

Daniel

INTRODUCTION

Along with thousands of captives from Judah who were taken into Babylonian exile between 605 B.C. and 582 B.C., the treasures of Solomon's palace and the temple were also transported. The Babylonians had subdued all the provinces ruled by Assyria and had consolidated their empire into an area that covered much of the Middle East.

To govern such a diversified kingdom over such an expanse of space required a skillful administrative bureaucracy. Slaves who were educated or possessed needed skills became the manpower for the government. Because of their wisdom, knowledge, and handsome appearance, four young Hebrews were selected for the training program (1:4). The outstanding character of Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah secured positions for them in the king's palace; and it was Daniel who rose to excel all the wise men of that vast empire (6:1-3).

Daniel has three main sections: Introduction to the person of Daniel (ch. 1), Daniel's key tests of character and the development of his prophetic interpretation skills (chs. 2-7), and his series of visions about future kingdoms and events (chs. 8-12). In this final section, Daniel emerges as a key prophetic book for understanding much of the Bible. Many insights into end-times prophecies are dependent upon an understanding of this book. Jesus' comments in the Olivet Discourse (Matt. 24; 25) and many of the revelations given to the apostle Paul find harmony and cohesion in Daniel (see Rom. 11; 2 Thess. 2). Likewise, it becomes a necessary study companion to the Book of Revelation.

Although the interpretation of Daniel, like Revelation, is subject to great diversity, for many the dispensational approach has become quite popular. It is an interpretive approach that sees in Daniel keys to help unlock the mysteries of such subjects as the Antichrist, the Great Tribulation, the Second Coming of Christ, the Times of the Gentiles, future resurrections, and judgments. This approach also sees most unfulfilled prophecy as revolving around two major focal points: 1) the future destiny of the city of Jerusalem; 2) the future destiny of Daniel's people, national Jews (9:24).

Daniel's writing covers the reign of two kingdoms, Babylon and Medo-Persia, and four kings: Nebuchadnezzar (2:11-4:37); Belshazzar (5:1-31); Darius (6:1-28); and Cyrus (10:1-11:1).

(Spirit Filled Life Bible Introduction to Daniel, Coleman Cox Philips)

Daniel 1:1-21

This book begins with an historical and biographical introduction in the first chapter. Daniel as a captive exile represents his nation in their servitude and captivity, while his holy separation from heathen pollutions (vv. 8-17), the care and favor of God towards him, and his heavenly insight into the deep mysteries of the future (v. 20), represent the divine superiority of the elect people of God, even in their exile, to their proud heathen masters. As Daniel saw the beginning, so he lived to see the end of the Babylonian captivity under Cyrus, and the downfall of the haughty oppressor, Babylon (v. 21). The greatness of the world at its best is transitory; the people of God, at their worst, are still heirs of heavenly glory.

Firmness in faith is consistent with gentleness of demeanor. Many, under the pretext of faithfulness in bearing testimony, cover over a spirit of ostentation and love of opposition. Daniel did not court martyrdom for its own sake, but sought by conciliatory means, to maintain a conscience void of offence, without the least compromise of principle. So "God brought him into favor and tender love with the prince of the eunuchs" (v. 9); and ultimately, when the time of training was completed, God had endowed Daniel and his three companions with such "knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom," that "the king found them ten times better than all the magicians and astrologers that were in all his realm" (vv. 17, 20). God thus made one of the despised covenant-people to excel the Chaldean sages in the very science on which they most prided themselves: an earnest of the final triumph of the people of God, though now so downtrodden, above all their enemies. Let us see that we give our sympathies to, and take our portion among, the people of God at all costs; for whosoever, like Daniel, shall confess the Lord before men, shall be confessed by Him before the assembled universe when He shall come in His glory.

(Bible Commentary, Jamieson, Fausset and Brown)

Why did Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-Nego object to partaking of the king's delicacies?

Lev. 11:43-47 Deut. 32:36-38 1 Cor. 8:10

How did God reward their courage?

Why do you think the chief of the eunuchs or the king had their names changed?

Dan 4:8

Is God once again bringing His downtrodden people into a superior position than those people surrounding them?

Daniel 2:1-49

Nebuchadnezzar, with all his worldly greatness, could not escape troubles of spirit (v. 1), which drove away sleep: whereas the sleep of the laboring man is generally sweet and sound. How often cares and restless anxieties are the attendants of that worldly elevation which is so much coveted by many!

Nebuchadnezzar, the representative of the world-power, receives the dream, which sets forth the final overthrow of the world-kingdom by the kingdom of God. He who first overthrew the theocracy is made by God the very medium of announcing the downfall of not only his own, but of the three other successive world-empires, by means of the kingdom of heaven, then seemingly prostrate, but at last about to be the universal kingdom.

The Chaldeans' ignorance of the king's dream, a thing of the past, proved their inability to interpret its meaning, which concerned the future. They were therefore compelled, out of their own mouth, to convict themselves as impostors, and to confess that none on earth can reveal the future, save those whom the God of heaven enables to do so, unconsciously, and by anticipation, thereby avouching the divine inspiration of Daniel (vv. 10, 11).

When God revealed the secret to Daniel, Daniel ascribed the whole glory to Him who alone deserved it, "the God of heaven" (v. 19). "Blessed be the name of God forever and ever: for wisdom and might are His" (v. 20). It is right and just that our praises should correspond to God's goodness (v. 21-23). Let us, like Daniel, clearly recognize and avow that the vicissitudes of states, as well as their "times and seasons," are not the result of fortuitous circumstances, but of God's providence, and that these form part of His mighty scheme in the moral government of the world for the ultimate setting up of the universal kingdom of God and His Christ. As all wisdom and light (vv. 21, 22) emanate from "the Father of lights," let us continually ask of Him who giveth liberally to all who ask (Jas. 1:5): so shall the eyes of our understanding be enlightened (Eph. 1:17, 18).

Daniel thanks and praises God as the "God of his fathers" (v. 23) thereby recognizing the truth that the grace which, he now receives from God is in accordance with the covenant made by God with His people of old. The Lord's faithfulness to His everlasting covenant and promises is the great source of consolation to His children in times of difficulty and fear, and is their great theme of praise when they have experienced His saving mercies.

Daniel, being learned in Chaldean lore, could speak authoritatively as to what it could discover, and what it could not; and he plainly tells the king that it was utterly unable to show him his secret; but he adds, "There is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets" (v. 28). How great is the privilege of the servants of God, of whom it is written, "Barely the Lord God will do nothing, but he revealeth His secret unto His servants the prophets!" (Amos 3:7). In our Gospel dispensation our eyes are blessed in seeing, and our ears in hearing, things which many prophets and righteous men desired to see and hear, but saw not and heard not (Matt. 13:16, 17, Luke 10:23, 24). At the same time, as Daniel disclaims all merit in the interpretation of the dream (v. 3), ascribing it solely to the wisdom and grace of the All-wise, All-loving God, so it is the feeling of every true saint, God has revealed His Son in me (Gal. 1:15, 16), not for any merit of mine, but "according to the good pleasure of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, wherein He hath made us accepted in the Beloved" (Eph. 1:5, 6).

The design of the interpretation in respect to Nebuchadnezzar was, "that He might know the thoughts of his heart" (v. 30). The moral probation (critical examination) of men's character is one of the leading reasons of all God's dealings with us in providence and grace, in prosperity and adversity, in what He hides from us, and what He reveals to us of the future.

The world-power, in relation to the kingdom of God is essentially *one*, while its manifestations in world-empires, whose course has affected the kingdom of God, have been, since Daniel's time inclusive, *four*: therefore the colossal human image seen by Nebuchadnezzar, the head of the first world-empire, was one, though composed of four distinct metals, representing successively those four world-empires: namely, the golden head, representing Babylon in the person of Nebuchadnezzar; the breast and arms of silver, representing Medo-Persia; the belly and thighs of brass, Graeco-Macedonia; ; the legs of iron, and feet partly iron and partly clay, Rome. The huge colossus of metal stands on fragile feet of mingled iron and clay, containing within themselves the elements of its downfall. Side by side with the image lay on the earth a seemingly insignificant stone, but one cut out from the everlasting mountain by the Almighty Spirit of God, without human hands (vv. 34, 45). Though small, and unheeded at first, it had in it elements of duration, being compact in its homogeneous unity: whereas the world-power in its heterogeneous composition contained the ingredients of its final dissolution. The stone represents the kingdom of God, the fifth and everlasting world-wide empire of Messiah, which began in humiliation, but which at His second coming shall smite the image on the feet (v. 34), and become a great mountain, filling the whole earth (v. 35). Originally cut out from the mountain, it ends in becoming a mountain; just so the kingdom of God, having come from the height of heaven, the mount of the Father's glory, and antitype (that which was foreshadowed) to Zion, and having been framed by God Himself at the first, shall eventuate in the establishment of the kingdom of heaven on earth, and the dwelling of God with men (Rev. 21:3, 10, 11). It is observable that the metals become baser and baser, and lessen in specific gravity, as they go downwards, silver being less heavy and valuable than gold, brass than silver, and iron than brass, implying a successive degeneracy and deterioration from bad to worse. On the contrary, the kingdom of the stone, Christ Jesus, precious from the first, though a stone of stumbling to many, and to Israel especially, from humiliation at first, progresses to surpassing grandeur and universal glory at last (Ps. 118:22). The world-kingsdoms are, in spite of themselves, constrained unconsciously to minister towards the setting up of this coming kingdom of God, which is the final end towards which God is overruling all the affairs of the earth. Woe be to the antichristian faction of the ten kingdoms which, under the man of sin, shall be smitten by this stone! As the fourth kingdom of iron "will break in pieces" others (v. 40), so in just retribution shall itself, in the person of its last Christ-opposed representatives, be broken to pieces simultaneously, and become like the chaff of the summer threshing-floors, so that no place shall be found for them (verses 35, 44). Then the world-empire, delegated by God to Nebuchadnezzar and other world-rulers for a time, but abused by them to subserve their own ambition and lust, instead of being held as a sacred trust for the glory of the King of kings, shall be wrested from them by the Divine Son of man, the Lord of lords, who will exercise it for ever in righteousness for the glory of God and the good of man, and shall so restore to man his long-lost inheritance (vv. 37, 38, 44; Ps. 8:4-6).

The effect of Daniel's interpretation on Nebuchadnezzar was, "he fell upon his face" before the servant of God. He who was accustomed to kings falling on their face before him, prostrates himself abjectly before his captive—a striking earnest of the future prostration of the world-powers before Messiah and His saints in the coming kingdom (1 Cor. 6:2; Phil. 2:10; Luke 19:17). Then shall there be no king of kings acknowledged save Messiah, "the God of gods, and the Lord of kings" (v.47; Rev. 17:14). Meanwhile, let us who bear His name, so honor Him in our whole tempers, words, and lives, that the men of the world, falling down on their faces, may worship, not us, but God, and report that God is in us of a truth (1 Cor. 14:25).

(Bible Commentary, Jamieson, Fausset and Brown)

Name the five Empires spoken of here and in what empire are we living in today?

Daniel 3:1-30

Nebuchadnezzar had confessed, upon the interpretation of his remarkable dream by Daniel (chapter 2:47), "Of a truth . . . your God is a God of gods, and a Lord of kings." But though he had thus confessed God when just relieved from his

previous anxiety, he had never renounced his idols. Men, in times of trouble, will worship the Lord, but still all the time not renounce their heart-idols. And these latter will soon, if cherished, supplant the remembrance of the only true God. So it was in the case of Nebuchadnezzar. Losing sight of the fact that Jehovah will not have a divided allegiance, he still retains his idols. Elated with his conquests of Judea and Syria, subsequently to his dream, and choosing to remember of the latter only so much as flattered his self-deifying pride, he determined, with the rich spoils which he had carried home, to realize, in the form, of an outward colossal idol of gold, the statement of Daniel (chapter 2:38), "Thou art this head of gold." Overweening pride contains in it the root of self-worship, and is utterly incompatible with the sincere worship of the Lord God.

