fact that it is not) either in this or in any other prophecy; but so near an approximation is given that the generation which is to see the establishment of this kingdom may mark its approach unerringly, and make that preparation which will entitle them to share in all its glories.” – *Daniel and The Revelation, p.64*

The great image of Daniel has stood complete in all its parts for fourteen centuries, today it is still waiting to be smitten upon its feet by the stone cut out of the mountain without hands. We have been in the days of these kings for many centuries and we are still in their days. The very next event in this prophecy is the setting up of God's everlasting kingdom. Other prophecies and innumerable signs show unmistakably that the coming of Christ is near at hand.

By what unusual means will this kingdom be established? Daniel 2:44,45

The setting up of this kingdom will be an event completely independent of human effort. The stone will be cut out “without hands,” it is the God of heaven who will set up a kingdom. But praise God, the kingdom will be inhabited by those who have been faithful to God.

**KEY
THOUGHT**

All the education and preparations of this life should be with the aim of qualifying us to be a part of the kingdom

LESSON 7

Sabbath
November 3

The Antichrist

In this lesson we are concerned exclusively with the great future crisis that was to come to God's people prior to the establishment of His eternal, righteous reign. When all that Gabriel revealed to Daniel on four separate visits (chs. 7, 8, 9, and 11, 12) is brought together, a much clearer and more complete picture is possible than when each of the four visions is studied separately. The word *tyrant* aptly expresses all the various aspects of the persecutor's character and conduct as set forth by Daniel. In his dealings with God's people this villain proved to be shrewd, arrogant, treacherous, and cruel.

In contrast with his specific identification of the great empires of antiquity, Gabriel did not divulge the identity of this figure, but left it sealed until "the time of the end."

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PART 1: LOCATING THE ANTICHRIST

And in the latter time of their kingdom, when the transgressors are come to the full, a king of fierce countenance, and understanding dark sentences, shall stand up. (Daniel 8:23)

This verse in Daniel 8 tells us plainly again that this great desolating power would arise in the latter days. Just as in Daniel 7, he was represented as arising from the head of the final beast-kingdom, so here, he “shall stand up” in the “latter time of their kingdom.” These prophecies show us in the clearest possible way that the antichrist would arise from the fragments of the former Roman empire. Some have held the fanciful idea that he might be somebody like Saddam Hussein, perhaps Osama Bin Laden or even the president of the United States. However, the prophecy makes it clear that all such ideas are false. The antichrist must arise in the “Old World, the territory once occupied by Rome.

What does God tell us about the tyrant’s greatness, power, and methods as well as the time of his rise to power? Dan. 7:8 20; 8:9, 23, 24.

The great oppressor of God’s people was to appear on the stage of history after the rise and fall of the great empires of antiquity – Babylon, Persia, Greece, and Rome. As a ‘little horn’ in the symbolism of Daniel 7, the tyrant is represented as rising up among the ten horns on the head of the fourth beast, which represent the fragments into which the Roman Empire, spilt up when it fell. Prophecy thus clearly establishes the fact that this tyrant would rise to power at the time of the breakup of ancient Rome, and also identifies western Europe as the locality where he would rise to power.

In what other ways is the great oppressor of prophecy described in other places in the book of Daniel? Dan. 7:20; 8:9, 24; 11:36-39.

Comparatively “little” to begin with, this oppressor of the saints would eventually become “greater” and “stronger than his fellows,” that is, than the nations represented by the other ten horns. In fact he would grow “exceeding great” and would “prosper” in his evil plot to annihilate God’s people. All who barred his way would be cut down without mercy. The tyrant was thus to dominate the political scene in western Europe following the downfall of the Roman Empire.

This description of the antichrist as arising in the area of the Old Roman empire could identify any of the nations of Western Europe, the near east or north Africa as constituting the antichrist. However, the other identifying marks which follow clear the air conclusively and make it clear that only one particular power fulfills *all* the specifications of the antichrist. This power is the Papacy.

**KEY
THOUGHT**

In light of the fact that the Roman Catholic power is identified as the great antichrist, how should I relate to people

PART 2: BLASPHEMIES OF THE ANTICHRIST

And the king shall do according to his will; and he shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvellous things against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished: for that that is determined shall be done. (Daniel 11:36)

One outstanding aspect of the Papacy has been its willingness to make claims which were striking in their blasphemous content. No other power has ever existed on earth which has dared to make such blasphemous claims as those made by the Papacy.

How did the apostle Paul describe the blasphemous work of the same antichristian power described by the prophet Daniel? 2 Thess. 2:3,4

The apostle Paul was obviously familiar with the prophecies of Daniel and knew of the coming of the antichrist. His description of the antichrist here, as one who would “exalt himself above all that is called God” is almost a word for word quote from Daniel 11:36. Clearly Paul was referring to the same power.

What definitions of blasphemy does the Bible give? John 10:33; Mark 2:7

The Papacy both claims the title of God, as well as claims to have the ability to forgive sins. Catholics have made the following extraordinary claims:

“The Pope is of so great dignity, and so exalted that he is not a mere man but as it were, God, and the vicar of God... the Pope alone is deservedly called by the name ‘Most Holy’ because he alone is the vicar of Christ ... he is likewise the divine monarch and supreme emperor and king of kings....hence the Pope is crowned with a triple crown, as king of heaven and of earth, and of the lower regions... he is of so great dignity and power that he forms one and the same tribunal with Christ ... The Pope is as it were, God on earth.” *Prompta Bibliotheca - by Lucius Ferraris*

“The priest holds the place of the Saviour Himself, when by saying, ‘Ego te absolvo’ (I absolve thee) he absolves from sin.... to pardon a single sin requires all the omnipotence of God... but what only God can do by His omnipotence, the priest can also do by saying, ‘ego te absolvo a peccatis tuis.’ ” *‘Dignity and duties of the priest’ - by Alphonsus de Liguori*

“The Pope is not only the representative of Jesus Christ, but he is Jesus Christ Himself hidden under the veil of the flesh. . . . So that when the Pope speaks we have no business to examine. We have only to obey. We have no right to criticize his direction or discuss his commands.”—*Published in the Catholic Mirror, Sept. 2,*

**KEY
THOUGHT**

¹⁸⁹³
Is the fact that one claims to be a Christian good enough reason to place confidence in such a person

PART 3: THE NATURE OF ANTICHRIST'S KINGDOM

I considered the horns, and, behold, there came up among them another little horn, before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots: and, behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of man, and a mouth speaking great things. (Daniel 7:8)

There can be no doubt that some unusual kind of power is represented by the symbols used here. This is not a kingdom such as those represented by the beasts, or even the other horns. Here we see the “eyes of a man” and a mouth “speaking great things.” In this prophecy God goes to great lengths to make us know that in seeking to identify this kingdom, we are to look for an unusual power. A “kingdom” which is different from all other kingdoms, yet similar in some respects.

How is the political nature of the antichrist kingdom revealed elsewhere in the Bible? Rev. 13:4

The student of history will not find it difficult to identify the power described here. Only one power dominated the scene for centuries after the breakup of political Rome, which was different from all other kingdoms, which was “more stout” than the other kingdoms, which was guilty of speaking “great words” against the Most High, and this power was the Papacy. This religio-political power, part church and part political state, is the only power in all the world which fulfills every specification of the prophecy.

What statement made by the apostle Paul reveals the fact that the antichrist is a religious power as well as a political force? 2 Thess. 2:4

Paul gives us a detail which is critical. He says that this antichrist power would “sit in the temple of God.” This is a vital clue because it reveals the fact that this antichrist would sit in the Christian Church. Since the time of the death of Christ, God has had only two dwelling places on earth which could be described as the “temple of God. One of them is the Christian (1 Cor. 6:19) and the other is the Christian Church (Eph. 2:19-21). In other words, we are not speaking of a heathen warrior, but of one who claims to be a Christian!

The Religio-Political nature of the Papacy is described in the following words:

“At the head of the Catholic Church is the pope of Rome. In a tiny, independent country, hardly as large as an ordinary American town site, the pope sits as spiritual ruler of nearly half billion Catholics in the world.

“This little country, situated almost in the heart of the Italian city of Rome is known as the Vatican. . . . the Vatican is a sovereign land like the United States, Russia or England. . . .” – *‘The Other Side of Rome’ by John B. Wilder, p. 101*

**KEY
THOUGHT**

Understanding the truth of the great deception which has been pawned off on the world, what is my duty as a

PART 4: OPPRESSOR OF GOD'S PEOPLE

And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened. (Matthew 24:22)

Persecution has been the lot of God's people in all ages. In a world dominated by sin, those who embrace righteousness cannot expect to pass without trial. "all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." However, this antagonism against the people of God would reach its climax in the latter days, and the chief perpetrator is identified in the book of Daniel as being the great tyrant, the Papacy.

For how long was this era of persecution to continue? Dan. 7:25; 12:7.

The length of time during which the oppressor would torment God's people is given as "a time, two times, and half a time," or three and a half times. It will be recalled that the seven times during which Nebuchadnezzar lapsed into a state of insanity proved to be seven years of literal time. The three and a half times would then be three and a half years. An equivalent expression in Revelation 12:14, "a time, and times, and half a time," is defined earlier in the same chapter as one thousand two hundred and sixty days. On the basis of thirty days to the month and twelve months to the year, the 1260 days prove to be exactly three and a half years.

In symbolic prophecy, a day of prophetic time stands for a full year of actual time. This day-for-a-year principle in predictive prophecy first appears in Numbers 14:34 and is illustrated again in Ezekiel 4:6.

How does Daniel describe the oppressor's attempt to annihilate the covenant people? Dan. 7:21, 25; 8:10, 13, 24; 11:33-35.

As Daniel watched, a great persecuting power made war with the saints, prevailed over them, and wore them out. He cast them down to the ground, and trampled upon them in a determined attempt to shatter and destroy them. The focal point of his savage attack on the Saints was their loyalty to God and to His revealed will. In that time of trouble, affliction, distress, and anguish such as the world had never seen, it appeared that they would be utterly swept away before him and broken.

"The church of Rome has shed more innocent blood than any other institution that has ever existed among mankind it is impossible to form a complete conception of the multitude of her victims"—*The historian, W.E.H. Lecky*

"It is estimated... an average of 40,000 religious murders for every year of the existence of the Papacy." — *Tom Dowling, - 'The History of Romanism'*

**KEY
THOUGHT**

If we are faithful to God and His truth, persecution will come to us. The only way to avoid persecution is by compromising principle. (see GC, p. 48)

PART 5: ASSAULT UPON TRUTH

And an host was given him against the daily sacrifice by reason of transgression, and it cast down the truth to the ground; and it practiced, and prospered. (Daniel 8:12)

How would this diabolical power go about defying God? The angel declared that his heart would “be set against the holy covenant” between God and His loyal people, and that he would “be enraged and take action against” it. Dan. 11:28, 30, R.S.V. He would enact religious precepts and requirements of his own and attempt to force men to comply with them instead of with those ordained by God. He would thus effectively “cast down ... to the ground” the “truth” as set forth in the Holy Scriptures.

