



THE PROPHECY OF DANIEL

Lesson Number 40



TRANSLATION LEGEND: ASV=American Standard Version (1901), BBE=Bible in Basic English (1949), DRA=Douay-Rheims (1899), ESV=English Standard Version (2001), KJV=King James Version (1611), NKJV=New King James Version (1982), NAB=New American Bible, NASB=New American Standard Bible (1977), NAU=New American Standard Bible (1995), NIB=New International Bible, NIV=New International Version (1984), NJB=New Jerusalem Bible, NLT=New Living Translation, NRSV=New Revised Standard Version (1989), RSV=Revised Standard Version (1952), TNK=JPS Tanakj (1985), YLT=Young's Literal Translation (1862).

----- Bible Translation Codes with Identification -----

A SUMMATION OF THE BOOK OF DANIEL

^{1:1} In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah came Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon unto Jerusalem, and besieged it . . . ^{1:6} Now among these were of the children of Judah, Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah . . . ^{2:48} Then the king made Daniel a great man, and gave him many great gifts, and made him ruler over the whole province of Babylon, and chief of the governors over all the wise men of Babylon . . . ^{5:29} Then commanded Belshazzar, and they clothed Daniel with scarlet, and put a chain of gold about his neck, and made a proclamation concerning him, that he should be the third ruler in the kingdom . . . ^{6:3} Then this Daniel was preferred above the presidents and princes, because an excellent spirit was in him; and the king thought to set him over the whole realm . . . ^{7:1} In the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon Daniel had a dream and visions of his head upon his bed: then he wrote the dream, and told the sum of the matters . . . ^{8:1} In the third year of the reign of king Belshazzar a vision appeared unto me, even unto me Daniel, after that which appeared unto me at the first . . . ^{9:2} 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 . . . ^{10:1} 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 . . .”

INTRODUCTION

WHAT WE KNOW ABOUT DANIEL. All we know about Daniel is found in his book – and that pertains exclusively to his ministry for the Lord. We do not know where or to whom he was born. We know nothing of him prior to his captivity by Nebuchadnezzar, except that he was obviously well taught in the ways and word of the Lord. In Daniel we have an affirmation that nothing really matters except what is done for the Lord.

THE FIRST THING. The very first thing we know about Daniel was that he refused to defile himself with unclean

foods (1:8). Although he was young (probably 13-18), and away from his home land, yet he was acutely conscious of God and his covenant. Such comely qualities are not only for the mature. They belong to those who live by faith, whether young or old.

HE STOOD THE TEST OF TRIAL. Daniel stood the test of severe trial, maintaining his faith during the various tests. He was tested when commanded to eat food his conscience did not condone (1:8). He was tested when faced with death if he could not make

known the dream of Nebuchadnezzar (2:16-18). He was tried when an edict went forth forbidding him to pray to God (6:7-27). He passed the test of being in politics (2:48; 5:29; 6:1-3). He remained true to God and prepared when he was in relative obscurity (5:11).

AN EXTENDED MINISTRY. The book of Daniel provides us with a glimpse of an extended ministry for God (1:21). It begins when the prophet is young, and continues until he is aged – a period of well over seventy years. He is a sterling example of a steward being found

OUTLINE

- ▶ THE SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD AFFIRMED.
- ▶ UNUSUAL DELIVERANCES REVEALED.
- ▶ THE PRAYERS IN THIS BOOK.
- ▶ GOD DEALS WITH THE HEATHEN.
- ▶ THE NATURE OF WORLDLY KINGDOMS.
- ▶ CHASTENING DELINEATED.
- ▶ THE IMPACT OF REVELATION.
- ▶ THE THRONE ROOM.
- ▶ THE DAY OF JUDGMENT.
- ▶ THE SAINTS TAKE THE KINGDOM.
- ▶ THE COMING AND EXALTATION OF THE MESSIAH.
- ▶ THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD.
- ▶ WHEN PROPHECIES ARE REVEALED.

faithful all the days of his life. This remarkable faithfulness was accomplished prior to the coming of Christ and the glorious benefits of “*the day of salvation.*”

A LIFE OF UNWAVERING FAITHFULNESS. In his productive life we see uninterrupted faithfulness to God. There were no periods of obtuseness, or times when his love of God and His truth cooled (6:4). **His life confirms that spiritual life contains the seed of consistency.** Where that consistency is missing, an ungodly intrusion has occurred.

A QUEST TO KNOW. In Daniel there is a continual increase in a fervent quest to know the mind of the Lord. If needful knowledge was not possessed, he sought it (2:18; 12:8). If something was revealed to him, he pursued it (8:15). If he did not understand what God made

known to him, he asked about it (12:8).

A CONTINUAL INCREASE IN UNDERSTANDING. Throughout his entire life, Daniel’s understanding continued to increase. Daniel is first made known to us in the context of receiving understanding from God (1:17). The very last thing we know about him, pertains to understanding being given to him, probably the year before he died, when he was close to ninety (10:5-12:13).

A CONSISTENT INTEREST. All of his life, Daniel maintained an intense interest in God’s land, God’s Temple, and God’s people. During over seventy years in a foreign land this interest did not wane. Although he was not in Jerusalem, the city came into his mind. Although he was separated from the Temple, he continually considered its place in the covenant under which he lived. Even his people were in the process of being chastened by God, yet he sought for their restoration (9:15-17).

THE RESPONSE OF FAITH. In Daniel we have a sterling example of the response of faith. When something was revealed to him, he knew it (7:1,7,13; 8:1,2; 10:5; 12:5). When angels appeared to him, he knew it (6:22; 8:16; 9:21). When a messenger from heaven spoke to him, he heard it (8:13,16; 10:9,12; 12:7,8). If an angel touched him, he responded (8:18; 9:21; 10:10,18). If he overheard a conversation between lofty heavenly personalities, he inquired about the things of which they spoke (12:8).

FELLOWSHIP WITH OTHER BELIEVERS. Daniel had a heart for God’s people as a whole. He also maintained a close and productive fellowship with believers around him. Of particular note is his companionship with Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah (1:6), renamed Shadrach, Meshach, and

Abednego (1:7). Together they overcame the temptation to eat the king’s dainty, but unlawful, diet (1:12-15). They were blessed together (1:17), and stood together to be tested by the king (1:19-20). Together they prayed for Daniel to be given an interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar’s first dream (2:18-19). When Daniel was exalted, he asked that key positions also be given to his three companions (2:49).

A PROPHET DURING A TIME OF CHASTENING. Some of God’s prophets have flourished during times of glory and Divine prominence – like Moses. But that has proved to be a rare occurrence. Many prophets spoke for the Lord while Israel was in their home land – like Nathan, Elijah, Elisha, and Isaiah. Still others prophesied during a time of recovery – like Ezra, Nehemiah, Haggai, and Zechariah. The entire ministry of Daniel, however, was carried out in a foreign land – most of it while the Babylonian captivity was being experienced. In fact, Daniel ministered throughout most of that captivity. His surroundings were not conducive to a productive ministry, but he faithfully served the Lord anyway. He kept his faith, his fervency, and his hope.

NOT UNUSUAL

The manner of Daniel may appear to be quite unusual – even rare. Yet, that is only because of the insensitivity that exists among professed believers – particularly in our part of the world.

Actually, Daniel’s sensitivity is the manner of the Kingdom. This is how a person who is living by faith responds to the Lord. The earnest inquiry into the truth, and a quest for spiritual understanding, are the standards for the people of God. Where these qualities are missing, faith is not present. Religion, in such a case, is only pretense.

THROUGHOUT HIS ENTIRE LIFE, DANIEL’S UNDERSTANDING CONTINUED TO INCREASE. DANIEL IS FIRST MADE KNOWN TO US IN THE CONTEXT OF RECEIVING UNDERSTANDING FROM GOD

THE SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD AFFIRMED

The book of Daniel is more about God than it is about Daniel. In fact, were it not for the working of the Lord, we would never have heard about Daniel. Even though he was in the midst of opposition, dwelling in a heathen culture, and away from the holy city and the Temple, yet Daniel frequently spoke of the greatness of God. He received repeated revelations concerning God's Sovereignty.

Although Daniel was faced

CHANGING TIMES AND CONTROLLING RULERS

When Nebuchadnezzar's dream was revealed to Daniel, he extolled the Lord for His nature and indisputable power. His words are all the more impressive when you consider the spiritually primitive time during which he lived. *"Daniel answered and said, Blessed be the name of God for ever and ever: for wisdom and might are His: and He changeth the times and the seasons: He removeth kings, and setteth up*

When he had served his purpose in the Divine plan, *"the great horn was broken"* (8:8,22; 11:4), and that *"without hand,"* or any human intervention (8:25).

Antiochus Epiphanes Removed

When Antiochus Epiphanes had served his purpose, and the time came for the cessation of God's punishment for the sin of His people, this mighty ruler was *"broken"* by God (11:22).

Roman Little Horn Struck Down

When a despotic and blasphemous *"little horn"* rose out of the Roman Empire, it *"made war with the saints, and prevailed against them"* (7:21). But at the appropriate time, and without so much as one second of effective opposition, God wrested the power from him, and *"the time came when the saints possessed the kingdom"* (7:18,22,25-27).

GOD'S KINGDOM AND DOMINION

In giving Nebuchadnezzar the interpretation of his dream, Daniel announced that God's kingdom would, in fact, utterly decimate all other kingdoms. *"And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever"* (Dan 2:44)

In a global proclamation to *"all people, nations, and languages,"* Nebuchadnezzar proclaimed the Sovereignty of the God of heaven. *"I thought it good to show the signs and wonders that the high God hath wrought toward me. How great are His signs! and how mighty are His wonders! His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and His dominion is from generation to generation"* (4:2-3).