The cruel decree of the king seems not to have solely originated from himself. There were many of the Babylonian courtiers jealous of the high position of the Jews in the king's court. Accordingly, by flattery and misrepresentation, they induced him to pass the decree affecting all recusants, representing such refusal of worship to the golden image of himself as an act of treason against his majesty, as the civil and religious "head" of the empire. Herein Nebuchadnezzar is a type of the Antichrist, to whose image as many as will not offer worship shall be killed (Rev. 13:14). It is "they that dwell in the earth"—that is, the earthly-minded—who shall comply. Then, too, as in Nebuchadnezzar's time, the godly few, the elect remnant, shall, at the cost of being found guilty of treason to the earthly ruler, eschew treason to the King of kings.

The miraculous deliverance of the three godly youths from the fiery furnace, as recorded in this chapter, manifested the glory of God before the haughty King of Babylon at a time when the heathen world-power seemed triumphant, and the cause of the people of God hopelessly lost. So wonderfully does God make the wrath of man to praise him, and restrain the remainder of wrath (Ps. 76:10)

(Bible Commentary, Jamieson, Fausset and Brown)

Why did it offend the king when some did not worship the golden idol?

Is it a self-destroying folly to fear man, who at his worst can only kill the body?

Show how Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-Nego took their stand before king Nebuchadnezzar?

Dan. 3:17-18

Stephen in Acts 7 was brought before the high priest to defend his faith but the end result was quite different from Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-Nego. **Knowing the outcome of both cases what would you say is the message to us as Christians?**

Who do you think the fourth person in the fire was?

Gen. 8:12-18 Job 38:1 Ps. 23:3-4 Ps. 34:7-8 Ps. 138:7 Isa. 43:1-3 Dan. 3:28

Daniel 4:1-37

In this chapter we have the instructive confession of Nebuchadnezzar as to his own past self-deifying pride, the consequent warning of God, and the judgment of God on him, deferred for a season of grace, but at last executed, and the blessed effect of the chastisement on him in producing humility, prayer, praise, and devotion towards the most High.

When man seeks to lift himself up to a level with God, he is justly doomed by God to sink beneath man's dignity, to the level of the beast. Nebuchadnezzar, like Adam our progenitor, had been given by God the delegated lordship over both men and also "the beasts of the field" (chapter 2:38); but as he would be a god, he thereby at once lost his lordship and became brutish. Prosperity was his snare. "At rest" from wars wherein he had been invariably victorious, and "flourishing" in an uninterrupted flow of affluence, he forgot that he was but a frail mortal. God, therefore, who is jealous for His own majesty, and will not allow His honor to be usurped by any other, gave him an awful admonitory dream. How apt we are, when our worldly wealth abounds, to forget what weak, dying creatures we are, and with what a holy God we have to do! God therefore in mercy sends us warnings, "that He may withdraw man from his purpose, and hide pride from man, and keep back his soul from the pit" (Job 33:17, 18).

Nebuchadnezzar had had experience many years before of Daniel's inspired skill in interpreting dreams which baffled the power of all the soothsayers of Babylon. And yet he did not have recourse to Daniel until he had first tried all the Chaldean sages in vain. Thus God often permits us to try all earthly physicians and remedies first, in order that the worthlessness of these to the soul may be proved, before He leads us by His Spirit to the Good Physician, who heals all our spiritual diseases effectually and at once with His atoning blood and righteousness. How sad it is that, after we have once tasted His grace, we yet should be so prone to go back to worldly idols! The Lord Jesus Christ has the fullness of "the Spirit of the holy God" (v. 9), so that He can tell us all that is in our heart, and all the will of God concerning us; nor

will He, on account of our past preference of others to Him, cast us out when we come to Him, but "all things that He has heard of His Father, He will make known to us" (John 15:15).

The dream represented Nebuchadnezzar under the image of a wide spreading tree in the midst of the earth, whose height reached towards heaven, whose leaves were fair, and whose fruit was abundant, under whose shadow the beasts sheltered, and in whose boughs the fowls of the heaven dwelt (vv. 10-12). Instead of fulfilling God's purpose in establishing a world-empire under his headship, by seeking the glory of God, and the good of man, and even of the dumb creatures under him, Nebuchadnezzar made a god of himself. The trust was therefore to be taken from him; and in his case first, the world was to be shown that mere man is not fit to be entrusted with the government of the earth; and that therefore men must look for the coming of Messiah the God-man, the Lord of man and of the lower animals, under the shadow of whose universal kingdom on earth the men of every nation shall dwell in security and blessedness (Ezek. 17:23; Matt. 13:32), and even the brute creation shall partake of the general peace and happiness (Isa. 11:6-9).

A heavenly watcher, a holy one from above (v. 13), is represented as having come down, in accordance with the "decree" of the Most High (v. 24), whose will and word are the will and word of His assembled angels, and are the answer to their petitions, wherein they "demand" (v. 17) that every mortal should be abased (v. 37), whosoever, like Nebuchadnezzar, try to obscure, in self-exalting pride, the glory that is the prerogative of God alone. "Hew down the tree, and cut off his branches," the heavenly watcher cried aloud (v. 14). It is a solemn thought that angels are, by God's command, ever watching our conduct; watching over His children for their good; watching over the ungodly to record their sins in the book of judgment, and at last to punish them. At any moment the "decree" may go forth from God against the unhumiliated sinner among us, in accordance with "the demand by the word of the holy ones," Hew down the sinner who is either barren, and therefore unprofitable, or else bears fruit only for self, and not for the glory of God and the good of his fellow-men. Then shall all the seemingly green leaves be shaken off from him, and his fair-looking fruit shall be scattered; and all who once gathered about him shall forsake him (v. 14).

Yet God remembered mercy to Nebuchadnezzar amidst judgment. It is true his heart or understanding was to be changed from man's, and that of a beast was to be given him; and this was to continue so for "seven times," a perfect revolution of time being the disciplinary period appointed to bring with it a complete revolution in his mind. But then his severe chastisement was to terminate, its gracious design having been accomplished in his being brought humbly to look up unto God (v. 34). Therefore the stump of the tree was left secured by a band of iron and brass from injury through the sun's heat. The angels had pleaded against him before God, demanding his humiliation for his pride, and so the decree had gone forth against him: but God had still grace in store for him; and therefore when, in accordance with their "demand," those "living" on earth had been made, by God's judgment on him, to "know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever He will," abasing the proud (v. 17), then God restored his understanding and reason (vv. 34, 36).

It is the tendency of the natural heart, if it confess God at all, to wish to limit His agency to *heaven*. Proud man, therefore, must be taught that "the heavens do rule" (v. 26) on earth, and that the Most High reigneth not only above, but here below also "in the kingdom of men," and that "He doeth according to His will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay His hand, or say unto Him, What doest thou?" (v. 35.) It is not one's talents or royal birth which are the *first* cause of any man's elevation—it is simply God's will. The king of Babylon abased to the dunghill, and then lifted up again out of the dust to the world-wide throne (1 Sam. 2:8), was experimentally to know this himself, and to be an example to men of all ages, teaching us that "promotion cometh neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south: but God is the judge; He putteth down one, and setteth up another."

The faithfulness of Daniel in his telling an absolute king the whole of the terrible message from God, without compromise or abatement, definitely fixing the application to Nebuchadnezzar himself, is a pattern for all ministers of God. While avoiding violent denunciations of wrath, as though they took pleasure in the sinner's punishment, ministers must not shun to declare the whole counsel of God, lovingly, indeed, and tenderly, but at the same time without fear or flattery of man, and trying to bring home the sense of guilt personally to each conscience. The sinner must be made to hear the voice of God speaking to his soul, "It is *thou*" (v. 22), "*Thou* art the man" (2 Sam. 12: 7).

Even yet Daniel held out to Nebuchadnezzar a hope of suspension of judgment, and prolongation of his reign in tranquillity, before wrath should descend, if he would still repent, and "break off *his* sins by righteousness, and his iniquities by showing mercy to the poor" (v. 27). God is indeed slow to wrath. Oh how this lovely feature in the character of our God should move us to put away from us whatsoever sins in us grieve Him, and provoke His displeasure!

But the long-suffering of God was set at nought by Nebuchadnezzar. A respite of a year (v. 29) was granted to him, to leave him without excuse. Probably at the first announcement of judgment to come he was alarmed, and *intended* to reform. But when execution was delayed, his deceitful heart whispered to him that it would never come (Eccl. 8:11); so he returned to his former pride, selfishness, and unrighteousness. Standing upon the roof of his gorgeous palace (v. 29), and looking down upon his golden capital, which owed much of its splendor to the public works which he had caused to be carried on by the forced and unremunerated labor of the poor, to whom he had shown no mercy (v. 27), he exclaimed, in self-glorifying elation, "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?" (v. 30.) It was while he was in the very act of so speaking that God also spoke the self-glorifier's judgment, in order that the inseparable connection might be marked between the sinner's pride and the sinner's

judicial downfall. Hypochondriacal madness, sent from God, whereby he fancied himself a beast, along with a conspiracy of his nobles, "drove" him (v. 32) to dwell with the beasts in the wide grass parks of the palace, which abounded in deer and wild animals kept there for the chase. Thus sore chastisements were made the means of bringing him to humble repentance. And when this was wrought, God graciously restored him to the respect of his counselors and lords (v. 36). With his return to God he returned to his true dignity as a man, no longer the associate of beasts. The glory, honor, and brightness of *his* kingdom returned unto him (v. 36), when once he learned to adore the "honor" and "everlasting dominion" of *God's* kingdom. 'Stability in his kingdom and excellent Majesty was *added* unto him' (v. 36), such as he had not enjoyed before, so long as he reigned without the humble recognition of the allegiance which he owed to the Most High, as being wholly dependent on Him. His lifting up his eyes to heaven (v. 34), from where the voice had come for his punishment (v. 31), was the first symptom of his return, to understanding. Previously his eyes, like the beast's, had been downward to the earth. But now he turns to Him that smote him (Isa. 9:13), with the faint glimmer of reason left him, and accepts as just the punishment of his iniquity. Immediately mercy from God followed. And the first use which he made of his restored reason was to "praise and honor Him that liveth for ever" (v. 34) to "extol Him as the king of heaven, all whose works are truth, and His ways judgment." Let us who possess this noble faculty of man, reason, use it for the glory of Him who gave it, not for the pampering of our intellectual pride! Let us remember that only so long as man lives as the humble, trusting, and obedient dependent on the God of heaven, is he truly partaker of man's highest prerogative above the brutes, union with the highest and most glorious being in the universe!

(Bible Commentary, Jamieson, Fausset and Brown)

Find other places in scripture where a heavenly being like the one in Dan. 4:13 came down with a message from the Most High?

Could the decree held out to king Nebuchadnezzar be suspended or put off for a period of time?

Dan. 4:27

Show how King Nebuchadnezzar was humbled at the end of the time of his judgment.

Dan. 4:36-37

Daniel 5:1-31

Babylon's cup of guilt was now almost full, and needed but one crowning act of profanity to be added, to make it overflow with vengeance on the transgressor. The messenger of God's wrath, Cyrus, was at the gates of the doomed city—a fact which might be thought well calculated to arouse the most careless to serious reflection: and yet this was the time that Belshazzar the king chose wherein to "make a great feast" for his nobles. God gave him up to a judicial infatuation, so that, relying on the fortifications and abundant provisions of the city, he despised the besieging army. Security and sensuality are the sure forerunners of the sinner's doom. When the eyes of the culprit are covered, he is on the very verge of his execution.

While Belshazzar was under the influence of wine, he dared to do a deed of audacious impiety which brought down the immediate interposition of the insulted Majesty of heaven. Not from any necessity, or to shed honor on the banquet, but in reckless and wanton profanity, he caused the sacred vessels of the temple of Jehovah to be brought forth; and he, his princes, his wives, and his concubines, drank in them, while they sang the praises of their gods of gold, silver, brass, iron, wood, and stone, as though these were above Jehovah, the Lord God of heaven and earth. How often do intoxicating drinks tempt men to daring acts of ungodliness, which in their sober times they would be afraid to venture on! Intoxication does not excuse sin, but rather adds sin to sin.