What specific aspect of truth would the antichrist attack? Dan. 7:25; 2 Thess. 2:3 (NRSV)

In the King James Version of the Bible, the antichrist is called “the man of sin” (2 Thess. 2:3). However, this term comes from the Greek words, “ho anomos” and literally mean “the lawless one,” or, “the one against the law.” This is the way it is translated in most other versions of the Bible. This, in conjunction with Daniel 7:25 makes it clear that the attack of the antichrist upon God’s truth would focus particularly on the law of God. He would “think to change” this law, and in particular, aspects of the law dealing with time. The following admission from Catholic sources reveal how successful they have been in their attempts to do this:

“The Church, . . . after changing the day of rest from Sabbath, or the seventh day of the week, to the first, made the Third Commandment refer to Sunday as the day to be kept holy as the Lord’s Day.” – *The Catholic Encyclopedia, vol.4, p.153.*

What other vital aspect of truth has the antichrist obscured and distorted? Dan. 11:37-39

This description of the work of the Papacy has been one with which commentators have struggled for centuries. The problem is that most Christians worship the same God which the Papacy professes to worship, namely the Trinity. How then could it be explained that the antichrist would worship a strange god whom his fathers knew not, and whom he would acknowledge and increase with glory? The simple explanation is that the Trinity is a strange god. One which was unknown to the early Christians but which was, along with Sunday observance and image worship also introduced into the Christian Church along with the other abominations of the Papacy. “These apostate Christians, uniting with their half-pagan companions, directed their warfare against the most essential features of the doctrine of Christ.” *The Story of Redemption, p. 324, emphasis supplied.*

**KEY
THOUGHT**

We must study God’s word carefully and believe what we read, rather than the traditions of men. It is only in

PART 6: THE END OF THE ANTICHRIST

And he shall plant the tabernacles of his palace between the seas in the glorious holy mountain; yet he shall come to his end, and none shall help him. (Daniel 11:45)

There is a happy ending to the long reign of terror. When it seems that the great oppressor is on the point of triumph, God intervenes in the course of history to deliver His people, to destroy their wily foe, and to inaugurate His own righteous reign on earth. By the verdict of the supreme court of the universe, those who have suffered at the hands of the great persecuting power will eventually, be awarded eternal justice.

What event in heaven will immediately precede the destruction of the kingdom of the antichrist? (Dan 7:26)

Here we have clear and unmistakable evidence of an investigative judgment which takes place *before* the return of Jesus to this earth. It is *after* the judgement sits that the dominion of the beast is taken away and consumed and destroyed unto the end. We may conclude then that one of the issues in this judgment will be the destiny of this beast. Evidently there are issues to be decided which require a close examination of the deeds of the beast before it is finally destroyed. This examination takes place when the judgment sits. Daniel 7:22 tells us that judgment was made "in favor of the saints (NKJV)" and this makes it clear that their destiny is also to be determined by this judgment. It is impossible to make a judgment "in favor of someone until that person's case has been examined.

By what means will the last earthly kingdom be overthrown? Dan. 8:25

The Bible is emphatic. The last great enemy of God's people will not be overthrown by any earthly power. It is God Himself who will intervene and accomplish the demise of this power. For thousands of years God's people have been persecuted and hounded by the powers of the world. At times it has seemed like the knowledge of God was to be erased from the earth. Often, God has worked through human agencies to deliver His people, even using one political power to overthrow another in order to achieve some kind of deliverance for His people.

However, at the end, indirect providential working will not be God's agency. He Himself will directly and decisively intervene in the affairs of earth. In a series of cataclysmic events He will invade this planet, overthrowing the forces of evil completely and forever, deliver His people in a cosmic event of awesome proportions, and remove them from this planet for a thousand years.

**KEY
THOUGHT**

In spite of His longsuffering what decision will God finally have to take? Rev. 22:11 (See 2 Chron. 36:15,16)

The Judgment was set

Christ qualified to be our righteous Judge by being “made like unto His brethren” “in all things,” and by being “in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.” Hebrews 2 17; 4:15. The Father has “given Him authority to execute judgment . . . because He is the Son of man.” John 5:27.

By “the judgment,” in this lesson, we refer to the entire process by which God intervenes to bring the course of this world’s history to a halt, to separate the righteous from the wicked, and to mete out to each group the reward for which it has qualified. To be sure, God needs no judicial procedure by which to determine a person’s eligibility for eternal life. The Bible writers make use of the human judicial process to illustrate the fact that God is not “arbitrary” in deciding individual destiny, but infinitely fair and just. God’s own people stand before His judgment bar that their right to eternal life may be authenticated – the wicked, that God may demonstrate their characters to be irreformably out of harmony with the principles of heaven.

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PART 1: THE DAY OF JUDGMENT

Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead. (Acts 17:31)

God's purposes know no haste and no delay. The record of God's dealings in past history make it clear that He has a designated time for each of the major events in the plan of salvation. Jesus came in "the fullness of time." The day Pentecost occurred precisely at the time prefigured in the type and so did the killing of the true passover Lamb, Jesus Christ. The apostle Paul assures us that there is also a day appointed for the judgement of the world. As with all God's purposes this day will surely come to pass at the appointed time.

What evidence is there that the "day of judgment" is much longer than a literal twenty-four hour day? Compare Dan. 7:26; Rev. 20:4; Rev. 20:12. See also Zechariah chapter 14.

In Daniel chapter seven we have a description of a judgment which takes place before the return of Christ. During this judgment "they shall take away his (the beast's) dominion to consume and to destroy it unto the end." Then during the millennium we are told that "judgment was given unto the saints. Finally in Revelation 20:12 we find the dead small and great standing before a great white throne to be judged. Thus we see that the judgement day really embraces a period which covers at least a thousand years. Zechariah 14 also describes events to take place during the "day of the Lord," which do not seem to make sense unless we realize that it is a panoramic view of events which take place during this thousand year period. The description is of events to take place on that "day" but not necessarily in chronological order. This day of judgment is referred to in many places as "the day of the Lord." The book of Revelation is basically a description of this "day" and it describes in detail the events which will take place during this judgment.

When would this day of judgment begin, according to Daniel? Dan. 7:10,11 (compare Dan. 8:14)

Daniel chapter seven does not give us a specific date for the beginning of this judgment. However, this chapter makes it clear that this judgment begins *before* Jesus returns to this earth. Chapter eight is a parallel of chapter seven and when we compare both, we discover that the event which parallels the judgment in Daniel seven, is the cleansing of the sanctuary in Daniel eight. This gives us the starting point of the judgment, which is the end of the 2300 days.

We are presently living in the "day of the Lord." God gives us this awareness so that we might be adequately prepared for the events which are about to happen.

**KEY
THOUGHT**

PART 2: THE DAY OF THE LORD

Behold, the day of the LORD cometh, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate: and he shall destroy the sinners thereof out of it. (Isaiah 13:9)

As we look at the condition of the world today, it seems that evil has taken full control of the earth. The vilest passions of humanity run riot without restraint. To many it seems that God has abandoned the earth or lost His power. However, the word of God tells us that God will have His day. There is a time appointed when God will once again rise up to intervene mightily in the affairs of this planet. This period is referred to as the "day of the Lord." It is the Lord's day because it is the period in which He will have His say. Until that time, men may be allowed to exalt themselves and to resist His authority with seeming impunity. But the word of God assures us that "the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night," at the moment when men least expect it. Among the events which the Bible declares will take place during this day, are the following:

- The heavens will disappear with a great noise (2 Peter 3:10)
- The earth and its works will be burned up (2 Peter 3:10)
- The Lord will plead with all flesh with hail and brimstone (Isaiah 28:17; Psalms 11:6)
- The beast will be judged (Daniel 7:11,26)
- Judgment will be made in favour of the saints (Dan. 7:22)
- The feet of the Lord will stand on the mount of olives which will become a great plain. (Zechariah 14:4)

What statements made by Peter and Moses suggest that the day of the Lord may be at least a thousand years old? Psalm 90:4; 2 Pet. 3:8

The Bible does not state specifically that the day of the Lord is a thousand years. However, it is difficult to escape the conclusion that in redeeming mankind God has chosen to use a thousand years to represent one of the days of creation. The earth is approximately six thousand years old as we come to the last moments of time, and the book of Revelation makes us know that we will spend a seventh thousand year with Christ in heaven. This thousand year period parallels the Sabbath, the literal day of the Lord and suggests that the events surrounding and including this millennium are those described as taking place on the symbolic "day of the Lord."

How does Zechariah show that the "day of the Lord is an extended period of time which involves several events? Zech. 14: 1-9; (Compare Rev. 1:10)

**KEY
THOUGHT**

Part 3: THE JUDGMENT OF THE BEAST

And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all. (Revelation 18:21)

Since the fall of man, the great forces of this planet have always been directed against the people of God. Satan has laboured with determined and unceasing effort to erase the knowledge of God from the earth. His greatest success has been with the establishment of the Papacy. In this institution he created a monstrous evil with great potential for deception because it bears the name of a Christian institution. No one can calculate the great harm done by this power, not only in the deliberate persecution and destruction of the people of God, but also by the multiplied millions who have been deceived by her doctrines. The word of God assures us that this will come to an end at last. Babylon will be thrown down with "violence," and shall be found no more at all. The overthrow of Babylon will mark the end of the power of evil on this earth forever.

What is the main reason for the condemnation of the beast according to Daniel? Daniel 7:11

The beast is finally condemned because of the words of the little horn. This shows us that the little horn is an integral part of the beast which cannot really be separated from it. It also reveals the fact that in spite of the merciless persecutions of the little horn, the greatest condemnation is that it has blasphemed the name of the God of heaven.

At what time will the beast as a system be condemned? Dan. 7:25,26

For nearly 2000 years this persecuting power has exalted itself to the pinnacle of human greatness. Even during the periods of its greatest weakness the Papacy has exercised more power than most political kingdoms could command. At the present time she once again stands close to the peak of earthly greatness, commanding great respect and influence in the highest circles of religious and political power on this planet. Yet the word of God declares that during this period of time in which we live, they shall take away the dominion of the beast to consume and destroy it unto the end. Daniel 7:26. It is during the period of time in which we live that this haughty power will finally be overthrown. Even now as the judgment sits, the elements are being put in place which will result in the destruction of this power.

**KEY
THOUGHT**

Part 4: JUDGMENT OF THE CHURCH

But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. (Romans 14:10)

The idea that the people of God would one day be brought to judgment is one that has been vigorously resisted by many Christians. They question the necessity of God judging His people since He already knows the destiny of all men, and reason that since Christians have already been justified and in Christ have received eternal life, they have passed from condemnation and therefore any further judgment of Christians would be a denial of the fact that salvation is a gift, freely bestowed. While this may seem like sound reasoning to a superficial reader of the Scriptures, the plain statements of the Bible to the contrary cannot be ignored. Over and over again the Bible speaks of a judgment using terms which make it clear that this judgment will include the professed people of God as well as those who make no profession of faith in Christ.

What evidence is there that the church as well as the world will be judged? Matt. 12:36,37; 2 Cor. 5:10; Matt. 22:10-14; Matt. 18:23-35

These passages of Scripture as well as many others reveal clearly that in the wisdom and providence of God all who are saved will first pass the scrutiny of the judgment.

Why is it necessary for God to judge even Christians who have committed their lives to Him? Matt. 7:20-23

Ultimately it is God who is being judged and justified in the great controversy. It is His character that Satan attacked from the very beginning, accusing Him of being a liar (Gen. 3:15) and accusing Him of being unfair and showing favouritism (Job 1:9-11). The story of Job is a good illustration of the reason why there is a necessity for even the people of God to be judged. Satan is the accuser of the brethren (Rev. 12:10) and his purpose is to destroy the reputation of God's people by seeking to show that their faith in God is not real. That they only seek to serve God from impure motives. While profession may be false, the testimony of our deeds cannot be denied. Jesus said His followers would be known by their fruits, or by the fact that they did the will of His Father in heaven. In the work of saving human beings, God will demonstrate clearly to the universe that those who are finally saved are saved, not because He shows favouritism, but because these people have willingly and voluntarily and wholeheartedly turned from the way of Satan to the service of God. It is the judgment which will demonstrate this clearly.

**KEY
THOUGHT**

The judgment will reveal clearly what we are. Only those who truly know God will be able to live lives which will pass the scrutiny of the judgment.

PART 5: THE INVESTIGATIVE JUDGMENT

A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened. (Daniel 7:10)

“Attended by heavenly angels, our great High Priest enters the holy of holies, and there appears in the presence of God, to engage in the last acts of his ministration in behalf of man,--to perform the work of investigative Judgment, and to make an atonement for all who are shown to be entitled to its benefits.