When Daniel was delivered from the lion's den, Darius made a global proclamation, declaring that God had unrestrained dominion. *"He is the living God, and steadfast for ever, and His kingdom that which shall not be destroyed, and His dominion shall be even unto the end. He delivereth and rescueth, and He worketh signs and wonders in*

ALTHOUGH DANIEL WAS FACED WITH SEVERAL DIFFICULT AND TRYING PERSONAL CIRCUMSTANCES, AND A TIME WHEN HIS PEOPLE AS A WHOLE APPEARED TO BE FORSAKEN BY GOD, YET HE NEVER QUESTIONED GOD OR EXPRESSED FLESHLY DISCONTENT WITH HIS SITUATION.

with several difficult and trying personal circumstances, and a time when his people as a whole appeared to be forsaken by God, yet he never questioned God or expressed fleshly discontent with his situation. He is a living rebuke to those who become "angry with God," doubting His loving interest and control when they fall upon hard times. Such attitudes and expressions, so common in our day, are evidences of unbelief. They are indefensible, and are worthy only of rebuke. When the ancients, like Job and Daniel, endured such hardships without registering objections with God, how great such a sin becomes when it is flaunted in the face of the Almighty God in this day of salvation.

CAUSING A PERSON TO BE FAVORED BY ANOTHER

When he was young, the Lord caused Daniel to be especially favored by the Babylonian official who was over him. It would prove to be the means of his protection. *"Now God had brought Daniel into favor and tender love with the prince of the eunuchs"* (Dan 1:9).

kings: He giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding: He revealeth the deep and secret things: He knoweth what is in the darkness, and the light dwelleth with Him" (Dan 2:20-22).

A GOD OF GODS AND LORD OF KINGS

Following Daniel's explanation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream of the great image, the king himself confessed that God was over all rulers, whether idols or kings. *"The king answered unto Daniel, and said, Of a truth it is, that your God is a God of gods, and a Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets, seeing thou couldest reveal this secret"* (Dan 2:47).

The End of Four Great Kingdoms

It was the government of God that brought an end to the dominance of Babylon, the Medes and Persians, Greece, and Rome (2:44-45).

Alexander the Great Removed

God removed Alexander the Great, the *"great horn"* of the Grecian empire.

heaven and in earth” (6:26-27).

GOD GIVES KINGDOMS TO WHOMEVER HE PLEASES

Even king Nebuchadnezzar was brought to a point where he saw the unfettered power of God. He announced to the world that he now knew God gave kingdoms to whomever He pleased. Men had nothing whatsoever to do with it: *“the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will, and setteth up over it the basest of men”* (Dan 4:17). In his proclamation, the king made two more references to this fact – something he learned during his seven-year tutelage in the open field (vs 25,34).

Earlier, when he interpreted Nebuchadnezzar’s first dream, Daniel told him, *“Thou, O king, art a king of kings: for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory”* (2:37).

Daniel reminded Belshazzar that God gave Nebuchadnezzar his kingdom. *“O thou king, the most high God gave Nebuchadnezzar thy father a kingdom, and majesty, and glory, and honor”* (5:18).

Daniel told Belshazzar the Lord would divide his kingdom and give it to the Medes and the Persians. (5:28).

GOD DOES WHATEVER HE WANTS

There is a level at which God does whatever He desires. Nebuchadnezzar was also given to see this, and he proclaimed it to the entire world. *“And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and He doeth according to His will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth:*

were removed at the appropriate time. Periods of chastening started and concluded according to the Divine time table. Nothing was out of control.

It is particularly important that believers of our time grasp the truth concerning God’s unquestioned and

IT IS PARTICULARLY IMPORTANT THAT BELIEVERS OF OUR TIME GRASP THE TRUTH CONCERNING GOD’S UNQUESTIONED AND EFFECTIVE RULE. IN MANY WAYS, OUR SITUATION IS SIMILAR TO THE TIMES OF WHICH DANIEL PROPHESED.

and none can stay His hand, or say unto Him, What doest thou?” (Dan 4:35).

CONCLUSION

The burden of the things revealed to Daniel pertained to what is called the “inter-testamental period” – from Malachi to John the Baptist. Although there was no kn own prophet during this time, and significant spiritual decline took place among the chosen people, yet God remained *“above all and through all”* (Eph 4:6). His counsels were executed with unhindered precision. His enemies

effective rule. In many ways, our situation is similar to the times of which Daniel prophesied. There is open opposition to the saints, and many are even being overcome.

Still, the Lord Jesus is ruling in the midst of His enemies as it was prophesied (Psa 110:2). The heavens still rule (Dan 4:26). Things are being controlled from heaven, and all times and seasons remain in the power of our Lord! There is every reason to trust God and live in hope.

UNUSUAL DELIVERANCES REVEALED

Some remarkable deliverances are made known in the book of Daniel. They provide a confirmation that it is not vain to serve the Lord, and that He is able to sustain His people in times of great trial and testing.

DELIVERANCE FROM DEFILEMENT

1:3-16. The first deliverance chronicled in this book is most unique – something that can be said of every Divine rescue.

The deliverance took place when Daniel was very young – toward the beginning of captivity in Babylon.

Together with his three companions, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, Daniel was chosen for special training, to *“stand in the king’s palace.”* For a period of three years they were appointed a diet *“of the king’s meat, and of the wine he drank.”* He was not only a king, but the ruler of the world, who had just conquered Daniel’s people. Daniel was young, and in captivity.

Yet, Daniel *“purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the meat and wine apportioned to him.”* The deliverance of Daniel and his friends came through the *“prince of the eunuch’s,”*

whom God moved to be favorably inclined toward Daniel. Daniel proposed a ten day test during which they would eat simple foods. At the conclusion of those days *“their countenances appeared fairer and fatter in flesh than all the children which did eat the portion of the king’s meat.”* Throughout the remainder of the three years, they were not required to eat the diet formerly imposed upon them by the king. Thus God honored the determination of Daniel, reversing the edict of the ruler of the world.

DELIVERED FROM THE SENTENCE OF DEATH

2:1-18. In the second year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign, he was troubled with dreams sent to him by God. When he called the "magicians, and the astrologers, and the sorcerers, and the Chaldeans" of his Empire to identify and interpret his dream, he found they were powerless to do so. Infuriated by their pretension "the decree went forth that the wise men should be slain." In the process of carrying out that decree, "they sought for Daniel and his fellows to be slain." Once again, the ruler of the world has made a decree that impacted upon Daniel.

When confronted with the

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were summoned before the king and given one last chance to do what he said. They refused, saying they required no time to think upon the matter. Their God was able to deliver them, and even if He did not, they would not fall down and worship the golden image.

The three were bound hand and foot and thrown into a furnace that had been heated seven times hotter than usual. It was so hot that those throwing them into the furnace were killed. While in the very middle of the furnace, an angel from heaven joined them. All four of them

such a law, forbidding any petition or prayer to be made to any one other than Darius for the space of thirty days. The law was passed, and the announcement blazed abroad throughout the kingdom.

Daniel heard about the Law, but totally ignored it, choosing to open his window and pray toward Jerusalem three times a day. The result was that he was found guilty of disobeying the kingly edict, even though it greatly grieved Darius. Consequently, he was thrown into a den of lions.

During the night, an angel was dispatched from heaven. He shut the lion's mouths, and Daniel was preserved. Early in the morning, the king found him safe, and was "glad for him." His accusers, together with their families, were thrown into the den of lions. The lions, ravished with hunger, broke them in pieces and consumed them before they hit the ground. Darius then made a global declaration, demanding that all men "tremble and fear before the God of Daniel." Daniel is then said to have "prospered in the reign of Darius, and in the reign of Cyrus the Persian."

THESE LATTER DELIVERANCES ARE KNOWN THROUGHOUT THE WORLD. THEY ARE EXAMPLES OF GOD DELIVERING HIS PEOPLE, SUBDUING THEIR ENEMIES, CHANGING THE DETERMINATIONS OF MEN, AND EVEN EXALTING HIS PEOPLE.

executioner, Daniel "answered with counsel and wisdom," asking why the decree was so hasty. Evidencing the Lord had softened his heart, the executioner told the circumstances to Daniel. The man of God then asked for time, and joined his companions, asking for mercy from the Lord to know and explain the dream. Their prayers were answered, Daniel explained the dream to Nebuchadnezzar, and was forthwith made "ruler over the province of Babylon." Thus the very circumstances that required Daniel's death proved to be an occasion for his exaltation, together with his three friends.

DELIVERED FROM THE FIERY FURNACE

3:1-30. Another unique deliverance occurred when Nebuchadnezzar had an image of gold constructed in the plain of Dura. It was nine stories high (90 feet), and nine feet wide. All people were called together for the announcement of a herald. When the sound of musical instruments began, all were to fall down and worship the image. At that time, it was reported to the king that certain of the Jews refused to obey the command.

were seen walking about triumphantly in the midst of the fire.

When the men were removed from the furnace, there was no external evidence they had ever been in it. The smell of smoke was not even on their clothes, and not a single hair had been singed. Nebuchadnezzar then confessed the superiority of their God, saying He had "changed the king's word." Those who had accused the three were cut in pieces and their houses made a dunghill. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were then promoted in the province of Babylon.

DELIVERED FROM THE LION'S DEN

6:4-28. During the third king under whom Daniel served – Darius the Mede – his favor with the king occasioned great jealousy among the other leaders. The "presidents and princes," therefore, sought to find an occasion or fault in Daniel. Because none could be found, they concluded the only way to find something against Daniel was to require him by sovereign law to do something against the law of his God. They knew he would violate such a law, and thus become guilty of crime. They moved upon Darius to pass

These latter deliverances are known throughout the world. They are examples of God delivering His people, subduing their enemies, changing the determinations of men, and even exalting His people.

As confirmed in this book, all of these things are involved in deliverance. Deliverance is more than bringing people through the desert. It is also providing nourishment and encouragement for them. It includes thwarting the intention of their enemies, and bringing them into a condition that is better.

The miraculous deliverance and sustenance of Israel was on a group basis. In the book of Daniel, it is on an individualistic basis. That is the Divine manner – to bestow mercy on both the collective and individual level. Scripture confirms God deals with both nations and a single individual (Job 34:29). An example of Divine favor on a nation is found in Israel. His working on the behalf of a person and a few persons is affirmed in the book of Daniel. Considering such marvelous workings brings comfort.

THE PRAYERS IN THIS BOOK

The effectiveness of prayer is seen in this marvelous book. There are a variety of prayers, and each is weighty with benefits. There is a certain focus in the prayers of this book, and the answer to them is equally focused. It is possible to pray in mere generalities, or for things that are difficult to associate with the purposes of God. I realize that it is fashionable to say God is interested in the smallest of our difficulties, and ever detail of our lives. I do not know, however, that such a thought can be established from Scripture. The great prayers of Scripture were not self-centered, but were uttered with the glory of God and fulfillment of His will in mind. The prayers in Daniel provide some excellent examples of this.

