

THE
Gospel
OF THE
Kingdom

STUDIES IN THE
BOOK OF DANIEL

W. W. Prescott

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Cover:

The Angel on Sea and Land
(Revelation 10:2)

Daniel and the Revelation (U. Smith), 1897

The Angel holds in His hand a “little book”
(shown as a scroll in the picture),
which He commands John to eat,
and which represents the unsealing
of the book of *Daniel* in “the latter days,”
or “time of the end.”

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Contents

1. Planting the Royal Seed.....	1
<i>The Gospel of the Kingdom</i>	1
<i>The Question to be Settled</i>	3
2. Strengthened by Temperate Living.....	11
<i>Character and Diet Related</i>	11
<i>A Body Temple</i>	12
<i>Restoration of Kingly Character</i>	13
<i>The Diet of God and the Diet of Babylon</i>	14
<i>A Test Between the Two Ways</i>	15
3. The Divine Education.....	21
<i>The Way to Obtain Knowledge</i>	22
<i>Knowledge that is Enduring</i>	23
<i>Advantages of God's School</i>	24
<i>This Question of Today</i>	25
<i>A Kingdom that Cannot be Moved</i>	26
4. God Arranges a Test.....	29
<i>A Mysterious Dream</i>	29
<i>A Severe Test</i>	30
<i>The Wise Taken in Their Own Craftiness</i>	31
<i>A Helpless King</i>	33
<i>Asking Wisdom of God</i>	34
5. The Philosophy of Human History.....	37
<i>The Key that Unlocks History</i>	39
<i>The Revealer of Secrets</i>	40
<i>Study for "The Latter Days"</i>	42
6. An Everlasting Kingdom.....	45
<i>Interpretation of the Dream</i>	46
<i>Temporary Kingdoms</i>	47
<i>The Fourth and Last Earthly World Empire</i>	48
<i>A Divided Kingdom</i>	50
<i>The Eternal Kingdom</i>	51
<i>Where We are Living</i>	52
<i>A Royal Acknowledgment</i>	54
7. Self-Exaltation.....	57
<i>Nebuchadnezzar's Great Image</i>	57

<i>A Grand Assembly</i>	59
<i>The Philosophy of Persecution</i>	61
<i>Loyalty to the Truth</i>	63
<i>A Test Question</i>	64
<i>Faithful Unto Death</i>	65
8. Gospel Liberty	67
<i>Witnesses For and Against God</i>	67
<i>Quenched the Violence of Fire</i>	69
<i>The Greatest King of Earth Only a Subject</i>	71
<i>Judgment in Favor of God</i>	76
<i>God Needs Not Human Support</i>	77
9. Righteousness by Faith is Presented	79
<i>An Apostolic Salutation</i>	80
<i>Ignorance of Professional Wise Men</i>	81
<i>Significance of a Tree</i>	83
<i>Interpretation of the Dream</i>	85
<i>The Needful Lesson</i>	86
<i>The Universal Message</i>	87
<i>Real Royalty</i>	89
10. Conversion of the King of Babylon	91
<i>A Great Builder</i>	92
<i>The Real Builder</i>	93
<i>The Lost Dominion</i>	94
<i>God's Dominion Never Lost</i>	95
<i>God's Authority Recognized</i>	96
<i>Extent of God's Dominion</i>	97
<i>The Crowning Victory</i>	98
11. Modern Babylon	101
<i>The Power of Personal Testimony</i>	101
<i>A Review of the Kingdoms in Daniel</i>	102
<i>The Fourth Kingdom</i>	103
<i>History to be Repeated</i>	104
<i>Fall of Babylon the Great</i>	106
12. The Wine of Babylon	109
<i>The Decay of Babylon</i>	109
<i>Trust in Human Strength</i>	110
<i>The Crowning Act of Rebellion</i>	111
<i>Future Prophetic Fulfillment</i>	112
<i>The Light Rejected</i>	115

13. The Time of Judgment Arrives.....	119
<i>The Writing of God's Finger.....</i>	120
<i>Slavish, Unkingly Fear.....</i>	121
<i>Men Who Cannot Read.....</i>	122
<i>The Man for the Occasion.....</i>	124
<i>Consequences of Rejecting Light.....</i>	126
14. The Cause of Babylon's Fall.....	129
<i>All Things are God's Gifts.....</i>	130
<i>Rejection of the Gospel.....</i>	131
<i>History is Prophecy.....</i>	132
<i>The Sign of the True God.....</i>	134
<i>The Sign Set Aside.....</i>	135
<i>The Sign Restored.....</i>	135
<i>A Needed Warning.....</i>	137
15. Babylon is Fallen, is Fallen.....	139
<i>Judgments Never Arbitrary, Nor Matters of Chance.....</i>	140
<i>Necessity for the Spirit of Prophecy.....</i>	141
<i>Worthless Rewards.....</i>	142
<i>Fulfillment of Prophecy.....</i>	144
<i>A World-Wide Destruction.....</i>	145
16. Men Ought Always to Pray.....	147
<i>Faithful in Everything.....</i>	147
<i>The Wicked Plots Against the Just.....</i>	149
<i>The Working of Envy.....</i>	151
<i>Two Ways of Exalting Self Above God.....</i>	152
<i>His Servants You Are to Whom You Obey.....</i>	152
<i>Deification of Human Law.....</i>	153
17. Deliverance from Death.....	157
<i>The Royal Bond-Slave and the Free Captive.....</i>	158
<i>Cooperation of the Human and the Divine.....</i>	159
<i>An Innocent Lawbreaker.....</i>	161
<i>The Wicked Snared in Their Own Trap.....</i>	162
<i>Kept From Hurt.....</i>	164
<i>The Gospel of Deliverance.....</i>	165
<i>Continuing and Prospering.....</i>	166
18. Modern Babylon in Prophecy.....	169
<i>The Vision.....</i>	170
<i>An Outline of the World's History.....</i>	173
<i>A View of the Judgment.....</i>	174

<i>A Mysterious Power</i>	175
<i>Modern Babylon the Chief Subject of the Prophecy</i>	177
<i>The Destruction of All Worldly Kingdoms</i>	178
<i>The Final Settlement of All Things</i>	179
<i>Who are the Real Possessors of the Kingdom</i>	180
19. The King of Modern Babylon Exalts Himself	183
<i>Prophecy Concerning Rome</i>	184
<i>Breaking Up of the Roman Empire</i>	185
<i>The Papacy Pointed Out</i>	186
<i>A Priest Kingdom</i>	187
<i>Haughtiness and Blasphemy</i>	189
<i>Wearing Out the Saints</i>	192
20. Works Substituted for Faith	195
<i>What the Law of God is</i>	196
<i>What the Gospel Is and Does</i>	197
<i>Everything Depends on Personal Faith</i>	198
<i>Relation of Great Apostasy to Law and Gospel</i>	199
<i>Papacy Relies on "The God of This World"</i>	200
<i>Plan of Redemption is Plan of Creation</i>	201
<i>A False Gospel: Man's Work Instead of God's Work</i>	203
21. Paganism Substituted for Christianity	205
<i>The Purpose of the Gospel is Deliverance</i>	206
<i>The Vital Union of Christ with Mankind</i>	208
<i>The Expression of a Genuine Gospel Experience</i>	209
<i>Characteristics: Paganism and Christianity</i>	211
<i>Christianity and Papacy Compared and Contrasted</i>	212
22. The Gospel is the Answer	217
<i>A Living Principle, not a Formal Creed</i>	217
<i>The Reformation and its Perversion</i>	218
<i>A New Reformation Needed</i>	218
<i>Prophetic Time Period Concerning the Papacy</i>	220
<i>The Final Result of the Great Controversy</i>	222
23. Afterword	225

1. Planting the Royal Seed

Present Truth, January 25, 1900

Daniel 1:1-7

In His reply to the definite question from His disciples,

Matthew 24

³ What shall be the sign of your coming and of the end of the world?

The Gospel of the Kingdom

Jesus said,

¹⁴ This *Gospel of the kingdom* shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.

It is therefore both the sign of the Lord's coming, and the preparation for that glorious event, that it should be proclaimed everywhere that God in Christ is...

1 Timothy 1

¹⁷ ...the King eternal, immortal,

and that:

Psalms 103

¹⁹ The Lord has prepared His throne in the heavens; and His kingdom rules over all.

When this truth has been fully made known throughout all the world, and all have either yielded themselves as obedient servants to the rightful King, or have rejected Him, and said,

Luke 19

¹⁴ We will not have this Man to reign over us,

—than will be heard the “great voices in heaven” saying,

Revelation 11 [RV]

¹⁵ The kingdom of the world is become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ; and He shall reign for ever and ever.

Matthew 25

³⁴ Then shall the King say unto them on His right hand, Come, you blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.

Those who have rejected the Gospel of the kingdom, and have persisted in their allegiance to “the god of this world,”¹ will perish with their chosen king in the downfall of his kingdom.

Every person in the world ought therefore to give earnest attention to this announcement of the Gospel of the kingdom. It is not a question of creed, or church, a mere subject of theological controversy; it is not a question of weight of argument in the settlement of some religious dispute, which may well be left to those who enjoy each soul-destroying pastime; it is an intensely real and practical question, which affects the whole tenor of our lives.

By this announcement of the Gospel of the kingdom we are informed of the true state of affairs in this world; we learn of the original rebellion against the authority of “the King of heaven;”² how that:

- Lucifer, the light-bearer, became Satan, the adversary;
- Through deception he turned man away from his allegiance to God, and by usurping his dominion became “god of this world;”
- God in His great love has made provision through the gift of Jesus, His life, His death, His resurrection, and His priesthood, that we should be rescued from the power of darkness, and translated into the kingdom of His dear Son;
- In Jesus Christ, the Son of man, the Son of God, who “loved us and washed us, from our sins in His own blood, and has made us kings” (*Revelation 1:5-6*), the do-

¹ *2 Corinthians 4:4.*

² *Daniel 4:37.*

minion will be restored, “and the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High.” *Daniel 7:27*.

This Gospel of the kingdom is the one topic of the Scriptures.

- It is set forth in precept, prayer, and praise;
- It is the teaching of the prophecy, the history, and the biography of the Bible;
- It is the keynote of the life and teaching of Jesus, who began His ministry by “preaching the Gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent, and believe the Gospel.” *Mark 1:14-15*.

It covers the working out of God’s eternal purpose concerning man, from the 1st chapter of *Genesis*, where we find him made in the image and likeness of God, and having dominion over the works of His hands, through the experience of sin, when...

Hebrews 2

⁸ ...we see not yet all things put under him,

–until we find him in the last chapter of *Revelation*, again a faithful servant of the rightful King, having God’s name in his forehead, once more a king,

Revelation 22

⁵ ...[who] shall reign for ever and ever.

The Question to be Settled

The Gospel message goes forth “with a loud voice,” saying,

Isaiah 40

⁹ Behold your God,

Revelation 14

⁷ Fear God and give glory to Him...and worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.

Thus each one is brought to face and to settle these questions,

“Who is the Lord, that I should obey His voice?”

“What is the nature of this kingdom of God?”

“Is there any clear evidence that it shall stand for ever?”

“Upon what principles is it established that it should be ‘an everlasting kingdom?’”

The history of the world, read in the light shining from the Scriptures, will give a clear and decided answer to all these questions. It is not a matter of theory or of philosophical speculation, but an experience which has been wrought out in the centuries of human history.

But in order to trace with profit the lessons taught in the apparently entangled course of events of these centuries, we must read the history from God’s standpoint, opening this storehouse of knowledge with the key which He has placed in our hands.

And it is especially important that this should be done in this generation, because the history of the past is being repeated in the history of today, and the true interpretation of present history is given to us in the Lord’s own interpretation of past history as the guide in the correct understanding of His prophecies concerning this time just before the coming of the King.

In the book of *Daniel*, concerning which Jesus said,

Matthew 24

¹⁵ Whoso reads, let him understand,

–we have in small compass a divinely-written history of the world from the time of...

Isaiah 13

¹⁹ Babylon, the glory of kingdoms,

to...

Daniel 12

¹³ ...the end of the days.

- Here we have the key to the correct interpretation of all history.
- Here we have the principles of the kingdom of heaven plainly revealed in contrast with the principles inculcated by the “god of this world,” and all this upon the actual stage of human action, a living panorama.
- Here is traced in bold outline the controversy which has been waged during all these centuries in the effort of “the prince of this world,” to set up a permanent kingdom on this earth that shall rival the kingdom of God.
- Here we see the outcome of this controversy, with such light upon the present as enables us to understand the nature of the events just before the setting up of God’s everlasting kingdom.

It is because “this Gospel of the kingdom” is so plainly preached in the book of *Daniel*, that we invite attention to it at this time.

Daniel 1

¹ In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, came Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, unto Jerusalem, and besieged it.

² And the Lord gave Jehoiakim, king of Judah, into his hand, with part of the vessels of the house of God; which he carried into the land of Shinar, to the house of his god; and he brought the vessels into the house of his god.

In the opening sentences of the book, the kingdom question is presented. Two earthly kings are warring with each other, and the Lord decides the issue of the conflict. And it will be seen that it is decided in a way to spread abroad in all the earth the knowledge of the kingdom of God, to preach the Gospel of the kingdom.

But how does it happen that Jehoiakim, *king of Judah*, is overcome by Nebuchadnezzar, *king of Babylon*? Why are the Lord's people conquered by the heathen? The walls of Jericho falling at the shout of faith, and Israel turning...

Joshua 7

⁸ ...their backs before their enemies

–at once furnish the answer.

¹¹ Israel has sinned, and they have also transgressed my covenant which I commanded them.

2 Chronicles 36

⁵ Jehoiakim...did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord.

Furthermore, the Lord never intended that His people should have any king but himself. When the people demanded a king, God said of them,

1 Samuel 8

⁷ They have rejected me, that I should not reign over them.

He it was who would have given them victory over all their enemies, and have made them...

Deuteronomy 28

¹³ ...the head and not the tail,

–above, and not beneath,

¹³ ...if you hearken unto the commandments of the Lord your God.

But when they chose a visible king in the place of the...

1 Timothy 1

¹⁷ ...King eternal, immortal, invisible,

–and departed from the Lord, they lost the working of that eternal power through faith in which kingdoms are subdued,³ and were carried captive by the heathen.

It is also true that the Lord works through His people to preach the Gospel of His kingdom throughout the world, and thus to restrain the kingdom of evil; but when they became self-centered, and shut this light away from the heathen, then the Lord overruled this very failure which gave them into the hands of the heathen as the means of accomplishing the work which they neglected to do in a time of prosperity.

Thus the truth to be learned by each individual is that:

Romans 14

¹⁷ The kingdom of God is righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost;

that:

Hebrews 1

⁸ A scepter of righteousness is the scepter of your kingdom;

that:

Luke 17

²¹ The kingdom of God is within you.

And the truth to be learned about worldly kingdoms is that:

Daniel 4

¹⁷ The Most High rules in the kingdom of men, and gives it to whomsoever He will.

³ **Hebrews 11** ³³ Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions,

³⁴ Quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens.

It is only in the light of these principles that the experiences of individuals and nations can be read aright. These are the themes of the book of *Daniel*.

The sacred vessels were removed from the house of God, and were displayed in the heathen temple, as the outward tokens of the superiority of the gods and the religion of Babylon over the God and the religion of the Jews. Alas, that...

Romans 2

²⁴ The name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles,

—by those who profess, but do not have faith in Him,

Romans 9

⁵ ...who is over all, God blessed for ever.

But the truth will triumph, even though its day of victory is often delayed by the unfaithfulness of those who profess to believe it.

Daniel 1

³ And the king spoke unto Ashpenaz the master of his eunuchs, that he should bring certain of the children of Israel, and of the king's seed, and of the princes;

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

⁵ And the king appointed them a daily portion of the king's meat, and of the wine which he drank: so nourishing them three years, that at the end thereof they might stand before the king.