In order to mark plainly the inseparable connection of impious pride and the divine punishment, "the same hour" (v. 5) that witnessed the king's profanation of the holy name of Jehovah, and of His consecrated vessels, was the hour in which the fingers of the invisible God wrote, full in the view of the king and his impious courtiers and mistresses, the awful sentence of his doom. The very walls of the palace, which were covered with flattering praises, in cuneiform writing, of the exploits of the Babylonian kings, now presented to Belshazzar's eyes a mysterious inscription, from which his guilty conscience already foreboded nothing but evil. The king's bright countenance in a moment "was changed," his thoughts were troubled, his whole nervous frame was unstrung, and his knees smote one against another (v. 6). How instantaneously God can make the stoutest sinner to tremble! Nothing more is needed, in order to trouble, agitate, and unnerve him, than that his own thoughts and fears should be let loose upon him. No anguish can exceed that of a self-accusing conscience suddenly awakened, in the midst of carnal mirth, to a realizing sense of the terrors of the Lord.

After that all the sages of Babylon had attempted in vain to read and interpret the mysterious writing, Daniel is at last consulted, by the advice of the queen-mother, probably Nitocris. His past services, which had been lost sight of in the corrupt court of Belshazzar, were again brought into view; and the king is reminded that, though Daniel has been for long neglected, yet that Belshazzar's forefather, Nebuchadnezzar, had treated him as one "in whom was the spirit of the holy

gods, and light, understanding, and excellent wisdom" (vv. 11, 14). The ungodly great men of the world despise the godly in time of prosperity; but are most glad to avail themselves of their services in times of adversity. Estimating all things, even spiritual realities, by the standard of money, they think that the godly do the same; and therefore they try to bribe the servant of God (v. 17) to procure for them deliverance from wrath and an easy mind. But the true child of God will show a spirit superior to the love of gain, even as Daniel agreed to read and interpret the writing, but declined to accept the king's gifts and rewards. Nothing tends more to injure a believer's usefulness than that he should be seen by the world, like Balaam and Gehazi, to be greedy of gain: and, on the contrary, nothing tends more to make the worldly to feel that believers are influenced by principles far above their own, than that they should see the children of God, as Daniel and Paul (Acts 20:33-35), ready to do whatever good they can, without regard to worldly advantage.

Daniel, with characteristic faithfulness, sets before the king his great sin. The most high God, of His own grace, had given to Nebuchadnezzar his forefather an universal and absolute monarchy, with majesty in the eyes of his subjects, glory from a succession of victories, and honor from the beautification of his capital (vv. 18, 19). That monarch, however, instead of ascribing the glory to God, had his heart lifted up "by his greatness," and "his mind hardened in pride" (v. 20); therefore the God who gave also took away for a time his kingly throne and glory from him: Nebuchadnezzar was driven from the sons of men, and as he had sunk himself from man's true dignity by severing himself from dependence on God. His heart was, in righteous retribution, made like the beasts: and being spiritually untamed, "like a wild ass's colt" (Job 11:12), "his dwelling was with the wild asses, till he knew that the most high God ruleth in the kingdom of men" (v. 21). Yet, though knowing all this, Belshazzar his grandson had not humbled his heart (v. 22), but had "lifted up himself against the Lord of heaven," and had advanced to a degree of profanity which Nebuchadnezzar had never reached, making the vessels of Jehovah the instruments of his unhallowed revelry, and of that of his lords and concubines; while at the same time he and they praised their senseless idols, robbing the God in whose hands his breath was, and whoso were all his ways, of the glory which is his due (v. 23): therefore, said Daniel, God sent forth the mysterious hand which wrote his doom. God had numbered the years of his empire, and that number was now completed (v. 26). Weighed in the balances of God's truth, he is found wanting in moral weight (v. 27). His kingdom was now to be divided between the Medes and Persians (v. 28). What a picture we have here of every reprobate sinner's course and final doom! Unwarned by the judgments inflicted on others before him, on account of pride and rebellion against God, the sinner still takes no heed to glorify the God in whose hand his breath is. And whose are all his ways. Instead of humbling himself in repentance, he either openly or else virtually lifts up himself against the Lord of heaven, following after worldliness, covetousness, or sensuality as his portion, and making the perishing things of time his idol. At last judgment, long deferred in mercy, goes forth, God brings to the appointed end the allotted number of the sinner's days. Then follows the judgment whereby, weighed in the balances of God, he is found wanting in the only thing which carries weight with God—faith working by love. His past privileges are taken from him forever, and given to another, while he himself is "cut asunder, and his portion is appointed with the hypocrites; where shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Matt. 24:51).

The writing was interpreted by Daniel in an early part of the night, and before the night closed, both the writing and its interpretation were proved, in the awful fulfillment, to be true, Belshazzar having been slain, the city taken, and the Babylonian kingdom divided among the Medes and Persians. Let the impenitent be warned that no one tittle of God's writing in His Word shall fail to come to pass: alike the self-righteous, when weighed in the balance of the law, and the formalist and hypocrite, weighed in the balance of the Gospel, shall be found wanting, and shall suffer accordingly. Lord, do thou root out the pride of our natural hearts, and clothe us with humility! "So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom!" (Ps. 90:12) "Receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear!" (Heb. 12:28.)

(Bible Commentary, Jamieson, Fausset and Brown)

Do you think countries today are weighed in the balances like the Babylonian empire (Dan. 5:27).

Is there any warnings for countries that go against Israel?

Gen. 12:2-3

Daniel 6:1-28

Though Daniel had escaped this fiery furnace of Nebuchadnezzar, he was not to escape the ordeal of persecution. It was the gracious and wise design of God that his servant should be sorely tried, in order to test his faith, and to discipline him in the school of affliction: and, finally, that in his deliverance the glory of God might be set forth, before the whole heathen world. Such an "excellent spirit" was found in him that the king of the great world-empire of that day advanced him to the highest rank and authority in the realm. It is to the honor of religion when its professors conduct themselves so in earthly relations as to win the esteem and confidence of even worldly men. Darius, sensual, weak, and averse to business himself, had yet the sagacity to discern moral and intellectual excellence in this servant of God; and Providence

overruled the king's very incapacity to the good of not merely Daniel, but also of the Jews, the covenant-people, through the commanding influence of Daniel with the king.

But high office and rank, though so much coveted by most men, is the position most of all exposed to envy, malice, and calumny. Daniel, therefore, was eyed by many of the Medo-Persian presidents and princes with jealousy and hatred. And when once these bad passions take possession of men they are not long in finding some pretext for giving vent to their dislike, and assailing the innocent object of it. After watching long and narrowly for some flaw in Daniel's conduct in his administration, the Medo-Persian nobles could find no occasion against him, except concerning the law of his God (v. 5). How much it tends to the glory of God, when the enemies of His people can find no other handle for censure except that the latter walk according to the law of God, even where it is in opposition to the course of the world!

The princes, knowing the weakness of Darius' character, hit upon an expedient most likely to succeed in entrapping him into becoming the instrument in their hands for the destruction of Daniel. Assembling in tumultuous haste they flock together to the king, in order to take him by surprise, and leave him no time for calm reflection. They doubtlessly represented to him the insecurity of his dynasty through the recency of its establishment, upon the fall of the Babylonian empire, and the need which therefore existed of some test-act, to put to the proof the loyalty of his conquered subjects. As being reputed the representative of Ormuzd, the chief Persian god, the king was regarded as entitled to religious homage. They accordingly propose, as if it were the request of all the counsellors of the empire, in their solicitude for the safety of their beloved king, that he will establish a royal statute, in his own name and theirs, that whosoever shall ask any petition of God or man for thirty days, save of himself, shall be cast into the den of lions (v. 7). Persecuting laws are generally made on false pretences; as, for instance, on the ground of political expediency, the safety of the reigning dynasty, or so-called state necessity. Flattery and cruelty often go hand in hand. "A man that flattereth his neighbor spreadeth a net for his feet" (Prov. 29:6). How much we should be on our guard against the "flattering mouth" that "worketh ruin". (Prov. 26:28) Let us avoid hasty counsels and rash words, easily spoken in a moment of weakness, but impossible to recall and undo, and sure to entail on us unavailing remorse and bitter self-reproach in the end. When worldly men flatter us, let us beware of being tempted aside into a wrong course by self-love, which swallows eagerly their praises. To "seek the honor which cometh from God only" (John 5:44) is the only antidote against being ensnared by the love of men's hollow praises.

Instead of venting loud reproaches against his malicious accusers, Daniel goes at once to God, and spreads his whole case in prayer before him. Withdrawing from the agitations of court, with the full knowledge of the decree that had been signed, and the penal consequences of violating it, Daniel went into his chamber, and his windows being open toward Jerusalem, the established place of God's manifestation on earth, "he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime" (v. 10). If Daniel could find time habitually to pray three times a day amidst the business of a vast empire devolving on him, which of us can justly say he is too busy to have time to pray? We are the creatures of habit: let us systematically adopt this blessed habit, and have fixed hours of prayer, and, so far from retarding, we shall find that it much advances our worldly business, by procuring for us strength from above for the discharge of every duty, whether great or small. As Daniel, in exile, looked towards the earthly temple, so let us lift up our eyes towards Christ, our heavenly temple, from this earthly scene of our captivity. As Daniel prayed openly and avowedly, so let us do as God and conscience would have us to do, and not as the fear of man's anger, or love of his praise, might suggest: and this, not as aiming at an ostentatious singularity, but as a fixed principle and settled habit. And as Daniel, even when earthly prospects were dark, and destruction seemed impending, still "gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime," so have we, in our highly favored position, still more cause to thank God at all times, and to have "His praise continually in our mouth" (Ps. 34:1).

Now that the envious presidents had got Daniel into their power, they lose no time in hurrying forward the execution of the iniquitous decree against him, with the same precipitate haste with which they had procured its enactment. Like all weak-minded despots, as Darius previously had been yielding where he ought to have been firm, so now he was obstinate where he ought to have been merciful. An innocent man's life was surely of more consequence than adherence to his word of honor. A decree, obtained from him by misrepresentation, for the destruction of his faithful servant, would have been more honored in its breach than in its observance. But often men who are reckless about the laws of God are very scrupulous and punctilious in maintaining the world's spurious code of honor. Regard for his own imaginary reputation, and fear of his princes, prevailed over his regard for Daniel and his distress at being entrapped into a plot which now he saw through; so that he gave up his loyal servant to the will of his enemies, with the sudden burst to his own conscience of a faint hope that God would counteract the fatal effects of his unjust decree and condemnation of the innocent. "Thy God whom thou servest continually," he said to Daniel (v. 16), "He will deliver thee," as I cannot. Men admire piety in others, but set at nought its precepts in their own practice. It is hypocrisy for us to do wilfully a wrong act, and then to hope or pray that God will undo the mischief which we ourselves have been the cause of!

The sealing of the stone on the mouth of the den was divinely ordered, both as a type of the sealing of the Savior's tomb, and in order that the reality of the miracle in the deliverance of Daniel might be the more unanswerably manifested. The king passed a sad night, the result of his own vanity, weakness, and want of self-control. How many such there are, who know enough of religion to make them unhappy in their disregard of it, but not enough of it to make them to withdraw

from their sins, and from the evil influence of those around them! Darius was sorry for the evil which he had occasioned, but took no step to undo it.

Love for his servant prevailing over every other feeling led him at early dawn to the mouth of the den where Daniel was: and what words can picture the joy and relief of the king's mind when he found that the angel of that God whom Daniel served continually, alike in prosperity and in persecution, had shut the lions' mouths, and vindicated his innocency in respect to the king, and his uncompromising faith and piety before his God whom he worshipped at all costs (vv. 20-23). Faith is the secret of consistency in all times of trial (Heb. 11:32, 33). Fearing God, we have none else to fear. Loyalty to Him to whom we owe the highest allegiance is not only compatible with, but will produce the truest loyalty to our earthly rulers. Duties are ours, and events are God's. Let each simply ask, in every case, What would God have me to do? not, What will be the earthly consequences? and so God, if He does not deliver us always, as He did Daniel, from temporal suffering, will surely deliver us from the "adversary," who goes about "as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour" (1 Pet. 5:8).

The accusers of Daniel were given over to the fate which they had plotted against Daniel (v 24). It was just that they who had aspersed the just, and sought the destruction of his life by the lions, should be themselves the victims of their own plot. Daniel was promoted to honor, and the God of Daniel was confessed by the head of the world-power to be the living God, whom all should fear, and whose "dominion shall be even unto the end" (vv. 25, 26). Herein we have a pledge given of the coming day, when every tongue shall confess that Jesus is Lord, and every knee shall bow at His name (Phil. 2:10, 11): when, in righteous recompense, His people shall be glorified with Him, and their enemies shall be given to everlasting destruction from His presence (2 Thess. 1:6-10)

(Bible Commentary, Jamieson, Fausset and Brown)

Describe the character of Darius? Do you think his decision to have the accusers and their families thrown into the lion's den was uncharacteristic of him?