PRAYING FOR THE REVELATION OF A SECRET

2:17-19. On this occasion, Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego prayed. Their lives were at stake, as Nebuchadnezzar had ordered the death of all the wise men in Babylon. The petition of the three young men was for “*mercies*” from the God of heaven. Those mercies were not merely to escape the wrath of the king, or for some form of miraculous deliverance. Rather, they prayed that the secret made known in Nebuchadnezzar’s dream would be revealed to Daniel. The “*secret*” was a sort of Divine blueprint of the history of global empires, and related directly to the day of salvation under the reign of the Lord Jesus. While the prayer was offered in order that “*Daniel and his fellows should not perish with the rest of the wise men,*” their deliverance was not at the heart of the matter. Rather, it was the revelation of the “*secret*” that was central. The prayer was heard, and the secret was revealed.

THANKSGIVING

2:10-23. In response to the revelation of the “*secret*” made known in Nebuchadnezzar’s dream, Daniel offered an insightful prayer of thanksgiving. He was relatively young at the time – probably not yet twenty years of age. Yet his prayer reveals a remarkable level of spiritual understanding.

He acknowledged that both wisdom and might belonged to God. He

confessed that God changed times and seasons, and removes and sets up kings. He saw and declared that God gave wisdom to those who were already wise, and knowledge to them with understanding. Daniel’s prayer included his confession that deep and secret things were revealed by the Lord, and that light, or illumination, dwelt with Him alone. He knew God had given him to understand what neither Nebuchadnezzar nor any of the wise men of Babylon could comprehend, and he thanked God for it.

The rarity of this level of knowledge within the professing church is itself a commentary on the greatness of Daniel’s prayer of thanksgiving. Further, his words were not driven by academic

knowledge, but by personal experience.

REGULARITY

6:10-11. We learn something of Daniel’s manner of praying in this book. It was not a private manner, although he did not parade it before men. Daniel prayed “*three times a day,*” on his knees, with his windows opened, and facing Jerusalem. It all may have appeared to be a mere lifeless routine to those about him, but it was not. **He prayed with a certain consciousness of the holy city, where God had placed His name, and the Temple, with which God had associated Himself.** He knew that Solomon had asked God to answer the prayers of those who were captive in another country, yet prayed regularly while considering the Temple (1 Kgs 8:46-50). Thus with regularity and thanksgiving, Daniel prayed daily without fearing man.

FOR THE PEOPLE OF GOD

9:3-21. Although he was separated from the land of promise and many of his people, Daniel did not forget them. **He prayed for their forgiveness, restoration, and welfare.** This particular prayer was prompted by Daniel’s understanding of the near-conclusion of the Babylonian captivity (9:1-2). In it there is a spiritual order and precision that blesses the soul

- ▣ He recognizes that God honors the covenants He makes (9:4).
- ▣ He knows there is continued mercy for those who love the Lord and keep hold of His commandments (9:4).

I REALIZE THAT IT IS FASHIONABLE TO SAY GOD IS INTERESTED IN THE SMALLEST OF OUR DIFFICULTIES, AND EVER DETAIL OF OUR LIVES. I DO NOT KNOW, HOWEVER, THAT SUCH A THOUGHT CAN BE ESTABLISHED FROM SCRIPTURE.

- ▣ The sin of God’s people is confessed in full recognition of both its nature and greatness. The people sinned, committed iniquity, did wickedly, rebelled, and departed from God’s precepts and judgments. They did not hearken to the prophets who spoke to the people and their leaders (9:5-6).
- ▣ Righteousness belongs to God, and confusion of face belongs to the transgressing people (9:7a).
- ▣ Due retribution belonged to the men of all Judah, Jerusalem, Israel, those who were near, and those who were far off, scattered in foreign countries (9:7b).
- ▣ The trespasses of the people were against the Lord Himself (9:7c).
- ▣ The people, kings, princes, and fathers sinned against God (9:8).

- ▣ Mercies and forgiveness belong to, and come from, God alone. Daniel knew those graces could be obtained, even though the people had rebelled against the Lord (9:9).
- ▣ The people had not obeyed the voice of the Lord to walk after His laws, which were set before them by the prophets (9:10).
- ▣ A curse had been poured out upon the people because they departed from God, refusing to obey His voice. This was done in strict accord with what Moses declared in the law (9:11).
- ▣ In judging Judah, God confirmed the words He spoke against them, and their judges, according to the law of Moses (9:12-13).
- ▣ God was righteous in storing up His

become a reproach to all about them because of their sin (9:16b).

- ▣ Daniel asks the Lord to hear his supplications and cause His face to shine upon His sanctuary, for His own name's sake (9:17).
- ▣ Daniel asks the Lord to listen to him, look upon their desolations, and look upon the city that is called by His name (9:18a).
- ▣ These requests are not presented because of the righteousness of the people, but because of God's great mercies (9:18b).
- ▣ Daniel pleads for the Lord to forgive, hearken, and defer not. This he asks the Lord to do for His own sake, and for the city and people who are called

experienced in prayer. This is evidenced when matters become very clear to the one making the supplication, and circumstances are seen as they really are.

PRAYING FOR UNDERSTANDING

10:2-3,12. Having sensed the approaching close of the Babylonian captivity, Daniel devoted three full weeks to a quest for understanding. During this time he ate no choice food, and avoided all personal comforts. He called the period a time of "*mourning*" (10:1). Later, when an angel was dispatched to give an answer to him, we learn that Daniel had actually set his heart to understand and to chasten himself before the Lord (10:12).

The fervency with which Daniel sought understanding is noteworthy. It no doubt accounts for the remarkable and extensive answer that was sent to him from heaven.

It is my persuasion that much of the spiritual ignorance that exists among the professed people of God is directly traceable to their lack of interest in obtaining an understanding. Their prayers and their quests are too abbreviated. Their exposure to the things of God is too brief. They are too casual about comprehending the things of God, and so they remain in a state of spiritual ignorance.

If understanding is to be obtained, it must be earnestly desired, and sought with all diligence. **This is necessary because we do not live in a vacuum, but in an intensely active moral realm.** There are opposing spiritual forces seeking to hinder the appropriation of "*spiritual understanding.*" This circumstance mandates a fervent and diligent quest.

IT IS MY PERSUASION THAT MUCH OF THE SPIRITUAL IGNORANCE THAT EXISTS AMONG THE PROFESSED PEOPLE OF GOD IS DIRECTLY TRACEABLE TO THEIR LACK OF INTEREST IN OBTAINING AN UNDERSTANDING.

anger against the people, then bringing evil upon them as He promised He would (9:14).

- ▣ Daniel appeals to the Lord's deliverance of the people from Egypt, and the renown He had gained for Himself in doing so (9:15).
- ▣ Daniel pleads with the Lord to turn His anger and fury away from the city of Jerusalem (9:16a).
- ▣ Jerusalem and God's people had

by His name (9:19).

This is a most excellent example of ordering ones cause before the Lord, and filling the mouth with arguments (Job 23:4). It is an example of reasoning together with the Lord (Isa 1:18), and pleading with Him (Isa 43:26).

It is good for the people of God to rise above mediocrity and generalities in their prayers. **There is a certain fellowship with God that can be**

GOD DEALS WITH THE HEATHEN

This book contains extensive revelation of how God deals with those who have no formal affiliation with Him. **Because God is not in covenant with a people or a person by no means suggests they are not answerable to**

Him, or that He does not hold them in strict accountability.

Some are of the opinion that God has no dealings with those who are not in covenant with Him. These views are

fueled by a misapprehension of the nature of God. For example, some have said that "*the Law*" was only for Israel, and not for the world. In this view, the Ten Commandments are perceived as binding only upon Israel. However, this is not the

case, as the book of Daniel will confirm. **As a covenant, the Law of Moses pertained to Israel. But as a definition of sin, it was for the whole world.** Thus we read, “*Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God*” (Rom 3:19). All of this is confirmed in the various responses of God to the heathen kings and nations mentioned in Daniel. None of these were in covenant with Him, or had received a law from Him.

- ▣ Four global heathen empires were decimated by the Kingdom of God: Babylon, Medes and Persians, Greece, and Rome (2:44-45).
- ▣ God struck down Nebuchadnezzar when he took credit for building great Babylon (4:30-33).
- ▣ Through chastening, God taught heathen Nebuchadnezzar that He alone was God, and did whatsoever He pleased (4:34-35).

- ▣ God judged Belshazzar for daring to drink wine from the vessels of God’s house, and not glorifying Him (5:23-28).
- ▣ God took away the dominion of the little horn that sprang out of the fourth kingdom, Rome, which I perceive to be papal power (7:25-26).
- ▣ God broke the power of the notable Grecian horn, Alexander the Great

in the heavenly realms (10:20).

In all of these cases, God governed the heathen with His own people in mind. He used the heathen to chasten His people, and removed them when their work was finished. He never overlooked their pride and insolence against Himself, even though they had neither covenant with, nor law from, Him.

It brings great comfort to consider

IN ALL OF THESE CASES, GOD GOVERNED THE HEATHEN WITH HIS OWN PEOPLE IN MIND. HE USED THE HEATHEN TO CHASTEN HIS PEOPLE, AND REMOVED THEM WHEN THEIR WORK WAS FINISHED.

(8:21-22; 11:4).

- ▣ God broke the power of the little horn that sprang out of Greece, Antiochus Epiphanes (8:25; 11:45).
- ▣ The Persian Empire was overthrown

that Jesus is presently ruling in the midst of His enemies (Psa 110:2). He does not overlook iniquity among those who do not know Him, and with whom He has no covenant. All souls belong to Him, and are held in strict accountability to Him. That is the Divine manner.

THE NATURE OF WORLDLY KINGDOMS

There is an overriding nature to worldly kingdoms, and it is not good. We should know this by the very fact that they are all going to be destroyed by the Kingdom of our God (2:44-45). Daniel was given insights into the nature of the kingdoms of this world.

THEY DETERIORATE IN GLORY

2:33,37-40. In contradiction of the working of the Kingdom of God, the kingdoms of the world tend to deteriorate. With God and His kingdom, the best is last. With the world’s kingdoms, the best is first. This is revealed in the dream given to Nebuchadnezzar regarding the four great global empires.