⁶ Now among these were of the children of Judah, Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah:

⁷ Unto whom the prince of the eunuchs gave names: for he gave unto Daniel the name of Belteshazzar; and to Hananiah, of Shadrach; and to Mishael, of Meshach, and to Azariah, of Abednego.

Some of the captives, who had the best physical appearance and who gave evidence of possessing intellectual ability already well-developed, were selected for training that “they might stand before the king.” They were “children,” “lads,” probably in their teens, just at the age when surroundings usually have the most powerful influence upon conduct, when those who are not controlled by a living principle within are swayed to and fro by the pressure of outward circumstances.

With the evident purpose that these young captives should retain their good physical appearance, and that they should make rapid progress in “the learning and the tongue of the Chaldeans” the king provided for them what he regarded as the best diet, just such food and wine as was found upon his own table. It was a royal bill of fare, as supplied to his majesty the king, but the king was *the king of Babylon*. The question of the kingdom is thus before these young men:

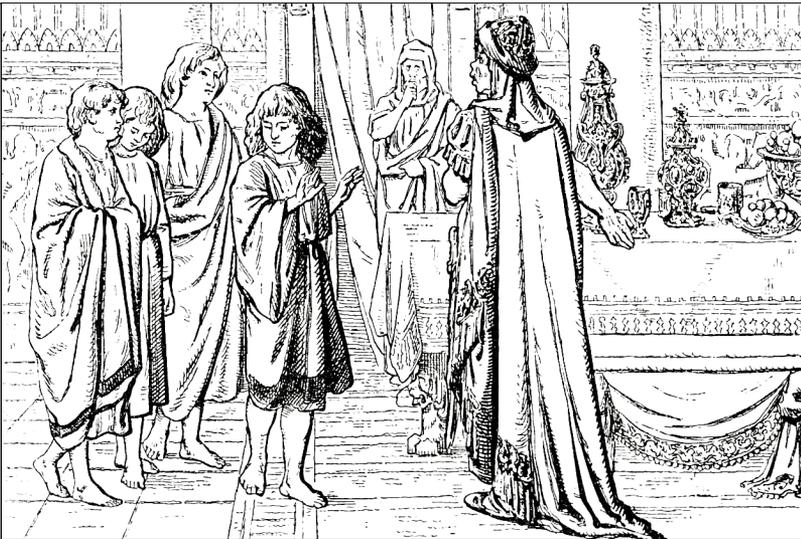
- Shall they follow the instruction of their real King, or that of the king of Babylon?
- Will the fact that they have been chosen for training, that they may serve the king of Babylon, lead them to excuse a departure from right principle, with the plea that they are captives and in Babylon, and that when in Babylon, they must do as the Babylonians do?
- Will it really make so much difference after all what they eat and drink, provided they hold fast to their creed, and are well prepared to defend it against the heathen?

Thus does the mere formalist betray his trust, substituting argument for conduct, sound for substance. Thus do all those think, who regard religion as merely a round of ceremonies, and God’s commandments as simply arbitrary requirements.

To all such the kingdom is outward, visible fleshly; and they are easily persuaded that one form is as good as another, and that God is not so particular about these matters, so long as

we maintain a sort of ethereal atmosphere about us which is sometimes mistaken for spirituality, and boasted of as that liberty by which we keep the law in the spirit, and so are privileged to disregard it in the letter.

Such is the modern idea of Gospel liberty. In this way does convenience dictate to principle, obedience becomes a mere matter of circumstance, and the kingdom of heaven becomes the kingdom of Babylon.



Daniel refuses the Kings Dainties
(Aunt Charlotte's Stories of Bible History, 1876)

2. Strengthened by Temperate Living

Present Truth, February 1, 1900

Daniel 1:8-16

ALTHOUGH the king of Babylon changed the name of Daniel, and gave him the name of Belteshazzar, according to the name of his god, yet his character remained unchanged, and he continued loyal to the King of heaven and the principles of that kingdom, as is shown by the record.

Character and Diet Related

Daniel 1

⁸ But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat, nor with the wine which he drank: therefore he requested of the prince of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself.

⁹ Now God had brought Daniel into favor and tender love with the prince of the eunuchs.

¹⁰ And the prince of the eunuchs said unto Daniel, I fear my lord the king, who has appointed your meat and your drink; for why should he see your faces worse liking than the children which are of your sort? then shall you make me endanger my head to the king.

It is clear that Daniel understood the gospel of the kingdom, and how the matter of eating and drinking was related to it. He did not ask for a change of diet merely because the food provided for him was different from that to which he had been accustomed, or because he wanted something which would please his palate better. He was acting, upon principle. He had learned that:

Luke 17

²¹ The kingdom of God is within you,

—that he was...

2 Corinthians 6

¹⁶ ...the temple of the living God,

1 Corinthians 3

¹⁶ ...that the Spirit [life] of God dwells in you,

–and that

¹⁷ If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy: for the temple of God is holy.

Although he was a captive in the dominion of the king of Babylon, yet he did not forget that God was his King, and that the principles of His kingdom were still to control in his life. The test came upon the question of food and drink.

“Should I follow the diet prescribed by the king of Babylon, or that prescribed by the King of heaven?”

The basis upon which he rested his choice reveals the true relationship between food and character, and shows how we may work with God, or against Him, in His plan to restore His image in us, and thus to place us again in dominion over the works of His hands.

A Body Temple

God created the body as the dwelling-place for the mind, a living temple,

Psalm 139

¹⁴ ...wonderfully made.

The mind was to rule the body, using its members as its servants to do its bidding. Thus was the Divine nature revealed in the flesh, and man shared in the dominion with the King of heaven, because he was a member of the royal family, and the royal blood (the life of the King) was in him. He was...

Hebrews 2

⁹ ...crowned with glory and honor,

–and was invested with the power of a king in the very character that was given to him.

Hebrews 1

⁸ A scepter of righteousness [was] the scepter of his kingdom.

Thus his dominion depended upon his character, and was not an arbitrary gift apart from it. Through the loss of character the dominion was lost,

Romans 3

²³ For all have sinned and come short [lack] of the glory [character] of God.

And therefore,

Hebrews 2

⁸ ...now we see not yet all things put under him.

Restoration of Kingly Character

It is the work of the Gospel to restore to man the kingly character, and thus to bring him back to his place of dominion. This is accomplished by the gift of righteousness, the true scepter of the kingdom,

Romans 3

²² Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe.

But this righteousness is simply the Lord's own life in its purity, just as it was first imparted to man when...

Genesis 2

⁷ God...breathed into his nostrils the breath of life.

To accept the gift of God's righteousness by faith is therefore to accept His life, recognizing it as His life, and submitting to it, so that it may be...

Philippians 2

¹³ God which works in you both to will and to do.

Now we may cooperate with God in His purpose by accepting this gift of His life as it comes to us in its full strength and

purity, or we may work against this purpose by refusing the life altogether, or by putting various hindrances in the way of its working in us.

- We cannot give life, but we can take it.
- We cannot save ourselves, but we can effectually hinder the Lord from saving us.
- We cannot put ourselves upon the throne again, but we can prevent the Lord from doing so.

The body, the home of the mind,

1 Corinthians 6

¹⁹ ...the temple of the Holy Ghost,

—has been placed in our care, with full instructions from the Creator as to the treatment which we are to give to it. So close is the relationship between the mind and the body that they react upon each other, and the condition of one has a marked effect upon the other.

The Diet of God and the Diet of Babylon

In order therefore that the body, and the mind through the body, might be properly nourished, God himself in the beginning prescribed a diet, simple yet varied and satisfying, by means of which His own life might be imparted to man.

Genesis 1

²⁹ And God said, Behold I have given you every herb bearing seed which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat.

This diet is nourishing, but not stimulating; and although the curse of disease and death is upon all things in the earth, yet its effects upon the fruits and grains are so manifest, when they appear at all, that they can readily be avoided.

Thus the diet prescribed by the King of heaven for those who are to share with Him in the dominion is clean and pure, and can be kept so, even under the curse.

- It does not rouse or feed the fires of passion, and thus make it harder to keep under the body, and bring it into subjection;
- It does not impart a tainted life, or load the system with poisons which have been generated in other living organisms filled with disease;
- It does not defile the temple of the body.

Not so with the diet provided by the king of Babylon. His food is made up of “delicacies,” those mysterious and complicated dishes which tempt the appetite to over-indulgence, and bring heavy burdens upon the delicate, living machinery. His wine, instead of being the pure blood of the grape, has been transformed into the fiery liquid which...

Proverbs 23

³² ...bites like a serpent and stings like an adder.

There is as wide a contrast between the two bills of fare as between the two kingdoms. Daniel understood all this, and so...

Daniel 1

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

A Test Between the Two Ways

Now comes the practical difficulty. In response to Daniel's request that he might not defile himself, the officer in charge says:

¹⁰ I fear my lord the king, who has appointed your meat and your drink.

The test is a plain one. The two kings and the two kingdoms are brought into direct opposition. The servant of the king of Babylon fears his lord the king, and the servant of the King of heaven fears his Lord the King; but the kind of fear is as different in the two cases, as the two kings. Shall the principles of the kingdom of Babylon prevail over the principles of the kingdom of heaven?

Of course the officer, like many a modern advocate of “a liberal diet,” thinks that the effects of such a way of living as was chosen by Daniel would be very marked at once in faces that would be “worse liking” than the others, and thus he himself would be brought into trouble; for the temper of the king of Babylon is just what might be expected from the nature of his diet, and when he loses his head and becomes...

Daniel 2

¹² ...angry and very furious,

—an offending subordinate is likely to lose his head also. But the Lord has sent Daniel and his companions to Babylon that they might proclaim the Gospel of the kingdom of God in the court of the king, and thus...

Matthew 24

¹⁴ ...in all the world for a witness.

They were not arbitrarily chosen for this work. If all the people had been as true to principle as they were, it would not have been necessary to give Jerusalem into the hands of the king of Babylon in order that the Gospel of the kingdom might be spread abroad. These young men had the kingdom of God within them, and they knew their King. They believed that the principles of the kingdom were true, and that these principles would justify themselves whenever they were given an opportunity.

They were willing to accept the test suggested by the officer, and to trust God for the result.

Daniel 1

¹¹ Then said Daniel to Melzar, whom the prince of the eunuchs had set over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah,

¹² Prove your servants, I beseech you, ten days; and let them give us pulse to eat and water to drink.

¹³ Then let our countenances be looked upon before you, and the countenance of the children that eat of the portion of the king's meat: and as you see, deal with your servants.

¹⁴ So he consented to them in this matter, and proved them ten days.

¹⁵ And at the end of ten days their countenances appeared fairer and fatter in flesh than all the children which did eat of the portion of the king's meat.

¹⁶ Thus Melzar took away the portion of their meat, and the wine that they should drink; and gave them pulse.

The food which this Hebrew captive asked for himself and his companions was practically what is now considered the proper diet for a prisoner when undergoing punishment: bread and water. Right principles were brought into "confusion" by the king of Babylon, and the best diet was provided for his prisoners when in disgrace, while that which was really the poorest, the most death-dealing, was supplied for his own table. Thus are men persuaded to choose death instead of life, and a stigma is placed upon that which is really good.

But God sets His seal to His own principles of right and truth. Life in its simplicity and purity has a greater power to build up than when burdened with a weight of useless or poisonous additions. When the glory of God is had in view in the eating and the drinking, and faith in God and in the principles of His kingdom controls the demands of a perverted appetite, then the way is open for the beauty of the Lord to appear upon us, as He works out in form and feature His original idea of a man,

Colossians 1

¹⁵ ...the image of the invisible God.

But of course some will ask if this remarkable change in the appearance of Daniel and his companions was not miraculous, rather than the natural result of their diet. But what is a miracle? It is not the confusion of natural law, but simply the uncovering of natural law with a more or less evident disregard of the element of time, in order that the working out of God's agencies may be clearly understood.

Nature is not simply an impersonal force. Natural laws are only the observed method of God's usual and habitual action in bringing about definite results. When He would emphasize the fact that:

Psalm 62

¹¹ ...power belongs to God,

—and that He in His own person is behind what are called natural laws, then He sometimes draws aside the curtain, puts cause and effect in their true connection, regardless of the usual time limit, and we have what is termed a miraculous result.

So in the experience of Daniel and his companions. The Lord gave the best diet to man in the beginning. The king of Babylon has not improved upon it. When received by faith as the free gift of God's own life it is designed to make one "fatter and fairer in flesh" than all the children who partake of the Babylonish diet. And thus the gospel of health is preached.

The whole question of the kingdom was brought to a test in this case in the matter of the true principles of eating and drinking. Daniel and his companions were steadfast in their loyalty to their king, and God honored their loyalty and bore unmistakable testimony to the superiority of His own provision for sustaining the life of man over the perversion of that provision by the king of Babylon.

The truth is eternal. This lesson is a present one. The failure of the first Adam was revealed in his accepting from the en-

emy as food that which the Lord had told him would cause death. The children of Israel made the same failure on their way to the promised land. Christ conquered where man had failed, and thus has assured victory to every one who will accept it.

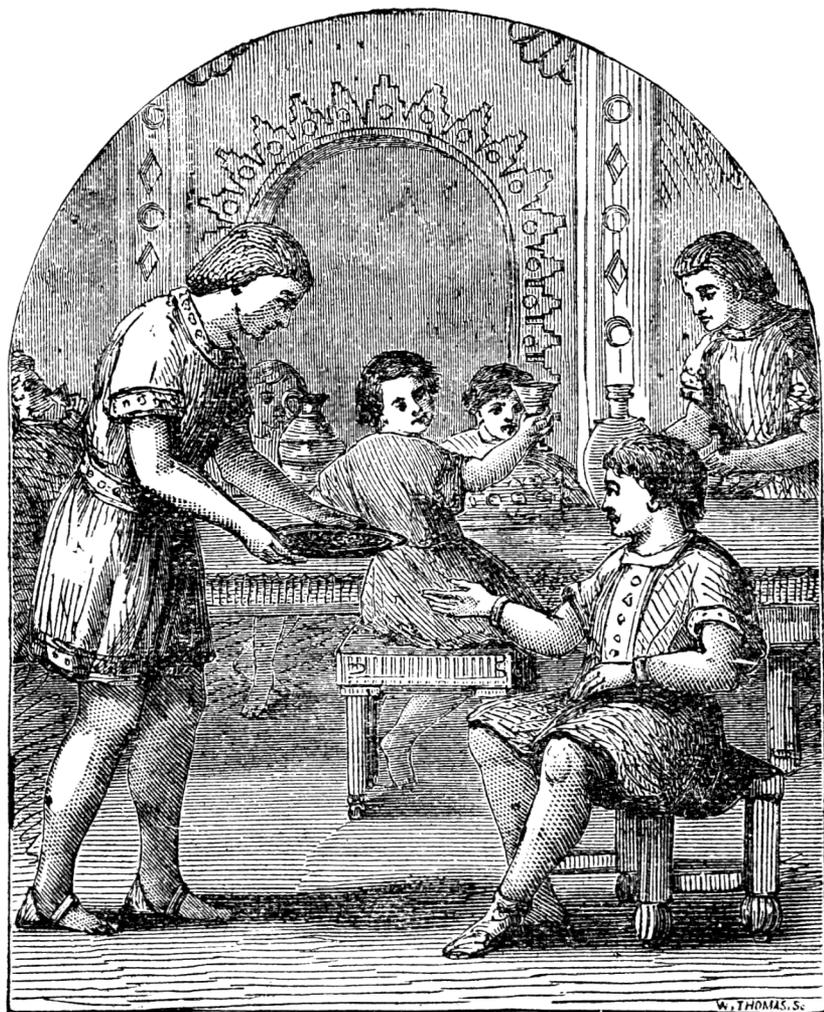
In these closing days, just before the coming of the King, we are warned against the danger of...