Dan.7:1-6

The great powers of the world are herein contemplated under the image of four beasts arising up successively from the sea. The great sea agitated by tempests is a fitting emblem of the perpetual turmoil, restlessness, and commotions out of which have emerged the four great world-empires. The wicked are said in Isaiah (57:20) to be "like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt;" and though in politics law has necessarily, from the principle of self-defence, had its place, yet it cannot be denied that wickedness, lawless violence, and unscrupulous self-aggrandizement have played a large part in the origin, consolidation, and progress of all great empires.

With all the outward pomp of the world-kingsdoms, when they are regarded in their inner essence, they are seen to be, in a spiritual point of view, brutish; physically, indeed, they are, like the larger wild beasts, superior to man in strength; but really they are fallen from the true dignity of man, which consists in spiritual union and communion with God. Severed from God, the world-powers are degraded to the level of the beasts, the creatures of blind impulse and passion. Willing subjection to the blessed God is what truly ennobles man. The moment that man tries to be independent of God, he falls to the level of the beast, with eye and head turned down earthward. It is only from above that the kingdom can come, which is at once perfectly human and perfectly divine: it is only in the coming kingdom of the Son of man, which is to descend from heaven upon earth, and to supplant the world-kingsdoms, that the true ideal and destiny of man shall be realized. Then shall the lower creatures, too, which in part have suffered by the fall, share in man's blessedness; and the cherubic *four living creatures* (Rev. 4:6), of which man is the noblest part, the redeemed elect at the head of creation, shall take that rightful authority under Christ which the *four beasts* have usurped and abused.

(Bible Commentary, Jamieson, Fausset and Brown)

What earthly kingdoms do each of the four beasts represent?

Daniel 7:7-8:27

In Daniel 7:7, 8 we read, "After this I saw in the night visions, and, behold, a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth: it devoured and break in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it: and it was diverse from all the beasts that were before it; and it had ten horns. I considered the horns, and, behold, there came up among them another little horn." This fourth beast is the last world-empire, prior to the setting up of the Messianic kingdom. This empire will, at first, be ruled over by ten kings—the "ten horns" of Daniel 7:7 and defined as ten kings in Daniel 7:24. After them arises another, the "Little Horn," which signifies another "king", see Daniel 7:24. He is termed "little" because at that stage his kingdom is but small compared with that of the others, and the power he then wields is insignificant when contrasted from the ten kings. But not for long will he remain weak and insignificant. Soon

the ten kings will themselves own allegiance to this eleventh—see Revelation 17:12, 13. We reserve for a later chapter the proofs that this "Little Horn" is the Antichrist, asking our readers to study carefully the description furnished of him in Daniel 7:8, 20-27; 8:9-12, 23-25.

Taking it for granted (at the moment) that the Little Horn of Daniel 7 is the Antichrist let us see how what is there said of him helps us to determine the quarter from which he will arise. In Daniel 7:7 the "fourth Beast" is described, and in Daniel 7:23 we are told, "the fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom upon earth, which shall be diverse from all kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, and shall tread it down, and break it in pieces." This kingdom will be divided into ten parts, over which will be the ten kings (Dan. 7:24). This kingdom will be, we believe, the old Roman Empire revived in its final form, and divided into two great halves—the Eastern and the Western. This fourth kingdom will include within itself all the territory and will perpetuate all the dominant characteristics of the other three which have preceded it, i.e. the Babylonian, the Medo-Persian, and Grecian. Turning now to Daniel 7:8 we are told, "I considered the horns, and, behold, there came up among them another little horn." The Antichrist, then, will have his rise within the limits of the old Roman Empire. This narrows considerably our circle of inquiry. The next question is, can we determine from which part of the empire he will arise—the Eastern or the Western? Daniel 8 furnishes light upon this point.

In Daniel 8:8, 9 we read, "Therefore the he-goat waxed very great: and when he was strong, the great horn was broken; and for it came up four notable ones toward the four winds of heaven. And out of one of them came forth a little horn, which waxed exceeding great, toward the south, and toward the east, and toward the pleasant land." Now Daniel 8:21 of this same chapter tells us, "The rough goat is the king (kingdom) of Grecia," and Daniel 8:22 informs us "and the great horn that is between his eyes is the first king. Now that being broken, whereas four stood up for it, four kingdoms (or kings) shall stand up out of the nation." This, of course, refers to the act of Alexander the Great who divided his kingdom into four parts—Greece, Egypt, Syria, and the rest of the domains of Turkey—under his four great generals: Ptolemy, Cassander, Lysimachus, and Seleucus. This, again, very appreciably narrows our circle of inquiry. Daniel 7 tells us the Little Horn is to arise in a part of the territory covered by the old Roman empire, which empire gradually included within its domains that of the preceding empires. Now here in Daniel 8 we learn that the Little Horn will spring from that part of the revived Roman Empire which was included in the Grecian Empire. But this is not all that Daniel 8 tells us. The Grecian Empire is here viewed as disintegrated into four parts or kingdoms, from which of these parts, then, may we expect him to issue—Macedonia, Egypt, Syria, or Thrace? This question, we believe, receives answer in Daniel 8; where we are told, that the Little Horn "waxed exceeding great toward the south, and toward the east, and toward the pleasant land." Practically all students are agreed that "the south" here refers to Egypt, the "east" to Persia and Greece and "the pleasant land" to Palestine, hence it would seem that the country from which Antichrist will first be manifested is Syria. It will be noted that nothing is said in Daniel 8:9 about the Little Horn "waxing great" toward the north, and we believe the reason for this is because that is the quarter from whence he shall arise. This is confirmed by the fact that "the king of Assyria" in Isaiah 10:12 is clearly none other than the Antichrist. We may say this was the current view of Christian writers on prophecy through the first ten centuries A.D. The late Mr. W. B. Newton in his splendid "Aids to the Study of Prophetic Inquiry" has succinctly summarized the various arguments of the ancients in the following language:

"In the first place, as Nimrod—the founder of Babel, that is, the Tower of Babylon—a savage tyrant and cruel oppressor of men, was the first person who declared open war against God; so it is meet that there should arise from the selfsame Babylon, the last and most atrocious persecutor of the saints—the Antichrist. Moreover, seeing that Nebuchadnezzar and Antiochus Epiphanes—two monsters who bore down upon the people of God with an overwhelming power of destruction, and who were the antichrists of the old Testament and remarkable types of the Antichrist which is to come; seeing, I say, that these monarchs reigned in Babylon, it is fitting that the true Antichrist of the New Testament should arise from the same Babylon.

"Besides, no place can be pointed out more meet for the nativity of Antichrist than Babylon, for it is the City of the Devil—always diametrically opposed to Jerusalem, which is deemed the City of God; the former city, that is, Babylon, being the mother and disseminator of every kind of confusion, idolatry, impiety—a vast sink of every foul pollution, crime, and iniquity—the first city in the world which cut itself off from the worship of the true God—which reared the city of universal vice,—which perpetually (according to the record of Holy Writ) carries on the mystery of iniquity, and bears imprinted on her brow the inscription of blasphemy against the name of God. The consummation, therefore, of impiety, which is to have its recapitulation in Antichrist, could not break forth from a more fitting place than Babylon."

Having dwelt at some length on the time and the place of the Antichrist's appearing, we shall attempt to give now a brief outline of the leading events in his career. We have seen that the scriptures which help us to determine the direction from which he will arise, speak of him under the title of the Little Horn. Now the first thing this title denotes is that he is a king, king of Assyria. Some, no doubt, will wonder how a Jew (See A. W. Pink's book *The Antichrist*—Chapter 2—*The Person of the Antichrist*) will succeed in obtaining the throne of Syria. Several answers might be suggested, such, for example, as heading a successful rebellion—the spectacle of an obscure plebeian speedily rising to the rank of national dictator, has been forcibly exhibited before our own eyes in Russia. But on this point we are not left to speculation. Daniel 11:21 tells us that the "Vile Person" will come in peaceably, and obtain the kingdom by flatteries. With this agrees Revelation 6:2, where the Antichrist is seen riding a white war-horse, and with bow in hand, but with no arrow fitted to it. The symbol suggests bloodless victories.

As soon as this Jew acquires the crown of Syria he will speedily enlarge his dominions. As Revelation 6:2 tells us, he will go forth "conquering and to conquer," and as we are told further in Habakkuk 2:5, "He is a proud man, neither keepeth at home, who enlarged his desire as hell, and is as death, and cannot be satisfied, but gathereth unto him all nations, and heapeth unto him all people." The first thing which is predicted of him (as "the Little Horn") is that "he shall subdue three kings" (Dan. 7:24). As to what kings these may be, appears to be intimated in Daniel 8:9 where we are told, "And out of one of them came forth a little horn, which waxed exceeding great toward the south, and toward the east, and toward the pleasant land." He waxes great first toward the south, that is, most probably, by a victorious expedition into Egypt. Next, he is seen moving toward the east, reducing, to what extent we are not told, the dominions of Persia and Greece; finally he turns his face toward the pleasant land, which is Palestine. Without being dogmatic, we would suggest that the three kings he subdues are those of Egypt, Persia (Iraq), and Greece.

Having subdued the three kings by his military prowess a "league" is made with him (see Daniel 11:23). Probably it is the remaining seven kings of the revived Roman Empire, plus the three vassals of the Antichrist who take the place of the kings he had deposed, that enter into this League with the Little horn, or king of Assyria; but he shall work deceitfully, and shall become strong with a small people (Dan. 11:23). So strong does he become that in a short time he rises to political supremacy, and the whole of the ten kings shall "give their kingdom unto the Beast." (Rev. 17:17), and he will then be recognized as the imperial Emperor. Thus as King of kings he will dictate the policies of Europe and Asia.

"The Little Horn will revive in himself all the personified glory of Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece and Rome. And let not this be regarded as an event incredible. We are to remember that Antichrist will be Satan's masterpiece; furnished with every auxiliary of influence and wealth, for wresting the scepter from the hands of Him who won it by His humiliation of the Cross. Thus it is said he will 'resist the God of gods'. The accumulated and restored honors of each royal successor are thus to crown the brow of this last and greatest of Gentile monarchs. And so shall he stand in his unrivalled magnificence till the Stone shall smite him and his power, and grind all to powder." (Needham)

After the Antichrist has acquired the political sovereignty of the prophetic earth he will then enter upon his religious role, claiming to be the Christ of God and demanding divine honors. At first sight it appears strange, if not incongruous, that a military despot should be found filling the character of a religious impostor. But history shows that there is a point at which one character readily merges into the other. Political ambition, intoxicated by success, finds it an easy step from self-glorification to self-deification, and the popular infatuation as easily passes from the abject adulation of the tyrant to the adoration of the god. Or again; a religious impostor, encouraged by the ascendancy he has acquired over the minds of men, grasps the scepter of secular power and becomes the most arbitrary of despots. Revelation 13:4 makes it plain that the military prowess of the Antichrist first induces men to render him Divine homage: "And they worshipped the Dragon which gave power unto the Beast: and they worshipped the Beast, saying, Who is like unto the Beast? who is able to make war with him?" But no ordinary honors will suffice him. His religious ambitions are as insatiable as his political, for he will "oppose and exalt himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God" (2 Thess. 2:4). This claim to be God Himself, incarnate, will be backed up by imposing credentials, for his coming will be, "after the working of Satan, with all power and signs and lying wonders" (2 Thess. 2:9). These miracles will be no mere pretenses, but prodigies of power.

The Jews, previously returned to Palestine, and with the temple in Jerusalem rebuilt, will receive this Son of Perdition as their long-promised Messiah (John 5:43). In imitation of the true Christ who will, at His return to the earth, "make a new covenant with the House of Israel and with the House of Judah" (Heb. 8:8, compare Jeremiah 31 and Ezekiel 36), the Antichrist will make a covenant with the Jews (see Daniel 9:27 and 11:22). Under a seven years' treaty, and in the guise of friendship, he will gain ascendancy in Jerusalem, only later to throw off the mask and break the covenant.