The first was the Babylonian kingdom, depicted by a head of gold. The second was the kingdom of the Medes and the Persians, portrayed by a chest and arms of silver – of lesser value. The third was likened to a belly and thighs of brass

– even lesser value. The fourth was pictured as legs of iron and feet of iron and clay mixed – far lesser value.

Thus the kingdoms of the world have more glory in their beginning than in their ending. This is to be contrasted with the Kingdom of our God, which is finally more glorious than it was at its beginning.

THEY TEND TO DIVISION

2:33,37-40. While the Kingdom of God is noted for its unity, the kingdoms of the world are noted for their division. They tend to become more divided and more fragmented. This was also made seen in the successive kingdoms made known in Nebuchadnezzar’s first dream.

The Vision of the Image

Babylon was pictured as a single head (2:32a). The Medes and the Persians were divided, and therefore shown as a

chest and two arms (2:32b). The Grecian kingdom was also divided, as shown by a belly and thighs (2:32c). The Roman kingdom was also divided, as shown in legs, feet, and toes (2:33).

The Vision of the Four Beasts

The divisions are further brought out in the vision of the four beasts. The first (Babylon) was a majestic lion with harmony of purpose (7:4). The second was a bear raised up on one side, with one part being dominant over the other (7:5). The third was a leopard with four heads (7:6). The fourth was a ruthless beast with ten horns (7:7).

The Fourth Beast

Division is further accentuated in the extended vision of the fourth beast. First, it had ten horns (7:7). Second, a little horn sprang up among them (7:8a). Third, three of the ten horns were plucked by the roots (7:8b).

The Vision of the Ram and He Goat

The vision of the ram and he goat also declared the tendency to division. First, the ram (the Medes and the Persians) had two horns, with one higher than the other, signifying dominance (8:3). Second, although the he goat had only one horn at first, when it was broken, four sprang up in its place (8:8).

The Demise of the Grecian Empire

In his exposition of the demise of the Grecian Empire, the angel of the Lord emphasized the division of the North (Syria) and the South (Egypt). They were involved in incessant battles and competition with one another (11:6,11,16,40).

overthrown by the Grecian. The Grecians were supplanted by the Romans (2:39-40).

Vision of the Ram and the He Goat

The ram (Medes and Persians) pushed westward, northward, and southward, ravishing other kingdoms (8:3). The he goat (Grecia) attacked and overcame the ram (8:7).

The Demise of the Grecian Empire

The two Grecian factions of Syria and Egypt continually attacked each other (11:6,11,15,40).

THEY ARE BEASTLY IN NATURE

Worldly kingdoms tend to be ruthless and aggressive, like beasts of the

point where God's people are opposed.

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego

King Nebuchadnezzar, drunk with the power God had given to him, made a large golden image. He required that all of the officials fall down and worship the image which he had set up. The government officials of Babylon saw the faithfulness of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego as a threat to the government and their role in it. They therefore informed the king these three men would not bow down to the statue.

The matter infuriated the king. Ultimately, he had the men thrown into a furnace of fire for not obeying his edict (3:1-28).

Daniel and the Lion's Den

Intimidated by Daniel's open and unhindered devotion to God, certain government dignitaries drafted a law that would eventuate, they thought, in the death of Daniel. The law forbade that any prayer or request be made of anyone other than king Darius for a period of thirty days. The outcome was that Daniel refused to quit praying, and was thus consigned to a den of lions. Although Darius did not want to do this to Daniel, the principle of his government mandated that he do so. The edict was overturned by the Lord (Dan 6:7-27).

The Roman Little Horn

Although the "little horn" of the seventh chapter of Daniel is a religious power, it operated upon the principles of worldly government. Because of this, the saints were viewed as a threat, and were thus opposed. It is said of him, "the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them" (7:21).

The Grecian Little Horn

Antiochus Epiphanes was also noted for his oppression of the people of God. It was said that he would "destroy the mighty and holy people" (8:24). It is twice stated that he came up against "the glorious land" – God's land (11:16,41). Once it is written that he came "toward the pleasant land" (8:9).

A CONSISTENT PROPENSITY

Throughout history, the propensity of government to oppose the people of God has been confirmed. It has

DIVISION IS A WORK OF THE FLESH, AS DESCRIBED IN THE WORDS "HATRED, VARIANCE, EMULATIONS, WRATH, STRIFE, SEDITIONS, HERESIES" (GAL 5:20). WORLDLY GOVERNMENT IS FLESH IN ONE OF ITS MORE REFINED FORMS, BUT IT HAS NEVER BEEN ABLE TO CONSISTENTLY AVOID THESE QUALITIES WITHIN ITSELF.

A Work of the Flesh

Division is a work of the flesh, as described in the words "hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies" (Gal 5:20). **Worldly government is flesh in one of its more refined forms**, but it has never been able to consistently avoid these qualities within itself.

THEY STRIVE WITH ONE ANOTHER

Not only do worldly governments tend to division, they also strive with one another, being unable to avoid the competitive spirit. This is also revealed in the book of Daniel.

The Great Image

In the dream of the great image, the hostility of worldly kingdoms was made known. The four kingdoms did not exist simultaneously. Each one was succeeded by another. Babylon was overthrown by the Medes and Persians. The Mede and the Persians were

earth. Thus Babylon was depicted as a ravenous lion (7:3). The Medes and Persians were likened to a ruthless bear with three ribs in its mouth, raising up to "devour much flesh" (7:5). Greece was like a swift leopard who rapidly gained dominion over others (7:6). Rome was pictured as a "dreadful and terrible" beast with strong teeth. It devoured, broke in pieces, and stomped and pulverized what was left (7:7).

You will note that the beastly nature increased with each kingdom. That too is the nature of world kingdoms. They tend to become more ruthless.

THEY TEND TO OPPOSE THE SAINTS

Eventually, worldly governments come against the saints of God. This is because, although ordained by God (Rom 13:1-3), the governments of this world tend to compete against God. Rather than serving their God-ordained role of subduing evil and encouraging good, they set their own agenda. It always comes to

even take place in our own country. Its aggressive suppression of Christian activities, together with its protection of abortion and sodomy, reveal the deadly nature found in the governments of this world. Saints look forward to the time when all opposition will be put down, and the kingdom will be given to the saints of the most high God (8:18,22,27).

THEY ARE MOTIVATED BY SPIRITUAL FORCES

Even though the governments of this world appear influential, and even impregnable, they are actually being manipulated by higher powers. Although the book of Daniel (or any other book) does not comment extensively on this, yet

enough it said for us to draw some sound and comforting conclusions.

An angel from heaven accounted for the fall of Persia and the rise of Greece when speaking with Daniel. **He traced the influence of both kingdoms to spiritual princes:** “*the prince of Persia,*” and “*the prince of Grecia*” (10:20). The overthrowing of “*the prince of Persia*” was accomplished by holy angels. Following that overthrow “*the prince of Grecia*” rose to prominence. The idea is that Persia was a dominant empire as long as “*the prince of Persia*” was free to work. Other the other hand, Greece could not rise to prominence under “*the prince of Grecia*” until “*the prince of*

Persia” was overthrown.

While we must take care not to carry these things further than the boundary of revelation, **enough has been made known to confirm that there is more to the governments of this world than meets the eye.** The book of Daniel gives us a slice of history in remarkable detail.

We are to understand that this is representative of the nature and background of things that take place in this world – all under God’s control. Nothing is really out of control or can be ultimately effective against us.

CHASTENING DELINEATED

Much is revealed about the chastening of the Lord in this book. We learn that while God is loving and longsuffering, He will not tolerate iniquity

Lord. The chastening of the children of Judah was occasioned by their refusal to honor the land sabbaths. The law concerning these sabbaths is stated in the

the fruit thereof; but in the seventh year shall be a sabbath of rest unto the land, a sabbath for the LORD: thou shalt neither sow thy field, nor prune thy vineyard.” (Lev 25:2-4).

MUCH IS REVEALED ABOUT THE CHASTENING OF THE LORD IN THIS BOOK. WE LEARN THAT WHILE GOD IS LOVING AND LONGSUFFERING, HE WILL NOT TOLERATE INIQUITY IN HIS PEOPLE. JUDGMENT DOES BEGIN WITH THE HOUSE OF GOD

in His people. Judgment **DOES** begin with the house of God, as Peter affirmed. As it is written, “*For the time is come that 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 of God? And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?*” (1 Pet 4:17-18). We must, therefore, learn from the perspectives of chastening that are provided in this book.

THE BABYLONIAN CAPTIVITY

The bulk of Daniel’s ministry took place during the Babylonian captivity, which itself was a chastening from the

book of Exodus, together with the reason for it. “*And six years thou shalt sow thy land, and shalt gather in the fruits thereof: but the seventh year thou shalt let it rest and lie still; that the poor of thy people may eat: and what they leave the beasts of the field shall eat. In like manner thou shalt deal with thy vineyard, and with thy oliveyard*” (Exo 23:11). The law was clarified even more in the book of Leviticus. “*Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye come into the land which I give you, then shall the land keep a sabbath unto the LORD. Six years thou shalt sow thy field, and six years thou shalt prune thy vineyard, and gather in*

Under the Law, God also moved Moses to speak of what He would do if the people did not honor the land-sabbaths. “*Then shall the land enjoy her sabbaths, as long as it lieth desolate, and ye be in your enemies’ land; even then shall the land rest, and enjoy her sabbaths. As long as it lieth desolate it shall rest; because it did not rest in your sabbaths, when ye dwelt upon it*” (Lev 26:34-35).

Beginning with king Saul, the people did not honor these sabbaths. This lasted for a period of four hundred and ninety years – a time during which seventy land-sabbaths were not honored. As a result of this, the people of God were chastened. Jeremiah was chosen to inform the people of the chastening, and the reason for it. Here are his words. “*And this whole land shall be a desolation, and an astonishment; and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years. . . . For thus saith the LORD, That after seventy years be accomplished at Babylon I will visit you, and perform my good word toward you, in causing you to return to this place*” (Jer 25:11; 29:10).