Luke 21

³⁴ ...surfeiting, and drunkenness.

The true gospel of the kingdom is the power of God to give a man victory over appetite, to give him self-control, and thus to make him a king indeed, even though he be for a time in the territory of the king of Babylon.

The whole experience of Daniel, as recorded in this book which we are studying, grows out of his loyalty to the principles of the kingdom of God, as revealed in this chapter, and is an object lesson for all time.



Daniel and his Companions are proved ten days
(Child's Commentator, 1873)

3. The Divine Education

Present Truth, February 8, 1900
Daniel 1:17-21

DANIEL and his companions were now students in the schools of Babylon, but not by their own choice. In His providence the Lord had brought them to Babylon, that as loyal subjects of His kingdom they might impart the knowledge of Him,—the only true knowledge,—to the heathen world. They had been chosen to be witnesses, in their own experiences, to the superiority of the kingdom of God over the kingdom of the world.

By the test through which they had passed in the matter of eating and drinking, convincing testimony had been borne that the provision which the King of heaven has made for imparting life and health to His children is better than that which the king of Babylon has substituted for it; and this experience had far-reaching consequences. Following the Divine plan in their diet not only resulted in their appearing “fatter and fairer in flesh” than the others, but also in giving to them clearness and power of mind.

When the system is nourished by simple food, and the brain is not beclouded by the poisons which are either introduced into the body, or formed within it by a gross diet, then the way is prepared for the life of God to reveal itself unhindered in its own living temple, and thus to make manifest the Divine attributes, the glory of God. Thus it was when...

John 1

¹⁴ The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

And so as these young men recognized and maintained their standing in the kingdom of heaven, although they were captives in the kingdom of Babylon, the King of heaven rec-

ognized them, and bestowed upon them the privileges of the kingdom.

Daniel 1

¹⁷ As for these four children, God gave them knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom: and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams.

The Way to Obtain Knowledge

The Divine way of imparting knowledge and wisdom is clearly set forth through the words of Solomon:

Proverbs 2

¹ My son, if you will receive my word and hide my commandments with you;

² So that you incline your ear unto wisdom, and apply your heart to understanding;

³ Yea, if you cry after knowledge, and lift up your voice for understanding;

⁴ If you seek for her as silver, and search for her as for hid treasures;

⁵ Then shall you understand the fear of the Lord and find the knowledge of God.

⁶ For the Lord gives wisdom: out of His mouth comes knowledge and understanding.

To be in direct communication with the source of all wisdom is not intended to be a substitute for earnest application, but rather an incentive to it. As in the natural world, so it is in the intellectual.

Psalms 104

²⁷ These all wait upon You; that You may give them their meat in due season.

²⁸ That You give them they gather.

But the gathering involves the preparation of the soil, the sowing, and the care of the growing crop. It is a law of the kingdom that every result must grow out of some definite effort. It is thus that we cooperate with God in receiving that

which He gives. There is no room for idlers in the kingdom of God.

John 5

¹⁷ My Father works hitherto and I work,

—said Jesus, and every true son of the King will bear the same testimony.

Knowledge that is Enduring

The knowledge which God gives is the knowledge of the truth,—that which is real and enduring,—as opposed to that which only appears to be, and soon passes away. In other words, He imparts a knowledge of the laws and principles of the heavenly and eternal kingdom, and makes known the reality which lies behind all observed facts and phenomena. This brings man into direct touch with the Divine mind, and gives him a clear view of the great King as He administers the affairs of His universal kingdom.

Romans 1 [RV]

²⁰ For the invisible things of Him since the creation of the world are clearly seen, being perceived through the things which are made, even His everlasting power and divinity.

It is sin which has cast a shadow over the face of nature, and drawn a veil over the mind of man, so that he does not recognize the Master Workman in and through His works. But,

Matthew 5

⁸ Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

Faith is therefore the key to all true knowledge, since it is through faith that the heart is purified,⁴ and:

⁴ **Acts 15** ⁸ And God, which knows the hearts, bore them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as He did unto us; ⁹ And put no difference between us and them, *purifying their hearts by faith.*

Hebrews 11

³ Through faith we understand.

That same faith in God and the principles of His kingdom, which was shown by Daniel and his companions in their test over the question of eating and drinking, both prepares the way to receive the gift of knowledge, and is the key which unlocks the treasure house itself.

Advantages of God's School

Daniel 1

¹⁸ Now at the end of the days that the king had said he should bring them in, then the prince of the eunuchs brought them in before Nebuchadnezzar.

¹⁹ And the king communed with them; and among them all was found none like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah: therefore stood they before the king.

²⁰ And in all matters of wisdom and understanding, that the king inquired of them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and astrologers that were in all his realm.

In the experience of these four children, the Gospel of the kingdom of God was being preached in the courts of Babylon. It was being clearly demonstrated that the principles of the heavenly kingdom are superior to those of the kingdom of the world.

First it was the matter of the diet; and those who followed God's original bill of fare as given to man in the beginning, gave every evidence of being in better health than those who preferred the Babylonish diet.

Next it was the question of the best education, and how to obtain it; and the king of Babylon was himself allowed to be the judge. This really resolved itself into a question between the true and the false religion, between the God of heaven and the gods of the heathen; for the magicians and the astrologers claimed to have communion with "the gods," and thus to have

access to a source of wisdom which was no available for ordinary mortals.

The Hebrew captives, being citizens of the heavenly kingdom, and recognizing God as their wisdom, were by His Spirit guided into all truth. Through their faithfulness to the commandments of the true God, they experienced the fulfillment of the words spoken so long before,

Deuteronomy 4

⁶ Keep therefore and do them; for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the nations.

This wisdom is that righteousness by faith which enables one to do the right thing in the right way and at the right time. It is a practical wisdom, which applies to the whole conduct of life. And in this case, as always, it was found to be “ten times better” than the wisdom of the world.

Daniel and his fellows were now classed among “the wise men” and stood before the king. The wisdom which comes from above, and the truth which makes free, had brought them to this position, that they might make known to the king the knowledge of the true God. The kingdom of God which was within them must reveal itself. It could not be hid. Through them the gospel of the kingdom was to be preached in all the world for a witness.

This Question of Today

Men are asking today,

“What is the true higher education?”

The answer is found in this experience in Babylon.

1 Corinthians 3

¹⁹ For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God.

²¹ Therefore let no man glory in men.

That is the true higher education, which imparts the knowledge of the Most High, and makes one familiar with the principles of the higher, the heavenly kingdom. Such an education will stand the test of time and eternity.

John 17

³ And this is life eternal, that they might know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom You have sent.

Proverbs 3

¹³ Happy is the man that finds wisdom, and the man that gets understanding.

This is the lesson from the experience of Daniel and his companions.

A Kingdom that Cannot be Moved

Daniel 1

²¹ And Daniel continued even unto the first year of king Cyrus.

The significance of this brief statement is appreciated when we consider the lesson of Daniel's life. One question to be answered by the teaching of this book is,

“What kingdom will stand?”

It is answered by the facts of experience here recorded, and not by a theoretical deduction from an abstract statement of principles. Babylon was the outward kingdom, the visible, having universal dominion, and with every prospect of enduring for ages. It had apparently triumphed over the kingdom of God, for Jerusalem had been conquered by it, and...

² ...part of the vessels of the house of God

—had been brought to Babylon and were displayed in triumph in the house of the god of the heathen king.

But Jerusalem fell because the people had already fallen, and the kingdom of God was no longer within them. There

were some faithful ones still left, however, and Daniel was among them. Although a captive, in Babylon, he was a living representative of the kingdom of God. In his own experience was to be preached the everlasting Gospel of the kingdom which...

Daniel 2

⁴⁴ ...shall stand for ever.

And so Babylon,

Isaiah 13

¹⁹ ...the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency,

–fell to rise no more; but:

Daniel 1

²¹ Daniel continued.

It will be seen, however, in the sequel, that although Babylon, the outward kingdom passed away, many centuries ago, the real Babylon is still here, and the same questions are pressing for a settlement. Who will yield to the principles of the kingdom of God as opposed to the kingdom of Babylon, acknowledge the kingdom of God to be within him?⁵ and so continue not merely...

Daniel 1

²¹ ...unto the first year of king Cyrus,

but:

Psalms 89 [Deuteronomy 11:21]

²⁹ ...as the days of heaven.

1 John 2

¹⁷ The world passes away, and the lust thereof: but he that does the will of God abides forever.

⁵ *Luke 17:21.*



Daniel and his Companions tested by Nebuchadnezzar
(Child's Commentator, 1873)

4. God Arranges a Test

Present Truth, February 15, 1900
Daniel 2:1-18

WE NOW come to the first of the three experiences in which the God of heaven revealed himself to Nebuchadnezzar, and through him to all the people of his realm. The faithfulness to principle on the part of Daniel and his companions, and their “skill in all learning and wisdom,” as set forth in the 1st chapter, had prepared them to act their part in preaching the Gospel of the kingdom in Babylon.

A Mysterious Dream

Daniel 2

¹ And in the second year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, Nebuchadnezzar dreamed dreams, wherewith his spirit was troubled, and his sleep broke from him.

² Then the king commanded to call the magicians, and the astrologers, and the sorcerers, and the Chaldeans, for to show the king his dreams. So they came and stood before the king.

³ And the king said unto them, I have dreamed a dream, and my spirit was troubled to know the dream.

⁴ Then spoke the Chaldeans to the king in Syriack, O king, live for ever: tell your servants the dream, and we will show the interpretation.

Only a short time after the Hebrew captives had completed their course of training at the court of the king, an opportunity was offered in the providence of the Lord to put to a practical test the value of such wisdom as was imparted in the Babylonish system of education, as compared with the wisdom which God gives to those who are true to the principles of His kingdom.

¹ ...Nebuchadnezzar dreamed dreams.

It is evident that he had had the same experience more than once, that the same dream was repeated, so that he was

deeply impressed with it, and then he could dream no more because...

¹ ...his sleep broke from him.

A Severe Test

Unable to recall the dream, and yet impressed with the idea that it had a meaning of deep import to him, the king called for his wise men, those who professed to be trained in the methods of finding out secret things which were hidden from others. But their claims were now to be subjected to such a test as they had not had before.

The God of heaven was directing affairs in such a way as to bring out clearly the wide contrast between the false and the true systems of education, and to make himself known as the only source of genuine wisdom. The dream which had been taken from the king was also hidden from them, and they were compelled to ask that the dream be told to them.

Daniel 2

⁵ The king answered and said to the Chaldeans, The thing is gone from me: if you will not make known unto me the dream, with the interpretation thereof, you shall be cut in pieces, and your houses shall be made a dunghill.

⁶ But if you show the dream, and the interpretation thereof, you shall receive of me gifts and rewards and great honor: therefore show me the dream, and the interpretation thereof.

⁷ They answered again and said, Let the king tell his servants the dream, and we will show the interpretation of it.

⁸ The king answered and said, I know of certainty that you would gain the time, because you see the thing is gone from me.

⁹ But if you will not make known unto me the dream, there is but one decree for you: for you have prepared lying and corrupt words to speak before me till the time be changed: therefore tell me the dream, and I shall know that you can show me the interpretation thereof.

These professed wise men had been able to maintain their position as the sole channels of superior knowledge, because no one had come forward to question their claims, and no circumstances had arisen which had made the demand upon them for a real revelation of secret things. For the first time in their experience they were really required to make good their profession, and they themselves must now stand or fall with their system.

But the wisdom and knowledge which were imparted by the Babylonish system of education would not stand such a test as this. Their wisdom was foolishness, and their system of education a fraud, and their only hope of success in maintaining confidence in their supposed revelations was that there should be no fair opportunity to test them.

And so they asked that the king should show them before they showed him; that he should furnish them with the key with which to unlock his difficulties. But the king would not help them, if he desired to do so, and thus they were left to reveal the utter folly of their vaunted wisdom.

The Wise Taken in Their Own Craftiness

Daniel 2

¹⁰ The Chaldeans answered before the king, and said, There is not a man upon the earth that can show the king's matter: therefore there is no king, lord, nor ruler, that asked such things of any magician, or astrologer or Chaldean.

¹¹ And it is a rare thing that the king requires, and there is none other that can show it before the king, except the gods, whose dwelling is not with flesh.

In their effort to convince the king of the unreasonableness of his demand, these professed wise men really threw up their whole case, and practically acknowledged that their system was a deception. While claiming that their course of training had opened up to them supernatural channels of wisdom, which were not at the command of ordinary people, they

were forced to acknowledge that their wisdom consisted merely in speculation on the possible meaning of facts which must be supplied to them by others.

Their utter failure, and their positive declaration that “there is not a man upon earth that can show the king’s matter,” only served to make the triumph of God’s system of education the more complete. They had the first opportunity to demonstrate the value of worldly wisdom, and to win a signal victory for their own system; and in defense of their failure to meet the demand made upon them they declared that the ability to do what the king required would be an unmistakable proof of Divinity manifested through humanity.

But this is just where the heathen religion fails. It deals with “the gods whose dwelling is not with flesh.” It is the vain effort of the flesh to satisfy the hunger of the soul after its Maker, with forms and ceremonies of human invention. It deals with “imagination” and “reasonings,” but has no means of acquiring a knowledge of invisible realities.

Romans 1

²² Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools.

Thus was the gauntlet again thrown down by the heathen, and the superiority of the kingdom of heaven over the kingdom of Babylon was again to be demonstrated. The way was prepared now for the true God to reveal himself as:

Isaiah 57

¹⁵ ...the high and lofty One that inhabits eternity,

—and yet as the meek and lowly One whose dwelling is with flesh. It was now to be shown that there is such a thing as genuine communion with God, who gives wisdom to those who seek it, and that such wisdom is life to those who find it. The difference was to be made plain between a philosophy which is merely human and a knowledge which is merely

speculative, and a philosophy which is divine and a knowledge which is positive.

- The one is heathenism, the other is the Gospel.
- The one is the mystery of iniquity, the other is the mystery of godliness.

A Helpless King

Daniel 2

¹² For this cause the king was angry and very furious, and commanded to destroy all the wise men of Babylon.

¹³ And the decree went forth that all the wise men should be slain; and they sought Daniel and his fellows to be slain.

Nebuchadnezzar was king of Babylon, but he was not king of himself. His dominion was an outward one, and was maintained by fleshly power. He was a stranger to that kingdom whose scepter is a scepter of righteousness. He had not learned that a man may sit upon a throne, and deck himself with all the outward signs of royalty, and yet not be a king.

Circumstances were revealing that the men who occupied the place of wise men were not wise men at all, and that the man who occupied the place of a king was not a king at all. This was why it was necessary that the Gospel of the kingdom should be proclaimed in Babylon, in order that true wisdom and genuine kingship might be revealed.

The failure of Nebuchadnezzar to maintain his claim to the outward profession which he made was no less apparent than the failure of the Chaldeans. He is called a king, but the very fact that “he was angry and very furious” shows that he had no real claim to the name. He was really in bondage,—a slave to his own passions.

Thus it is in Babylon, and thus has “the god of this world” confused right principles, so that kings are found in hovels, and slaves upon thrones.

Proverbs 16

³² He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that rules his spirit than he that takes a city.

James 1

¹⁹ Let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath:

²⁰ For the wrath of man works not the righteousness of God.

Anger is unreasoning, and so the command went forth...

Daniel 2

¹² ...to destroy all the wise men.

It matters not that “in all matters of wisdom and understanding” the king found Daniel and his companions...

Daniel 1

²⁰ ...ten times better than all the magicians and astrologers.

They were now all classed together. The wise men had failed to do what he required, and so they were all to be destroyed. The first intimation which Daniel had of this whole matter was when he was sought after to be slain.