About seven months after the Antichrist, the "Prince" (i.e. of the Roman Empire) of Daniel 9:27 has made the Covenant with the Jews he will begin to "practice" in Jerusalem (Dan. 8:24). This we believe is the explanation of the two thousand three hundred days of Daniel 8:14 which has puzzled so many of the commentators. This two thousand three hundred days is the whole period during which the false messiah will practice in Jerusalem and have power over the "sanctuary:" two thousand three hundred days is seven years less seven months and ten days.

There, in Jerusalem, he will pose as the Christ of God, the Prince of Peace. The world will suppose that the long looked for Millennium has arrived. There will be every indication that the eagerly desired Golden Age has, at last, dawned. The great Powers of Europe and Asia will have been united under the ten-kingdomed Empire. It will be expected that the League of Nations (before the United Nations) guarantees the peace of the earth. For a season quietness and amity will prevail. None will dare to oppose the mighty Emperor. But not for long will the hideous war-specter hide himself. Soon will the "white horse" of Revelation 6 be found to change his hue. A "red horse" will go forth, and then "peace shall be taken from the earth" (Rev. 6). At the very time the world is congratulating itself that all is well, and the slogan of the hour is "Peace and Safety," then "sudden destruction cometh upon them" (1 Thess. 5:3).

In the midst of the seven years the Antichrist will throw off his mask, break his covenant with Israel, and stand forth as the most daring idolater who has ever trodden this earth. After he has "practiced" in Jerusalem for two years and five months, he will take away the daily sacrifice (Dan. 8:11; 9:27) from the temple, and in its place rear an image to himself in the holy place, which is the "abomination of desolation" referred to by Christ (see Matthew 24:15).

This brings us to the great dividing line in his career, to which reference was made near the beginning of this chapter. It is a point not only of interest but of considerable importance to ascertain what it is that causes this startling change of front, from posing as the true Christ to that of the open defier of God. There are several scriptures which throw light on this point. Satan will cause the Man of Sin to crown his daring imitation of the Christ of God by being slain and rising again from the dead.

Both the Old and the New Testaments refer to the death of the Antichrist, and attribute it to the sword. In Revelation 13:14 we read that the false Prophet shall say to them that dwell on the earth that they should make an image to the Beast, which had the wound by the sword and did live. In harmony with this we read in Zechariah 11:17, "Woe to the Idol shepherd that leaveth the flock! The sword shall be upon his arm, and upon his right eye." It is to be noted that before we read that "the sword shall be" upon him, we are told that he "leaveth the flock," and the previous verse tells us that he was raised up "in the land," which can only mean that he was ruling in Palestine. Hence it is clear that he leaves the Land before he receives his death wound by the sword. In perfect accord with this is what we read in Isaiah 37:6,7 (in a later chapter we shall treat at length of the future Babylon, restored; the connection of Antichrist with it, and the typical and prophetic significance of Isaiah 37 and 38); "Behold, I will send a blast upon him, and he shall hear a rumor, and return to his own land; and I will cause him to fall by the sword in his own land."

Leaving Palestine, the Antichrist will "return to his own land," that is, the land of his nativity—Assyria—which confirms what we have said previously about Assyria being the country where Antichrist will first be manifested. There, in his own land, he will fall by the sword. Most probably he will be slain there by his political enemies, envious of his power and chafing under his haughty autocracy. In death he will be hated and dishonored, and burial will be refused him. It is to this that Isaiah 14 (speaking of the King of Babylon, see v. 4) refers: "But thou art cast out of thy grave like an abominable branch, and as the raiment of those that are slain, thrust through with a sword, that go down to the stones of the pit. As a carcass trodden under foot, thou shalt not be joined with them in burial, because thou hast destroyed thy land, and slain thy people" (vv. 19, 20). But his enemies will suddenly be filled with consternation and then admiration for to their amazement this one slain by the sword shall rise from the dead, and his deadly wound will be healed—note how this is implied in Isaiah 14, for v. 25 shows him once more in the land of the living, only to meet his final doom at the hands of the Lord Himself. It is to this amazing resurrection of the Antichrist that Revelation 13:3, 4 refers: "And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the Beast. And they worshipped the Dragon which gave power unto the Beast: saying, Who is like unto the Beast? who is able to make war with him?" Details of his resurrection are supplied in Revelation 9, from which we gather that just as Christ was raised from the dead by God the Father, so the Antichrist will be raised from the dead by his father the Devil, see v. 1 where the fallen "Star," which refers to Satan, is given the "key to the bottomless pit," and when this is happened there comes out of it the mysterious "locusts" whose king is the Destroyer (v. 11), the Antichrist.

A further reference to the resurrection of the Antichrist, his coming forth from the Bottomless Pit, is found in Revelation 17:8: "The Beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the Bottomless Pit, and go into Perdition: and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the Beast that was, and is not, and yet is." It is to be noted that the earth-dwellers wonder when they behold the Beast that was, and is not, and yet is. The world will then be presented with the spectacle of a man raised from the dead. All know him, for his career and amazing progress were eagerly watched; his wonderful achievements and military campaigns were the subject of daily interest; his transcendent genius elicited their admiration. They had witnessed his death. They stood awe-struck, no doubt, at the downfall of this King of kings. And now he is made alive; his wound of death is healed; and the whole world wonders, and worships him.

It is about this time, apparently, that the "False Prophet" (Rev. 13:11-16), the third person in the Trinity of Evil will appear on the scene. From a number of scriptures it is evident that the Antichrist will not spend all his time in Palestine during the last three and a half years of his career. It seems that shortly after the middle of the "week" the Beast will turn his face again toward Babylon, leaving the False Prophet to act as his vicegerent, compelling all in Jerusalem to worship the image of the Beast under pain of death (Rev. 13:15). It is to be noted that Habakkuk 2:5 tells us that the Antichrist is "a proud man, neither keepeth at home, who enlarged his desire as hell, and is as death, and cannot be satisfied, but gathereth unto him all nations, and heapeth unto him all people."

The reason for the Antichrist's return to Babylon is not far to seek. Having thrown off his mask of religious pretension, he now stands forth as the Defier of God. His first move now will be to blot out from the earth everything that bears His name. To accomplish this the Jewish race must be utterly exterminated, and to this end he will put forth all his power to banish Israel from the earth. He will make war with the saints (the Jewish saints) and prevail against them (Dan. 7:21; 8:24): this is the going forth of the "red horse" of Revelation 6:4.

Those of the godly remnant who are left will "flee to the mountains" (Matthew 24:16), and there they will be hunted like partridges. It is then they will cry, "Keep not Thou silence, O God: hold not Thy peace, and be not still, O God. For, lo, Thine enemies make a tumult: and they that hate Thee have lifted up the head. They have taken crafty counsel against Thy people, and consulted against Thy hidden ones. They have said, Come, and let us cut them off from being a nation; that the name of Israel may be no more in remembrance" (Ps. 83:1-4). Then, because many of the Jews will be found in that day dwelling in Babylon (see Jeremiah 50:8; 51:6, 45; Revelation 18:4) the Antichrist will go in that direction to wreak

his vengeance upon them. But not for long will he be suffered to continue his blasphemous and bloody course. Soon will heaven respond to the cries of the faithful remnant of Israel, and terrible shall be the punishment meted out on their last enemy.

(The Antichrist, A.W. Pink)

Can you add or take away anything from A. W. Pink's explanation of these end time events?

In what country or countries is the former Babylonian Empire located today and is the political scene ripe for the Antichrist and the empire to rise to power?

In the end what does the stone "cut out of the mountain without hands" (Dan. 2:34-35) do to the wicked ruler, the Antichrist?

Isa. 11:4 Dan. 8:25 Matt. 21:44 2 Cor. 5:1

What did Daniel do after receiving the vision and interpretation of the ram and the goat?

Dan. 8:27

Daniel 9:1-19

Confession of sin should always be the first element in prayer. Like Daniel, we should make our confession personal and particular, as well as general and in common with others: "I prayed onto the Lord *my* God, and made *my* confession" (v. 4). At the same time we should, as the prophet, mourn over and confess our *nation's* sins as our own. "We have sinned . . . neither have we hearkened unto thy servants the prophets, who spoke in thy name to our kings, our princes, and our fathers, and to all the people of the land" (vv. 5, 6). God had promised, if Israel in captivity would confess her sin, and accept the punishment of her iniquity (Lev. 26:39-44), He would remember for her the covenant made with her fathers. Daniel accordingly accepts the Babylonian exile and the unparalleled evils brought upon Jerusalem (v. 12) as not exceeding what was her due, but as altogether consonant to the righteousness of God (vv. 7-11, 13, 14). But he pleads God's "covenant" (v. 4), and God's "mercies and forgivenesses," which "belong to Him" in accordance with that covenant (v. 9). Let us imitate him in this respect when we are in sore trouble, and pray for relief; let us justify God as righteous (v. 14) in all His dealings with us, however trying; and let our sole plea be His own everlasting covenant of mercy in Christ to all true and believing penitents. The spiritual restoration must precede the literal and external restoration. Without the former, the latter would be of no real benefit: soon the same sins, recurring through the unhumiliated state of the heart, would render necessary again an infliction of the same, or even of a more severe chastisement.

Daniel, however, pleads God's ancient favor in delivering Israel out of Egypt, whereby He had attested to the whole world His covenant-relation to the Israelites as his ground of hope that God would now again deliver them, turn His anger away, and cause His face to shine upon His own sanctuary as in the days of old (vv. 16, 17). He appeals to the Lord's regard to His own honor, and endeavors to show that the Lord's glory was at stake, before the Gentile nations, in the cause of His own covenant-people. So our most effectual plea with God will be, "For the Lord's sake (v. 17) . . . for thy great mercies . . . O Lord, hearken and do; defer not, for thine own sake, O my God; for thy people are called by *thy* name" (vv. 18, 19). Intense fervor and vehement earnestness, flowing from a lively sense of the urgency of our needs, and of the power and willingness of God to supply them, are the fire which will kindle the holy name of true devotion.

The whole period from the downfall of the theocracy, at the Babylonian captivity, until its reestablishment at Messiah's second coming, was to constitute "the times of the Gentiles," which were to be "troublous times" (v. 25). In them the street and wall of Jerusalem were rebuilt. But no recovery of the full freedom and glory of the theocracy was thereby realized for the Jews, nor has been ever since. But to compensate for it, it was in this period that the Savior came, in whom is summed up all that is good of all preceding ages. He came in great lowliness, reflecting in His person the humiliation and sufferings which are the portion of His covenant-people, Israel, during the whole period of the troublous times of the Gentiles. Till sin was "made an end of," by a full and perfect propitiation, ever-lasting righteousness could not be brought in. But now that "iniquity" has been "covered" by the atonement of Christ, the antitypical "Most Holy" place is anointed and consecrated; and by that new and living way which he has consecrated through the veil that is, His flesh, believers may come boldly before God, accepted and justified in the everlasting righteousness of their divine surety.

(Bible Commentary, Jamieson, Fausset and Brown)

What is Daniel asking God to do?

Dan. 9:9, 13, 16, 18, 19 John 1:29

Daniel 9:20-27

We turn now to Daniel 9:26, 27. This forms a part of the celebrated prophecy of the seventy "weeks" or hebdomads.

The prophecy begins with Daniel 9:24 and concerns the seventy hebdomads, a word signifying "sevens." Each "hebdomad" equals seven years, so that a period of 490 years in all is here comprehended. These seventy "sevens" are divided into three portions: First, seven "sevens" which concerned the re-building of Jerusalem, following the Babylonian captivity. Second, sixty-two "sevens" unto "Messiah the Prince," that is, unto the time when He formally presented Himself to Israel as their King: this receiving its fulfillment in the so-called "Triumphal Entrance into Jerusalem." Third, the last "seven" which is severed from the others. It should be carefully noted that we are expressly told that "after threescore and two weeks (which added to the preceding seven would make sixty-nine in all up to this point) shall Messiah be cut off." The reference is to the Cross, when Christ was cut off from Israel and from the land of the living. This occurred after the sixty-ninth week before the seventieth began.