Scripture also clarifies that this had to do with the land-sabbaths that were not honored. *“To fulfil the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed her sabbaths: for as long as she lay desolate she kept sabbath, to fulfil threescore and ten years”* (2 Chron 36:21).

This was the prophecy that confirmed to Daniel that the Babylonian captivity was about to conclude. It was then that he set himself to pray for the Temple, the city of Jerusalem, and the people of God (9:2-3).

A person without spiritual understanding cannot conceive of God chastening in such a severe manner, and for such an extended time, over such an issue. However, that is the Divine manner, and it has been recorded for our learning to assist us in avoiding similar judgments.

THE CHASTENING OF NEBUCHADNEZZAR

The Babylonian captivity was a corporate chastening. In Nebuchadnezzar we see one that was personal – directed to a single individual. Habakkuk prophesied of the Babylonian, or Chaldean, captivity (Hab 1:6-10). He emphasized the ferocity with which they would carry out their Divinely appointed mission. He also foretold the punishment of the king of Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar. *“Then shall his mind change, and he shall pass over, and offend, imputing this his power unto his god”* (Hab 1:11).

The chastening of which Habakkuk prophesied is chronicled in the book of Daniel. First, Nebuchadnezzar was warned of the impending chastening in a dream. In the dream he saw a flourishing tree that was eventually cut down, then allow to sprout once again. Daniel interpreted the dream to the king. The king was the tree, and had grown fat and prideful because of his own imagined glory. The chastening was spelled out. *“That they shall drive thee from men, and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field, and they shall make thee to eat grass as oxen, and they shall wet thee with the dew of heaven, and seven times shall pass over thee, till thou know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever He*

will” (Dan 4:25). One year later, the time came when Nebuchadnezzar walked in his palace and reasoned, *“Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom by the might of my power, and for the honor of my majesty?”* (Dan 4:30). No sooner had the words dropped from his mouth than a voice came from heaven. *“O king Nebuchadnezzar, to thee it is spoken; The kingdom is departed from thee. And they shall drive thee from men, and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field: they shall make thee to eat grass as oxen, and seven times shall pass over thee, until thou know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever He will”* (Dan 4:32). The same hour the word was fulfilled, and *“he was driven from men, and did eat grass as oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven, till his hairs were grown like eagles’ feathers,*

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and his nails like birds’ claws” (Dan 4:33).

There is no reason to suspect that God does not operate in the same manner today – chastening prideful rulers who do not give Him the glory.

THE REIGN OF ANTIOCHUS EPIPHANES

The ruthless rule of Antiochus Epiphanes is associated with the chastening of the Lord. The allusions to this chastening are vague, yet clear enough to understand what was happening.

When we are introduced to this despot, we are told a host was *“given to him,”* enabling him to do away with the *“daily sacrifice,”* cast truth down *“to the ground,”* and practice and prosper without any seeming restraint. **However, a brief word is declared which**

connects this activity with chastening: “by reason of transgression” (8:12). Other versions read, *“because of transgression,”*^{NKJV} *“on account of transgression,”*^{NASB} and *“because of rebellion.”*^{NIV} Another allusion is made to this in the twelfth chapter, where the scattering of the power of the holy people is mentioned (12:6). That is, the chastening would involve the thorough crushing of their pride.

CONCLUSION

The chastening of the Lord is something with which every child of God must be familiar. Solemnly we are told, *“For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is He whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without*

chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons” (Heb 12:6-8).

Chastening is not a pleasant experience, nor, indeed, should it be. **It is one of the ways the Lord rebukes His wayward children.** As it is written, *“And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of Him”* (Heb 12:5).

The ultimate design behind the Lord’s chastening is that we might *“be partakers of His holiness”* (Heb 12:10). There are certain things that prohibit our participation in holiness, *“without which no man shall see the Lord”* (Heb 12:14). Chastening, if received and endured, will have a purging effect upon us. Thus it is said of this experience, *“Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be*

joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby” (Heb 12:11).

The severe chastening that was experienced under wicked Antiochus Epiphanes effectively purged from the remnant of God’s

people the things that had stubbornly remained among them in spite of very much Divine longsuffering.

THE IMPACT OF REVELATION

There are some indications in Daniel of the impact Divine revelation has upon the individual. **Those who are passive and indifferent about the Lord have probably never been knowingly faced with His presence, power, and will.**

in the kingdom could declare the interpretation of the dream. Yet, he said, “*thou art able.*” During the period that followed, the Lord made the interpretation known to Daniel. The effect of the experience is noteworthy. Daniel was “*was **astonied for one hour, and his thoughts troubled him***”

eating grass like an ox, roaming the open fields with beasts. This would come upon the king because of his pride. The king did not know the Lord ruled the kingdoms of men, giving them to whomever He pleased. **Therefore, God would reduce him to a brute beast until he learned that truth.**

I AM ALWAYS CONCERNED WHEN PEOPLE CAN SPEAK ABOUT A GREAT FALLING AWAY, THE JUDGMENT OF THE WICKED, AND JUDGMENT BEGINNING AT THE HOUSE OF GOD WITH SUCH PASSIVITY AND CALMNESS. THAT POSTURE INDICATES THE MESSAGE HAS REALLY NOT DAWNED UPON THEM.

To Daniel, this was not a mere Bible story. The awareness of such a judgment jarred his intellect and challenged his powers of reason and expression.

There are messages from God which, when taken seriously, disconcert the individual, causing one to tremble at the Word of God. John received such a word when told of the apostate church, and he “*marveled with great amazement*”^{NKJV} (Rev 17:6). When he was given the book of Divine destiny to eat, it became “*bitter*” in his belly (Rev 10:9-10).

Some revelations are so weighty they thoroughly disrupt the soul. They speak of judgments that are awesome and extensive, causing the heart to tremble. Such revelations were made known to Daniel, and they had an effect upon him.

(4:19). Other versions say he was “*astonished,*”^{NKJV} “*appalled,*”^{NASB} “*perplexed,*”^{NIV} and “*severely distressed.*”^{NRSV} The word “*astonied*” can also mean “*stunned.*”^{STRONG’S}

A messenger came to Ezekiel with a similar word. A book was spread out before him “*written within and without*” with “*lamentations, mourning, and woe.*” When he ate the book, he was told to cause his stomach to be “*filled with this scroll.*” In his mouth it was “*as honey for sweetness.*” However, it was not sweet in his belly. His spirit became hot, and he remained “*astonished*” by the river of Chebar “*for seven days*” (Ezek 2:9-15).

The mere exposure of a mortal to a heavenly messenger can be disconcerting. This is not always owing to particular sin found in the one receiving the revelation, but is rather owing to the weakness of the human constitution. In Daniel, we are exposed to the unusual effects of encounters with heavenly beings.

The revelation of this dream was like a shock to Daniel’s humanity, sending waves of agitation throughout his soul. It virtually incapacitated him “*for one hour.*”

Also, his thoughts – the ones revealed to him – “*troubled him.*” Other versions read “*alarmed,*”^{NASB} “*terrified,*”^{NIV} and “*aghast at the meaning of the dream.*”^{NLT} The meaning of the word “*troubled*” includes the idea of dismayed, depressed, or horrified.

In both cases, with Daniel and Ezekiel, the message was one of woe and judgment. Those messages were of such magnitude with when they were seen they brought great trouble and distress.

ASTONIED FOR ONE HOUR

When Nebuchadnezzar dreamed of a great tree that was cut down, he remembered every detail of the dream. However, he had no understanding of its meaning. Upon calling for Daniel, the king told him that none of the wise men

We learn from the text that it was the nature of the message that so alarmed Daniel. He was told that Nebuchadnezzar was going to be given a beast’s heart for seven years, losing all rationality, and

I am always concerned when people can speak about a great falling away, the judgment of the wicked, and judgment beginning at the house of God with such passivity

and calmness. That posture indicates the message has really not dawned upon them.

ON HIS FACE IN A DEEP SLEEP

On one occasion, the angel Gabriel was commanded to make Daniel “understand the vision” of ram and the he goat, and the various things made known in it. As Gabriel drew near to Daniel, the prophet wrote, “I was afraid, and fell upon my face” (Dan 8:17). The clash of glory with the flesh dissipated his strength and fear gripped his heart. That confirms the vast chasm that has been created by sin between those on earth and those in heaven.

As the angel spoke with Daniel, his natural capacities were simply not able to function in a state of normalcy. Daniel said he remained “in a deep sleep on my face toward the ground” until the angel “touched” him, setting him “upright.” (Dan 8:18).

A similar thing happened when a heavenly messenger appeared to Daniel during the third year of the reign of Cyrus the Persian. Again, as the angel spoke, Daniel reports, “Yet heard I the voice of his words: and when I heard the voice of his words, then was I in a deep sleep on my face, and my face toward the ground” (Dan 10:9). He remained in that state until the angel “touched” him, setting him on his knees and the palms of his hands (10:10).

NO STRENGTH REMAINED

However robust and strong a person’s body may appear, a single encounter with an angel from heaven can drain all power from one’s physical constitution. Thus Daniel speaks of an angelic encounter in these words. “Therefore I was left alone, and saw this great vision, and there remained no strength in me: for my comeliness was turned in me into corruption, and I retained no strength” (Dan 10:8). This took place at the sight of the angel, and before he began to speak.

Later Daniel confessed he said to the angel, “I have retained no strength,” and “straightway there remained no strength in me” (10:16,17).

BECAME DUMB

An angelic encounter also resulted in the loss of Daniel’s power of speech. It is written, “And when he had spoken such words unto me, I set my face toward the ground, and I became dumb,” or “speechless” ^{NKJV} (Dan 10:15). A single encounter with a single angel who had a single message, and the tongue, which “no man can tame” (James 3:8) lost all abilities of expression.

SORROWS TURNED UPON HIM

IF SUCH AN IMPACT IS REGISTERED UPON THE HUMAN CONSTITUTION BY THE SIGHT AND MESSAGE OF A SINGLE ANGEL, WHAT CAN BE SAID OF THE APPEARANCE OF THE LORD HIMSELF IN ALL OF HIS GLORY?