“. . . in the great day of final atonement and investigative Judgment, the only cases considered are those of the professed people of God. The judgment of the wicked is a distinct and separate work, and takes place at a later period. "Judgment must begin at the house of God; and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel?" [1 PET. 4:17.]

“The books of record in Heaven, in which the names and the deeds of men are registered, are to determine the decisions of the Judgment. Says the prophet Daniel, "The Judgment was set, and the books were opened." . . . – *The Great Controversy*, p. 480

In what way was the importance of the investigative judgment shown to John? Rev. 5:1-4

The scene in Revelation chapters four and five is the same as that revealed in Daniel 7:9,10.

- In both places we see a throne set in heaven on which God takes his seat
- In both places we have the opening of books (in Revelation they are referred to as seals in one book)
- In both places ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands stand before God.

How does the book of Revelation clearly reveal the fact that many of God's people will be shown to be righteous, when the books are opened and while many of them are still dead? Rev. 6:9-11

White robes represent the righteousness of Christ. How can God's people receive this when they are dead? Is it not when we believe that we are justified and covered with Christ's righteousness? Yes, but clearly these Christians are **shown** to be righteous at this time. This represents the fact that their characters are shown to be that of genuine Christians in the investigative judgment. While the term "Investigative Judgment is not found in the Bible, yet the idea is clearly taught in many places in the Scriptures.

**KEY
THOUGHT**

Do my deeds reveal that I have truly received the righ-

PART 6: THE BASIS OF THE JUDGMENT

For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil. (Ecclesiastes 12:14)

"There is a record also of the sins of men. "For God shall bring every work into Judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil." [ECCL. 12:14.] "Every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of Judgment." Said the Saviour, "By thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned." [MATT. 13:36,37.] The secret purposes and motives appears in the unerring register; for God "will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts." [1 COR. 4:5.] "Behold, it is written before me, . . . your iniquities, and the iniquities of your fathers together, saith the Lord." [ISA. 65:6, 7.]

"Every man's work passes in review before God, and is registered for faithfulness or unfaithfulness. Opposite each name in the books of Heaven is entered, with terrible exactness, every wrong word, every selfish act, every unfulfilled duty, and every secret sin, with every artful dissembling. Heaven-sent warnings or reproofs neglected, wasted moments, unimproved opportunities, the influence exerted for good or for evil, with its far-reaching results, all are chronicled by the recording angel." – *The Great Controversy*, p. 481-2

According to Jesus, how may the genuineness of a person's Christian experience be determined? Matt. 7:16–20

"By their fruits ye shall know them" (Matthew 7:20), the Saviour declared. All the true followers of Christ bear fruit to His glory. Their lives testify that a good work has been wrought in them by the Spirit of God, and their fruit is unto holiness. Their lives are elevated and pure. Right actions are the unmistakable fruit of true godliness, and those who bear no fruit of this kind reveal that they have no experience in the things of God. They are not in the Vine. . . ." – *Counsels to Parents, Teachers and Students*, p. 329

What is the standard by which our works will be assessed? James 2:11,12

"The law of God is the standard by which the characters and the lives of men will be tested in the Judgment. Says the wise man: "Fear God, and keep his commandments; for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into Judgment." [ECCL. 12:13, 14.] The apostle James admonishes his brethren, "So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty." [JAMES 2:12.] – *The Great Controversy*, p. 481-2

**KEY
THOUGHT**

There is no true faith without works. While faith cannot be seen in itself, our works will reveal the true state of

Our High Priest

In this lesson we focus attention on Christ's ministry as our great High Priest in the heavenly sanctuary, as a basis for understanding its role in the fulfillment of Daniel's prophecy.

The transition from ancient literal Israel to the new spiritual Israel had profound and far-reaching effects. A new covenant replaced the old, and a new revelation of the divine purpose was given, adapting the former revelation to the new situation.

The heavenly sanctuary on Mount Zion replaced the literal sanctuary on Mount Moriah as the place to which all who choose the worship and service of the true God were to come to find mercy and grace to help in time of need. The infinite priesthood of Jesus Christ replaced a human priesthood, to mediate between repentant sinners and God, and now all men might come directly to Him, by faith. The infinite sacrifice on Calvary superseded the animal sacrifices which pointed forward to it, and the worship of God in spirit and in truth replaced the formalism that often characterized worship through types and ceremonies.

LESSON STUDY RECORD

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PART 1: FROM JUDAISM TO CHRISTIANITY

For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God. (Romans 2:28-29)

The Jews, like Christians in many denominations today, had come to believe that no matter what they did they would always be God's people. The God that they believed in was one who was racially prejudiced. He favoured them because of their race, because they were "Abraham's seed," regardless of how they apostasized and betrayed God's cause. However, while God had promised that "Israel" would never be cast off (Jer. 31:35-37) His definition of Israel changed and this is the thing which until today, the Jews will not recognize and accept. The same is true of many organizations today which pride themselves on being "the true people of God" simply because they were used of God and were faithful to Him in the past. It is not what we **were** that counts with God, but what we are today.

What did the transition from Judaism to Christianity involve with respect to the chosen people, Jerusalem and the land of Palestine? Matt. 21:43; 1 Peter 2:9. 10; Acts 1:8; Rev. 21: 1, 2.

God's basic plan did not change, but when those who have been called refuse persistently to cooperate, God changes the manner in which He will eventually carry His plan forward to success and the human instruments He will use. The conflict which had been limited largely to Palestine, Spread to all nation's, and people everywhere became involved in the struggle. Now, Instead of a literal nation composed of the literal descendants of Abraham, the chosen people would henceforth be an international body, the church universal, a spiritual "nation" called out of all nations. The world replaced the land of Palestine as the stage for God's efforts in behalf of the human race, and the New Jerusalem in heaven replaced literal Jerusalem as the focal center of the believer's hope. Whereas God sent literal Israel into the land of Palestine and established them there, Christ sent His followers forth to all the world, which in the age to come would be their permanent home.

What did this transition involve with respect to the covenant? Heb.8:6-10.

The nature of man is contrary to the law. Man cannot of himself obey the commandments of God. Therefore, the old Covenant failed, for under it, God's people were a miserable failure. Under the new covenant, God's law is written in our hearts by the holy spirit. Our natures are changed so that we now love and willingly do what was once burdensome and impossible for us.

**KEY
THOUGHT**

The only qualification necessary to be one of God's people is trust in Christ and to commit myself wholly to

PART 2: THE SANCTUARY IN HEAVEN

Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; A minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man. (Hebrews 8:1-2)

“Here is revealed the sanctuary of the new covenant. The sanctuary of the first covenant was pitched by man, built by Moses; this is pitched by the Lord, not by man. In that sanctuary the earthly priests performed their service; in this, Christ, our great high priest, ministers at God's right hand. One sanctuary was on earth, the other is in Heaven.” – *The Great Controversy*, p.413

What did the transition from Judaism to Christianity involve with respect to the sanctuary and its services? John 4:21; Heb. 8:1, 2; 10:9 (last part).

The earthly sanctuary and its services were designed to represent, on a finite scale, the infinite realities of the plan of salvation. Its services all pointed forward to Christ, first as the sacrificial victim on Calvary, and then as the priestly minister of that sacrifice in heaven above. This earthly representation was imperfect. Nevertheless, God ordained the ancient sanctuary and its services, and through them we are able to understand better Christ's infinite ministry on our behalf.

“Jesus stands before the Father, continually offering a sacrifice for the sins of the world. He is the minister of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man. The typical offerings of the Jewish tabernacle no longer possess any virtue. A daily and yearly atonement is no longer necessary. But because of the continual commission of sin, the atoning sacrifice of a heavenly Mediator is essential. Jesus, our great high priest, officiates for us in the presence of God, offering in our behalf His shed blood.” -- *The Youth's Instructor*, April 16, 1903.

What relationship does the sanctuary in heaven sustain to its ancient counterpart on earth? Heb. 8:5; 9:23.

“The sanctuary in heaven, in which Jesus ministers in our behalf, is the great original, of which the sanctuary built by Moses was a copy. God placed His Spirit upon the builders of the earthly sanctuary. .

“The matchless splendor of the earthy tabernacle reflected to human vision the glories of that heavenly temple where Christ our forerunner ministers for us before the throne of God. . . [The earthly copy was] but a faint reflection of its vastness and glory. Yet Important truths concerning the heavenly sanctuary and the great work there carried forward for man's redemption were taught by the earthly sanctuary and its services.” – *The Great Controversy*, p.414

<p>KEY THOUGHT</p>

While many Christians emphasize only what Christ did at Calvary, those who follow Christ by faith will look to

PART 3: OUR GREAT HIGH PRIEST

But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. (Hebrews 9:11-12)

While the ministration of the levitical priests dealt with the forms and symbols of salvation, they could not in themselves provide salvation. They were intended to be a lesson book from which, as the Israelites participated day by day in the rituals, they could learn the truths of the greater realities to which they pointed, and by faith partake of their benefits. In the life and heavenly ministration of Christ, however, we no longer deal with symbols. It is the reality with which we are involved. Faith has become sight.

Ascending to heaven forty days after the resurrection, upon what phase of His ministry did Christ enter? Heb. 7:25; 9:24; 10:12.

On Calvary Christ fulfilled the role of the sacrificial victim in the ancient sanctuary service, providing the vicarious atonement necessary to reconcile all sinners to God. In heaven above He fulfills the role prefigured by the ministration of the priests in the earthly sanctuary, ministering to us individually the infinite benefits of that one vicarious sacrifice. According to the Epistle to the Hebrews, both aspects of His ministry are essential to our salvation.

How is Christ's priestly ministry in heaven related to His sacrificial ministry on Calvary? Heb. 9:11, 12; 10:12, 14.

A priest must have an offering to present to God on the sinner's behalf. The Saviour provided that sacrifice by His own death on Calvary.

As our great High Priest, what does Christ do for us? What gracious invitation does He extend to us? Heb. 4:16; 7:25; 10:19-22. See also 1 John 2:1.

**KEY
THOUGHT**

What does the present work of Christ in heaven mean to me in a practical way? What effect does it have on

PART 4: CHRIST AND ANTICHRIST

(Dan 8:11) Yea, he magnified himself even to the prince of the host, and by him the daily sacrifice was taken away, and the place of his sanctuary was cast down.

Satan cannot interfere directly with Christ's ministry in the heavenly sanctuary, but he has been eminently successful in keeping from men a knowledge of that saving ministry, and thereby has prevented them from benefiting by it. For practical purposes, the effect is the same. Such was the result of the great apostasy that began in the early Christian centuries. The Dark Ages were dark because the light of heaven had been effectively shut out from the minds and hearts of men.

In what other ways does the Bible speak of this same work of the Antichrist in seeking to replace Christ? Dan. 8:11, 25; 11:22. Compare Matt. 2:13, 16; Luke 23:44-46; Rev. 12:4, 7-9.

Throughout His life on earth Satan sought to destroy Jesus. He began from the time of His Infancy, and continued throughout His life seeking to accomplish his goal through several means, including temptation, and by the hands of those who hated Him. But Christ was "caught up unto God, and to His throne" (Rev. 12:5), and since that time Satan has been unable to touch Him directly. By attacking His work as our High Priest, however, Satan has effectively made the life, death resurrection and ministry of Christ of none effect as far as millions of people are concerned, both now and for the greater part of the last two thousand years. Christians today like to speak of the "finished work of Calvary" and speak of "looking to Calvary." This is good. However, we cannot stop there. We need to recognize that the work of Christ on our behalf did not end at Calvary, but that he continues a work in heaven, equally as important as that which He accomplished on the cross. It is this work that the devil has sought to obscure and to some extent has been very successful in accomplishing, by means of the antichrist.