The sixty-ninth terminated with the formal presentation of Christ to Israel as their "Prince." This is described by Matthew (the distinctively Jewish Gospel) in chapter 21. The rejection of their Prince caused the break between Christ and Israel. It is very striking to note that (following the rejection) Matthew records three distinct proofs or evidences of this break. The first is found in Matthew 21:19 in the cursing of the "fig tree," which signified the rejection of the Nation. The second was His sorrowful announcement from the brow of Olivet that the time of Israel's visitation was past and her overthrow now certain (Matthew 23:37 and cf. Luke 19:41-44). This was the abandonment of the City. The third was His solemn pronouncement concerning the Temple: "Behold your House is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see Me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord" (Matthew 23:38, 39). This was the giving up of the Sanctuary.

The entire Christian dispensation (which began with the crucifixion of Christ) is passed by unnoticed in this prophecy of the seventy weeks. It comes in, parenthetically, between the sixty-ninth and the seventieth. What follows in Daniel 9:26, 27 concerns what will happen after the Christian dispensation is ended when God again takes up Israel and accomplishes His purpose concerning them. This purpose will be accomplished by means of sore judgment, which will be God's answer to Israel's rejection of His Son. But let us examine more closely the form this judgment will take.

The judgment of God upon the people who were primarily responsible for the cutting off of their Messiah was to issue in the destruction of their city and sanctuary (Dan. 9:26). This destruction was to be brought about by the people of a Prince who should subsequently appear, and be himself destroyed. The "Prince" here is the Antichrist, but the Antichrist connected with and at the head of the Roman Empire in its final form. It is the Man of Sin who is to be the last great Caesar. Now we know that it was the Romans who destroyed Jerusalem and the temple in A. D. 70, but that "the Prince" here does not refer to the one who then headed the Roman armies is clear from the fact that Daniel 9:27 informs us this Prince is to play his part in the yet future seventieth week—further proof is furnished in that Daniel 9:26 carries us to the end (i.e. of Israel's desolations) which is to be marked by a "flood," and Isaiah 28:14, 15 intimates that this is to be after Israel's covenant with Antichrist: "Wherefore hear the word of the Lord, ye scornful men, that rule this people which was in Jerusalem. Because ye have said, We have made a covenant with Death, and with Hell are we at agreement; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through it, it shall not come unto us: for we have made lies our refuge, and under falsehood have we hid ourselves." To this God replies, "Your covenant with Death shall be disannulled, and your agreement with Hell shall not stand; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, then ye shall be trodden down by it" (v. 18). The "overflowing scourge" is, literally, "the scourge coming in like a flood."

A few words remain to be said on Daniel 9:27: "And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate." The subject of this verse is the Antichrist, "the Prince that shall come" of the previous verse. By the time he appears on the scene large numbers of Jews will have been carried back to their land (cf. Isaiah 18). With them the Prince makes a covenant, as of old Jehovah made one with Abraham, and as Christ will yet do with Israel, see Jeremiah 31. This will be regarded by God with indignation, as "a covenant with Death, and an agreement with Sheol". But while this covenant is accepted by the majority of the Jews, God will again reserve to Himself a remnant who will refuse to bow the knee to Baal: hence the qualification, "He shall confirm the covenant with many," not all.

"In the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease." The returned Jews will rebuild their temple and there offer sacrifices. But these, so far from being acceptable to God, will be an offense. There seems a clear reference to this in the opening verses of Isaiah 66, which describe conditions just before the Lord's appearing (see Isaiah 66:15). And here the Lord says, "He that killeth an ox is as if he slew a man; he that sacrificeth a lamb, as if he cut off a dog's neck," etc. (v. 3). But three and a half years before the end, the Prince will issue a decree demanding that the sacrifices must cease, and the worship of Jehovah be transferred to himself, for it is at this point he shall "exalt himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped" (2 Thess. 2:4). The fact that we are here told that he causes the sacrifices and the oblation to cease, at once identifies this Prince of the Romans as the Antichrist—cf. 8:11.

(The Antichrist, A.W. Pink)

While Daniel was praying for Israel Gabriel arrived with an answer to his request for the deliverance of Israel. **When did or when will this deliverance occur?**

Acts 1:6-7

What period of time in the 70 weeks is considered “the Times of the Gentiles”?

Dan. 9:24-25

Explain the three portions or periods of the seventy weeks.

What will be the state of the world at the beginning of the last week?

Daniel 10:1-21

There is a spiritual world unseen, which is closely connected with the world of sense that meets our eyes. This chapter draws aside the veil, and gives us a glimpse into the spirit-world, where we see the hidden springs which govern the movements adverse to the people of God in our world, and also the counteracting agency of the loving angels, who, by God's commission, defend His Church on earth. How solemn is the thought that we are not only a "spectacle to angels" (1 Cor. 4:9), but are a subject of the liveliest and most personal interest to them! If angels of darkness, far more powerful than we, are against us, blessed be God, angels of light, more than able to thwart their sinister designs, are our spiritual champions arrayed on our side, and shall foil all the adversary's designs against us, if indeed we be the people of the Lord!

When sinful, and therefore weak and fearful, man is brought into close contact with angelic beings, his instinctive feeling is that of alarm, and a desire to flee away through fright. The men who were with Daniel, at the first sight of the angel were affected with a great quaking, and fled to hide themselves (v. 7). Even the prophet himself lost all strength, and waxed deadly pale (v. 8), and fell with his "face toward the ground" (v. 9). This instinct of man is a sad testimony to the reality of the fall. The relations of holy communion between heavenly beings and man is interrupted, and love and confidence have given place to guilty fear and trembling.

But the angel raised Daniel again to a standing posture (vv. 9, 10), and told him not to fear (vv. 11, 12). The child of God may for a time give way to the impulses of his old fleshly infirmity; but he has no real and lasting cause for fear. For angels are not his adversaries, but his fellow-servants and brethren (Rev. 22:9). Every believer is "a man greatly beloved" of God, as was Daniel; and his Heavenly Father would have him not to tremble, as do the demons (Jas. 2:19), but to have towards Him that perfect love which casteth out slavish and tormenting fear (1 John 4:18).

(Bible Commentary, Jamieson, Fausset and Brown)

Many times we feel our prayers are not heard so what proof do we have that they are heard?

Dan 10:12 Hab. 2:3 Rom. 8:29-31

Can angels of darkness retard our prayers or prevent the manifestations of deliverance?

Ps. 89:19-28 Dan. 10:13 Acts 8:26-27

What are the titles of the two angelic princes? Was Daniel held physically or spiritually captive? What enemy of the Persians appeared after Michael arrived? Have you seen similar rescues happen in your life?

Dan. 10:13 Dan. 10:20-21

Daniel 11:1-45

We turn now to Daniel 11, which is undoubtedly the most difficult chapter in the book. It contains a prophecy which is remarkable for its fullness of details. Much of it has already received a most striking fulfillment, but like other prophecies, we are fully satisfied that this one yet awaits its final accomplishment. That Daniel 11 treats of the Antichrist all pre-millennial students are agreed, but as to how much of it refers to him there is considerable difference of opinion. A small minority, from whom we must dissent, confine the first thirty-five verses to the past. Others make the division in the middle of the chapter and regard all from Daniel 11:21 onwards as a description of the Man of Sin, and with them the writer is in hearty accord. A few consider the entire chapter, after Daniel 11:2, as containing a prediction of the Antichrist under the title of "The King of the North," and while we are not prepared to unreservedly endorse this, yet it is fully allowed that there is not a little to be said in its favor.

We shall here confine ourselves to the second half of Daniel 11. Our present limits of space, however, will permit of nothing more than brief notes upon it. Commencing at Daniel 11:31 we read, "And in his estate shall stand up a vile

person, to whom they shall not give the honor of the kingdom: but he shall come in peaceably, and obtain the kingdom by flatteries." The history of this "vile person" is here divided into three parts: first, the means by which he obtains the kingdom: Daniel 11:21, 22; second, the interval which elapses between the time when he makes a covenant with Israel, the taking away of the daily sacrifice and the setting up of the abomination of desolation: Daniel 11:23-31; third, the brief season when he comes out in his true colors and enters upon his career of open defiance of God, reaching on to his destruction: Daniel 11:32-45. Thus from Daniel 11:21 to the end of the chapter we have a continuous history of the Antichrist.

"In his estate shall stand up a vile person . . . he shall come in peaceably, and obtain the kingdom by flatteries." This epithet "the vile person" is a manifest antithesis from "the Holy One of God." This twenty-first verse takes notice of the Man of Sin posing as the Prince of peace. He shall achieve what his antitype, Absalom, tried but failed to do—"Obtain the kingdom by flatteries."

"And with the force of a flood they shall be swept away from before him and be broken, and also the prince of the covenant" (Dan. 11:22). This Vile Person is denominated "the Prince of the Covenant," which, at once, identifies him with the Prince of 9:26, 27. Then we are told in Daniel 11:23 "And after the league made with him he shall work deceitfully: for he shall come up, and shall become strong with a small people." This "league" or "covenant" is doubtless the seven-years-treaty confirmed with Israel, which is made at an early point in the Antichrist's career, and which corresponds with the fact that at the first he appears as a "little horn," the "small people" being the Syrians.

Daniel 11:25 and 26 describe his victory over the king of Egypt. Then, in Daniel 11:28 we read, "Then shall he return into his land with great riches." His land is Assyria. The mention of great riches corresponds with what we are told of the Antichrist in Psalm 52:7; Ezekiel 28:4, etc.

"And arms (forces) shall stand on his part, and they shall pollute the sanctuary of strength and shall take away the daily sacrifice, and they shall place the abomination that maketh desolate." (Dan. 11:31) This is clear evidence that these verses are treating of that which takes place during the seventieth week. The mention of polluting the Sanctuary is an unmistakable reference to "the abomination of desolation," i.e. the setting up of an idol to the Antichrist in the Temple. Note the repeated use of the plural pronoun in this verse; the "they" refer to the Antichrist and the False Prophet, cf. Revelation 13. It is significant that in the next verse (Dan. 11:32) there is an allusion made to the faithful remnant—"The people that do know their God."

"And the king shall do according to his will; and he shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvelous things against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished: for that which is determined shall be done" (Dan. 11:36). That "the King" here is the "Vile Person" is not only indicated by the absence of any break in the prophecy, as also by the connecting "and" with which the verse opens, but is definitely established by the fact that in Daniel 11:27 (note context) the Vile Person is expressly termed a "king"! The contents of this thirty-sixth verse clearly connects "the king" with the Man of Sin of 2 Thessalonians 2:3, 4, and also as definitely identifies him with the "little horn"—cf. Daniel 7:23 and 8:25.

(The Antichrist, A.W. Pink)

The tangled web of earthly politics is full of intrigues, ambition, selfishness, violence and treachery. **In spite of all this whose purpose will be established? Are these conflicts and plots mentioned because they bear upon the interests of Israel, the covenant people? Is what is spoken of in Zechariah chapters 12-14 related to Daniel 11.**

Daniel 12:1-13

It is a ground for thanksgiving that during the last three or four generations the people of God have given considerable attention to the prophecies of Scripture which treat of the future of Israel. The old method of "spiritualizing" these predictions, and making them apply to the Church of the present dispensation, has been discarded by the great majority of pre-millennarians. With a steadily increasing number of Bible students it is now a settled question that Israel, as a nation, shall be saved (Rom. 11:26), and that the promises of God to the fathers will be literally fulfilled under the Messianic reign of the Lord Jesus (Rom. 9:4). Jerusalem, which for so many centuries has been a by-word in the earth, will then be known as "the city of the great King" (Matthew 5:35). His throne shall be established there, and it shall be the gathering point for all nations (Zech. 8:23; 14:16-21). Then shall the despised descendants of Jacob be "the head" of the nations, and no longer the tail (Deut. 28:13); then shall the people of Jehovah's ancient choice be the center of His earthly government; then shall the Fig Tree, so long barren, "blossom and bud, and fill the face of the world with fruit" (Isa. 27:6). All of this is common knowledge among those who are in any-wise acquainted with dispensational truth.

But the same Word of Prophecy which announces the glorious future awaiting the children of Israel, also contains another chapter in the history of this peculiar people; a chapter yet unfulfilled, setting forth a period in their history darker and sadder than any of their past experiences. Both the Old and New Testaments plainly tell of a season of suffering for the Jews which will be far more acute than even their afflictions of old. Daniel 12:1 says, "And there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time". And in Matthew 24:21, 22 we read, "For

there shall be a great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved."