Asking Wisdom of God

Daniel 2

¹⁴ Then Daniel answered with counsel and wisdom to Arioch the captain of the king’s guard, which was gone forth to slay the wise men of Babylon:

¹⁵ He answered and said to Arioch the king’s captain, Why is the decree so hasty from the king? Then Arioch made the thing known to Daniel.

¹⁶ Then Daniel went in, and desired of the king that he would give him time, and that he would show the king the interpretation.

¹⁷ Then Daniel went to his house, and made the thing known to Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, his companions: that they should desire mercies of the God of heaven concerning this secret; that Daniel and his fellows should not perish with the rest of the wise men of Babylon.

Having learned the cause of the hasty decree, Daniel did not hesitate to assure the king that he would show the interpretation of the dream. He did not ask the king to tell him the dream, but that he would give him time, and this time he used not in gazing at the stars, or consulting the evil spirits, but in seeking mercies from the God of heaven. It was a case of life or death. The knowledge of this secret meant life to them. Unless Daniel could fulfill his agreement with the king, they would all perish together.

All the circumstances of this experience make it clear that “this secret” which was to be made known to the king through the interpretation of his dream is...

Matthew 4

¹¹ ...the mystery of the kingdom of God.

This is that which is hidden...

Matthew 11

²⁵ ...from the wise and prudent,...and revealed unto babes.

This is the Gospel, whose chief glory is that Divinity is joined with humanity, that:

Galatians 2

²⁰ ...Christ lives in me,

—and that:

Revelation 21

³ ...the tabernacle of God is with men.

God has commissioned His servants...

Ephesians 3

⁹ To make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery.

And it was for this purpose that Daniel and his fellows were in Babylon. They were to make known the power of a kingdom greater than the kingdom of Babylon, and to show that this power is revealed in man, in human flesh. They were to

reveal in themselves the fact that this power in man, this power of the Divine character, determines not simply the destiny of individuals, but also of...

Genesis 18

¹⁸ ...the nations of the earth,

–and that the kingdom of God within man is the only enduring kingdom. It is only a living communion with God, which enables anyone to fulfill such a commission as this, for it is the life which is to be manifested, a fellowship with...

1 John 1

² ...that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested,

–and is always to be manifested by every true child of the kingdom. Thus only can the contrast be sharply and distinctly drawn between:

- the professed wisdom of this world and that wisdom which comes from above;
- a man upon a throne and a genuine king;
- the kingdom of Babylon and the kingdom of God.

5. The Philosophy of Human History

Present Truth, February 22, 1900
Daniel 2:19-36

DANIEL and his companions desired mercies of the God of heaven, and their prayers were not in vain. Communion with the God of heaven was not a new thing to them, and they were not driven to it as a last resort, through fear of death. As citizens of the heavenly kingdom, loyal to its principles, they had learned to come boldly to a throne of grace, and to ask with confidence. Of some it is said,

James 4

³ You ask, and receive not, because you ask amiss, that you may consume it upon your lusts.

Not so with these petitioners. The way they lived was the index of the way they prayed. Right living was the true basis of right praying.

Daniel 2

¹⁹ Then was the secret revealed unto Daniel in a night vision. Then Daniel blessed the God of heaven.

²⁰ Daniel answered and said, Blessed be the name of God for ever and ever; for wisdom and might are His:

²¹ He changes the times and the seasons; He removes kings, and sets up kings: He gives wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding:

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

²³ I thank You and praise You, O God of my fathers, who has given me wisdom and might, and has made known unto me now what we desired of You: for You have now made known unto us the king's matter.

That which Daniel saw in the night vision was what he had already experienced in his own life, the superiority of the principles of the kingdom of heaven. The Lord now showed him the working out of these principles among the nations of

the earth, and their final triumph over all other kingdoms, regardless of their outward glory and power. He saw the long procession of kings who are removed one after the other, and of the kingdoms which succeed each other until...

Mark 1

¹⁴ ...the Gospel of the kingdom of God...

...has accomplished its work, and...

Ezekiel 21

²⁷ ...until He come whose right it is.

But “the secret” of all this goes deeper than the mere fact of the succession of kingdoms. It makes clear the means by which the King of heaven will establish an everlasting kingdom, although He has no other source from which to gather His subjects than the very peoples that constitute the earthly kingdoms which pass away. These are “the deep and secret things” which are beyond the range of human wisdom, and which must be “revealed” if they are ever known by man.

The stability of any kingdom depends upon the loyalty of the subjects to the law of the realm, and so it is in the kingdom of heaven. And it is the triumph of the Gospel, that rebellious, fallen men can be transformed into loyal, obedient subjects of God’s kingdom; but this is only accomplished by that mysterious union of the Divine with the human, through the gift of the Son of God to the human family.

Hebrews 2

¹⁴ Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil;

¹⁵ And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

Romans 8

² For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death.

³ For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh;

⁴ That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

1 Timothy 3

¹⁶ And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness; God was manifest in the flesh.

Daniel's prayer of thanksgiving shows that he had been prepared through his personal experience as a child of the heavenly King, to appreciate the nature of the revelation which was made to him, and to recognize in it the wider application of principles already familiar to him.

The Key that Unlocks History

Daniel 2

²⁴ Therefore Daniel went in unto Arioch, whom the king had ordained to destroy the wise men of Babylon: he went and said thus unto him; Destroy not the wise men of Babylon: bring me in before the king, and I will show unto the king the interpretation.

²⁵ Then Arioch brought in Daniel before the king in haste, and said thus unto him, I have found a man of the captives of Judah, that will make known unto the king the interpretation.

The dream of Nebuchadnezzar, as will appear from the record, dealt with the history of the world, the rise and fall of earthly kingdoms. The true interpretation of the dream will therefore furnish the key to the correct understanding of the whole problem of human history, as viewed from the standpoint of the kingdom of God.

But the philosophy of human history can be understood only as we study the life and teachings of the Son of God, the Son of Man,

1 Timothy 2

⁵ ...the man Christ Jesus.

In His own person is found the interpretation of all history, and He was of the tribe of Judah. So the captain of the king's guard spoke better than he knew when he said,

Daniel 2

²⁵ I have found a man of the captives of Judah, that will make known unto the king the interpretation.

Everyone who finds...

John 1

⁴⁵ ...Him of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets did write, Jesus of Nazareth,

–will know the interpretation of history which would otherwise be to him but a confused struggle for the supremacy among the nations.

The Revealer of Secrets

Daniel 2

²⁶ The king answered and said to Daniel, whose name was Belteshazzar, Are you able to make known unto me the dream which I have seen, and the interpretation thereof?

²⁷ Daniel answered in the presence of the king, and said, The secret which the king has demanded, the wise men, the astrologers, the magicians, the soothsayers cannot show unto the king;

²⁸ But there is a God in heaven that reveals secrets, and makes known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days. Your dream, and the visions of your head upon your bed are these;

²⁹ As for you, O king, your thoughts came into your mind upon your bed, what should come to pass hereafter: and He

that reveals secrets makes known to you what shall come to pass.

³⁰ But as for me, this secret is not revealed to me for any wisdom that I have more than any living, but for their sakes that shall make known the interpretation to the king, and that you might know the thoughts of your heart.

The wisdom of this world cannot make clear the mystery of the kingdom of God. All the education of the schools will not make one a successful exponent of that mystery.

Job 11

⁷ Can you by searching find out God?

The ability to proclaim the Gospel of the kingdom grows out of a personal revelation, not simply to one but in one. So it was with the great apostle to the Gentiles:

Galatians 1

¹⁵ It pleased God...

¹⁶ To reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the heathen.

Thus had Daniel been prepared for the same work. The secret of God's power among the nations, and the working of that power to set up His everlasting kingdom in the earth, are revealed in the experience of every man who will yield to it as it works in him,

2 Corinthians 10

⁵ Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.

This experience, and the knowledge which comes from this experience, are open to all.

Acts 10

³⁴ God is no respecter of persons,

Psalm 25

¹⁴ The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him: and He will show them His covenant.

This is the knowledge in which a man may justly glory,⁶ and as in the case of Daniel, the glory is all given to God, who...

Daniel 2

²² ...reveals the deep and secret things.

Study for “The Latter Days”

Nebuchadnezzar was thinking of...

²⁹ ...what should come to pass hereafter.

It is evident from what did come to pass later in his own experience, that he was thinking of his own kingdom as one likely to endure for an indefinite time, having already a universal dominion, and almost limitless resources for preserving and transmitting its glory unimpaired. Who can overthrow his kingdom, or prevent it from standing forever?

Then God gave him a true view of the future history, that he might know “what shall be in the latter days,” and then God caused it all to be written in this book with the interpretation, in order that all the world might know the same thing. It is certainly worthy of study by those who live...

²⁸ ...in the latter days.

The whole course of history is but the preaching of the Gospel of the kingdom of God, the revealing of the failure of anything to endure, which is not in harmony with the principles of that kingdom. When future events are made known before they actually happen, it is simply preaching the Gospel in advance. And so we read:

⁶ **Jeremiah 9** ²⁴ But let him that glories glory in this, that he understands and knows me, that I am the Lord which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, says the Lord.

Galatians 3

⁸ And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the Gospel unto Abraham, saying, In you shall all nations be blessed.

This is the Gospel which was proclaimed in the courts of Babylon by Daniel the Hebrew, the descendant of Abraham. The true God was to be made known to the heathen world, and in such a way as to command their attention.

Because the people had departed from God and His truth, Jerusalem had been overcome by Babylon, and the professed people of God were in captivity. Not recognizing that the God of heaven had given Jerusalem into his hand, and that for a definite purpose, the king of Babylon was lifted up in pride, and he thought of his kingdom as established for ever.

But behind the king of Babylon was “the god of this world,”⁷ seeking to establish a permanent kingdom in opposition to the kingdom of God, with Babylon as its capital. Had he really triumphed, and was Babylon to endure longer than Jerusalem?

Psalm 92

⁶ The stupid man never regards, nor does the foolish man understand this,—

⁷ That when the wicked spring up as the herbage, and all the workers of iniquity do flourish; it is that they may be cut down forever!

⁸ And You, Jehovah, are forever exalted!

Psalm 9

¹⁹ Arise, O Lord; let not man prevail: let the heathen be judged in your sight.

²⁰ Put them in fear, O Lord: that the nations may know themselves to be but men.

These are the lessons to be taught, not simply to the heathen of Nebuchadnezzar’s time, but to the heathen of all time,

⁷ 2 Corinthians 4:4.

including the present; and for this purpose the record has been preserved for us. With its help we can look back over the centuries, and read aright their testimony, and are thus prepared to understand the interpretation of the present history. This is the only way by which we may know...

Daniel 2

²⁸ ...what shall be in the latter days.



Daniel brings God's interpretation to Nebuchadnezzar
(Spirit of the Holy Bible, 1874)

6. An Everlasting Kingdom

Present Truth, March 1, 1900

Daniel 2:31-49

WITHOUT any hesitation, or doubt as to the correctness of the revelation which had been made to him, Daniel related to the king his dream:

Daniel 2

³¹ You, O king, saw, and behold a great image. This great image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before you; and the form thereof was terrible.

³² This image's head was of fine gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass,

³³ His legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay.

³⁴ You saw till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and broke them to pieces.

³⁵ Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken in pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing-floors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them; and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth.

It is no wonder that this dream made a wonderful impression upon the mind of Nebuchadnezzar. It was certainly a most striking sight. The image was "great," there was an outward splendor or glory that was "excellent," and its aspect was "terrible." And it "stood" there before him with every outward indication that it might continue to stand.

But it was struck upon the feet (not upon the head) by a stone "which was not in hands" (margin), and suddenly it all went to utter destruction "together," and the wind carried away the dust. Not even a remnant was left to remind one of its former greatness, but the stone which did the smiting became greater than the image. It is not surprising that Nebuchadnezzar said,

Daniel 2

³ My spirit was troubled to know the dream.

What could be the meaning of a sight so remarkable?
Daniel had informed the king that:

²⁹ He that reveals secrets makes known to you what shall
come to pass,

—and he had promised that he would...

¹⁶ ...show the king the interpretation.

His statement and his promise are now made good.

Interpretation of the Dream

³⁶ This is the dream; and we will tell the interpretation
thereof before the king.

³⁷ You, O king, are a king of kings: for the God of heaven has
given you a kingdom, power, and strength and glory.

³⁸ And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of
the field and the fowls of the heaven has He given into your
hand, and has made you ruler over them all. You are this
head of gold.

A crisis had come in the lives of both Nebuchadnezzar and Daniel. The former was to hear the Gospel of the kingdom of God, and the latter had the privilege of proclaiming it to him. If the preacher is faithful, and his message is received, great results will follow. And what is the message? The same...

Matthew 24

¹⁴ Gospel of the kingdom [which is to] be preached in all the
world for a witness:

Isaiah 40

⁹ Behold your God!

Psalms 145

¹¹ They shall speak of the glory of your kingdom, and talk of
your power;

¹² To make known to the sons of men His mighty acts, and the glorious majesty of His kingdom.

¹³ Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and your dominion endures throughout all generations.

Nebuchadnezzar was “a king of kings,” that “all nations shall serve him,” but there is a king greater than he, and a dominion of wider extent.

Jeremiah 10

¹⁰ The Lord is the true God, He is the living God, and an everlasting King.

Psalms 103

¹⁹ His kingdom rules over all.

This is the truth which is to be made known to Nebuchadnezzar, and so Daniel testified to the king that it was the “God of heaven” who had given to him the “kingdom, power, strength, and glory” which he enjoyed, and who had bestowed upon him the greatest dominion held by any man since the original dominion was given to Adam. How great is the One who can give such gifts as these!

Isaiah 40

²² It is He that sits upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers.

And Nebuchadnezzar must learn that even...

Isaiah 13

¹⁹ ...the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency,

—will pass away.

Temporary Kingdoms

Daniel 2

³⁹ And after you shall arise another kingdom inferior to you, and another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth.

Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom was not to stand for ever. There was to be "another," and then "another." And not only so, but the one which succeeded his was to be "inferior."

Lamentations 4

¹ How is the gold become dim! how is the most fine gold changed!

The very metals which formed the different parts of the image told the story of future degeneracy. Gold, silver, brass, iron, clay: each one is "inferior" to the preceding one.

1 Samuel 16

⁷ The Lord sees not as man sees; for man looks on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart.

It is character, not outward splendor, which counts in His estimate of real worth.

Proverbs 14

³⁴ Righteousness exalts a nation.

The Fourth and Last Earthly World Empire

Daniel 2

⁴⁰ And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron: forasmuch as iron breaks in pieces and subdues all things; and as iron that breaks all these, shall it break in pieces and bruise.

⁴¹ And whereas you saw the feet and toes, part of potter's clay, and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; but there shall be in it of the strength of the iron, forasmuch as you saw the iron mixed with miry clay.

⁴² And as the toes of the feet were part of iron, and part of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong and partly broken.

⁴³ And whereas you saw 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.

The meaning of the image is now made clear. It was to reveal an outline history of the kingdoms of the world, and the

truth that they would all pass away. There were to be four universal kingdoms, no more and no less.

The first was distinctly stated to be the kingdom of Nebuchadnezzar, Babylon; the others are not mentioned by name, because it was the character of the kingdoms, and not their names, which was of importance. It was the life of the history, rather than the mere skeleton, to which the attention was to be directed. But we know from the other prophecies in this same book, and from the historical records, that the second kingdom was Medo-Persia, the third Grecia,⁸ and the fourth Rome.

It is worthwhile to note in passing that the second and third kingdoms are merely mentioned so as to make the connection between the first and the fourth, Babylon and Rome, and that more details are given concerning the fourth kingdom than the first. God was making known to the king, and by the record is making known to us, “what shall be in the latter days,” and it is evident that the fourth and last of these earthly kingdoms holds the most important place in His view of earthly history.