What would the antichrist's policy be with respect to the heavenly sanctuary and its ministrations? Dan. 8:11, 13. Compare 1 Tim. 2:5; Eph. 2:8, 9.

By depreciating Christ's sacrifice and priestly ministry and substituting a counterfeit system of its own devising, the Church of Rome has, in effect, profaned the sanctuary in heaven above. She has so effectively deprived millions of people of a knowledge of these fundamental Bible truths, and thus of the benefit of their saving power, that for them the plan devised in heaven has, for practical purposes, ceased to exist.

**KEY
THOUGHT**

The gifts and abilities which God gives to men should never lead us to put them in the place of God.

Part 5: CHRIST'S QUALIFICATIONS

Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted. (Heb 2:17-18)

Inside of every man there is the innate desire for better things than this world has to offer. We all somehow have a desire for a relationship with the Almighty. However, because of sin, man finds it very difficult to approach God. The sense of the greatness and holiness of the Creator fills men with a sense of awe and an awareness of his unworthiness. Men, by nature are afraid of God and this creates a barrier which it is very difficult, if not impossible for men to break through. This is the reason why Jesus had to come down to our level in order that He could become our Representative, our Mediator before God. While we find it difficult to relate to a Being who is infinite in power, wisdom, glory and majesty, one who is altogether beyond our comprehension, it is not difficult for us to relate to Jesus, because He was just like us. He sat at our tables, slept on our ground, wept our tears, ate our food, experienced our trials, felt our pain. For this reason, we find it easy to relate to Him, and this is one of the major reasons why God gave Him to us, and why He is eminently qualified to be our High Priest.

How did Christ qualify to serve as our great High Priest? Heb. 4:15; 8:3. Compare Heb. 7:27.

A priest is man's representative before God. As man's intermediary, he must have a sympathetic understanding of those whom he represents, in order to be merciful as well as just. To qualify as our High Priest, Christ became one of us. lived with us, and fought the battle against sin and temptation as we must fight it. He was tempted in all points as we are tempted, yet without sin.

In order for Him to truly pass through our experiences, what critical factor was necessary in the incarnation of Christ? Heb 2:16; Rom 8:3

“ . . . It would have been an almost infinite humiliation for the Son of God to take man's nature, even when Adam stood in his innocence in Eden. But Jesus accepted humanity when the race had been weakened by four thousand years of sin. Like every child of Adam He accepted the results of the working of the great law of heredity. What these results were is shown in the history of His earthly ancestors. He came with such a heredity to share our sorrows and temptations, and to give us the example of a sinless life.” – *Desire of Ages*, p. 48

KEY THOUGHT

In Jesus, God has provided a Saviour and a Mediator who is perfectly fitted to the needs of sinful men.

Part 6: CONFIDENCE IN CHRIST

Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need. (Heb 4:16)

"Though now He has ascended to the presence of God, and shares the throne of the universe, Jesus has lost none of His compassionate nature. Today the same tender, sympathizing heart is open to all the woes of humanity. Today the hand that was pierced is reached forth to bless more abundantly His people that are in the world. . . . The soul that has given himself to Christ is more precious in His sight than the whole world. The Saviour would have passed through the agony of Calvary that one might be saved in His kingdom. He will never abandon one for whom He has died. Unless His followers choose to leave Him, He will hold them fast." – *Desire of Ages*, p. 480

What assurance has Christ given us to comfort us, especially during those times when we are feeling alone, friendless and forsaken? Heb 13:5

"Through all our trials we have a never-failing Helper. He does not leave us alone to struggle with temptation, to battle with evil, and be finally crushed with burdens and sorrow. Though now He is hidden from mortal sight, the ear of faith can hear His voice saying, Fear not; I am with you. "I am He that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive forevermore." Rev. 1:18. I have endured your sorrows, experienced your struggles, encountered your temptations. I know your tears; I also have wept. The griefs that lie too deep to be breathed into any human ear, I know. Think not that you are desolate and forsaken. Though your pain touch no responsive chord in any heart on earth, look unto Me, and live. "The mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but My kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of My peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee." Isa. 54:10. – *Desire of Ages*, p. 480-3

What fact assures us of the reality that notwithstanding the great gap between God's holiness and the natural degradation of our human nature, we are accepted by God? Heb 7:25; Rom 8:3

There is nothing in the entire universe as offensive to God as sin. This is what He hates the most. It follows then that the most degraded thing in the universe is a sinner. Such a being is a misfit in a holy universe, a disease which needs to be eradicated, fit only for everlasting destruction. Yet the love of God has found a way, through His only begotten Son to bridge the gap between Himself and poor hopeless sinners so that we can boldly and confidently claim the gift of eternal life and fellowship with God the Father and His Son.

<p>KEY THOUGHT</p>

No matter what we have been or what we have done, when we come to Christ we may be confident that we are fully accepted, in the Beloved, as true Sons of God

The Sanctuary Cleansed

Of all the information given to him during the various visions which he received, nothing seems to have concerned Daniel as much as the information concerning the “cleansing,” or restoring of the Sanctuary (Dan. 8:14). The temple of Solomon, the center of the worship of Jehovah in the earth, had been destroyed by Neuchadnezzar’s armies. The true faith had been dishonoured and its adherents worshipped as captives in a foreign land. In spite of Daniel’s concern, he was told that the vision referred to “the latter days” or “at the time of the end.” It is clear then that this vision also applies to our day and must be the subject of the study of every serious Christian.

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PART 1: THE CONTEXT OF DANIEL 8:14

And he said, Behold, I will make thee know what shall be in the last end of the indignation: for at the time appointed the end shall be. (Dan 8:19)

Over and over in the book of Daniel we see the idea coming out that the prophecies which Daniel saw did not apply to his day, but to the end time. Of course, there were some aspects of the prophecy which did apply to Daniel's time, such as the sections which dealt with the Babylonian empire. We can also see that the succession of kingdoms had to do with an ongoing fulfillment over the ages. The main point of the prophecies, however, is always the ending events. As the angel Gabriel said to Daniel, "Now I am come to make thee understand what shall befall thy people in the latter days: for yet the vision is for many days." (Dan 10:14)

What part of the prophecy of Daniel chapter 8 applies to the end of time? Dan. 8:26

Many Bible commentators today find fault with the idea that the "cleansing of the Sanctuary" mentioned in the Dan. 8:14 has to do with end time events. Most of them claim that it had to do with events which took place in Judah during the time of the Maccabees, a few years after the time of Daniel. This idea, however, totally disagrees with the insistence by the angelic messenger that the prophecy applies to the time of the end. The angel refers specifically to "the vision of the evening and the morning," and tells Daniel that it shall be "after many days."

How can we be certain that the prophecy does not apply to the outrageous actions of the Greek king, Antiochus Epiphanes who offered swine's blood on the altar of the Jewish sanctuary in the year 167 B.C.? Dan. 8:17

" . . . When Antiochus returned from Egypt in 167 B.C. he took Jerusalem by storm and forced it to adopt Greek culture. The city forfeited its privileges and was permanently garrisoned by Syrian soldiers. . . . the worship of Yahweh and all of the Jewish rites were forbidden on pain of death. In the Temple an altar to Zeus Olympios was erected, and sacrifices were to be made at the feet of an idol in the image of the King. Against that desecration Judas Maccabeus, leader of the anti-Greek Jews, led the aroused Hasideans in a guerrilla war and several times defeated the generals Antiochus had commissioned to deal with the uprising." – *The Encyclopedia Britannica, art. Antiochus IV Epiphanes*

**KEY
THOUGHT**

In Daniel 8:14 God was trying to tell us of something which would happen in our time. It is important that we

Part 2: THE ATTACK ON THE SANCTUARY

And arms shall stand on his part, and they shall pollute the sanctuary of strength, and shall take away the daily sacrifice, and they shall place the abomination that maketh desolate. (Dan 11:31)

Just as in Old Testament times God's people had a real kingdom, a real king and a real centre of worship, the sanctuary, so today, there is a real king, (Jesus Christ), a real kingdom, (the new earth), a real capital city, (the New Jerusalem), and a real centre of worship, the heavenly sanctuary. It is here that Christ ministers on behalf of His people, and it is here that we are to follow Him by faith. It is critically important that we should understand the work of Christ in the heavenly sanctuary.

What does the Bible describe as the temple of God in New Testament times? 1 Cor 3:16; Eph 2:19-21; Rev 11:19; Heb 8:1,2 (see also Acts 7:48; Acts 17:24)

While our bodies are plainly declared to be the temple of God, as is the Christian church, we also see a very clear teaching that there is a temple in heaven, the antitype of the Jewish sanctuary, where God's high Priest ministers in this true "tabernacle which the Lord pitched and not man." We find also that the Bible is equally clear in declaring that the "Most high dwelleth not in temples made with hands."

"... the Lord gave me a view of the heavenly sanctuary. The temple of God was open in heaven, and I was shown the ark of God covered with the mercy seat. Two angels stood one at either end of the ark, with their wings spread over the mercy seat, and their faces turned toward it. This my accompanying angel informed me represented all the heavenly host looking with reverential awe toward the law of God, which had been written by the finger of God." – *Christian Experience and Teaching of E.G. White, p. 85*

What particular aspect of God's work was most assaulted by the horn? Dan. 8:11, 13

The devil has bent his efforts towards diverting people's attention to spurious concepts of the sanctuary because in this way he effectively nullifies the work of Christ. Some of these false ideas concerning the sanctuary include,

- a. The sanctuary is the building where we worship
- b. God's temple (sanctuary) is St. Peter's cathedral in Rome
- c. God's temple is a place of worship which the Jews will rebuild soon.
- d. God's temple applies **exclusively** to the Christian's body, or to the church.

**KEY
THOUGHT**

The devil directs his greatest attacks against the sanctuary because true worship is his greatest enemy.

PART 3: IDENTIFYING THE SANCTUARY

But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; (Heb 9:11)

“. . . The tabernacle and temple of God on earth were patterned after the original in heaven. Around the sanctuary and its solemn services mystically gathered the grand truths which were to be developed through succeeding generations.” – *The Faith I Live By*, p. 194

“All who have received the light upon these subjects are to bear testimony of the great truths which God has committed to them. The sanctuary in heaven is the very center of Christ’s work in behalf of men. It concerns every soul living upon the earth. It opens to view the plan of redemption, bringing us down to the very close of time, and revealing the triumphant issue of the contest between righteousness and sin. It is of the utmost importance that all should thoroughly investigate these subjects, and be able to give an answer to every one that asketh them a reason of the hope that is in them.” -- *The Great Controversy*, pp. 488, 489

Of what was the Hebrew Sanctuary a pattern? 1 Cor. 3:16

“Through Christ was to be fulfilled the purpose of which the tabernacle was a symbol--that glorious building, its walls of glistening gold reflecting in rainbow hues the curtains inwrought with cherubim, the fragrance of ever-burning incense pervading all, the priests robed in spotless white, and in the deep mystery of the inner place, above the mercy seat, between the figures of the bowed, worshiping angels, the glory of the Holiest. In all, God desired His people to read His purpose for the human soul. It was the same purpose long afterward set forth by the apostle Paul, speaking by the Holy Spirit:” {Ed 36.2}

What truth taught by Stephen and Paul compels us to no longer regard any earthly building of worship as the “temple of God?” Acts 7:48; Acts 17:24

The heavens are not large enough to contain God; how much less could those temples made with hands contain him. Paul, under the inspiration of his subject, soared above the comprehension of the idolatrous assembly, and sought to draw their minds beyond the limits of their false religion to correct views of the true Deity, whom they had styled the "Unknown God." This Being, whom he now declared unto them, was independent of man, needing nothing from human hands to add to his power and glory.” — *Sketches from the Life of Paul*, p. 94

**KEY
THOUGHT**

Although God dwells not in temples made with hands, yet He honors with His presence the assemblies of His