The reasons or causes of this future suffering of Israel are as follows. First, God has not fully visited upon Israel's children the sins of their fathers. "When Solomon and her kings had by transgression lost their blessings, and the glory of the reign of Solomon had faded away, the supremacy, which was taken from them, was given to certain Gentile nations, who were successively to arise and bear rule in the earth, during the whole period of Israel's rejection. The first of these was the Chaldean Empire under Nebuchadnezzar. The period termed by our Lord the 'Times of the Gentiles', commences with the capture of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar. It is a period coincident from its beginning to its close, with the treading down of Jerusalem. 'Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles till the Times of the Gentiles be fulfilled'. Nebuchadnezzar therefore, and the Gentile empires which have succeeded him, have only received their pre-eminence in consequence of Jerusalem's sin; and the reason why they were endowed with that pre-eminence was, that they might chasten Jerusalem; and when they shall have fulfilled that purpose, they shall themselves be set aside and be made, because of their own evil, 'like the chaff of the summer threshing-floors'. In this we have another evidence that the earthly dispensations of God revolve around the Jews as their center" (B. W. Newton).

A further reason or cause of the future sufferings of Israel lies in the rejection of their Messiah. First and foremost Christ was "a Minister of the Circumcision, for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers" (Rom. 15:8). He was sent "but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel" (Matthew 15:24). And in marvelous grace He tabernacled among them. But He was not wanted. "He came unto His own, and His own received Him not" (John 1:11). Not only did they receive Him not, they "despised and rejected Him"; they "hated Him without a cause." So intense was their enmity against Him that with one voice they cried, "Away with Him, crucify Him." And not until His holy blood had been shed, and He had died the death of the accursed, was their awful malice against Him appeased. And for this they have yet to answer to God. Vengeance is His, and He will repay. Not yet has the murder of God's Son been fully avenged. It could not be during this "Day of Salvation". But the Day of Salvation will soon be over, and it shall be followed by "the great Day of His Wrath" (Rev. 6:17; Joel 2:11). Then will God visit the earth with His sore judgments, and though the Nations shall by no means escape the righteous retribution due them for their part in the crucifixion of Christ, yet, the ones who will be punished the most severely will be they who took the lead in that crime of crimes.

The form which God's judgment will take upon the Jews is to be in full accord with the unchanging law of recompense—what they have sown, that shall they also reap. This was expressly affirmed by our Lord Jesus: "I am come in My Father's name, and ye receive Me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive" (John 5:43). Because they rejected God's Christ, Israel shall receive the Antichrist. The same thing is stated in 2 Thessalonians 2:7—"For this cause (i.e. because they received not the love of the Truth, that they might be saved) God shall send them strong delusion that they should believe the Lie." The immediate reference here, we believe, is to the Jews, though the principle enumerated will also have its wider application to apostate Christendom. The chief reason why God suffers the Man of Sin to come on the scene and run his awful course, is in order to inflict punishment upon guilty Israel. This is clearly taught in Isaiah 10:5, where of the Antichrist God says, "O Assyrian, the rod (the instrument of chastisement) of Mine anger, and the staff in their hand is Mine indignation. I will send him against an hypocritical nation, against the people of My wrath will I give him a charge, to take the spoil, and to take the prey, and to tread them down like the mire of the street."

It must be borne in mind that the Jews are to return to Palestine and there re-assume a national standing while yet unconverted. There are a number of passages which establish this beyond question. For example, in Ezekiel 22:19-22 we are told, "Therefore thus saith the Lord God; because ye are all become dross, behold, therefore I will gather you into the midst of Jerusalem, as they gather silver, and brass, and iron, and lead, and tin, into the midst of the furnace, to blow the fire upon it, to melt it; so will I gather you in Mine anger and in My fury, and I will leave you there, and melt you. Yea, I will gather you, and blow upon you in the fire of My wrath, and ye shall be melted in the midst thereof". The first six verses of Isaiah 18 describe how the Lord will gather the Jews to Jerusalem, there to be the prey of "fowls and beasts." The closing chapters of Zechariah lead to the inevitable conclusion that the Jews return to their land in unbelief, for if their national conversion takes place in Jerusalem (Zech. 12:10), they must have returned to it unconverted.

When the Antichrist is manifested, great companies of the Jews will already be in Palestine, and in a flourishing condition. What, then, will be his relations with them? It is by no means easy to furnish a detailed answer to this question, and at best we can reply but tentatively. Doubtless, there are many particulars respecting this and all other related subjects, which will not be cleared up until the prophecies concerning them have been fulfilled. We, today, occupy much the same position with regard to the predictions concerning the Antichrist, as the Old Testament saints did to the many passages which foretold the coming of the Christ. Their difficulty was to arrange those passages in the order they were to be fulfilled, and to distinguish between those which spoke of Him in humiliation and those which foretold His coming glory. A similar perplexity confronts us. To ascertain the sequence of the prophecies relating to the Antichrist is a real problem. Even when we confine ourselves to those passages which speak of him in his connections with Israel, we have to distinguish between those which concern only the godly remnant, and those which relate to the great apostate mass of the Nation; and, too, we have to separate between those prophecies which concern the time when Antichrist is

posing as the true Christ, and those which portray him in the final stage of his career, after he has thrown off his mask of religious pretension.

It would appear that the first thing revealed in prophecy concerning the Antichrist's dealings with Israel is the entering into a "covenant" with them. This is mentioned in Daniel 9:27: "And he shall confirm the covenant (make a firm covenant, R.V.) with many for one week" i.e. seven years. The many here can be none other than the mass of the Jewish people, for they are the principal subjects of the prophecy. The one who makes this covenant is the "Prince that shall come" of the previous verse, the Head of the restored Roman Empire. Thus the relations between this Prince, the Antichrist, and the mass of the Jews shall, at the first, be relations of apparent friendship and public alliance. That this covenant is not forced upon Israel, but rather is entered into voluntarily by them, as seeking Antichrist's patronage, is clear from Isaiah 28:18, where we find God, in indignation, addressing them as follows—"And your covenant with death shall be disannulled, and your agreement with Hell shall not stand; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, then ye shall be trodden down by it." And this, we believe, supplies the key to Daniel 2:43.

Nebuchadnezzar's vision of the great image and the interpretation given to Daniel, outlines the governmental history of the earth as it relates to Palestine, further details being supplied in the other visions found in the book of Daniel. "The earthly dispensations of God revolve around Jerusalem as their center. The method which it hath pleased God to adopt in giving the prophetic history of these nations, is in strict accord with this principle. As soon as they arose into supremacy and supplanted Jerusalem, prophets were commissioned, especially Daniel, to delineate their course. We might perhaps, have expected that their history would have been given minutely and consecutively from its beginning to its close. But instead of this, it is only given in its connection with Jerusalem; and as soon as Jerusalem was finally crushed by the Romans and ceased to retain a national position, all detailed history of the Gentile Empires is suspended. Many a personage most important in the world's history has since arisen. Charlemagne has lived, and Napoleon—many a monarch, and many a conqueror—battles have been fought, kingdoms raised and kingdoms subverted—yet Scripture passes silently over these things, however great in the annals of the Gentiles. Because Jerusalem has nationally ceased to be, 1800 years ago, the detail of Gentile history was suspended—it is suspended still, nor will it be resumed until Jerusalem re-assumes a national position. Then the history of the Gentiles is again minutely given, and the glory and dominion of their last great King described. He is found to be especially connected with Jerusalem and the Land . . . The subject of the book of Daniel as a whole, is the indignation of God directed through the instrumentality of the Gentile Empires upon Jerusalem" (B.W. Newton "Aids to Prophetic Enquiry," first Series).

The method which the Holy Spirit has followed in the book of Daniel is to give us, a general outline of Gentile dominion over Jerusalem, and this is found in the vision of the Image in chapter 2; and second, to fill in this outline, which is given in the last six chapters of that book. It is with the former we are now more particularly concerned. Much of the prophetic vision of Daniel 2 has already become history. The golden head (Babylon), the silver breast and arms (Medo-Persia), the brazen belly and thighs (Greece), the iron legs (Rome), have already appeared before men. But the feet of the Image, "part of iron and part of clay," have to do with a time yet future. The break between the legs and feet corresponds with the break between the sixty-ninth and seventieth "weeks" of Daniel 9:24-27. The present dispensation comes in as a parenthesis during the time that Israel is outside the Land, dispersed among the Gentiles.

What, then, is represented by the "iron and the clay" toes of the feet of the Image? If we bear in mind that this portion of the Image exactly corresponds to the seventieth week, we have an important key to the interpretation. Daniel 9:26, 27 treats of the seventieth week—the "one week" yet remaining. These verses speak of the Prince (of the restored Roman Empire) making a seven years' Covenant with the Jews. Thus the prophecy concerning the seventieth week presents to us two prominent subjects—the Romans, at whose head is the Antichrist, and apostate Israel, with whom the Covenant is made. Returning now to Daniel 2 we find that when interpreting the king's dream about the Image, the prophet declares that the "iron" is the symbol for the "fourth kingdom" (v. 40), which was Rome, who succeeded Babylon, Persia, and Greece; the "feet" with their ten toes forecasting this Empire in its final form. Thus, we have Divine authority for saying that the "iron" in the feet of the Image represent the peoples who shall yet occupy the territory controlled by the old Roman Empire. In a word, the "iron" symbolizes the Gentiles—specifically those found in the lands which shall be ruled over by the "ten kings."

Who, then, is symbolized by "the clay"? Here we are obliged to part company with the commentators, who unanimously take the clay to be the figure of democracy. So far as we are aware none of them has offered a single proof text in support of their interpretation, and as the Word is the only authority, to it we must look. Assured that Scripture is its own interpreter, we turn to the concordance to find out what the "clay" signifies elsewhere, when used symbolically. In Isaiah 64, which records the Cry of the Remnant at the End-time, we find them saying, "But now, O Lord, Thou art our Father; we are the clay, and Thou our Potter; and we are all the work of Thy hand". Again, in Jeremiah 18 the same figure is employed. There the prophet is commanded to go down to the potter's house, where he beheld him manufacturing a vessel. The vessel was marred in the hands of the potter, so he "made it again another vessel". Clearly, this is a picture of Israel in the past and in the future. The interpretation is expressly fixed in Jeremiah 18:6: "O house of Israel, cannot I do with you as this potter? saith the Lord. Behold, as the clay is in the potter's hand, so are ye in Mine hand, O house of Israel." How clear it is then that "clay" is God's symbol for Israel.

In its final form, then, the revived Roman Empire—the kingdom of Antichrist—will be partly Gentilish and partly Jewish. And is not this what we must expect? Will not that be the character of the kingdom of that One which the Antichrist will counterfeit? Such scriptures as Psalm 2:6-8; Isaiah 11:10; 42:6; Revelation 11:15, etc., make plain the dual character of the kingdom over which our Lord will reign during the Millennium. That the Antichrist will be intimately related to both Jews and the Gentiles we have proven again and again in the previous chapters—Revelation 9:11 is quite sufficient to establish the point. Therefore, we should not be surprised to find that that part of the Image which specifically depicts the kingdom over which the Man of Sin shall reign, should be composed of both "iron" and "clay." It would be passing strange were it otherwise. It is indeed striking to note that the "clay" is mentioned in Daniel 2 just nine times—the number of judgment!

In Daniel 2:43 we read, "And whereas thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men: but they shall not cleave one to another even as iron is not mixed with clay"—a verse that has sorely puzzled the expositors. We believe that the reference is to the coming intimacy between Jews and Gentiles. The apostate Jews (members of the Corrupt Woman) shall "mingle themselves with the seed of men"—the Gentiles. This is amplified in Revelation 17, where we read of the great Whore, "with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication". "But they shall not cleave one to another" (Dan. 2:43) is explained in Revelation 17:16—"And the ten horns which thou sawest upon the Beast, these shall hate the Whore, and shall make her desolate and naked," etc.! There is a remarkable verse in Habakkuk 2 which confirms our remarks above, and connects the Antichrist himself with the "clay." The passage begins with the third verse, which, from its quotation in Hebrews 10:37, 38 we know, treats of the period immediately preceding our Lord's return. In Habakkuk 2:4 and 5 we have a description of the Antichrist, and then in Habakkuk 2:6 we read, "Shall not all these take up a parable against him, and a taunting proverb against him, and say, Woe to him that increaseth that which is not his! how long? and to him that ladeth himself with thick clay." The reference is clearly to this "proud Man's" fellowship with apostate Israel. We are satisfied that Habakkuk 2:6-8 is parallel with Isaiah 14:9-12. Isaiah 14 gives us a glimpse of the Antichrist being scoffed at in Hell, by the "chief ones of the earth" because he, too, was unable to escape their awful fate. So in Habakkuk 2, after stating that he "gathereth unto him all nations" (Hab. 2:5) the prophet goes on to say "Shall not all these take up a taunting proverb against him." The taunt is, that though he had leagued himself with the mass of Israel (laden himself with thick clay), yet it will be "the remnant" of this same people that shall "spoil" him (Hab. 2:8).