Those, therefore, who wish to learn the lessons which the Lord would teach in the world’s history will accept His estimate of the most important period, and will give the most study to the fourth kingdom.

The character of this fourth kingdom is plainly set forth. It is “strong as iron,” even as it is known in history as the “iron monarchy of Rome,” but it uses its strength to “break in pieces and bruise.” It is not the mere possession of power by an individual or by a nation, which determines its standing in God’s sight, but it is the use made of that power. He who is the Almighty uses His power to help the needy, to restore the fallen, to save the lost. Satan, the adversary, uses his power to hurt, to tear down, to destroy.

⁸ *Daniel* 8:3-5, 20, 21.

A Divided Kingdom

It is also declared of this fourth kingdom that it...

Daniel 2

⁴¹ ...shall be divided.

This reveals the fact that it will not be an everlasting kingdom, for:

Matthew 12

²⁵ Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand.

The effort to impart strength and stability to this kingdom by royal alliances, as:

Daniel 2

⁴³ ...they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men,

–is no more successful than the effort to mix iron and clay. Strength is not found in cleaving to men. That union which is merely outward, and is dictated simply by self-interest, will not stand the strain of changed and trying circumstances.

It is only that love which “endures all things”,⁹ love as the life, binding hearts together, which will bring permanent union and strength. This is the experience of the kingdom of God within, and the law of the kingdom is the life of love, and the love which is life. By this means divisions are either prevented or are healed, and those who are...

Ephesians 2

¹³ ...far off are made nigh in the blood [the life] of Christ.

¹⁴ For He is our peace who has made both [or two] one.

⁹ 1 Corinthians 13:7.

The Eternal Kingdom

But the interpretation is not completed yet. It has been shown that none of these four kingdoms will endure; what is to happen next?

Daniel 2

⁴⁴ And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these, and it shall stand for ever.

⁴⁵ Forasmuch as you saw that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it break in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver and the gold; the great God has made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter; and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure.

The secret is now made known to Nebuchadnezzar. His false view of the course of history has been corrected. The kingdom of Babylon will not endure for ever.

2 Corinthians 4

¹⁸ The things which are seen are temporal.

Daniel 2

²⁸ There is a God in heaven that reveals secrets,

—and He who is thus making himself known to Nebuchadnezzar is the only King whose kingdom...

⁴⁴ ...shall stand for ever.

And this kingdom is not set up by a gradual process of absorbing the fourth kingdom, for:

⁴⁴ ...it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms.

The stone...

³⁴ ...smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and broke them to pieces.

Psalms 2

⁶ Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion.

⁷ I will declare the decree: the Lord has said unto me, You are my Son; this day have I begotten You.

⁸ Ask of me, and I will give You the heathen for your inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for your possession.

⁹ You shall break them with a rod of iron; You shall dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.

It is...

Romans 1

¹⁸ ...all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men,

—rather than the men themselves, against which...

¹⁸ ...the wrath of God is revealed from heaven.

Through the working of the power of the Gospel, God is able to set up His kingdom within man, separating this “ungodliness and unrighteousness” from him, so that when “the wrath of God is revealed from heaven” against them, the man is not destroyed.

John 3

³⁶ He that believes on the Son has everlasting life.

But those who reject the Gospel of the kingdom reject...

Romans 8

² ...the law of the Spirit of life,

—and make themselves the objects of the wrath.

John 3

³⁶ ...he that believes not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abides on him.

Where We are Living

We are living “in the days of these kings,” in the divided state of the fourth kingdom; and from the fulfillment of many signs and prophecies we know that the time is just at hand when all earthly kingdoms will pass away, and the God of

heaven shall set up His kingdom in their place. This will be consummated...

2 Thessalonians 1

⁷ ...when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels,

⁸ In flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ:

⁹ Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power;

¹⁰ When He shall come to be glorified in His saints, and to be admired in all them that believe...in that day.

The preparation for that greatest event of the ages consists in receiving the Gospel of the kingdom of God, in recognizing and accepting in our lives the truth that:

Ephesians 4

⁶ God...is above all, and through all, and in all,

–and that:

Isaiah 40

⁶ All flesh is grass...

⁸ ...but the word of our God shall stand for ever.

Being thus identified with...

Deuteronomy 33

²⁷ The eternal God,

–and becoming...

Romans 8

¹⁷ ...heirs of God,

Matthew 13

³⁸ ...children of the kingdom,

2 Peter 3

¹⁰ [When] the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, [and when]

the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up,

Isaiah 33

¹⁴ [We] shall dwell with the devouring fire, [we] shall dwell with everlasting burnings,

¹⁷ [We] shall see the King in His beauty.

O that all might listen to “the voice” that is now sounding throughout all the earth,

Revelation 14

⁷ Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His Judgment is come: and worship Him that made heaven and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.

By this message a people is to be gathered out from...

⁶ ...every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people,

Philippians 3

²⁰ [Whose] citizenship is in heaven,

Hebrews 11

¹³ [Who are] strangers and pilgrims on the earth,

¹⁴ [Who] declare plainly that they seek a country,

–and who will be citizens of that kingdom which:

Daniel 2

⁴⁴ ...shall stand for ever.

⁴⁵ And the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure.

A Royal Acknowledgment

Daniel 2

⁴⁶ Then the king Nebuchadnezzar fell upon his face, and worshiped Daniel, and commanded that they should offer an oblation and sweet odors unto him.

⁴⁷ The king answered unto Daniel and said, Of a truth it is, that your God is a God of gods, and a Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets, seeing you could reveal this secret.

⁴⁸ Then the king made Daniel a great man, and gave him many great gifts, and made him ruler over the whole province of Babylon, and chief of the governors over all the wise men of Babylon.

⁴⁹ Then Daniel requested of the king, and he set Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, over the affairs of the province of Babylon: but Daniel sat in the gate of the king.

Although Daniel was a captive, and Nebuchadnezzar sat upon the throne, yet Nebuchadnezzar recognized Daniel as a greater man than he was. It was his acquaintance with God, that made him great. It was his acceptance of the principles of the kingdom of God, which had made him ruler over himself and over Babylon within, and now these kingly qualities were recognized.

His ability to tell the dream and the interpretation, showed that he was chief “over all the wise men of Babylon,” and the king simply gave to him the position which belonged to him. Faithfulness to principle, and loyalty to the King of heaven, made Daniel and his companions truly great.

They did and taught the commandments of God, and so they were...

Matthew 5

¹⁹ ...called great in the kingdom of heaven.

Therefore in order that the Gospel of true greatness might be preached to all the people, they were given the place which really belonged to them “over the affairs of the province,” and “in the gate of the king.”

And as Babylon was then a universal kingdom, so the experiences of these Hebrew captives preached the Gospel of the kingdom...

Matthew 24

¹⁴ ...in all the world for a witness unto all nations.

And in these last days the same devotion to principle is needed in order that the same work may be accomplished, and the setting up of the kingdom of God may be hastened.

Dare to be a Daniel! dare to stand alone!
Dare to have a purpose firm! dare to make it known.¹⁰



Daniel explains Nebuchadnezzar's Dream of the Image
(Historiae Sacrae, 1700)

¹⁰ Philip P. Bliss, Hymn: *Dare to Be a Daniel*, 1873.

7. Self-Exaltation

Present Truth, March 8, 1900
Daniel 3:1-18

A PERIOD of more than twenty years separates Nebuchadnezzar's dream of the great image, as recorded in the 2nd chapter, from his setting up of the image, as given in the 3rd chapter.

In the dream and the interpretation the God of heaven had revealed to him the truth concerning the history of the world, with special reference to what should be...

Daniel 2

²⁸ ...in the latter days,

—and had thus shown him that all earthly kingdoms, including his own, would pass away one after the other, and that the kingdom of God was the only one which would...

⁴⁴ ...stand for ever.

Nebuchadnezzar seemed to accept the message thus delivered to him, and acknowledged God as...

⁴⁷ ...a God of gods, and a Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets.

But the course of years had added to the glory and the power of the kingdom of Babylon, and the king evidently first doubted, then disbelieved the predictions of the Hebrew captive, and then determined to express in the most positive and public manner his own ideas concerning the kingdom question.

Nebuchadnezzar's Great Image

Daniel 3

¹ Nebuchadnezzar the king made an image of gold, whose height was threescore cubits, and the breadth thereof six cu-

bits: he set it up in the plain of Dura, in the province of Babylon.

No dimensions are given of the image which the king saw in his dream. It is simply stated that it was...

Daniel 2

³¹ ...a great image.

Evidently Nebuchadnezzar desired that the image which he set up should make the same impression upon the minds of the people that the one in the dream did upon him, and so he made it ninety feet in height.

The very measurements are suggestive of the interpretation to be given to his act. The image is six cubits broad, ten times six cubits high, and six kinds of instruments are specified¹¹ as being used to summon to its worship. The triple six marks the number of the beast,¹² against whose worship there is such a fearful warning proclaimed throughout all the world:

Revelation 14

⁹ And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand,

¹⁰ The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of His indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb:

¹¹ And the smoke of their torment ascends up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receives the mark of his name.

¹¹ **Daniel 3** ⁵ That at what time you hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, dulcimer, and all kinds of music, you fall down and worship the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king has set up.

¹² **Revelation 13** ¹⁸ Here is wisdom. Let him that has understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is Six hundred threescore [sixty] and six.

This is...

2 Thessalonians 2

³ ...that man of sin...

⁴ Who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped.

In setting up this image Nebuchadnezzar was expressing his own idea in direct opposition to what the God of heaven had revealed to him. He was exalting himself above God.

In the dream he saw an image whose head only was of gold, while the other parts were of inferior metals, signifying that other kingdoms would succeed Babylon; but now he made an image all of gold, to express his confidence that Babylon would endure, and that the history of the world from that time would simply be the history of Babylon.

Although Nebuchadnezzar did not so intend it, and did not himself understand the full significance of his act, yet he was teaching a great truth. Kingdoms known in history by different names have succeeded each other, just according to Daniel's interpretation of the dream, and Babylon of the Chaldees has long since passed away, but the real Babylon is still here and will remain until...

Revelation 18

⁸ ...she shall be utterly burned with fire.

This will appear more closely in our later studies.

A Grand Assembly

Daniel 3

² Then Nebuchadnezzar the king sent to gather together the princes, the governors, and the captains, the judges, the treasurers, the councilors, the sheriffs, and all the rulers of the provinces, to come to the dedication of the image which Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up.

³ Then the princes, the governors, and the captains, the judges, the treasurers, the councilors, the sheriffs, and all the

rulers of the provinces, were gathered together unto the dedication of the image that Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up; and they stood before the image that Nebuchadnezzar had set up.

⁴ Then a herald cried aloud, To you it is commanded, O people, nations, and languages,

⁵ That at what time you hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, dulcimer, and all kinds of music, you fall down and worship the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king has set up:

⁶ And whoso falls not down and worships shall the same hour be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace.

⁷ Therefore at that time, when all the people heard the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and all kinds of music, all the people, the nations, and the languages, fell down and worshiped the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up.

A careful reading of the record shows that Nebuchadnezzar purposed that this image and its dedication should be his answer to the dream and its interpretation. Daniel had declared that other kings should follow Nebuchadnezzar, and that...

Daniel 2

⁴⁴ In the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed.

Nebuchadnezzar now showed his view of the matter. The contrast was between what “the God of heaven” sets up, and what “Nebuchadnezzar the king has set up.” The question at issue was,

- Who is right, God or Nebuchadnezzar?
- Who is the “everlasting King”?
- What kingdom shall stand: the kingdom of God, or the kingdom of Babylon?

The same questions are before the people of the whole earth today, and the final decision is soon to be made,

Revelation 14

⁷ ...for the hour of His Judgment is come.

All the world was represented at the dedication of this image. It was a worldwide proclamation of the greatness and power of Babylon; and the command that all the people should...

Daniel 3

⁵ ...fall down and worship the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king has set up,

—was issued in order to compel all the world to acknowledge this greatness and power as supreme. The dedication of the image was really a deification of the kingdom of Babylon, the State, as represented in Nebuchadnezzar, under whose rule Babylon had attained to such a pinnacle of greatness. The refusal to worship the image would thus be regarded as high treason against the State or kingdom of Babylon, and was to be punished by death in...

⁶ ...a burning fiery furnace.

No opportunity was given to the people to exercise any choice in the matter. In Babylon the people are not allowed either conscience or free will. Their religion is prescribed to them by the State, and consists simply in the acknowledgment of the greatness of the State, and the right of the State as represented by the king to have undisputed control over both the bodies and the souls of men.

The right of the individual man to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, apart from the dictation of the State, is wholly ignored, and the king assumes to become the keeper of the consciences of the people.

The Philosophy of Persecution

Thus it has always been in all false religions. Substituting the visible for the invisible, the worldly for the heavenly, the

human for the Divine, they must depend upon the compelling power of the flesh instead of the drawing power of the Spirit, and upon the threat of pains and penalties enforced by the State instead of the love that gives itself, in order to secure and hold their followers. This is the philosophy of all tyranny and persecution.

When it is once granted that the State has any right to prescribe to the people what or how they shall worship, or whether they shall worship at all, then the punishment of those who refuse to obey these commands of the State is not called persecution at all, but simply a just provision for the enforcement of the laws. So it was in Babylon of the Chaldees, and so it is in the Babylon of today.

The command of the king, accompanied by the threat of death in case of disobedience, had its intended effect, and:

Daniel 3

⁷ ...all the people...fell down and worshiped the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up.

We are facing the same issues today, and another world-wide effort will be made to compel all the people under the threat of death to accept man in the place of God, and the commandments of men in the place of the commandments of God; and there is only one way of escape, for:

Revelation 13

⁸ All that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

And this power of the Gospel of life to deliver from the fear of any earthly power was known and proclaimed that day,

Daniel 3

¹ ...in the province of Babylon.

Loyalty to the Truth

Daniel 3

⁸ Wherefore at that time certain Chaldeans came near, and accused the Jews.

⁹ They spoke and said to the king Nebuchadnezzar, O king, live for ever.

¹⁰ You, O king, have made a decree, that every man that shall hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, dulcimer, and all kinds of music, shall fall down and worship the golden image:

¹¹ And whoso falls not down and worships, that he should be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace.

¹² There are certain Jews whom you have set over the affairs of the province of Babylon, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego; these men, O king, have not regarded you: they serve not your gods, nor worship the golden image which you have set up.

The refusal of these men to obey the command of the king was a most flagrant offense, as the Chaldeans viewed the case. Their nation had been conquered by the king of Babylon, and they were captives; but at the request of Daniel, and in recognition of his service rendered to the king, they had been...

¹² ...set over the affairs of the province.

And yet in spite of all this, they refused obedience to the royal decree. Although raised to the dignity of administering the laws of the realm, they themselves disregarded the law in the presence of...

³ ...all the rulers of the provinces.

And to disregard this particular law on this particular occasion was certainly to show public contempt for the person of the king, and was a most aggravated case of high treason.

This is the method of reasoning adopted by all those who deify the State, and who claim for it supreme authority both in temporal and spiritual matters.

“It is the law, and it must be obeyed!”

The argument is that every loyal citizen will regard the law of the land, and that to disregard it willfully is to show a spirit of disloyalty, which ought to be punished as practically treason against the State.

And this method of reasoning will justify all the persecutions from the time of Nebuchadnezzar until now. It is not persecution to enforce a just law, even though it may bring severe punishment upon the offenders.

A Test Question

Daniel 3

¹³ Then Nebuchadnezzar in his rage and fury commanded to bring Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. Then they brought these men before the king.

¹⁴ Nebuchadnezzar spoke and said unto them, Is it true, O Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, that you do not serve my gods, nor worship the golden image which I have set up?

¹⁵ Now if you be ready that at what time you hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, dulcimer, and all kinds of music, you fall down and worship the image which I have made, well: but if you worship not, you shall be cast the same hour into the midst of a burning fiery furnace; and who is that God that shall deliver you out of my hands?