PART 4: THE SANCTUARY RESTORED

And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the LORD an offering in righteousness. (Mal 3:3)

“Here is the process, the refining, purifying process, to be carried on by the Lord of hosts. The work is most trying to the soul, but it is only through this process that the rubbish and defiling impurities can be removed. Our trials are all necessary to bring us close to our heavenly Father, in obedience to His will, that we may offer to the Lord an offering in righteousness. God has given each of us capabilities, talents to improve. We need a new and living experience in the divine life, in order to do the will of God. No amount of past experience will suffice for the present, or will strengthen us to overcome the difficulties in our path. We must have new grace and fresh strength daily in order to be victorious.” – *4BC 1182*

What damage by the little horn necessitated a work of restoring the sanctuary in the end-time? Dan. 8: 11, 14

“... it is this continual service of Christ, the true High Priest, 'who continueth ever,' and 'who is consecrated forevermore' and 'an unchangeable priesthood' – it is this continual service of our great High Priest, which is the man of sin, the Papacy, has taken away. It is the sanctuary and the true tabernacle in which this true High Priest exercises his continual ministry that has been cast down by 'the transgression of desolation.' It is this ministry and this sanctuary that the 'man of sin' has taken away from the church and shut away from the world, and has cast down to the ground and stamped upon; and in place of which it has set up itself 'the abomination that maketh desolate.'” – *The Consecrated Way to Christian Perfection, by A. T. Jones, p. 99-100*

What is involved in this work of restoration? Lev. 16:30; Dan. 7: 9,10

Jesus regarded with the deepest compassion the disappointed ones who had waited for His coming; and He sent His angels to direct their minds that they might follow Him where He was. He showed them that this earth is not the sanctuary, but that He must enter the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary to make an atonement for His people and to receive the kingdom from His Father, and that He would then return to the earth and take them to dwell with Him forever. The disappointment of the first disciples well represents the disappointment of those who expected their Lord in 1844. {EW 244.

Note: The parallel nature of Daniel 7 and Daniel 8 show that the cleansing of the Sanctuary (Dan. 8:14) and the judgment (Dan. 7: 9,10) are identical events.

**KEY
THOUGHT**

PART 5: TWO THOUSAND THREE HUNDRED DAYS

In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia a thing was revealed unto Daniel, whose name was called Belteshazzar; and the thing was true, but the time appointed was long: and he understood the thing, and had understanding of the vision. (Dan 10:1)

The time periods of Daniel and the Revelation are of great interest, firstly because they are so specific and detailed, and secondly because it is evident that God placed them in these books for a specific reason and intended that the understanding of these periods should bring a definite response from His people. These periods, as noted before are stated in various ways. The one which comes up most often is the 3 ½ year period which is sometimes referred to as 42 months and sometimes as 1260 days, as well as a time, times and the dividing of times. Of all the time periods in the Bible, however, the longest is the one found in Daniel 8:14. It is also the one which receives the most detailed explanation.

According to the angel, how long would it be until the sanctuary was cleansed? Dan. 8:14

This period of 2300 days really signify 2300 years. Here we have a time period, but it is not very helpful to us unless we either know when it begins or when it ends. Without this information all we have is just a number hanging in limbo as it were. It is critical that we understand this because this will help us to better understand why the angel Gabriel returned to Daniel in Chapter 9, and will give us a foundation from which to begin examining the information found in that chapter.

What reason do we have for believing that the 2300 days really refer to 2300 years? Ezek. 4:6; Num. 14:34; Dan. 8:17

The phrase has been translated as “two thousand three hundred days” in the King James version. However, the literal rendering of the verse should be, “unto two thousand three hundred evenings and mornings.” The angel makes reference to this in verse 26 of Daniel 8 when he says, “And the vision of the evening and the morning which was told is true. . . .” Because of this the majority of commentators have concluded that it refers to literal days, rather than to prophetic days (a day equals a year) as in many other references in the book of Daniel. They state that the phrase “evening and morning” when used with reference to days, has never been used anywhere else in Scripture to signify prophetic days. However, the angel specified clearly that these days referred to “the time of the end” and would be “after many days.” (verses 17, 26). This, along with the evidence of chapter 9 which we will examine in our next lesson indicate very strongly that in this unusual case, the term “evening and morning” was used with reference to prophetic days.

**KEY
THOUGHT**

The attention given to the 2300 days by the angel Gabriel makes us know that it is important that we under-

Part 6: THE VISION IS TRUE

For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry. (Hab 2:3)

“Those who followed in the light of the prophetic word saw that, instead of coming to the earth at the termination of the 2300 days in 1844, Christ then entered the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary, to perform the closing work of atonement, preparatory to His coming. . . .

“Now in the holy of holies they again beheld Him, their compassionate high priest, soon to appear as their king and deliverer.

“Following Him by faith, they were led to see also the closing work of the church. They had a clearer understanding of the first and second angels' messages, and were prepared to receive and give to the world the solemn warning of the third angel of Revelation 14.” {FLB 284.8}

What event on earth signified the occurrence of some significant event in heaven? Acts 2:1-4

“Christ's ascension to heaven was the signal that His followers were to receive the promised blessing. For this they were to wait before they entered upon their work. When Christ passed within the heavenly gates, He was enthroned amidst the adoration of the angels. As soon as this ceremony was completed, the Holy Spirit descended upon the disciples in rich currents, and Christ was indeed glorified, even with the glory which He had with the Father from all eternity. The Pentecostal outpouring was Heaven's communication that the Redeemer's inauguration was accomplished. According to His promise He had sent the Holy Spirit from heaven to His followers as a token that He had, as priest and king, received all authority in heaven and on earth, and was the Anointed One over His people.” – *Acts of the Apostles, p. 38-9*

What prophecy in Revelation pointed to the events to take place at the end of the 2300 days? Rev. 10: 10,11

The eating of the little book represented the intense interest with which the early Advent believers studied the book of Daniel in the years just before and during the year 1844. The experience was as sweet as honey as they believed that the prophecies taught that Jesus would return in the year 1844. The bitterness in the belly represented the grief of the believers when their expectations were not fulfilled. The rest of the prophecy makes it clear that in spite of the disappointment this was God's movement. The disappointed ones are given a commission to “prophesy again before “many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings.”

**KEY
THOUGHT**

Only those who appreciate what the cleansing of the sanctuary means in a practical way will be able to receive God's intended blessing

Sealing The Vision

Generally speaking, a seal is something which certifies the authenticity of a document. In Daniel chapter 9 this striking phrase appears, “to seal up the vision and prophecy,” A time period is mentioned, “seventy weeks are determined upon thy people.” Here we see an event mentioned – seventy weeks given to the Jews – as a means of sealing the vision. The question arises, which vision are we speaking about? And how did the time period given to the Jews “seal” the vision? This vision is actually a continuation of the vision received in chapter eight, even though a few years had passed since then. The angel Gabriel is sent to Daniel again to help him to understand the vision he had received in chapter eight. In chapter eight Daniel's great problem had been the twenty-three hundred day period. He had not understood it and had fainted before it had been explained to him. So here now, a few years later, he set himself to fasting and prayer in an attempt to understand the purposes of God, and once again the angel Gabriel is sent to give him understanding.

LESSON STUDY RECORD

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PART 1: THE NUMBER OF THE YEARS

In the first year of his reign I Daniel understood by books the number of the years, whereof the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah the prophet, that he would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem. (Dan 9:2)

'It was at the close of this vision (the vision of chapter 8) that Daniel heard "one saint speaking, and another saint said unto that certain saint which spake, How long shall be the vision?" The answer that was given, "Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed," filled him with perplexity. Earnestly he sought for the meaning of the vision. He could not understand the relation between the seventy years' captivity, as foretold through Jeremiah, to the twenty-three hundred years that the angel had said should elapse before the cleansing of God's sanctuary. The angel Gabriel gave him a partial interpretation; yet when the prophet heard the words, "The vision . . . shall be for many days," he fainted away. . . . Still burdened in behalf of Israel, Daniel studied anew the prophecies of Jeremiah. They were very plain.' *Prophets & Kings*, pages 553, 554.

'As the time approached for the close of the seventy years' captivity, Daniel's mind became greatly exercised upon the prophecies of Jeremiah. He saw that the time was at hand when God would give His chosen people another trial; and with fasting, humiliation, and prayer, he pleaded with the God of heaven in behalf of Israel.' *The Sanctified Life*, page 46.

What did Daniel decide to do as a result of his study of the Scriptures? Daniel 9:3.

'With faith founded on the sure word of prophecy, Daniel pleaded with the Lord for the speedy fulfilment of these promises.' RH, March 21, 1907.

It may well be that the prayers that led to Daniel's experience in the lion's den were connected with his studies of Jeremiah's prophecy.

Daniel's example is one which we need to follow. How many times we are in perplexity concerning some aspect of Scripture which seems to be of great importance or which seems to have some particular application to our lives, yet we do not do as Daniel did. Instead of seeking the Lord with earnest, humble determination, we give up trying to understand, or else turn to the nearest person whom we consider to be a better Bible student. It is good to hear the opinions of others, but this will never serve to convict us of truth. Each of us must search the word of God for ourselves with a continual sense of our dependence upon the spirit of God in order that we may understand. Prayer is the better half of study.

KEY THOUGHT

The secrets of God are not discovered, but are revealed.

Part 2: DANIEL'S CONFESSION

Yea, all Israel have transgressed thy law, even by departing, that they might not obey thy voice; therefore the curse is poured upon us, and the oath that is written in the law of Moses the servant of God, because we have sinned against him. (Dan 9:11)

“. . . What earnestness and fervour characterize his supplications! He is coming nearer and nearer to God. The hand of faith is reached upward to grasp the never-failing promises of the Most High. His soul is wrestling in agony. And he has the evidence that his prayer is heard. He feels that victory is his. If we as a people would pray as Daniel prayed, and wrestle as he wrestled, humbling our souls before God, we should realise as marked answers to our petitions as were granted to Daniel. Hear how he presses his case at the court of Heaven.” *Second Advent Review & Sabbath Herald*, February 8, 1881.

What was the burden of Daniel's prayer? Daniel 9:4-15, 18-19.

“Notice these words. Daniel does not proclaim his own fidelity before the Lord. Instead of claiming to be pure and holy, he identifies himself with the really sinful of Israel. The wisdom which God imparted to him was as far superior to the wisdom of the wise men of the world as the light of the sun shining in the heavens at noonday is brighter than the feeblest star. Yet ponder the prayer from the lips of this man so highly favoured of Heaven. With deep humiliation, with tears, and with rending of heart, he pleads for himself and for his people. He lays his soul open before God, confessing his own vileness, and acknowledging the Lord's greatness and majesty. . . .” *Second Advent Review & Sabbath Herald*, February 8, 1881.

What especially was on Daniel's heart? When was Daniel praying? Daniel 9:16-17, 21. Compare Daniel 8:14.

“The man of God was praying, not for a flight of happy feeling, but for a knowledge of the divine will. And he desired this knowledge, not merely for himself, but for his people. His great burden was for Israel, who were not, in the strictest sense, keeping the law of God. He acknowledges that all their misfortunes have come upon them in consequence of their transgressions of that holy law. . . They had lost their peculiar, holy character as God's chosen people. "Now therefore, O our God, hear the prayer of thy servant, and his supplications, and cause thy face to shine upon thy sanctuary that is desolate." Daniel's heart turns with intense longing to the desolate sanctuary of God. He knows that its prosperity can be restored only as Israel shall repent of their transgressions of God's law, and become humble, and faithful, and obedient.” – *Review & Herald*, February 8, 1881

**KEY
THOUGHT**

The greatest cause for concern today is not so much the sin in the world, but rather the sin in the church. (See Ezek. 9:4

Part 3: GABRIEL ARRIVES

And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear. (Isa 65:24)

It is our Father's delight to answer our prayers. However, there are factors which sometimes necessitate a delay in God's response to our petitions. More often than not there is some obstacle in our lives which makes it necessary for God to delay the blessing which we seek.