The message delivered to Daniel in the tenth chapter of his book brought great sorrow upon him. After the angel enabled Daniel to speak, he said to the angel, “O my lord, by the vision my sorrows are turned upon me” (Dan 10:16). Other versions read, “my sorrows have overwhelmed me,” ^{NKJV} “anguish has come upon me,” ^{NASB} and “because of the vision such pains have come upon me.” ^{NRSV}

Daniel would be shown visions and interpretations that would speak of the plundering and defilement of the Temple, the cessation of the daily sacrifice and the oppression of the people of God. He could not take such a message casually. His deep love for the Lord, His Temple, His city, and His people caused sorrow to dominate him for a season.

NO BREATH REMAINED IN HIM

In a sense, an encounter with an angel from heaven – even to one greatly beloved of God – was like a strong blow to the pit of one’s stomach. **It took Daniel’s breath away.** It was a shock to his physical constitution. Of the experience Daniel wrote, “For how can the servant of this my lord talk with this my lord? for as for me, straightway there

remained no strength in me, **neither is there breath left in me**” (Dan 10:17).

THE LESSON TO BE LEARNED

If such an impact is registered upon the human constitution by the sight and message of a single angel, what can be said of the appearance of the Lord Himself in all of His glory?

Today there is much foolishness

taught in the name of the Lord – particularly regarding His second coming. Some conceive of the world fighting with the glorified Christ as Jesus leads His people forth in military conquest. All such talk betrays an abysmal ignorance of both the glory and power of the Lord Jesus.

No person or group of persons ever thought to engage a single angel in combat. The mere look of the Lord “through the pillar of fire and of the cloud,” “troubled the host of the Egyptians, and took off their chariot wheels.” The Egyptians did not decide to fight the Lord, or to resist Him. Instead they cried out, “Let us flee from the face of Israel; for the LORD fighteth for them against the Egyptians” (Ex 14:24-25).

And what will happen when the Lord descends from heaven with a mighty shout, the voice of the archangel, and the trump of God? What of when He comes in all of His own glory, the Father’s glory, and the glory of all of the holy angels (Lk 9:26)? **What power will remain in flesh at that time? Who will dare to hurl aspersions at the Lord’s Christ at that time? Who will take up stones to stone Him then, as they did when He walked among men?** (John 10:31)?

THE THRONE ROOM

There are precious few glimpses of the throne room of God in Scripture.

ISAIAH

Isaiah was given a view of the heavenly chambers. *“In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory. And the*

bow that is in the cloud in the day of rain, so was the appearance of the brightness round about. This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the LORD. And when I saw it, I fell upon my face, and I heard a voice of one that spake” (Ezek 1:28).

ZECHARIAH

Zechariah was given to see the throne room of God. *“And he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the LORD, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him. And the LORD said unto Satan, The LORD rebuke*

and upon the seats I saw four and twenty elders sitting, clothed in white raiment; and they had on their heads crowns of gold. And out of the throne proceeded lightnings and thunderings and voices: and there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God. And before the throne there was a sea of glass like unto crystal: and in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne, were four beasts full of eyes before and behind” (Rev 4:2-6).

DANIEL

Now, Daniel is added to this illustrious number – people given to behold the very throne room of Almighty God. **This is the place from which the affairs of this world are governed.** It is the domain from which kings are thrown down and raised up. Times and seasons are determined in this sacred place.

After being introduced to the ruthless kingdoms of this world, and a “little horn” that would wreak havoc among men, Daniel was shown the throne of God. *“I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of His head like the pure wool: His throne was like the fiery flame, and His wheels as burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before Him: thousand thousands ministered unto Him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him”* (Dan 7:10).

Who is able to stand before this throne, or to resist the judgments that issue **forth from it**? The answer is obvious – no one! All power and authority issue forth from this throne. **The majestic powers that surround it, ministering to the Lord enthroned there, are all superior to anyone upon the earth or under the earth.** Edicts issued from this throne cannot be thwarted or countermanded.

The One upon this throne does whatever He wills among the armies of heaven and the inhabitants of earth, and none can restrain Him.

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posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke” (Isa 6:1-4).

MICAHIAH

Micaiah the prophet was also given a glimpse of the throne. *“I saw the LORD sitting on his throne, and all the host of heaven standing by him on his right hand and on his left”* (1 Kgs 22:19).

EZEKIEL

Ezekiel saw *“visions of God,”* in which a heavenly throne was seen. *“And above the firmament that was over their heads was the likeness of a throne, as the appearance of a sapphire stone: and upon the likeness of the throne was the likeness as the appearance of a man above upon it. And I saw as the color of amber, as the appearance of fire round about within it, from the appearance of his loins even upward, and from the appearance of his loins even downward, I saw as it were the appearance of fire, and it had brightness round about. As the appearance of the*

thee, O Satan; even the LORD that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee: is not this a brand plucked out of the fire? Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, and stood before the angel. And he answered and spake unto those that stood before him, saying, Take away the filthy garments from him. And unto him he said, Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment. And I said, Let them set a fair miter upon his head. So they set a fair miter upon his head, and clothed him with garments. And the angel of the LORD stood by” (Zech 3:1-5).

JOHN THE BELOVED

John the beloved also had a vision of the throne. *“And immediately I was in the spirit; and, behold, a throne was set in heaven, and One sat on the throne. And He that sat was to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone: and there was a rainbow round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald. And round about the throne were four and twenty seats:*

THE DAY OF JUDGMENT

The prophet Daniel was also granted to see some of the involvements of the day of judgment. While the amount of information given to him was not significant, the weight of it was unmistakably large. *“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”* (Dan 7:10).

A PUBLIC JUDGMENT

“ . . . thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him.” We learn from this that the judgment will be a public affair, with a surrounding host of ministering spirits. These are the angels before whom Jesus will confess those who have confessed Him before men (Luke 12:8). Those who have denied Him will also be denied before this ministering

host (Luke 12:9). Here, before this vast host, God will be *“justified in all of His sayings”* (Rom 3:4).

THE JUDGMENT IS SET

“The judgment was set.” There is an appointed time when the heavenly court will convene, and the judgment will begin. Paul spoke of it in this manner: *“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). **There is no way to avoid this day, or for it to be postponed.** The time will come when the day of judgment will commence, and everyone will be there.

EVERYTHING WILL BE KNOWN

“ . . . and the books were opened.” The “books” will be “opened”—something

that was also revealed to John the beloved. *“And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works”* (Rev 20:12).

These are the record of the thoughts, words, and deeds of mankind. There will be *“nothing hid, which shall not be manifested; neither was any thing kept secret, but that it should come abroad”* (Mark 4:22). The books will be “opened.”

Things that were “hidden” upon the earth will be brought to light by God, and even the *“counsels of the heart”* will be made known (1 Cor 4:5). All of that, and more, is involved in the books being “opened.”

THE SAINTS TAKE THE KINGDOM

Prior to Christ, very little was known of the saints receiving the Kingdom.

AT CREATION

Although God created man *“to have dominion,”* the revelation of the scope of that dominion was extremely limited. *“And God said, Let us make man in Our image, after Our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him; male and female created He them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth”* (Gen 1:26-28).

THE PSALMS

The Psalmist said, *“Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet: all sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field; the fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas”* (Psa 8:8).

TO NOAH

After the earth was cleansed in the flood, and only eight people were found upon it, God spoke to Noah. *“And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth, and upon every*

fowl of the air, upon all that moveth upon the earth, and upon all the fishes of the sea; into your hand are they delivered. Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you; even as the green herb have I given you all things” (Gen 9:3).

HEBREWS

The Holy Spirit has revealed to those in Christ that although man was made to have dominion, **he does not yet possess it.** With the entrance of sin into the world, mankind realized a loss of dominion. *“Thou madest him a little*

THE HOLY SPIRIT HAS REVEALED TO THOSE IN CHRIST THAT ALTHOUGH MAN WAS MADE TO HAVE DOMINION, HE DOES NOT YET POSSESS IT. WITH THE ENTRANCE OF SIN INTO THE WORLD, MANKIND REALIZED A LOSS OF DOMINION.

AFTER BEING SHOWN A VISION OF GLOBAL KINGDOMS AND THEIR EXPLOITS, THE LORD REVEALED TO DANIEL THAT THE ENTIRETY OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD WAS GOING TO BE GIVEN TO THE SAINTS.. HE WAS TOLD THIS WAS A DIVINE APPOINTMENT, AND IT WAS SURE TO COME.

lower than the angels; thou crownedst him with glory and honor, and didst **set him over the works of Thy hands:** Thou hast **put all things in subjection under his feet.** For in that He put all in subjection under him, He left nothing that is not put under him. **But now we see not yet all things put under him**" (Heb 2:7-8).

In other words, the extent of the dominion for which God created man was much more than it appeared to be. "All things" goes beyond beasts, fowl, and fish. Yet, prior to Christ, little this dominion was revealed.

DANIEL

In this matter, Daniel was given to see much more than was previously

known. God did not show Daniel a vision of the animal kingdom being ruled by men – although that will surely take place when creation is liberated from the bondage of corruption (Rom 8:21).

After being shown a vision of global kingdoms and their exploits, the Lord revealed to Daniel that **the entirety of the kingdom of God was going to be given to the saints..** He was told this was a Divine appointment, and it was sure to come.

THE SAINTS WILL TAKE THE KINGDOM. "But the saints of the most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever" (Dan 7:18).

THE TIME WILL COME. "Until

the Ancient of days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the most High; and **the time came** that the saints possessed the kingdom" (Dan 7:22).

THE KINGDOM IN ALL OF ITS GREATNESS WILL BE GIVEN TO THE SAINTS. "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**" (Dan 7:27). The New Revised Standard Version provides an interesting reading of this text. "The kingship and dominion and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven shall be given to the people of the holy ones of the Most High; **their kingdom shall be an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey THEM.**"

No other person prior to Christ received such a clear view of the ultimate reign of the saints of God. After Jesus was exalted, we were told about reigning with Christ (2 Tim 2:12), judging the world (1 Cor 6:2), judging angels (1 Cor 6:3). How singularly marvelous it is that Daniel was given to see the glorious reign of the saints in such vivid detail!

THE COMING OF MESSIAH

Within the context of jostling empires, and the rise and fall of kings and kingdoms, Daniel was given to see the coming of the Messiah, and His exaltation as well.

THE COMING OF THE MESSIAH

With astounding precision, Daniel was told of the coming of the Messiah. This included pinpointing when He would begin His ministry, and when He would die for the sins of the people. The beginning of His Messianic ministry at His baptism would occur four hundred and thirty-four years after the restoration of Jerusalem began under Ezra (27 A.D.). Thus it is written, "Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build

Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks (434 years): the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times." (Dan 9:25).