The king proposed to deal fairly with these men. It was hardly thought possible that they would persist in their obstinate refusal to obey duly constituted authority, and especially when the certainty of the penalty was held before them.

Of course there was no suggestion of a change of the law, for was not the king of Babylon the king of all the earth? And had he not conquered all the Jews? And shall he now be conquered by only three of them? If the God of the Jews is stronger than the king of Babylon, why did He not deliver Jerusalem?

Nebuchadnezzar was yet to learn of the power of the kingdom of God within, when one is...

Ephesians 3

¹⁶ ...strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man,

–and experiences the indwelling of...

²⁰ ...Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us.

But God had committed this Gospel to these three men to proclaim in Babylon, by their loyalty to the principles of His kingdom even in the face of death; and this attempt of king Nebuchadnezzar himself to dissuade them from their loyalty to their King only served to give the greater force to this second message from the God of heaven to the king of Babylon.

Faithful Unto Death

Daniel 3

¹⁶ Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, answered and said to the king, O Nebuchadnezzar, we are not careful to answer you in this matter.

¹⁷ If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and He will deliver us out of your hand, O king.

¹⁸ But if not, be it known unto you, O king, that we will not serve your gods, nor worship the golden image which you have set up.

There is only one answer to be returned to one who seeks to turn a true child of the kingdom from his loyalty to his God, whether it be the king on his throne or the humblest peasant; and that answer is so simple that it can be made at once. The motto is,

Revelation 2

¹⁰ ...faithful unto death.

These men had heard the voice which fills every loyal heart with hope and courage:

Isaiah 51

⁷ Hearken unto me, you that know righteousness, the people in whose heart is my law; fear not the reproach of men, neither be afraid of their revilings.

⁸ For the moth shall eat them up like a garment, and the worm shall eat them like wool: but my righteousness shall be forever, and my salvation from generation to generation.

Nebuchadnezzar might do what he would with their bodies, if he was willing to assume that responsibility, but so long as they had the control of them they would yield them to be instruments of righteousness, and not prostrate them in worship before any other being than the King of heaven. Their answer was the same as was given in the wilderness when the same temptation was pressed by

2 Corinthians 4

⁴ ...the god of this world

–upon the Son of man:

Matthew 4

¹⁰ You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only shall you serve.

As faithful and true witnesses they said with Job,

Job 13

¹⁵ Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him.

8. Gospel Liberty

Present Truth, March 15, 1900
Daniel 3:19-30

NEBUCHADNEZZAR was king over all the earth, and it was a new thing for anyone to dispute his absolute authority. It was to him a case of unbearable insolence, when the three Jewish captives from conquered Jerusalem presumed to withstand him to his face.

Daniel 3

¹⁹ Then was Nebuchadnezzar full of fury, and the form of his visage was changed against Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego: therefore he spoke and commanded that they should heat the furnace one seven times more than it was wont to be heated.

²⁰ And he commanded the most mighty men that were in his army to bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, and to cast them into the burning fiery furnace.

²¹ Then these men were bound in their coats, their hosen, and their hats, and their other garments, and were cast into the midst of the burning fiery furnace.

²² Therefore because the king's commandment was urgent, and the furnace exceeding hot, the flame of the fire slew those men that took up Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego.

²³ And these three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, fell down bound into the midst of the burning fiery furnace.

Witnesses For and Against God

The question to be decided in this experience was,

“Who is God? Is there any king greater than the king of Babylon?”

The God of heaven placed His case in the hands of these three men, saying unto them,

Isaiah 43

¹² You are my witnesses...that I am God.

Nebuchadnezzar was therefore on trial, and he appeared as his own witness, but his own testimony was against his claim to be king. When he was...

Daniel 3

¹⁹ ...full of fury, and the form of his visage was changed,

–he was testifying that he lacked the power of the true king, the power to control himself. A greater power was being revealed in the men who refused, in the face of death, to betray the sacred trust committed to them, and that without bringing “a railing accusation” against the unrighteous decree of the king, than in Nebuchadnezzar, who became so angry at their refusal. And the course which he pursued to vent his rage only served to make more decisive the testimony which was borne in behalf of the God of heaven.

Psalm 76

¹⁰ Surely the wrath of man shall praise You.

The king of Babylon did his utmost. The furnace was “exceeding hot,” and from its fiery mouth it breathed forth death to “the most mighty men” that were in the army of the king of Babylon. They were literally slain by the breath of its mouth. Not one of that assembled multitude could say that the flame and the heat were not real, for it was demonstrated that men selected for their power of resistance could not endure to approach near it. To them it was “a consuming fire.”

And there was no possibility left to the three captives for escaping from the furnace, for they “were bound” and they “fell down bound,” into the very center of the flames. Thus did the king of Babylon purpose to inflict summary punishment upon those who presumed to question his right to dictate what and how they should worship; and by making a public example of these few he would effectually check any such tendency to these treasonable sentiments on the part of his other subjects.

But he did not know with whom he was dealing, for he had not yet become acquainted with the God whose dwelling is with flesh, and there was no Gamaliel to say to him,

Acts 5

³⁸ Refrain from these men, and let them alone...

³⁹ ...lest haply you be found even to fight against God.

That God who had brought these men to Babylon to reveal His power to save, and whose presence was known to them, would through them make His presence known to all the people.

Quenched the Violence of Fire

Daniel 3

²⁴ Then Nebuchadnezzar the king was astonished, and rose up in haste, and spoke, and said unto his counselors, Did not we cast three men bound into the midst of the fire? They answered and said unto the king, True, O king.

²⁵ He answered and said, Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God.

²⁶ Then Nebuchadnezzar came near to the mouth of the burning fiery furnace, and spoke, and said, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, you servants of the most high God, come forth, and come hither. Then Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, came forth of the midst of the fire.

²⁷ And the princes, governors, and captains, and the king's counselors, being gathered together, saw these men upon whose bodies the fire had no power, nor was a hair of their head singed, neither were their coats changed, nor the smell of fire had passed on them.

This was the second time that Nebuchadnezzar was shown in a manner to impress his mind most forcibly, that there is a God in heaven whose ways are not his ways.

- It was the second time that the truth was presented to him that there is a King, a kingdom, and a dominion

greater than the king, the kingdom, and the dominion of Babylon.

- It was the second time that it was made clear to him that the whole current of his life needed to be changed.
- It was the second time that the Gospel of the kingdom was publicly proclaimed in Babylon.

In the dream and its interpretation Nebuchadnezzar was taught concerning the failure of all earthly kingdoms, and the outward setting up of the kingdom of God “in the latter days.” In the lapse of years this lesson had faded from his mind.

In this second experience he was taught that this same kingdom of God, which would be set up outwardly “in the latter days,” a kingdom of greater power than any earthly kingdom, was set up as a present experience in the hearts of men who through faith in that power...

Hebrews 11

³⁴ Quenched the violence of fire.

The effect of the fire upon the men who were cast into it was very different from what was expected. Instead of consuming them it consumed the bonds with which they were bound by the king of Babylon, and so the men who were cast in “bound” were seen to be...

Daniel 3

²⁵ ...loose, walking in the midst of the fire.

These men were not proclaiming a theory, but they were revealing a fact. They were not merely talking about a power that could save, but they were taking hold of that power, and being saved by it. And,

²⁵ ...the form of the fourth

–who was with them in the furnace was the visible evidence to Nebuchadnezzar that...

Daniel 2

²⁸ There is a God in heaven,

–who is also...

Matthew 1

²³ ...God with us,

–in the person of His Son.

The Greatest King of Earth Only a Subject

It was through the direct providence of the God of heaven that Nebuchadnezzar held a universal dominion. Through the prophet Jeremiah the Lord had said:

Jeremiah 27

⁵ I have made the earth,...and have given it unto whom it seemed meet unto me.

⁶ And now have I given all these lands into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, my servant...

⁷ And all nations shall serve him.

And in his interpretation of the dream Daniel had said:

Daniel 2

³⁷ The God of heaven has given you a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory.

It is evident, therefore, that the Lord expected all the people of the earth to be obedient to Nebuchadnezzar. Why then did He work in such a wonderful manner to deliver from death those who had refused to obey the king's decree? The key to the answer is found in the words of the Lord,

Jeremiah 27

⁶ ...the king of Babylon, my servant.

These three Hebrews were servants of the Most High God, and they were loyal, faithful servants. The king of Babylon was also a servant, but he was disloyal; and his unfaithfulness could not absolve the faithful few from their allegiance to the God of heaven and earth.

When God gave the dominion of all the earth into the hands of Nebuchadnezzar, He did not resign any of His own authority over the universe.

Jeremiah 10

¹⁰ The Lord is the true God, He is the living God, and an everlasting King; at His wrath the earth shall tremble, and the nations shall not be able to abide His indignation.

Psalm 95

³ The Lord is a great God, and a great King above all gods.

⁴ In His hand are the deep places of the earth; the strength of the hills is His also.

⁵ The sea is His, and He made it; and His hands formed the dry land.

Psalm 96

⁴ ...He is to be feared above all gods.

⁵ For all the gods of the nations are idols: but the Lord made the heavens.

⁶ Honor and majesty are before Him: strength and beauty are in His sanctuary.

⁷ Give unto the Lord, O you kindreds of the people, give unto the Lord glory and strength.

⁹ O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness; fear before Him all the earth.

¹⁰ Say among the heathen that the Lord reigns.

Psalm 100 [RV]

¹ Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all you lands.

² Serve the Lord with gladness: come before His presence with singing.

³ Know you that the Lord He is God; it is He that has made us, and we are His; we are His people, and the sheep of His pasture.

In the beginning God gave man authority over all the earth, and over every living creature; but this authority was only under God as supreme. As soon as man ceased to be loyal to God, he lost the dominion. Now to Nebuchadnezzar had God

given the dominion;¹³ but Nebuchadnezzar had no power except as he received it from God.

Romans 13

¹ ...there is no power but of God; and the powers that be are ordained of God.

Nebuchadnezzar's great dominion was but a proof of the fact, which he ignored, that he was but an instrument in the Lord's hands, with no power of his own.

Isaiah 10 [RV]

⁵ O Assyrian, the rod of my anger, the staff in whose hand is my indignation!

⁶ I will send him against a profane nation, and 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 streets.

⁷ Howbeit he means not so, neither does his heart think so; but it is in his heart to destroy, and to cut off nations not a few.

⁸ For he says, Are not my princes all of them kings?

⁹ Is not Calno as Carchemish? is not Hamath as Arpad? is not Samaria as Damascus?

¹⁰ As my hand has found the kingdoms of the idols, whose graven images did excel them of Jerusalem and of Samaria;

¹¹ Shall I not, as I have done unto Samaria and her idols, so do to Jerusalem and her idols?

¹² Wherefore it shall come to pass, that, when the Lord has performed His whole work upon mount Zion and on Jerusalem, I will punish the fruit of the stout heart of the king of Assyria, and the glory of his high looks.

¹³ For he has said, By the strength of my hand I have done it, and by my wisdom; for I have understanding: and I have removed the bounds of the peoples, and have robbed their treasures, and like a valiant man I have brought down them that sit on thrones:

¹⁴ And my hand has found as a nest the riches of the peoples; and as one gathers eggs that are forsaken, have I gathered

¹³ Compare *Psalm* 8:4-8 and *Jeremiah* 27:6; *Daniel* 2:37-38.

all the earth: and there was none that moved the wing, or that opened the mouth, or chirped.

¹⁵ Shall the axe boast itself against him that hews therewith? shall the saw magnify itself against him that wields it? as if a rod should wield them that lift it up, or as if a staff should lift up him that is not wood.

¹⁶ Therefore will the Lord, Jehovah of hosts, send among his fat ones leanness; and under his glory there shall be kindled a burning like the burning of fire.

¹⁷ And the light of Israel will be for a fire, and his Holy One for a flame; and it will burn and devour his thorns and his briars in one day.

¹⁸ And he will consume the glory of his forest, and of his fruitful field, both soul and body: and it shall be as when a standard-bearer faints.

Nebuchadnezzar's obligation to...

Ecclesiastes 12

¹³ ...fear God and keep His commandments,

–was not lessened, but rather increased, by his being placed in high position. As an individual he owed to God the same allegiance that the most despised Hebrew captive did, and as a king over all the nations of earth there was upon him the far greater responsibility of setting to all men an example of loyalty to the Creator and supporter of all.

The disregard of the three Hebrews to the edict of the king was in reality an exhibition of the highest kind of loyalty, namely, to God, the King of kings. Moreover, the three Hebrews were more faithful to the interests of Babylon than was the king himself. When they were taken captive, God said to them,

Jeremiah 29

⁷ Seek the peace of the city whither I have caused you to be carried away captives, and pray unto the Lord for it; for in the peace thereof you shall have peace.

But peace comes only to those who keep the commandments of God.

Psalms 119 [RV]

¹⁶⁵ Great peace have they which love your law: and nothing shall cause them to stumble.

Isaiah 57

²¹ There is no peace, says my God, to the wicked.

Proverbs 14

³⁴ Righteousness exalts a nation; but sin is a reproach to any people.

Babylon's safety depended solely on its loyalty to God and His commandments. Its fall was foretold, only because of its sins. Therefore in refusing to worship the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar had set up, the Hebrew captives were showing greater solicitude for the safety of Babylon than its king was.

This is a lesson for today for all the dwellers, the rulers, and the captives in Babylon the whole earth. In the obligation to be subject to the powers that be, no man is absolved from the obligation to be subject to God, from whom all rulers hold their power. The injunction to every soul to be subject to "the higher powers," includes subjection to the Most High Power. All men alike, both high and low, owe to Him common allegiance.

And if the king whom God has placed or allowed to be placed in the position of "a little brief authority"¹⁴ forgets his dependence upon God, and presumes to exalt himself above Him, by setting at nought any of His laws, then the subject must remember that his duty cannot possibly rise any higher than obedience to God, and he must show the way of life to the disloyal ruler who is jeopardizing the peace of his own dominions.

¹⁴ William Shakespeare, *Measure for Measure*.

Judgment in Favor of God

Daniel 3

²⁸ Then Nebuchadnezzar spoke, and said, Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who has sent His angel, and delivered His servants that trusted in Him, and have changed the king's word, and yielded their bodies, that they might not serve nor worship any god, except their own God.

²⁹ Therefore I make a decree, That every people, nation, and language which speak anything amiss against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego shall be cut in pieces, and their houses shall be made a dunghill: because there is no other God that can deliver after this sort.

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

Through the loyalty of “His servants that trusted in Him,” the God of heaven made himself known again in the kingdom of Babylon, and in the case which was on trial the verdict was in His favor, the judgment being given by Nebuchadnezzar himself.

Deuteronomy 32

³¹ For their rock is not as our Rock, even our enemies themselves being judges.

But by thus bearing testimony to the greatness and power of the King of heaven, these men themselves became great, for they “changed the king's word,” and surely those who can change the word of a king are greater than the king himself. Thus it was with these three men as it was in the case of Daniel. By what was revealed in and through them it was shown that they were greater than Nebuchadnezzar, and he acknowledged the fact. And thus was the true Gospel of the kingdom again proclaimed in Babylon, and so throughout the world.

It is well to notice how this was done. It was not accomplished by appealing to courts or armies to set aside the unrighteous decree, and to enforce their rights. Such a course as

this would simply have resulted in setting one earthly power against another, and the warfare would have been wholly carnal, and the glory of any victory would have been given to men. But these men...

Daniel 3

²⁸ ...yielded their bodies,

–and by yielding they became the conquerors, and...

Hebrews 11

³⁴ ...out of weakness were made strong.

And so the Gospel truth was taught that:

1 Corinthians 1

²⁷ God has chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God has chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty;

²⁸ And base things of the world, and things which are despised, has God chosen, yea, and, things which are not, to bring to nought things that are:

²⁹ That no flesh should glory in His presence.