"Prayer is heaven's ordained means of success in the conflict with sin and the development of Christian character. The divine influences that come in answer to the prayer of faith will accomplish in the soul of the suppliant all for which he pleads. For the pardon of sin, for the Holy Spirit, for a Christlike temper, for wisdom and strength to do His work, for any gift He has promised, we may ask; and the promise is, "Ye shall receive." – *Acts of the Apostles*, p. 564

Who came in answer to Daniel's prayer? Daniel 9:20-21. Compare Isaiah 65:24.

"As Daniel's prayer is going forth, the angel Gabriel comes sweeping down from the heavenly courts to tell him that his petitions are heard and answered. This mighty angel has been commissioned to give him skill and understanding, to open before him the mysteries of future ages. Thus, while earnestly seeking to know and understand the truth, Daniel was brought into communion with Heaven's delegated messenger." – *The Sanctified Life*, page 48.

"It was Gabriel, the angel next in rank to the Son of God, who came with the divine message to Daniel. It was Gabriel, "His angel," whom Christ sent to open the future to the beloved John; and a blessing is pronounced on those who read and hear the words of the prophecy, and keep the things written therein. Revelation 1:3." – *Desire of Ages*, page 234.

How did Gabriel explain his mission to Daniel? Daniel 9:22-23. Compare Daniel 8:16.

"God had bidden His messenger: "Make this man to understand the vision." That commission must be fulfilled. In obedience to it, the angel, some time afterward, returned to Daniel, saying: "I am now come forth to give thee skill and understanding;" "therefore understand the matter, and consider the vision." Daniel 8:27, 16; 9:22, 23, 25-27. There was one important point in the vision of chapter 8 which had been left unexplained, namely, that relating to time, the period of the 2300 days; therefore the angel, in resuming his explanation, dwells chiefly upon the subject of time." – *Great Controversy*, page 325.

KEY THOUGHT

God still sends His angels today in response to the sincere prayers of His faithful children.

Part 4: SEVENTY WEEKS DETERMINED

Seventy weeks are determined 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. (Dan 9:24)

“The word here translated “determined” literally signifies “cut off.” Seventy weeks, representing 490 years, are declared by the angel to be cut off, as specially pertaining to the Jews. But from what were they cut off? As the 2300 days was the only period of time mentioned in chapter 8, it must be the period from which the seventy weeks were cut off; the seventy weeks must therefore be a part of the 2300 days, and the two periods must begin together.’ *Great Controversy*, page 326.

What was to take place during that period of time? Daniel 9:24.

“The transgression was to be finished; that is, the Jewish people were to fill up the cup of their iniquity, which they did in the rejection and crucifixion of Christ. An end of sins, or of sin-offerings, was to be made. This took place when the great offering was made on Calvary. Reconciliation for iniquity was to be provided. This was made by the sacrificial death of the Son of God. Everlasting righteousness was to be brought in; the righteousness which our Lord manifested in His sinless life. The vision and the prophecy were to be sealed up, or made sure. By the events given to transpire in the seventy weeks, the prophecy is tested. By this the application of the whole vision is determined. If the events of this period are accurately fulfilled, the prophecy is of God and will all be accomplished; and if these seventy weeks are fulfilled as weeks of years, then the 2300 days, of which these are a part, are so many years. Thus the events of the seventy weeks furnish a key to the whole vision.” – Smith, *Daniel & the Revelation*, 1918 ed., page 217.

When was this period to begin? Daniel 9:25, first part.

“The seventy weeks were declared by the angel to date from the going forth of the commandment to restore and build Jerusalem. If the date of this commandment could be found, then the starting point for the great period of the 2300 days would be ascertained. In the seventh chapter of Ezra the decree is found. Verses 12-26. In its completest form it was issued by Artaxerxes, king of Persia, 457 BC. But in Ezra 6:14 the house of the Lord at Jerusalem is said to have been built “according to the commandment of Cyrus, and Darius, and Artaxerxes king of Persia.” These three kings, in originating, reaffirming, and completing the decree, brought it to the perfection required by the prophecy to mark the beginning of the 2300 years. “ – *Great Controversy*, page 326.

KEY THOUGHT

Part 5: THE DECREE OF ARTAXERXES

And I, even I Artaxerxes the king, do make a decree to all the treasurers which are beyond the river, that whatsoever Ezra the priest, the scribe of the law of the God of heaven, shall require of you, it be done speedily, (Ezra 7:21)

What did the decree of Artaxerxes, issued in 457 B.C., specify? Who supervised its execution? Ezra 7:1, 6, 8, 11, 13.

"The reign of Artaxerxes "saw the return of a company of Jews under Ezra, the completion of the walls of Jerusalem by Nehemiah and his associates, the reorganization of the temple services, and the great religious reformations instituted by Ezra and Nehemiah. During his long rule, he often showed favor to God's people; and in his trusted and well-beloved Jewish friends, Ezra and Nehemiah, he recognized men of God's appointment, raised up for a special *work*." -*Prophets and Kings*, page 607.

Under what circumstances was the city wall completed? Who led out in this project? Neh. 4:16-18; 6:1-3, 15, 16.

"Notwithstanding the plots of enemies, open and secret, the work of building went steadily forward, and in less than two months from the time of Nehemiah's arrival in Jerusalem, the city was girded with its defenses, and the builders could walk upon the walls, and look down upon their defeated and astonished *foes*." -*Ibid.*, p. 65-7.

The wall was completed in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes September 21, 444 BC.

How long a period was to elapse from the going forth of the commandment until the appearance of Messiah the Prince? How much of this time was to be devoted to rebuilding of the city streets and walls? Daniel 9:25.

The decree of Artaxerxes went into effect in the autumn of 457 BC From this date, 483 years extend to the autumn of AD 27. (See Appendix.) At that time this prophecy was fulfilled. The word "Messiah" signifies "the Anointed One." In the autumn of AD 27 Christ was baptised by John and received the anointing of the Spirit. The apostle Peter testifies that "God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power." Acts 10:38. And the Saviour Himself declared: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He hath anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor." Luke 4:18. After His baptism He went into Galilee, "preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, The time is fulfilled." Mark 1:14, 15.' *Great Controversy*, page 327.

KEY THOUGHT

Part 6: THE SEVENTIETH WEEK

And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined. (Dan 9:26)

What was to happen during the final part of the prophecy? Daniel 9:27.

“And He shall confirm the covenant with many for one week.” The “week” here brought to view is the last one of the seventy; it is the last seven years of the period allotted especially to the Jews. During this time, extending from AD 27 to AD 34, Christ, at first in person and afterward by His disciples, extended the gospel invitation especially to the Jews. As the apostles went forth with the good tidings of the kingdom, the Saviour’s direction was: “Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.” Matthew 10:5, 6. “In the midst of the week He shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease.” In AD 31, three and a half years after His baptism, our Lord was crucified. With the great sacrifice offered upon Calvary, ended that system of offerings which for four thousand years had pointed forward to the Lamb of God. Type had met antitype, and all the sacrifices and oblations of the ceremonial system were there to cease.’ *Great Controversy*, page 327.

What was to be the fate of the city and the sanctuary? Daniel 9:26, last part, Daniel 9:27, last part. Compare Matthew 24:15-20, Luke 21:20-24. Compare Luke 19:42-44.

NOTE: ‘After the destruction of the temple, the whole city soon fell into the hands of the Romans. The leaders of the Jews forsook their impregnable towers, and Titus found them solitary. He gazed upon them with amazement, and declared that God had given them into his hands; for no engines, however powerful, could have prevailed against those stupendous battlements. Both the city and the temple were razed to their foundations, and the ground upon which the holy house had stood was “ploughed like a field.” Jeremiah 26:18. In the siege and the slaughter that followed, more than a million of the people perished; the survivors were carried away as captives, sold as slaves, dragged to Rome to grace the conqueror’s triumph, thrown to wild beasts in the amphitheatres, or scattered as homeless wanderers throughout the earth.’ *Great Controversy*, page 35.

When was the remainder of the vision revealed to Daniel? Daniel 10:1.

NOTE: ‘Upon the occasion just described, the angel Gabriel imparted to Daniel all the instruction which he was then able to receive. A few years afterward, however, the prophet desired to learn more of subjects not yet fully explained, and again set himself to seek light and wisdom from God.’ *The Sanctified Life*, page 49.

<p>KEY THOUGHT</p>

LESSON 12

The Kings of the North and South

The final prophetic portion of the book of Daniel focuses a great deal on two powers which dominate the stage of world history right down to the time of the end. They are the kings of the North and the South. Under this symbolism, God gives us an extremely detailed description of the conflict among the nations of the Middle East and Europe during the past 2500 years. This prophetic history brings us right down to our day and beyond. The subject of the King of the North in particular, has been one which has always generated a great deal of interest because, according to the prophecy, when this power comes to its end, it will mark the beginning of the greatest time of trouble the world has ever seen as well as the time of the deliverance of God's people.

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PART 1: CONTINUAL CONFLICT

And the king of the south shall be moved with choler, and shall come forth and fight with him, even with the king of the north: and he shall set forth a great multitude; but the multitude shall be given into his hand. (Dan 11:11)

What event in the history of the Greek kingdom resulted in the kingdom being broken up into four parts? Dan. 11: 3,4

“Having overthrown the Persian empire, Alexander "became absolute lord of that empire, in the utmost extent in which it was ever possessed by any of the Persian kings." - (Prideaux, Vol.I, p.477). His dominion was great, including "the greater portion of the then known habitable world;" and he did according to his will. His will led him, B.C.323, into a drunken debauch, as the result of which he died as the fool dieth; and his vainglorious and ambitious projects went into sudden, total, and everlasting eclipse.” – *Smith, Daniel and The Revelation, p.234*

Into what two major divisions did the kingdom of Greece eventually resolve itself? Dan. 11: 5,15

“. . . When Alexander's empire was divided, the different portions lay toward the four winds of heaven, west, north, east, and south. . . .

“whatever power at any time should occupy the territory which at first constituted the kingdom of the north, that power, so long as it occupied that territory, would be the king of the north; and whatever power should occupy that which at first constituted the kingdom of the south, that power would so long be the king of the south. We speak of only these two, because they are the only ones afterward spoken of in the prophecy, and because, in fact, almost the whole of Alexander's empire finally resolved itself into these two divisions. . . .” – *Smith, Daniel and The Revelation, p.235-6*

What indication is there in Daniel chapter 11 that the meaning of the terms, “king of the north” and “king of the south” may have changed in the latter part of the chapter? Dan. 11: 29

In the first portion of Daniel 11 it is clear that the conflict is between political powers. However as we come to the final portion of this chapter, we find the same power introduced which is the enemy of God, His truth and His people in chapters 7 and 8. The symbolism of the kings of the North and South continue, but it becomes clear that the symbols are now to be interpreted , not in a physical way (not geographical north and south), but that we are to identify these kings applying different rules.

**KEY
THOUGHT**

Part 2: BLASPHEMIES OF THE NORTHERN KING

And the king shall do according to his will; and he shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvellous things against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished: for that that is determined shall be done. (Dan 11:36)

“The power of the north in Daniel 1:40 is not the literal kingdom of Babylon but rather a power in the last days of this earth’s history which displays the same characteristics as literal Babylon – a power which manifests the same spirit of self-exaltation above God; which also seeks to cause all to worship an image, a false or ‘strange god. Daniel 11:37, 39. It professes to honor God as the ‘God of gods’ and yet assumes the worship that belongs to God alone.” –*Rafferty, Tidings of a Whirlwind.*

What description of the king of the North in the “time of the end” identifies this king with the Papacy? Dan. 11: 37–39

This glorification of, and worship of a ‘strange god’ is another critical description which points unerringly to the Papacy as the power here referred to as the ‘king of the north.’ This has been fulfilled in more than one way in the career of the Papacy. First of all the Papacy has been responsible for introducing the Trinity into the Christian Church; a god which was not known to the Christians of the New Testament or to the people of God in the Old Testament. This ‘strange god’ which his fathers knew not’ has been glorified and exalted by the Papacy and has also been accepted by most of the other Christian churches. The Papacy has also introduced the ‘veneration’ of Mary, and has, to all intents and purposes elevated her to the status of a goddess. Interestingly there has been for a few years a major push in the Catholic Church for the pope to declare that Mary is a co-mediatrix with Christ.