THE DEATH OF THE MESSIAH

The time of the death of the Messiah was also revealed. It would be in the midst of the seventieth week, or three and one-half years after His ministry began. "And after threescore and two weeks (after the city was built) shall Messiah be cut off" (Dan 9:26). The precise time is said to be "in the midst of the week," which was the seventieth week, or around A.D. 30.

THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF

MESSIAH'S DEATH

Prior to Christ, there were very few revelations about what would be accomplished by the death of Christ. In Eden it was presented as Satan bruising Christ's heel, and a time when He would bruise the serpent's head (Gen 3:15). In the Psalms it was seen as a time when He was forsaken by God (Psa 22:1), and a time when He was oppressed by men (Psa 22:13-18; 69:21,26; 109:25). Isaiah spoke of His death as the time when His appearance was marred more than any of the sons of men (Isa 52:14). Isaiah also was given to see the substitutionary aspect of Christ's death (Isa 53:5-6,8,10-12). Zechariah declared He would die by the hand of His friends (Zech 13:6). What marvelous things will Daniel see?

Ponder what was revealed to Daniel concerning the accomplishments of Christ's death. ". . . 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)

Finish the Transgression

That is, as a result of the coming Messiah, the tendency to transgress would, in Him, be brought to an end. There would be a new creation (2 Cor 5:17), in which men have their stony heart removed, and a new and pliable heart of flesh be given to them (Ezek 11:19; 36:26). By putting His laws "into their minds" and writing them "in their hearts" (Heb 8:10), God would transform the people, causing them to walk in His statutes (Ezek 36:27). Those in covenant with God through the Christ would no longer be noted for sinning.

Make An End of Sin

Here the idea is that of bringing an end to the reign of sin. It would be toppled from the throne so that men would no longer be enslaved by it, being "servants of sin" and "free from righteousness" (Rom 6:17,20).

This is a prophetic declaration of the taking away of the sins of the world (John 1:29). The scape-goat of heaven would bear them into an uninhabitable land, where they would be remembered "no more" (Lev 16:10-22; Heb 8:12).

Make Reconciliation for Iniquity

This declares the means by which sin would be done away, expiated, or removed from Divine consideration. Apostolic doctrine elaborates on this marvelous accomplishment. "For He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin . . ." (2 Cor 5:21). And again, "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree" (Gal 3:13). And again, "Who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed" (1 Pet 2:24).

From another perspective, this was God Himself laying upon Christ "the

WHAT HAS BEEN MADE KNOWN ABOUT THE COMING MESSIAH IS SO SURE THE PROPHECY AND VISION CAN BE STAMPED WITH A SEAL JUST AS THOUGH IT HAD ALREADY BEEN FULFILLED. THERE IS NO POSSIBILITY THAT IT WOULD NOT HAPPEN – THAT THE MESSIAH WOULD NOT COME IN THE FULNESS OF THE TIME, BRINGING NEWNESS OF HEART AND SPIRIT, TAKING AWAY THE SINS OF THE WORLD, SATISFYING THE RIGHTEOUS DEMANDS OF GOD, AND BRINGING EVERLASTING RIGHTEOUSNESS WITHIN THE REACH OF FALLEN HUMANITY.

iniquity of us all" (Isa 53:6). It was Jesus suffering for our sins, "the Just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God" (1 Pet 3:18). It was God in Christ Jesus "reconciling the world unto Himself" (2 Cor 5:18-20).

Bring In Everlasting Righteousness

If ever men were going to become righteous, righteousness would have to be brought in. At the time of Daniel, sin had reigned uncontested for around 3,500 years. It had prevailed to such an extent that the Divine assessment was, "there is none righteous, no not one" (Rom 3:10). **Men have to be "made righteous."**

Because Jesus effectively took away the sins of the world, God is now the "Justifier" of those who believe on His Son – and He is "Just" in doing so (Rom 3:26). Now, having put the believer in Christ Jesus, God makes Jesus to be "wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption" (1 Cor 1:30). From another perspective, He imputes His own righteousness to those believing on His Son. As it is written, "But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness. Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works" (Rom 4:6).

Seal Up the Vision

This sealing does not refer to a concealment of the prophecy, but to its predetermined fulfillment. **What has been made known about the coming Messiah is so sure the prophecy and**

vision can be stamped with a seal just as though it had already been fulfilled. There is no possibility that it would not happen – that the Messiah would not come in the fulness of the time, bringing newness of heart and spirit, taking away the sins of the world, satisfying the righteous demands of God, and bringing everlasting righteousness within the reach of fallen humanity.

Anoint the Most Holy

The vision and the prophecy related to men having access to God through an effective Mediator. In covenantal words, "And they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know Me, from the least to the greatest" (Heb 8:11). This is nothing less than entrance into the Most Holy place – the holy of holies. Our bold access to the throne of grace is involved in this. "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).

This refers to "the new and living way, which He has consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, His flesh" (Heb 10:20). **By anointing the holy place, Jesus has cleansed or sanctified it for our entrance.** Now the sons of God may traffic in the place formerly forbidden to them. It has been sprinkled with His blood, purifying "heavenly things" for the use of the redeemed of the Lord (Heb 9:23).

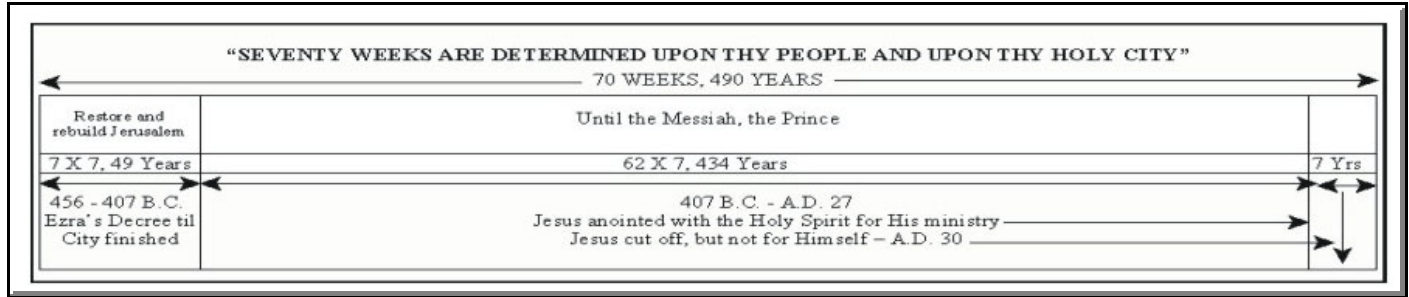
Conclusion

Today, more than 2,500 years after Daniel's prophecy, the things revealed to Him about Christ remain

obscured to great numbers of professing believers. It is improper for any

person in this day of salvation to see less of the Messiah than was seen by

Daniel. This is the day of the unsealed truth of the Gospel, which is to be known.



THE EXALTATION OF MESSIAH

The exaltation of Christ was not seen with clarity prior to His ascension. Some few references were made to it, but they were not attended with any measurable degree of clarity. The second Psalm refers to Christ's enthronement and the necessity of yielding to Him (Psa 2:8-12). The twenty-fourth Psalm alludes to His ascension as Him returning from a great victory (Psa 24:7-10). The sixty-eighth Psalm speaks of Him ascending on high and receiving gifts for men (Psa 68:18). Isaiah prophesied, *“a king shall reign in righteousness”* (Isa 32:1).

Ponder what was revealed to Daniel concerning the exaltation of Christ.

“I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed” (Dan 7:13-14).

Son of Man

In all of the Scriptures prior to Christ, Daniel is the only book in which the Messiah is referred to as *“The Son of Man.”* That term is used eighty-six in the Scriptures after Christ, but only once before His appearance in the world. Eighty-three of these are found in the Gospels, when Jesus Himself was

speaking. One is found in the book of Acts (Acts 7:56). Two are found in the book of the Revelation (1:13; 14:14).

The term “Son of Man” refers to the Christ in His redemptive capacity. This does not refer to Jesus merely as the premier Man, but as the One chosen to redeem man. It is most remarkable that Daniel was given to see Him in this capacity. It would be as the glorified *“Man”* that He would be exalted.

He Came With the Clouds

“ . . . came with the clouds of heaven . . . ” Other versions read, *“coming with the clouds of heaven,”*^{NKJV} and *“with the clouds of heaven One like a Son of man was coming.”*^{NASB}

Those familiar with Scripture will recall the Lord's use of these very words when referring to His return to earth. *“they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory”* (Mat 24:30; Mk 13:26). *“Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven”* (Mat 26:64; Mk 14:62). In these texts, Jesus is referring to His second coming, when He returns to be seen by *“every eye”* (Rev 1:7).

This text, however, refers to Him coming to *“the Ancient of days,”* or *“God the Father,”* as Jesus called Him (John 6:27). **This has reference to His ascension into heaven when “a cloud received Him out of their (the**

disciples) *sight,”* and into the presence of the Father (Acts 1:9).

They Brought Him Near to Him

“ . . . and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought Him near before Him.” This has to do with Christ's entrance into heaven and reception by the Father. This is the point at which the Father *“highly exalted”* the Son, giving Him a *“name that is above every name”* (Phil 2:9). **In order for men to be received by God, He must first receive the Son and what He did in the behalf of men.**

The entrance of the risen Savior into heaven is a key point of Apostolic doctrine. Here, as well as some other places, it is seen in prophecy, which, by its very nature, is not as specific as the declaration of the fulfillment of the prophecy. The fulfillment of the prophetic word is what Peter referred to as *“a more sure word of prophecy,”*^{KJV} or *“the prophetic word confirmed”*^{NKJV} (2 Pet 1:19). **It is to our advantage to acquaint ourselves with the ascension of Jesus.** Once again, this is the point at which He *“came”* *“with the clouds of heaven,”* and *“unto the Ancient of Days.”*

He Was Given Dominion

“And there was given Him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom. . . ” **This equates to Jesus receiving all power in heaven and in earth** (Matt 28:18). It was what Jesus referred to when He said, *“And I appoint unto you a*

kingdom, as My Father hath appointed unto Me" (Luke 22:29).