Another scripture which shows that in the End-time apostate Israel will no longer be divided from and hated by the Gentiles is found in Isaiah 2, where we are told, "They strike hands with the children of strangers" (Isa. 2:6 R.V.). As the context here is of such deep interest, and as the whole chapter supplies us with a most vivid picture of the Jews in Palestine just before the Millennium, we shall stop to give it a brief consideration. The first five verses present to us a millennial scene, and then, as is so frequently the case in the prophecies of Isaiah, we are taken back to be shown something of the conditions which shall precede the establishing of the Lord's house in the top of the mountains. This is clear from the twelfth verse, which defines this period, preceding the Millennium as "the Day of the Lord." The section, then, which describes the conditions which are to obtain in Palestine immediately before the Day of the Lord dawns, begins with Isaiah 2:6. We there quote from Isaiah 2:5 to the end of Isaiah 2:10:

"For thou hast forsaken thy people the house of Jacob, because they be filled with customs from the east, and are soothsayers like the Palestines, and they strike hands with the children of strangers. Their land also is full of silver and gold, neither is there any end to their treasures; their land also is full of horses, neither is there any end of their chariots. Their land also is full of idols; they worship the work of their own hands, that which their own fingers have made. And the mean man is bowed down, and the great man is brought low: therefore forgive them not. Enter into the rock, and hide thee in the dust, from before the terror of the Lord, and from the glory of His majesty."

This most interesting passage shows us that apostate Israel will be on terms of intimacy with the Gentiles; that she will be the mistress of vast wealth; that she will be given up to idolatry. Their moral condition is described in Isaiah 2:11 to 17—note the repeated references to "lofty looks," "haughtiness of men," "high and lifted up," etc.

If Zechariah 5 be read after Isaiah 2:6-9 we have the connecting link between it and Revelation 17. Isaiah 2 shows us the Jews as the owners of fabulous wealth, as being in guilty fellowship with "strangers," and as universally given to idolatry. Zechariah 5 reveals the emigration of apostate Israel (the "woman" in the midst of the Ephah) and the transference of her wealth to the land of Shinar. Revelation 17 and 18 give the ultimate outcome of this. Here we see apostate Israel in all her corrupt glory. She is pictured, first, as sitting upon many waters (Rev. 17:1), which signified "peoples, and multitudes, and nations and tongues" (Rev. 17:15). These will support her by contributing to her revenues. The huge bond issues made by the nations to obtain loans, are rapidly finding their way into Jewish hands; and doubtless it is the steadily accumulating interest from these which will soon make them the wealthiest nation of the world. That which has half bankrupted Europe will soon be used to array the Woman in purple and scarlet color and gold and precious stones and pearls (Rev. 17:4).

Second, the Woman is seen sitting upon the Beast (Rev. 17:3), which means that the Antichrist will use his great governmental power to insure her protection. How this harmonizes with Daniel 9:27, where we read of him making a seven-year Covenant with them, needs not to be pointed out. Then will poor blinded Israel believe that the Millennium has

come. No longer the people of the weary foot and homeless stranger, but mistress of the greatest city in the world. No longer poor and needy, but possessor of the wealth of the earth. No longer the "tail" of the nations, but reigning over them as their financial Creditor and Dictator. No longer despised by the great and mighty, but sought after by the kings of the earth. Nothing withheld that the flesh can desire. The false Prince of Peace their benefactor, blinded Israel will verily conclude that at long last the millennial era has arrived, and such will be the Devil's imitation of that blessed time which shall be ushered in by the return of God's Son to this earth.

But not for long shall this satanic spell be enjoyed. Rudely shall it be broken. For, Third, Revelation 17 shows us the ten horns and the Beast turning against the Whore, stripping her of her wealth, and despoiling her of her glory (Rev. 17:6). This, too, corresponds with Old Testament prophecy, for there we read of the Antichrist breaking his Covenant with Israel! As we are told in Psalm 55:20, "He hath put forth his hands against such as be at peace with him: he has broken his covenant," cf Isaiah 33:8. And this very breaking of the Covenant is but the fulfillment of the Divine counsels. Thousands of years ago, Jehovah addressed Himself through Isaiah to apostate Israel, saying, "And your Covenant with Death shall be disannulled, and your agreement with Hell shall not stand; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, then ye shall be trodden down by it."

Concerning Antichrist's relations with the godly Jewish Remnant, that has already been discussed, as also his final attack upon Jerusalem and his defeat and overthrow in the Valley of Armageddon. Apostate Israel, the Beast, and all his Gentile followers shall be destroyed. The faithful remnant of Israel, and those Gentiles who befriend them in the hour of their need, shall have their part in the millennial kingdom of David's Son and Lord (Matthew 25). Thus has God been pleased to unveil the future and make known to us the things which "must shortly come to pass." May it be ours to reverently search the more sure Word of Prophecy with increasing interest, and may an ever-deepening gratitude fill our hearts and be expressed by our lips, because all who are now saved by grace through faith shall be with our blessed Lord in the Father's House, when the Great Tribulation with all its attendant horrors shall come upon the world.

That God will yet permit the Devil to bring forth his satanic masterpiece, who shall defy God and persecute His people, should scarcely be surprising. In each succeeding age there has been a Cain for every Abel; a Jannes and Jambres for every Moses and Aaron; a Babylon for every Jerusalem; an Herod for every John the Baptist. It has been so during this dispensation: the sowing of the Wheat, was followed by the sowing of the Tares. It will be so in the Tribulation period: not only will there be a faithful remnant of Israel, but there shall be an unfaithful company of that people, too. And just before the Christ of God returns to this earth to set up His kingdom, God will suffer His arch-enemy to bring forth the false christ, who will establish his kingdom.

And God's hour for this is not far distant. It was when "the iniquity of the Amorites" was come to the "full" (Gen. 15:16) that God gave orders for their extermination (Deut. 7:1, 2). And Israel's transgressions (Dan. 8:23) and the transgressions of Christendom (2 Thess. 2:11, 12), will only have come to "the full" when those who rejected the Christ of God, shall have received the christ of Satan. Then, shall God say to His avenging angel, "Thrust in thy sickle, and reap: for the time has come for thee to reap; for *the harvest of the earth is ripe*" (Rev. 14:15). It is this which makes the subject so solemn.

What God has been pleased to make known concerning the Antichrist is not revealed in order to gratify carnal curiosity, but is of great moment for our daily lives. In the first place, a proper apprehension of these things should cause us to seriously search our hearts, and to examine carefully the foundation upon which our hopes are built, to discover whether or not they rest on the solid Rock Christ Jesus, or whether they stand upon nothing more stable than the shifting sands of human feelings, human resolutions, human efforts after self-improvement. Incalculably serious is the issue at stake, and we cannot afford to be uncertain about it. A mere "*hope I am saved*" is not sufficient. Nothing short of the full assurance of faith ought to suffice.

Unspeakably solemn is what we read of in 2 Thess. 2:8-12: "And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of His mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming: Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they *received not the love of the truth*, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe the Lie: That they all might be damned who *believed not the truth*, but had *pleasure in unrighteousness*".

There are three points in the above verses by which the writer and the reader may *test* himself. First, have I "*believed the Truth*"? "*Thy Word is Truth*". Have I set to my seal that God is true? Have I applied the Word of God *to myself*, and taken it to *my own heart*? Have I *personally* received the Savior that it reveals?

Second, do I have "*pleasure in unrighteousness*"? There is a vast difference between *doing* an act of unrighteousness, and having "pleasure" therein. Scripture speaks of Moses "choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy *the pleasures of sin* for a season" (Heb. 11:25). And again, it speaks of some who "knowing the judgment of God that they who commit such things are worthy of death, not only *do* the same, but *have pleasure* in them that do them" (Rom. 1:32). So it is here in the passage before us. They who "believe not the Truth", have "*pleasure in unrighteousness*". And here is one of the vital differences between an unbeliever and a genuine believer. The latter may be overtaken by a fault, his communion with Christ may be broken, he may sin grievously, but if he does, *he* will have no "pleasure" therein! Instead, he will *hate* the very unrighteousness into which he has fallen, and mourn bitterly for having done that which was so dishonoring to his Savior.

Third, have I "received *the love* of the Truth"? Do I read God's Word daily, not simply as a duty, but as a delight; not merely to satisfy conscience, but because it rejoices my heart; not simply to gratify an idle curiosity, that I may acquire some knowledge of its contents, but because I desire above everything else to become better acquainted with its Author. Can I say with the Psalmist, "I will *delight myself* in Thy statutes Thy commandments are *my delights*" (Ps. 119:16, 143). The wicked *love* the "darkness"; but God's people *love* "the light"!

Here, then, are three tests by which we earnestly entreat every reader to honestly examine himself, and see whether he be in the faith. Awful beyond words is the only alternative, for Scripture declares of those who have "believed not the Truth", who have "pleasure in unrighteousness", and who have "received not the love of the Truth", that "for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe the Lie: *that they all might be damned*".

Again; if we diligently search the Scriptures to discover what they teach concerning the Antichrist—his personality, his career, his ways, etc.—the more we are informed about him the better shall we be prepared to detect the many antichrists who are in the world today, now preparing the way for the appearing and career of the Man of Sin. There is no reason why we should be *ignorant* of Satan's "devices". There is no valid excuse if we are deceived by his "false apostles", who transform themselves into the apostles of Christ (2 Cor. 11:13). Christians ought not to be misled by the many false prophets who are gone out into the world (1 John 4:1). Nor will they be, if they study diligently those things which God has recorded for our enlightenment and to safeguard us against the subtle deceptions of the great Enemy.

Again; as we give diligent heed to the prophetic Word, as we take its solemn warnings *to heart*, the effect must be that we shall *separate ourselves* from everything which is anti-Christian. "Be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you" (2 Cor. 6:14-17).

This call is not directed toward Christians separating themselves from their fellow-Christians. How could it be? Scripture does not contradict itself. God's Word explicitly says, "Not forsaking the assembling *of ourselves together*, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching" (Heb. 10:25). But the same Word which tells us not to forsake the assembling of ourselves together, commands us to have "*no fellowship* with the unfruitful works of darkness" (Eph. 5:11). God forbid that His people should be found helping forward the plans of the Prince of Darkness.

Finally; as we read prayerfully the teaching of Scripture concerning this Coming One, who shall embark upon the most awful course that has ever been run on their earth; as we learn of how he will ascend the Throne of the World, and be the director and dictator of human affairs; as we discover how he will employ the mighty power, with which Satan invests him, to openly defy God and everything which bears His name; and, as we are made aware of the unspeakably dreadful judgments which God will pour upon the world at that time, and the fearful doom which shall overtake the Antichrist and all his followers; our heart will be stirred within us, and we shall not hesitate to lift up our voices in warning. The world is in complete ignorance of what awaits it. The nations know not what is in store for them. Even Israel discerns not the dark night which lies before them. But as God instructs us concerning what He is about to do, it is positively criminal to remain silent. The voices of all whom God has been pleased to enlighten ought to be raised in solemn and united testimony to the things which God has declared "*must* shortly come to pass".

(The Antichrist, A.W. Pink)

How many years is a time, times and a half a time?

And he said, "Go *your way*, Daniel, for the words *are* closed up and sealed till the time of the end" (Dan. 12:9). **Is there anyone worthy to open the seal and if so when will it be opened?**

Rev. 5:1-14

"The Antichrist" was originally published in 1923 and much has happened since then. **Can you give further insight into what A. W. Pink has said in his explanations in the book of Daniel?**