What similarities are there between the description of the Northern King and the “man of sin” spoken of by Paul? 2 Thess. 2: 3,4

The teachings of the New Testament have their foundation in the Old Testament, and many of the New Testament writers quoted heavily from the Old Testament. Paul’s description of the ‘man of sin,’ in 2 Thessalonians 2, is very similar to the description given by Daniel in chapter 11. It is important that we see this connection because Paul gives us another clue which is vital in identifying this desolating power. He tells us that the man of sin ‘sits in the temple of God.’ This clearly identifies the antichrist as being somebody who claims to be a Christian. He sits in the temple of God, or the Christian Church.

**KEY
THOUGHT**

Part 3: THE KING OF THE SOUTH

He shall stretch forth his hand also upon the countries: and the land of Egypt shall not escape. (Dan 11:42)

“The word “south” is derived from a Hebrew word which occasionally translates “Egypt.” It also Biblically symbolizes the country of Egypt (Isa. 30:1-7).” Egypt denotes an atheistic power which denies the existence of God. (Exodus 5:2). Therefore the power of the south in Daniel 11:40 is atheism. In the ‘time of the end,’ beginning in 1793-1798, this atheistic power emerged in the country of France.

On the 23rd of November 1793 atheism in France reached its extreme point, by a decree of the municipality ordering the immediate closing of all the churches, and placing the whole priesthood under surveillance

Infidelity and atheism reigned supreme. The National Convention abolished the Sabbath, and the leaders of the Paris Commune declared that they intended to dethrone the King of heaven as well as the monarchs of the earth.

thus the power of the ‘south’ (atheism) emerged in France in the period 1793-1798, in fulfillment of Bible prophecy. This power is better known today as Communism.” – *Rafferty, Tidings of a Whirlwind.*

How has the king of the south provoked the king of the north in modern times? Dan. 11:40

From the overthrow of the “See of Rome” at the “time of the end” and into the 20th century, atheism has consistently warred against Papal Rome. Notice the account given in this recent *Time* magazine article:

“Until recently, the battalions of Marxism seemed to have the upper hand over the soldiers of the Cross. In the wake of the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917, Lenin had pledged toleration but delivered terror. ‘Russia turned crimson with the blood of martyrs,’ says Father Gleb Yakunin, Russian Orthodoxy’s bravest agitator for religious freedom. In the Bolsheviks’ first five years in power, 28 bishops and 1,200 priests were cut down by the red sickle. Stalin greatly accelerated the terror, and by the end of Khrushchev’s rule, liquidations of clergy reached an estimated 50,000. After World War II, fierce but generally less bloody persecution spread into the Ukraine and the new Soviet bloc, affecting millions of Roman Catholics and Protestants as well as Orthodox.” *Time, December 4, 1989.*

Basically, communism for the greater portion of the 20th Century provoked the Papacy by consistently establishing itself in Catholic countries and oppressing the Roman Catholic churches in those countries when it took over. Examples of this are Cuba, Romania, Poland, and in fact most of the countries of Europe which became a part of the Soviet Union.

**KEY
THOUGHT**

Part 4: THE NORTHERN KING'S RESPONSE

And at the time of the end shall the king of the south push at him: and the king of the north shall come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, and with horsemen, and with many ships; and he shall enter into the countries, and shall overflow and pass over. (Dan 11:40)

The word "push" means "to war against." It is a simple definition but it holds for us a key to unlocking Daniel 11:40. It describes the conflict which has been taking place between the "king of the south," (atheism) and the "king of the north," since the "time of the end." (1793-1798).

The role of the Papacy in the overthrow of the former Soviet Union is a striking fulfillment of the prophecy which states that the king of the North would come against him (atheism) like a whirlwind. Many highly respected journals such as *Time*, and *Life* magazines have given the credit to the Papacy for engineering and orchestrating the downfall of communism in Europe.

How does the Bible describe the restoration of the Papacy's power in the end-time? Rev. 13: 3,8

" . . . it was none other than the papal head that was wounded to death, and his deadly wound was healed. This wounding is the same as the going into captivity. Rev.13:-10. It was inflicted when the pope was taken prisoner by Berthier, the French general, and the papal government was for a time abolished, in 1798. Stripped of his power, both civil and ecclesiastical, the captive pope, Pius VI, died in exile at Valence in France, Aug. 29, 1799. But the deadly wound was healed when the papacy was re- established, though with a diminution of its former power, by the election of a new pope, March 14, 1800. " - *Smith, Daniel and the Revelation, p.567*

Which nations will be able to stand against the northern king in the end-time? Dan. 11: 43; Rev. 13: 7

It is the Papacy on whose part "arms shall stand," that is "force," whose "power shall be mighty, but not by his own power, and who shall have "an host" or "a mass of persons, an army, a campaign," given into his hands. Daniel 11:31; 8:12,24. The Papacy shall again work through the military and political power of other great nations to enforce its dogmas and teachings.

The Bible speaks in every place of this final desolating power in the end-time as a force which will be unstoppable by human means. Not only will he be able to call upon great military and political support, but he will also be supported by the masses of the people. "All the world wondered after the beast." This is the testimony of the word of God. (Rev. 13:3).

**KEY
THOUGHT**

Part 5: HE ENTERS THE GLORIOUS LAND

He shall enter also into the glorious land, and many countries shall be overthrown: but these shall escape out of his hand, even Edom, and Moab, and the chief of the children of Ammon. (Dan 11:41)

Does the term, “glorious land” here, refer to physical Palestine, or should we interpret this according to New Testament symbolism and identify this “glorious land” as God’s Church? If we identify the northern and southern kings applying New Testament interpretations, then it is reasonable that we should also apply New Testament rules in identifying this “glorious land.”

What descriptions of Jerusalem identifies it as the “glorious land? Ps. 48: 2

There can be no question that for the Jews and for Daniel, Palestine was the “glorious land.” It was their homeland, promised to, and given to them by God. A place which had been favored with His blessings for centuries. When Daniel heard the term, “the glorious land,” his mind would immediately think of his homeland Palestine. However, Daniel also thought that several other things referred to himself, the Jews, their sanctuary and their homeland. For example, the cleansing of the sanctuary (Dan. 8:4) clearly did not refer to the Jewish temple, but to the antitypical sanctuary. The deliverance of the people in Daniel 12:1, does not refer to the deliverance of Jews (though they are referred to as “thy people”) but to the deliverance of Christians. It is therefore worth exploring the idea that the “glorious land” here in Daniel 11:44 might refer to the antitypical Palestine or holy land, rather than to physical Palestine.

What reasons are there why we should not regard Palestine or Jerusalem as the “glorious land” in these days? Matt. 23: 37-39; Matt. 21: 43

The Hebrews were once the favored people of God. He placed them in a location (Palestine) where they were at the crossroads of the nations and God purposed to bless the world, by blessing them and their land. However when the Hebrews failed God and rejected their destiny, did He continue to hold some special purpose for the land itself? Did the land remain special in God’s eyes, or was its uniqueness in God’s eyes dependent on the status of the Jews as God’s people? Today God’s people are a universal nation, scattered in every corner of the earth. Our homeland is heaven, our sanctuary is in heaven, our king is in heaven. It is not consistent with the revelations of the New Testament to regard the land of Palestine as still having the special blessing and favor of God.

**KEY
THOUGHT**

Part 6: TIDINGS FROM THE EAST

But tidings out of the east and out of the north shall trouble him: therefore he shall go forth with great fury to destroy, and utterly to make away many. (Dan 11:44)

The southern king provokes the northern king and arouses his wrath, but something else infuriates him even more. Tidings from the east and from the north trouble him. What kind of news from the “north” and the “east” troubles the Papacy in the end-time, resulting in the furious persecution of “many.”

“. . . Men of faith and prayer will be constrained to go forth with holy zeal, declaring the words which God gives them. The sins of Babylon will be laid open. The fearful results of enforcing the observances of the church by civil authority, the inroads of spiritualism, the stealthy but rapid progress of the papal power—all will be unmasked. By these solemn warnings the people will be stirred. . . .

“The power attending the message will only madden those who oppose it. . . . The church appeals to the strong arm of civil power, and in this work, papists and Protestants unite. As the movement for Sunday enforcement becomes more bold and decided, the law will be invoked against commandment keepers. . . .” - *Faith I Live By* p. 330

What important event having a critical relation to God’s people in the end-time is represented as coming from the east? Rev. 7: 2,3

“. . . In Rev. 7:2 the work of preparing a people to stand when the great day of God’s wrath shall come is symbolized by an angel “ascending from the east,” or, as some translate, “like the rising of the sun.” Behold the dawning of the day—first appear the rays of light in the east; these blend into greater clearness until the sun’s broad, distinct disk is seen. As the “King of Day” ascends to the zenith, its light, heat, and power become more and more vivid.” - *Loughborough, The Great Second Advent Movement*, p. 464

What event in the history of Israel, having a future antitype brought deliverance to God’s people which originated in the east? Isa. 41: 2; 45: 1-6; Rev. 16: 12

To Cyrus belongs the high honor of having been designated by name by the God of Heaven, many years before his birth, as one that should act an important part in the restoration of Jerusalem. The commandment of the God of Heaven came to him, and from him issued authority that embraced an essential part of the work. Such of the Jews as pleased were authorized to return to Jerusalem, and were empowered to rebuild the temple. This laid the foundation of the entire work, and naturally drew after it all that followed.” - *J.N. Andrews, The Commandment to*

Restore and to Rebuild Jerusalem, p.8

**KEY
THOUGHT**

Part 7: THE END OF THE NORTHERN KING

And he shall plant the tabernacles of his palace between the seas in the glorious holy mountain; yet he shall come to his end, and none shall help him. (Dan 11:45)

We do not know exactly when or how the northern king will come to his end. However, the prophecies of Daniel and Revelation do give us a definite description of this event in more than one place.

In Daniel 7:11 it says the beast will be given to the burning flame.

In Daniel 8:25 it says the little horn will be broken without hand.

In Daniel 11:45 it says he shall come to his end and none shall help him.

What wonderful event will immediately follow the destruction of the “king of the north?” Dan. 12: 1

Though we do not know the day nor the hour of Jesus coming, yet the Bible gives us definite events which will make us know that it is at hand. Here we are given a very plain indicator. “At that time shall Michael stand up. . . . and thy people shall be delivered. . . .” When the Northern king comes to his end, then we may know that we are about to be delivered. Of course by that time we will have already endured the trials of the great tribulation, and passed through the great test associated with the Mark of the Beast crisis. Those who wish to wait until that time to begin to prepare for the coming of the Lord will by then have joined the ranks of the enemy and will have received the Mark of the Beast. Yet, God makes us know that this event signals the end of mankind’s rebellion against God. In that time, when the forces of apostasy are all around and bent on the destruction of God’s people this sign of the destruction of the Northern king will be a great comfort to the faithful.

How does Gabriel describe the end of the great end-time enemy of God’s people? Dan. 8: 25

This description of the final overthrow of the Papacy is similar to the one found in Daniel 2:34, in the description of the great image. There we are told that the stone which destroyed the image was cut out “without hands.” Here in Daniel 8:25 we are told that the horn is broken “without hand.” By whatever means the papacy will be finally overthrown, it is clear that God Himself will especially intervene to accomplish that event, therefore the consistent emphasis that the end of this anti-Christ power will be “without hand.”