Daniel was given to see what Paul would powerfully declare as accomplished

many years later. "He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named,

not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: and hath put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be the head over all things to the church" (Eph 1:20-22).

THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD

The resurrection of all the dead was introduced by the prophets, but without extensive elaboration. Job spoke of it, but with little clarity (Job 14:12-15; 19:25-27). David was given to see something of the resurrection (Psa 16:9-10; 17:15; 49:15). Isaiah was given to see

the earth" are the bodies. They are said to "sleep" in view of their imminent resurrection. When the earth passes away, the bodies that are asleep there will awaken by the word of Christ (John 5:28). Thus, the grave is seen as a temporal abode, and what is placed in it

from the dead, and their future is *dreadful*. "Shame" speaks of disgrace, reproach, and rebuke. **The unrighteous will be faced with an eternity in which shame will never be lifted, and reproach will never cease.** There will be a lively sense of total rejection that is ever growing and intensifying within them.

THEN, WITHIN THE ENVIRONMENT OF THE NEW HEAVENS AND THE NEW EARTH, AND IN THE PRESENCE OF GOD, THE LAMB, AND THE HOLY ANGELS, THEY WILL COLLECTIVELY SHINE AS THE BRIGHTNESS OF THE FIRMAMENT, AND INDIVIDUALLY AS THE STARS FOREVER AND EVER.

"*Everlasting contempt*" speaks of being repulsive, abhorred, and detestable. In this world, there are some facets of even wicked people that do not appear detestable. Often there are commendable traits found in people who are themselves wicked and cut off from God. **But it will not be so when they are raised from the dead.** Even though they may have been honored and revered in this world, in the world to come they will be held in utter contempt which will never cease, but only increase.

the resurrection as the dissolution of death (Isa 25:8), when the earth would "cast out the dead" (Isa 26:19). Hosea spoke of God ransoming people from the power of the grave (Hos 13:14). Aside from these, few references were made to what we call the general resurrection.

will come forth from it.

SOME TO EVERLASTING LIFE

Just as surely as there is a distinction among men, **that distinction will be made known in the resurrection.** Some who are raised will enter into "everlasting life," with not a single aspect of death remaining in or around them.

THEY WILL SHINE

The righteous will gain many advantages in the resurrection. Although they were subjected to shame in this world, and often counted as "the filth of the world" and "the offscouring of all things," it will not be so when they are raised from the dead. **Then, within the environment of the new heavens and the new earth, and in the presence of God, the Lamb, and the holy angels, they will collectively shine as the brightness of the firmament, and individually as the stars forever and ever.** That is a remarkable revelation to be given prior to the enthronement of Jesus.

Ponder what was made known to Daniel about the resurrection. In his case, the point was not the resurrection itself, but events that would occur at that time.

"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. And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever" (Dan 12:2-3).

All of this is made more plain in Jesus. But it was not so plain in Daniel's day. In every translation of Scripture, this is the only Old Covenant writing in which the words "everlasting life" occur. While no other prophet spoke of the resurrection in this way, Jesus did (Matt 25:46; John 5:28-29). It is, therefore, noteworthy that such wonderful knowledge was vouchsafed to Daniel.

SOME TO SHAME AND EVERLASTING CONTEMPT

The wicked will also be raised

A SPECIFIC PLACE RESERVED

"But go thou thy way till the end be: for thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at the end of the days" (12:13). Daniel was comforted with a promise of what he would experience **after** the resurrection.

SLEEPING AND WAKING

Those who "sleep in the dust of

Soon his life on earth would end, and he would “*go the way of all the earth*” (1 Kgs 2:2). **But in the end, he would stand**

in his appointed place, and occupy the domain for which he was prepared in this world. Once again,

this is an out-of-the-ordinary insight for the times of Daniel. He received it because he was “*greatly beloved*.” (9:23; 10:11,19).

WHEN PROPHECIES ARE REVEALED

One of the key things I personally gleaned from this book is when prophecies can be properly understood. A special point is made of this in the twelfth chapter. Daniel was told to seal up what was shown to him until “*the time of the end*.” The texts read as follows. “*But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end*” (Dan 12:4), and “*Go thy way, Daniel: for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end*” (Dan 12:9).

THE TIME OF THE END

The “*time of the end*” is the time during which the things that are written will begin to be fulfilled. At that time, they will be opened, and will become more apparent. When the things the angel has made known begin to happen, **then** the truth of them can be more clearly seen.

The things that were revealed to Daniel were not intended to be used to formulate an official religious position. They are not mere intellectual dainties, or theological fads to be traded back and forth among religious specialists. **They were to be recorded precisely as they were given. Then, when they came to pass, they would be unfolded to the elect, yielding edification and comfort.**

In this way, the Word of God is seen as “*seed*” (Luke 8:11). When it finds lodging in an “*honest and good heart*,” the time has come for it to be unfolded. All times before that were “*even to the time of the end*.”

The Manner of the Kingdom

This is a kingdom manner, or a way in which God deals with humanity. **When what God has declared occurs in human experience, then light is shed upon it, and the book is unsealed.** At that time, those who are involved in the experience receive the

understanding they did not have before.

Peter on Pentecost

A most excellent example of this facet of the kingdom is seen on the day of Pentecost. At that time God began to fulfill many things that were formerly like Daniel’s prophecy – shut up and sealed. The words of these prophecies were known, but their meaning remained veiled.

When the Holy Spirit was

with one that is yet to be fulfilled. Of this “*More sure word*” Peter writes, “*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 Pet 1:19).

This “*more sure word*” relates to the accomplishments of the Lord Jesus as contained in the Gospel. He has already put away sin (Heb 9:25), reconciled the world to God (2 Cor 5:18-20), destroyed

WHEN THE HOLY SPIRIT WAS “SHED FORTH” BY THE LORD JESUS, AND PROPHESED EVENTS BEGAN TO TAKE PLACE, PETER AT ONCE SAW MORE IN CERTAIN TEXTS THAN HE HAD EVER SEEN BEFORE.

“*shed forth*” by the Lord Jesus, and **propheied events began to take place, Peter at once saw more in certain texts than he had ever seen before.** He saw the truth of Joel’s prophecy (Acts 2:16-21; Joel 2:28-32). He saw the truth of David’s words (Acts 2:25-28; Psa 16:8-11). He saw the truth of God’s promise to David concerning One who would sit on his throne (Acts 2:30-33; 2 Sam 7:11-16; 1 Chron 17:11-15). He saw the truth of David’s Psalmic prophesy (Acts 2:34-36; Psa 110:1-3).

The time of those prophecies had come, and thus they were opened to the hearts of the faithful.

Until the Day Dawn

This principle is also seen in Peter’s word concerning the “*more sure word of prophecy*” that those in Christ possess. A “*more sure word*” is one that has already been fulfilled, as compared

the devil (Heb 2:14), plundered principalities and powers (Col 2:15), and is “*the end of the law for righteousness*” (Rom 10:4). He has already made peace with God through the “*blood of His cross*” (Col 1:20), and is ever living “*to make intercession for us*” (Heb 7:25).

These things being true, this is the time when they can be understood – when the book can be unsealed, so to speak. **Therefore, as we diligently give heed to them, making them a priority in our thoughts and meditations, they will be opened to us.** What a marvelous truth!

A Common Experience

When you experience what God has said, it opens to your understanding. **In this sense, you know no more of God’s Word than you have actually experienced.** A person whose heart has actually been circumcised is able to arrive

at an understanding of “*the circumcision of Christ*” (Col 2:11). For all others, the matter is “*shut up*” and “*sealed*.” The best they can do is philosophize about it,

and **philosophy has no moral or spiritual power.**

When the Lord has “*opened*” your

heart, the Scripture that declares He opened Lydia’s heart comes alive to you (Acts 16:14). Until that time, such expressions are “*shut up*” and “*sealed*.”

CONCLUSION

Thus we come to the conclusion of this marvelous book. In it we have seen the God of heaven revealed and extolled in order that we might trust in Him and live by every word proceeding out of His mouth. If the times in which we are living are difficult, let us resort to the book of Daniel for comfort and consolation. If we are faced with a difficult environment in which to minister, consider the circumstances under which Daniel

ministered. If we are called to pass through hard trials, ponder the furnace of fire and the den of lions, and expect to be delivered. If your peers malign you and seek your hurt, think of those who conspired against Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, and against Daniel as well. If you are young, by faith look forward to protection like the four children of Judah. If you are old, expect to be given something special from God. If you do not

understand, seek understanding, and be willing to wait like Daniel. If you are concerned for the people of God, pray for them like Daniel did. If you have message to deliver that is difficult, declare it like Daniel. If you have to give bad news, be heart-broken about it like Daniel was. If you see something wonderful in God’s word, linger longer, and you will see some more, like Daniel did. You can learn much from this man of God.

Our next Hungry Saints Meeting will be held on Friday, 7/25/2003. In this session, we begin an overview of the book of Colossians. Our text will be the first two verses of chapter one. The title of our lesson is, “**PAUL AND TIMOTHY TO THE FAITHFUL BRETHREN.**” This lesson will contain an introduction to the church at Colossae, the excellent qualities of both Paul and Timothy, and the necessity of delivering edifying and instructive words to the people of God. Our meeting will begin at 7:00 P.M. You are invited to bring your family and friends for fellowship around the Word of God. Refreshments are served afterward, with a time of extended fellowship for everyone.

*The Blakely Family: Given, June, Benjamin, Jonathan, and Eva
406 South Sergeant Street, Joplin, MO 64801*

A place where believers can meet, fellowship, be edified, and express themselves.

Telephone: (417) 782-3063, Email: Given (GivenB@aol.com) June: (JuneE01@aol.com)

ADAH’s Webpage: <http://wotruth.com/adah.htm> -- EVA’s Webpage: <http://wotruth.com/Eva.htm>

Benjamin (Bensvison@aol.com), Jonathan (Jonstalk@aol.com), Eva (Evablakely@aol.com)
Adah Hutchcraft (ALHutchcraft@milligan.edu), Jason Hutchcraft (hutchcraftj@esr.edu)

WORD OF TRUTH Website: <http://wotruth.com>

WORD OF TRUTH FELLOWSHIP Website: <http://wotruth.com/wotf/wotindex.htm>

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