Psalms 115

¹ Not unto us, but unto your name give glory.

God Needs Not Human Support

But although Nebuchadnezzar recognized that...

Daniel 3

²⁹ ...there is no other God that can deliver after this sort,

–he really held himself as still above even that God, by threatening to destroy any who should speak against Him. Any god who needs the assistance of an earthly king in order to maintain his standing among men, is certainly not so great as the king, and the king who offers such assistance shows that this is his view of the matter.

Nebuchadnezzar was just as much out of his place in seeking to enforce the worship of the true God, as in commanding

the worship of his image. God himself does not compel men to worship Him. He invites and seeks to win by a wondrous revelation of His own character, and He commissions every man who hears the invitation to invite others, but He does not need and will not accept the assistance of any earthly power to enforce obedience to Him. Every such effort hinders rather than advances the kingdom of God in the earth. The State may make a man a hypocrite, but only the creative power of God can make a man...

2 Corinthians 5

¹⁷ ...a new creature.

The last which we hear of these three men is that they were...

Daniel 3

³⁰ ...promoted...in the province of Babylon.

When they stood before the angry king and witnessed for the true God, they had no assurance that they would not seal their testimony with their lives, but the flame of the furnace was to them simply the light of the glory of God in which their true character was revealed to the king of Babylon, who gave them the place to which their worth entitled them.

Luke 14

¹¹ He that humbles himself shall be exalted.



(The Bible in Picture and Story, 1889)

9. Righteousness by Faith is Presented

Present Truth, March 22, 1900

Daniel 4:1-27

THE 4th chapter of *Daniel* consists of a most remarkable document, which is complete in itself. It is a personal confession in the form of a public proclamation by one of the greatest kings of either ancient or modern times, in which he gives his own account in detail of the experience which resulted in his conversion.

On two occasions the God of heaven had revealed himself through His servants to Nebuchadnezzar, so that the king had acknowledged that He was...

Daniel 2

⁴⁷ ...a Lord of kings and a revealer of secrets,

—and that...

Daniel 3

²⁹ ...there is no other God that can deliver after this sort.

Thus the Gospel of the kingdom was publicly proclaimed throughout all the king's realm, and the existence of the true God and His power to save were made known to all the people.

But the Gospel of the kingdom is not preached as the Lord would have it, by merely calling public attention to these facts. The message,

Isaiah 40

⁹ Behold, your God,

—must be brought to each individual with a clearness and power which will require him to make a definite choice whether he will personally acknowledge the right of the King of heaven to rule in him, and whether he will yield himself to

be His servant. So it was with Nebuchadnezzar, and it is this experience which he himself relates.

An Apostolic Salutation

Daniel 4

¹ Nebuchadnezzar the king, unto all people, nations, and languages, that dwell in all the earth: Peace be multiplied unto you.

² I thought it good to show the signs and wonders that the high God has wrought toward me.

³ How great are His signs and how mighty are His wonders! His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and His dominion is from generation to generation.

The God of peace had set up His kingdom in the heart of Nebuchadnezzar, and the same power which had delivered the three captives from the burning fiery furnace had now wrought in him to deliver him from the violence of his own passions.

No outward sign or wonder can be so great to any person as his own experience in being rescued from the power of darkness, and translated into the kingdom of God. There is then revealed to him, and in him,

Hebrews 7

¹⁶ ...the power of an endless life,

—and the conviction is wrought into his inmost soul that the kingdom and the dominion are eternal. And he who has had such an experience is prompted by an earnest desire to make it known “unto all people.”

Acts 4

²⁰ We cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard.

1 John 1

⁴ And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full.

Ignorance of Professional Wise Men

Daniel 4

⁴ I Nebuchadnezzar was at rest in my house, and flourishing in my palace:

⁵ I saw a dream which made me afraid, and the thoughts upon my bed and the visions of my head troubled me.

⁶ Therefore made I a decree to bring in all the wise men of Babylon before me, that they might make known unto me the interpretation of the dream.

⁷ Then came in the magicians, the astrologers, the Chaldeans, and the soothsayers: and I told the dream before them; but they did not make known unto me the interpretation thereof.

The failure of the wise men of Babylon to meet the requirements of the occasion was more complete than when the king dreamed the dream of the great image. Then they said,

Daniel 2

⁴ Tell your servants the dream, and we will show the interpretation.

But now they did not offer any interpretation, although the dream was related to them. They were utterly unacquainted with the King of heaven, or the principles of His kingdom, and so they could not interpret these mysteries to anyone else. But the king evidently remembered his former experience, and knew where to turn for help in his extremity.

Daniel 4

⁸ But at the last Daniel came in before me, whose name was Belteshazzar, according to the name of my god, and in whom is the spirit of the holy gods: and before him I told the dream, saying,

⁹ O Belteshazzar, master of the magicians, because I know that the spirit of the holy gods is in you, and no secret troubles you, tell me the visions of my dream that I have seen, and the interpretation thereof.

¹⁰ Thus were the visions of my head in my bed: I saw, and behold, a tree in the midst of the earth; and the height thereof was great.

¹¹ The tree grew, and was strong, and the height thereof reached unto heaven, and the sight thereof to the end of all the earth.

¹² The leaves thereof were fair, and the fruit thereof much, and in it was food for all: the beasts of the field had shadow under it, and the birds of the heavens dwelt in the branches thereof, and all flesh was fed from it.

¹³ I saw in the visions of my head upon my bed, and, behold, a watcher and a holy one came down from heaven;

¹⁴ He cried aloud, and said thus, Hew down the tree, and cut off his branches, shake off his leaves, and scatter his fruit: let the beasts get away from under it, and the birds from his branches:

¹⁵ Nevertheless leave the stump of his roots in the earth, even with a band of iron and brass, in the tender grass of the field; and let it be wet with the dew of heaven, and let his portion be with the beasts in the grass of the earth:

¹⁶ Let his heart be changed from man's, and let a beast's heart be given unto him: and let seven times pass over him.

¹⁷ This matter is by the decree of the watchers, and the demand by the word of the holy ones: to the intent that the living may know that the Most High rules in the kingdom of men, and gives it to whomsoever he will, and sets up over it the basest of men.

¹⁸ This dream I king Nebuchadnezzar have seen. Now you, O Belteshazzar, declare the interpretation thereof, forasmuch as all the wise men of my kingdom are not able to make known unto me the interpretation: but you are able; for the spirit of the holy gods is in you.

Daniel was known and recognized in Babylon as one “in whom is the spirit of the holy gods.” This was not due, however, to any claim which he made for himself, but to the simple fact that a power and a wisdom were manifested in his life, which testified to communion with a God greater than the gods of the wise men of Babylon.

This is the testimony which carries weight with it, and is just what is needed in the world now. The Gospel of the kingdom cannot be proclaimed simply by expounding creeds and prescribing ceremonies, but by revealing the principles and the power of the kingdom in the life. Those who have the form of godliness, but deny the power thereof, are really the worst enemies of the truth, and they do more to hinder the kingdom of God in the earth than do the avowed unbelievers. Men are wanted today who know...

1 Timothy 3

¹⁶ ...the mystery of godliness,

—and who like Daniel are living representatives of the kingdom of heaven, and then in time of perplexity many of those who have come to feel their need of help will turn to them.

Isaiah 60

¹ Arise, shine; for your light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon you.

² For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the Lord shall arise upon you, and His glory shall be seen upon you.

³ And the Gentiles shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising.

Significance of a Tree

The picture presented to Nebuchadnezzar in the dream was not an arbitrary one. The tree in the vegetable kingdom answers to man in the animal kingdom, and these two kingdoms may very properly be regarded as two portions of the same kingdom of life, and the man as a tree with the power of moving at will from place to place. And so the trees are constantly declaring to us that we should be...

Ephesians 3

¹⁷ ...rooted and grounded in love,

that it is...

1 Corinthians 3

⁷ ...God that causes to grow,

that...

Matthew 7

¹⁷ Every good tree brings forth good fruit,

and that...

²⁰ By their fruits you shall know them.

Thus every tree, through the interpretation given to it in the written word, ought to preach to us the Gospel of the kingdom, just as the one in his dream, through the interpretation given to it by Daniel, preached the same Gospel to King Nebuchadnezzar.

With fair leaves, and abundant fruit, supplying food for all, it is a universal object lesson which tells of the man...

Hebrews 2

⁹ ...crowned with glory and honor,

–a king and a priest, ministering the gifts of God to all about him. And there is nothing in the structure of the tree which would indicate that it was not intended to...

Daniel 2

⁴⁴ ...stand forever.

Under right conditions it ought to continue from generation to generation. But the tree of Nebuchadnezzar's dream was to be hewn down, the branches to be cut off, the leaves to be shaken off, and the fruit scattered.

When Daniel had heard the dream, and the words of the watcher and the holy one, he saw that the King of heaven was sending a message of warning and yet of encouragement to Nebuchadnezzar, that he might cease to be a cumberer of the ground and become a tree of righteousness. But the experi-

ence was to be a severe one, and the contemplation of it disturbed the mind of the interpreter.

Interpretation of the Dream

Daniel 4

¹⁹ Then Daniel, whose name was Belteshazzar, was astonished for one hour, and his thoughts troubled him. The king spoke, and said, Belteshazzar, let not the dream, or the interpretation thereof, trouble you. Belteshazzar answered and said, My lord, the dream be to them that hate you, and the interpretation thereof to your enemies.

²⁰ The tree that you saw, which grew, and was strong, whose height reached unto the heaven, and the sight thereof to all the earth;

²¹ Whose leaves were fair, and the fruit thereof much, and in it was meat for all; under which the beasts of the field dwelt, and upon whose branches the fowls of the heaven had their habitation:

²² It is you, O king, that are grown and become strong: for your greatness is grown, and reaches unto heaven, and your dominion to the end of the earth.

²³ And whereas the king saw a watcher and a holy one coming down from heaven, and saying, Hew the tree down, and destroy it; yet leave the stump of the roots thereof in the earth, even with a band of iron and brass, in the tender grass of the field; and let it be wet with the dew of heaven, and let his portion be with the beasts of the field, till seven times pass over him;

²⁴ This is the interpretation, O king, and this is the decree of the Most High, which is come upon my lord the king:

²⁵ That they shall drive you from men, and your dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field, and they shall make you to eat grass as oxen, and they shall wet you with the dew of heaven, and seven times shall pass over you, till you know that the Most High rules in the kingdom of men, and gives it to whomsoever He will.

²⁶ And whereas they commanded to leave the stump of the tree roots; your kingdom shall be sure unto you, after that you shall have known that the heavens do rule.

²⁷ Wherefore, O king, let my counsel be acceptable unto you, and break off your sins by righteousness, and your iniquities by showing mercy to the poor; if it may be a lengthening of your tranquility.

God deals with every man as an individual. His messages of warning, His instruction, His...

2 Peter 1

⁴ ...exceeding great and precious promises,

–are all personal. In all effective preaching of the Gospel, the message must be delivered as to the individual, and not to the mass, and each one must hear the voice saying to him,

2 Samuel 12

⁷ You are the man.

Thus God spoke to Nebuchadnezzar through the dream and its interpretation, and through the same channel He is still speaking to all...

Daniel 4

³⁷ ...those that walk in pride.

And so this experience is still preaching the Gospel of the kingdom to every man who reads it.

The Needful Lesson

The lesson which Nebuchadnezzar the king needed to learn, and which every other man must learn who wishes to be a king and to...

Revelation 22

⁵ ...reign for ever and ever,

–was...

Daniel 4

²⁶ ...that the heavens do rule [or, “the ruling powers are of heaven”],

—and that he himself was a servant of the Most High. The simple recognition of this fact would establish him in his kingdom.

Daniel 4

²⁶ Your kingdom shall be sure unto you, after that you shall have known that the heavens do rule.

This is a universal truth. Man lost his kingship and his dominion by refusing to continue as an obedient servant of the Most High. In the Gospel, there has been abundant provision made for his restoration to his place of privilege and power, but to avail himself of these blessings means that he must constantly acknowledge the God of heaven as above all, and himself as a servant. This is the law of the new kingdom, and so:

Revelation 22

³ ...His servants shall serve Him:

⁵ ...and they shall reign for ever and ever.

The Universal Message

What the Lord said to Nebuchadnezzar; and to all men, in the dream, is the same Gospel message which He has proclaimed and is yet proclaiming:

Isaiah 45

⁵ I am the Lord, and there is none else, there is no God beside me...

¹² I have made the earth, and created man upon it: I, even my hands, have stretched out the heavens, and all their host have I commanded.

²² Look unto me, and be saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else.

Revelation 14

⁷ Fear God, and give glory to Him,...and worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.

⁹ ...If any man worship the beast and his image,...

¹⁰ The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath at God.

Acknowledging that...

Psalm 100

³ ...the Lord He is God; [that] it is He that has made us, and [that] we are His,

–and

Psalm 96

⁸ [Giving] unto the Lord the glory due unto His name,

–and

Psalm 100

² [Serving] Him with gladness,

–mean eternal salvation. But self-exaltation, a claim to be independent of God, seeking one's own glory, and allegiance to...

2 Corinthians 4

⁴ ...the god of this world,

–mean...

Romans 2

⁸ ...indignation and wrath,

⁹ Tribulation and anguish.

The message to Nebuchadnezzar was a complete one. It did not simply warn him of the coming trouble, but it pointed out the remedy. Sin was the cause of the trouble; righteousness was the only remedy.

Daniel 4

²⁷ Break off your sins by righteousness.

It required the courage of a Christian to give such counsel and this to the king of Babylon, but Daniel was a Christian, and so he was...

Joshua 1

⁷ ...strong and very courageous,

—and in his faithfulness to the king he did not content himself by speaking of sins and iniquities in general, but he made it a personal matter,—“Your sins,” and “your iniquities.” The Lord was seeking to bless Nebuchadnezzar by turning him away from his iniquities, and His spokesman, Daniel, did not thwart His purpose by seeking to please men.

The Lord is no respecter of persons, but sends the same Gospel message to all, high and low, rich and poor. It sometimes happens, however, that the messenger forgets that he is simply to be a mouthpiece for God, and prophesies smooth things to those in high position. Then the word becomes man’s word merely, and the power of God unto salvation is not revealed. The Lord’s instruction to every messenger is,

Jeremiah 26

² Stand in the court of the Lord’s house, and speak...all the words that I command you to speak unto them; diminish not a word.

Real Royalty

The result of the inward change in Nebuchadnezzar’s character was to be manifested...

Daniel 4

²⁷ ...by showing mercy to the poor.

No grand temple was to be built in honor of the true God, which should surpass in its glory the temple of Belus in Babylon, but the king was to recognize the temple of the living God already built,

1 Corinthians 6

¹⁹ ...the temple of the Holy Ghost,

—revealing the character of God in his treatment of the poor.

Matthew 25

⁴⁰ Inasmuch as you have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, you have done it unto me.

The true king both reveals and retains his kingship by ministering to the lowly and the unfortunate.

Matthew 20

²⁸ Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many.

Revelation 1

⁵ Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood,

⁶ And has made us kings and priests unto God and His Father: to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.



Daniel interprets Nebuchadnezzar's Dream of the Tree
(van Doetechum, Prentbijbel, 1646, Rijksstudio)

10. Conversion of the King of Babylon

Present Truth, March 29, 1900

Daniel 4:26-37

THE story of his personal experience, which was considered in the last lesson, is now continued in the words of Nebuchadnezzar himself. He has related the dream of the tree, and the interpretation as given by Daniel, and he now tells of its fulfillment and the result.

Daniel 4

²⁸ All this came upon the king Nebuchadnezzar.

²⁹ At the end of twelve months he walked in the palace of the kingdom of Babylon.

³⁰ The king spoke, and said, Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom by the might of my power, and the honor of my majesty?