“In the mad strife of their own fierce passions, and by the awful outpouring of God’s unmingled wrath, fall the wicked inhabitants of the earth,--priests, rulers, and people, rich and poor, high and low. “And the slain of the Lord shall be at that day from one end of the earth even unto the other end of the earth; they shall not be lamented, neither gathered, nor buried.” – *Great Controversy*, p. 656

**KEY
THOUGHT**

LESSON 13

Michael Stands up

Daniel's description of earth's final moments is a striking one. The standing up of Michael in heaven results in a terrible outbreak of trouble upon the earth. Scenes will take place such as have never been witnessed before by human beings. Those who are alive at that time will witness the death pangs of a planet. In connection with this end-time prophecy several time periods are mentioned, which have generated much interest and a great deal of speculation. The pioneers of the Advent movement viewed these time periods as having all been already fulfilled. However there is strong opinion among some today, that at least some of these time periods still lie in the future. One thing is certain, God intends that in this "time of the end," the "wise shall understand." (Dan. 12:10)

LESSON STUDY RECORD

- | | |
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| <input type="checkbox"/> Sunday | <input type="checkbox"/> Wednesday |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Monday | <input type="checkbox"/> Thursday |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tuesday | <input type="checkbox"/> Friday |

Part 1: KNOWLEDGE INCREASED

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 prophet of God declares that in the last days knowledge shall be increased. There are new truths to be revealed to the humble seeker. The teachings of God’s word are to be freed from the errors and superstition with which they have been encumbered. Doctrines that are not sanctioned by the Scriptures have been widely taught, and many have honestly accepted them; but when the truth is revealed, it becomes the duty of every one to accept it. Those who allow worldly interests, desire for popularity, or pride of opinion, to separate them from the truth, must render an account to God for their neglect.” – *Spirit of Prophecy, Vol. 4, p. 186*

What symbolism did God use to show John that there would be earnest study of the book of Daniel in the end-time? Rev. 10: 8-11

The description of the angel here, and the words which he speaks are very similar to the description and the words of the angel in Daniel 12. In Daniel chapter 12 we are told that the book was to be shut up and sealed. Here in Revelation we find a “little” book being opened. There is a strong suggestion that both prophecies are referring to the same book, which is the book of Daniel. There is only one way in which we may understand the symbolism of the little book being eaten. This indicates that the book would be studied with great earnestness. We should notice that the study of this book of Daniel would lead those who studied it to an experience which was first, “sweet in the mouth,” but afterwards “bitter” in the belly. This is a good description of the experience of the early Advent believers who, after studying the prophecies of Daniel came to believe that Jesus would return in the year 1844. However, when the time passed they came to a proper understanding of the prophecy and suffered a great disappointment which was a bitter blow to them.

What should be our attitude as we study the prophecies of the Bible and especially those which apply to the last days? Prov. 2: 3-5

“As we near the close of this world’s history, the prophecies recorded by Daniel demand our special attention, as they relate to the very time in which we are living. With them should be linked the teachings of the last book of the New Testament Scriptures. . . . “The wise shall understand” (verse 10), was spoken of the visions of Daniel that were to be unsealed in the latter days; and of the revelation that Christ gave to His servant John for the guidance of God’s people all through the centuries, the promise is, “Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein.” – *Prophets and Kings, p. 547*

**KEY
THOUGHT**

Part 2: CHRIST'S MINISTRATION CEASES

And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book. (Dan 12:1)

"In the time of trouble we all fled from the cities and villages, but were pursued by the wicked, who entered the houses of the saints with a sword. They raised the sword to kill us, but it broke, and fell as powerless as a straw. Then we all cried day and night for deliverance, and the cry came up before God. The sun came up, and the moon stood still. The streams ceased to flow. Dark, heavy clouds came up and clashed against each other. But there was one clear place of settled glory, whence came the voice of God like many waters, which shook the heavens and the earth. The sky opened and shut and was in commotion. The mountains shook like a reed in the wind, and cast out ragged rocks all around. The sea boiled like a pot and cast out stones upon the land. . . . God spoke the day and the hour of Jesus' coming and delivered the everlasting covenant to His people. . . ." – *Early Writings, p. 34*

How was the end of Christ's ministration symbolized in the book of Revelation? Rev. 8: 3-5

" . . . that we are here carried forward to the end, is evident from the act of the angel in filling the censer with fire and casting it unto the earth; for his work is then done; no more prayers are to be offered up mingled with incense; and this symbolic act can have its application only at the time when the ministration of Christ in the sanctuary in behalf of mankind has forever ceased. And following the angel's act are voices, thunderings, lightnings, and an earthquake - exactly such occurrences as we are elsewhere informed transpire at the close of human probation." – *Uriah Smith, Daniel & The Revelation, p. 477*

What will be the spiritual destiny of all human beings when Michael stands up? Rev. 22: 11

"Our own course of action will determine whether we shall receive the seal of the living God, or be cut down by the destroying weapons. Already a few drops of God's wrath have fallen upon the earth; but when the seven last plagues shall be poured out without mixture into the cup of His indignation, then it will be forever too late to repent, and find shelter. No atoning blood will then wash away the stains of sin. . . . When this time of trouble comes, every case is decided; there is no longer probation, no longer mercy for the impenitent. The seal of the living God is upon His people." – *Christian Experience & Teachings of Ellen G. White, p. 187*

**KEY
THOUGHT**

PART 3: UNIVERSAL STRIFE

For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. (Mat 24:21)

“When he (Jesus) leaves the sanctuary, darkness covers the inhabitants of the earth. In that fearful time the righteous must live in the sight of a holy God without an intercessor. The restraint which has been upon the wicked is removed, and Satan has entire control of the finally impenitent. God's long-suffering has ended. The world has rejected his mercy, despised his love, and trampled upon his law. The wicked have passed the boundary of their probation; the Spirit of God, persistently resisted, has been at last withdrawn. Unsheltered by divine grace, they have no protection from the wicked one. Satan will then plunge the inhabitants of the earth into one great, final trouble. As the angels of God cease to hold in check the fierce winds of human passion, all the elements of strife will be let loose. The whole world will be involved in ruin more terrible than that which came upon Jerusalem of old.” – *The Great Controversy*, p. 614

How serious will be the final tribulation as compared to all the conflicts which have occurred during the earth's six thousand year history? Dan. 12:1

“These plagues are not universal, or the inhabitants of the earth would be wholly cut off. Yet they will be the most awful scourges that have ever been known to mortals. All the judgments upon men, prior to the close of probation, have been mingled with mercy. The pleading blood of Christ has shielded the sinner from receiving the full measure of his guilt; but in the final Judgment, wrath is poured out unmixed with mercy.” – *The Great Controversy*, p. 629

Defenceless and poor, how will God's faithful people be able to endure the trials of that last great conflict? Matt. 24:22; Ps. 46:1-3; Ps. 91:1-4

“The great general conflagration is but just ahead, when all this wasted labor of life will be swept away in a night and day.

There will be . . . great destruction of human life. But as in the days of the great deluge Noah was preserved in the ark that God had prepared for him, so in these days of destruction and calamity, God will be the refuge of His believing ones. Through the psalmist He declares, "Because thou has made the Lord, which is my refuge, even the most High, thy habitation; there shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling." "For in the time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion. . . ." Then shall we not make the Lord our surety and our defense?" – *Maranatha*, p. 283

**KEY
THOUGHT**

Part 5: VICTORS FROM THE DUST

And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. (Dan 12:2)

"Graves are opened, and "many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth . . . awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt." Dan. 12:2. All who have died in the faith of the third angel's message come forth from the tomb glorified, to hear God's covenant of peace with those who have kept His law.

Those who had died in faith under the third angel's message, keeping the Sabbath, came forth from their dusty beds.

"They also which pierced him" (Rev. 1:7), those that mocked and derided Christ's dying agonies, and the most violent opposers of His truth and His people, are raised to behold Him in His glory, and to see the honor placed upon the loyal and obedient. . . ." – *The Faith I Live By*, p. 182

What triumphant words of Job may each Christian claim as a promise, even when faced by the prospect of death? Job 19:25-27

The coming of the Lord has been in all ages the hope of his true followers. The Saviour's parting promise upon Olivet, that he would come again, lighted up the future for his disciples, filling their hearts with joy and hope, that sorrow could not quench, nor trials dim. Amid suffering and persecution, "the appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ" was the "blessed hope." When the Thessalonian Christians were filled with grief as they buried their loved ones, who had hoped to live to witness the coming of the Lord, Paul, their teacher, pointed them to the resurrection, to take place at the Saviour's advent. Then the dead in Christ should rise, and together with the living be caught up to meet the Lord in the air. "And so," he said, "shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words." – *Great Controversy*, p. 302

What great enemy will the delivered and resurrected ones never need to fear anymore? 1 Cor. 15:26; Rev. 20:14

"In the home of the redeemed there will be no tears, no funeral trains, no badges of mourning, "The inhabitant shall not say, I am sick: the people that dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquity." Isaiah 33:24. One rich tide of happiness will flow and deepen as eternity rolls on. . . .

We are homeward bound. He who loved us so much as to die for us hath builded for us a city. The New Jerusalem is our place of rest. There will be no sadness in the city of God. No wail of sorrow, no dirge of crushed hopes and buried affections, will evermore be heard. Soon the garments of heaviness will be changed for the wedding garment. Soon we shall witness the coronation of our King." – *Maranatha*, p. 352

**KEY
THOUGHT**

PART 6: THE BLESSED WHO WAIT

Blessed is he that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days. (Dan 12:12)

In the final verses of the book of Daniel two time periods are mentioned in connection with the “time, times and a half,” which have caused a great deal of discussion and controversy among Seventh-day Adventist Bible students over the years. These periods are the 1290 days and the 1335 days. The Seventh-day Adventist pioneers believed that the 1290 days were fulfilled in 1798. They see this period as beginning in 508 A.D. when the last of the 10 pagan kings was “converted” to Christianity. They saw this as the taking away of the “daily,” (which they believed to be paganism). From this time to 1798 when the Pope was taken captive was 1290 years. 45 years after 1798 (or 1335 years after 508 A.D.) takes us to the year 1843 which was the year originally chosen by William Miller and his followers as the end-point of the 2300 days. The pioneers believed that those who came to this time received a special blessing from God, because they were privileged to understand the truth of the cleansing of the Sanctuary and to be a part of the final movement of God on the earth.

According to Michael, the great Prince, how long would it be until the end of “these wonders?” Daniel 12:7

What wonders was the angel referring to in his question to Michael? This is a key question. Michael states that these wonders would come to an end after a “time, times and a half.” At that time the “power of the holy people” would be scattered and then “all these things” would be finished. There are some who believe that these time periods of Daniel chapter 12 have a future fulfillment. They point to the fact that the “power of the holy people” has not yet been scattered (which seems to suggest a time when the work of God’s people will be ineffective, such as the close of probation). This is a good point and needs to be considered. However, in examining these ideas we also need to consider the counsel of Ellen White that “*the people of God will not have another message upon definite time. After this period of time, reaching from 1842 to 1844 there can be no more definite tracing of the prophetic time.*” (7 BC - 971)

What final answer did Daniel receive in reply to his question concerning the event which would mark the “end of these things?” Dan. 12:8-13

No one can doubt that we are now living in the time of the end. In fact, the Advent pioneers believed that the time of the end began in 1798. While we cannot say that we have a 100% understanding of every part of the prophecies of Daniel, yet a great deal of light has been shed on the book. As we study we should keep seeking the Lord for guidance that He might give us understanding of those portions which are still not fully understood.

<p>KEY THOUGHT</p>

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