The experience of Nebuchadnezzar was not caused by any arbitrary decree against him by the God of heaven. The Lord saw what would be the inevitable result of the pride of his heart and his self-exaltation, and through the dream He instructed him concerning it, that he might learn the secret of true greatness and enduring glory.

The message which came to Nebuchadnezzar through Daniel's interpretation of his first dream, when he said,

Daniel 2

³⁷ The God of heaven has given you a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory,

—had not been accepted, and he had not acknowledged the true God as the Giver of those powers of the mind, or His providence as shaping the events, which had placed him upon the throne of the world. His greatness had grown, and his dominion reached unto the end of the earth, but he did not recognize the fact that he was simply a servant of One whose

greatness is unsearchable, and whose dominion is over all the universe.

A Great Builder

Nebuchadnezzar prided himself upon his achievements as a builder.

Daniel 4

³⁰ Is not this great Babylon which I have built?

He earned in history the name of being “the greatest builder of the world.”

But it was as the adorer and beautifier of his native land—as the builder and restorer of almost all her cities and temples—that this monarch obtained that great reputation which has handed down his name traditionally in the East as on a par with those of Nimrod, Solomon, and Alexander, and made it still a familiar term in the mouths of the people. Probably no single man ever left behind him as his memorial upon the earth one half the amount of building that was erected by this king.¹⁵

These facts are very significant, and show how much is involved in the few words of the record preserved to us. Nebuchadnezzar was a great builder, but he built for himself, and claimed all the glory for himself.

Daniel 4

³⁰ ...by the might of my power, and for the honor of my majesty.

These are the words which he himself used to express his own view of his work. Wonderful powers of mind had been bestowed upon him, that he was able to project and to bring to a successful completion such extensive operations; but in claiming these powers as his own, and perverting them for his

¹⁵ McClintock & Strong's *Cyclopedia of Biblical, Theological and Ecclesiastical Literature*, “Babylonia”.

own gratification in preparing for himself a royal habitation, he was revealing the attribute of Satan,

2 Corinthians 4

⁴ ...the god of this world,

—the inspiration of all the ways of Babylon,—and representing him in the earth.

The Real Builder

It is true that Nebuchadnezzar was a great builder,

Hebrews 3

⁴ ...but He that built all things is God.

And He it was who conferred upon Nebuchadnezzar all his ability. But this ability to build up is not to be used in providing a palace for one's self, in erecting a Babylon, with its temple of Belus, but in restoring and rebuilding the temple of the living God, which has been so sadly marred by sin.

1 Corinthians 3

⁹ You are God's building,

Hebrews 3

⁶ ...whose house we are.

The gifts of God are given...

Ephesians 4 [RV]

¹² ...for the building up of the body of Christ.

In acknowledging that all our powers of body and mind are the gifts of God, and in consecrating them all to His service, we become...

1 Corinthians 3

⁹ ...laborers together with God

—in the building of Jerusalem, the city of the living God. Babylon and its builders will come to nought, but:

Psalm 48

⁸ As we have heard, so have we seen in the city of the Lord of hosts, in the city of our God: God will establish it for ever.

The Lost Dominion

Daniel 4

³¹ While the word was in the king's mouth, there fell a voice from heaven, saying, O king Nebuchadnezzar, to you it is spoken; The kingdom is departed from you.

³² And they shall drive you from men, and your dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field: they shall make you to eat grass as oxen, and seven times shall pass over you, until you know that the Most High rules in the kingdom of men, and gives it to whomsoever He will.

³³ The same hour was the thing fulfilled upon Nebuchadnezzar: and he was driven from men, and did eat grass as oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven, till his hairs were grown like eagle's feathers, and big nails like birds' claws.

It is through the mind that man is allied to God, and he is to serve God with all his mind. This power and privilege of fellowship with God, this ability to know God, placed him but a little below the angels in the scale of being, and gave him dominion...

Genesis 1

²⁸ ...over every living thing that moves upon the earth.

The loss of this power of fellowship, or the refusal to make the right use of it, will result in the loss of his place of dominion. This is the lesson of Nebuchadnezzar's experience.

God permitted the result of his rejection of the former instruction sent to him, to appear in a sudden and marked manner, as a final personal appeal to him, and as an object lesson for all time to come. He lost his kingdom, because he lost that power by which every man retains his place as ruler. He was driven from the society of men, because he was no longer a man among men.

Psalm 49

²⁰ Man that is in honor, and understands not, is like the beasts that perish.

And so his dwelling became with the beasts of the field. Even when Nebuchadnezzar sat upon the throne in Babylon, clothed with the royal apparel, with all the outward indications of authority, and prided himself upon the glory of his own achievements, the King of heaven, who looks not upon the outward appearance but upon the heart, estimated him at his true worth, and saw that apart from the splendid gifts of mind and reason which He himself had bestowed upon him, he was simply as a beast of the field.

This fact was then revealed to all the world, by withdrawing from him those gifts for a time, during which Nebuchadnezzar, as a natural result of the traits and habits which he revealed, had his dwelling with the beasts of the field, ate the food which was given to the beasts in the beginning, and became in a large degree conformed in outward appearance to ether irrational animals.

Thus was to be taught to Nebuchadnezzar, and to all men for all time, that all those powers of the mind and soul which distinguished man from the beast, and the possession of which in an unusual degree make men kings in the earth, are the direct gift of God, and that the greater the gift, the greater the obligation to glorify God in representing His character in the earth.

God's Dominion Never Lost

Man could betray into the hands of Satan only what he possessed, and that was a limited dominion as a dependent being. God always has been, and still is, the only rightful ruler of this world, and this remains true even though His authority is denied, and men refuse to acknowledge that they are His servants.

The Gospel of the kingdom, preached in all the world, is to make known the truth that:

1 Corinthians 8 [RV]

⁴ ...no idol is anything in the world, and that there is no God but one.

⁵ For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there are gods many, and lords many,)

⁶ Yet to us there is one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we unto Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, through whom are all things, and we through Him.

Acts 17

²⁴ God that made the world...

²⁶ Has made of one blood all the nations of men...and has determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation.

Daniel 4

¹⁷ The Most High rules in the kingdom of men, and gives it to whomsoever He will.

God's Authority Recognized

Daniel 4

³⁴ At the end of the days I Nebuchadnezzar lifted up my eyes unto heaven, and my understanding returned unto me, and I blessed the Most High, and I praised and honored Him that lives for ever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and His kingdom is from generation to generation:

³⁵ And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and He does 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 do You?

During the whole period of his life the eyes of Nebuchadnezzar had been fixed upon that which is earthly. The earthly kingdom, the earthly power, the earthly glory, had occupied his attention, and he had not looked at...

2 Corinthians 4 [RV]

¹⁸ ...those things which are unseen.

The heavenly gifts had been perverted to earthly uses. But after seven years¹⁶ during which he had experienced the result of debasing all the nobler powers in prostituting them to purely selfish ends, he turned his eyes from the earthly to the heavenly, and saw things in their true light.

Looking as it were into the sanctuary of God, he saw the end of all that is human; and then his own attainments, his own glory, and his own dominion, were lost in insignificance and he glorified the ever-living One, whose dominion and kingdom, being simply the outshining of His life of righteousness, are like himself, without end.

Extent of God's Dominion

When...

Daniel 4

³⁵ All the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing,

—what will express the utter littleness of the individual? Yet it is with the individual that the God of heaven deals. It was Nebuchadnezzar, the one man, to whom the King of heaven was bending this wonderful message. And when His Gospel is accepted,

Isaiah 13

¹² [He] will make a man more precious than fine gold; even a man than the golden wedge of Ophir.

The greatness of God is shown, not merely in His ability to govern the universe as a whole, but in the fact that He thinks of and cares for each individual. And this must be so, for the whole kingdom is summed up in each individual.

Luke 17

²¹ The kingdom of God is within you.

For this reason God calls upon each individual to acknowledge Him as his God, as an act of his own free choice, and

¹⁶ “times” are years, see *Daniel* 11:13 and margin.

cannot accept in place of such an acknowledgment the most zealous efforts to compel others to acknowledge Him. Nebuchadnezzar had already threatened to destroy any who should...

Daniel 3

²⁹ ...speak anything amiss against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego.

And by such zeal which was...

Romans 10

² ...not according to knowledge,

–he had dishonored God and misrepresented His character. But now, leaving others to follow their own choice in the matter, he recognized for himself that God alone is great, that man is nothing, and consequently he blessed, and praised, and glorified Him, and testified to the exceeding greatness of His power.

The Crowning Victory

Daniel 4

³⁶ At the same time my reason returned unto me; and for the glory of my kingdom, my honor and brightness returned unto me; and my counselors and my lords sought unto me; and I was established in my kingdom, and excellent majesty was added unto me.

³⁷ Now I Nebuchadnezzar praise and extol and honor the King of heaven, all whose works are truth, and His ways judgment: and those that walk in pride He is able to abase.

Through the prophet Jeremiah the Lord had spoken of Nebuchadnezzar as:

Jeremiah 27

⁶ ...my servant,

–and He used him in the accomplishment of His purpose for His people and for the world. In this way he became the ruler over the nations, and men of all countries and languages

did him homage, and yet there was one more victory for him to gain, for he had not conquered himself. He was yet to learn that the greatest conquests come through submission, and that before honor is humility.

1. First God showed him the history of all earthly kingdoms, and the end of all human greatness;
2. Then He taught in the deliverance of the three Hebrews the great truth that every man is a servant of the living God, and that He has the first claim upon his service;
3. Now that which has been revealed in the outward and visible kingdom, the kingdom outside of himself, was brought into his own experience, was applied to the kingdom within, and Nebuchadnezzar accepted the lesson and yielded himself to be of his own choice the Lord's servant.

This very humbling of himself prepared the way for greater exaltation. As a steward of the Lord's gifts, he could be trusted with more than when he claimed all as his own, and sought only his own glory. Therefore he was reinstated in his kingdom, and additional greatness was added unto him. Giving to God the place which belonged to Him as above all, raised Nebuchadnezzar to a higher position than he had before occupied, and established him in his kingdom.

Psalm 50 [RV]

³ Whoso offers the sacrifice of thanksgiving glorifies me; and prepares a way that I may show him the salvation of God.

The same Gospel message which was preached to Nebuchadnezzar is now being proclaimed in all the earth.

Revelation 14

⁷ Fear God and give glory to Him...and worship Him that made heaven, and earth; and the sea, and the fountains of waters.

Those who receive this message, give to God the glory, and acknowledge Him as the Ruler of all, will be exalted to a greater dominion than was given to man at the first, and will be established in the kingdom.

Revelation 21

⁷ He that overcomes shall inherit all things: and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.

Nebuchadnezzar was the ruler of the earth, but his last recorded words are in praise of “the King of heaven,” who has humbled his pride, and made known to him His works and His ways. He who before his conversion had boasted of his own work, saying,

Daniel 4

³⁰ Is not this great Babylon, that I have built?

—having experienced the working within himself of a greater power than that which built Babylon, now makes his boast in God, and says,

³⁷ I Nebuchadnezzar, praise and extol and honor the King of heaven.

The Gospel of the kingdom was not preached in vain in Babylon. That which is of more value than any earthly treasures, and which Hezekiah ought to have showed to the messengers from the king of Babylon, had been revealed through the faithful testimony of Daniel and his companions, and Nebuchadnezzar had seen it.

And now the message which ought to have gone forth from Jerusalem is heralded by:

¹ Nebuchadnezzar the king unto all people, nations, and languages, that dwell in all the earth.

And so the Gospel of the kingdom was preached in all the world for a witness.

11. Modern Babylon

Present Truth, April 5, 1900

IN THE chapters which have already been studied, we have seen how the Gospel of the kingdom was preached in Babylon to Nebuchadnezzar the king, and through him,

Daniel 4

¹ ...unto all people, nations, and languages, that dwell in all the earth,

—so that the knowledge of the true God, His manifold wisdom, His power to deliver, and His dominion in the kingdom of men, had been fully made known.

The Power of Personal Testimony

By this revelation of the most high God, in the faithful testimony which had been borne by Daniel and his companions, and the experiences connected therewith, Nebuchadnezzar the king had been...

1 Thessalonians 1

⁹ ...turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God.

With a genuine sense of the nothingness of man and the greatness of God, he praised and glorified the King of heaven. The signs and wonders that the high God wrought toward him, and his own conversion, had been heralded abroad by a royal proclamation, and thus the testimony which might have gone forth from Jerusalem as a worldwide message, went out from Babylon.

The same power which converts a man attends the story of his experience, when it is told to glorify God. Such testimony is the Gospel in concrete form, and it requires no theological training to preach it. So Jesus told the man out of whom He had cast the legion of devils,

Mark 5

¹⁹ Go home to your friends, and tell them how great things the Lord has done for you, and has had compassion on you.

So Paul, the great Apostle to the Gentiles, before Felix, and again before Agrippa, told in simple language the story of his own conversion, and thus the Gospel, the power of God and the light of the world, was preached in the king's palace. So it was in Nebuchadnezzar's case. And the divinely written history of his experience has been, and still is, preaching the same Gospel to all the world.

A Review of the Kingdoms in Daniel

The 5th chapter records the downfall of Babylon, with such a statement of the events of that fateful night as throws light upon the cause of its fall. But the lesson contained in this brief record, and its meaning at the present time, cannot be rightly understood except as we see in the light of the Scripture the application which the Lord himself has made of the name of Babylon, and the meaning which He himself has put into it.

If we should anticipate our future studies a little by reading the remaining chapters of *Daniel*, we shall readily see that taken as a whole, the book of *Daniel* deals almost exclusively with the first and the fourth of the four universal kingdoms of the world.

In the earlier part of the book we have so much of the history of the first kingdom as serves the definite purpose of the Divine historian, and in the later part we have prophecies concerning the fourth kingdom. The second and third kingdoms are mentioned briefly, and serve merely to wake the proper connection between the other two.

To the first three kingdoms, the same names are given in the book of *Daniel* as are given in human history, viz., Babylon, Media and Persia, and Grecia, but to the fourth no name is applied. It is simply mentioned as "the fourth kingdom."

We shall also find that it is not so much the fourth kingdom, but a power developed in the fourth kingdom, which occupies the prominent place in the prophecy, and this power is not designated by any name in the book of *Daniel*.

The Fourth Kingdom

If we turn, however, to the book of *Revelation*, which is a supplement to the book of *Daniel* and deals wholly with the period covered by the fourth kingdom, we shall find further light upon these things.

By a careful reading of the 17th chapter of *Revelation*, with special attention to the third, ninth, twelfth, and eighteenth verses, it will clearly appear that a power is described there which was to arise during the time of the ten kingdoms into which the fourth kingdom was to be divided,

Revelation 17 [RV]

¹⁸ ...that has sovereignty over the sovereigns of the earth.

This power corresponds to the little horn mentioned in the 7th chapter of *Daniel*, and also to the little horn mentioned in the 8th chapter, and these symbols occupy the leading place in these chapters.

It is a matter of common knowledge that the fourth of the universal kingdoms is known in human history as Rome, and that Rome as an ecclesiastical power has exercised much more influence upon the history of the world than has Rome as a civil power. It is with ecclesiastical Rome, or papal Rome, or the papacy, that the prophecies deal more particularly, and it is this power which is described under the symbol of the little horn in *Daniel* and of the woman in the 17th chapter of *Revelation*. This application will be fully justified by our further studies.

But in this last chapter the Lord himself gives the name by which this power is known in the Divine, history:

Revelation 17 [RV, margin]

⁵ And upon her forehead a name written, a mystery, BABYLON THE GREAT.

History to be Repeated

We can now appreciate more fully the meaning of the historical portion of the book of *Daniel*. It is not merely to set forth general principles, although this is done most effectively, but it is to give a living picture of the closing events of this world's history, during the time when "Babylon the Great" is again the chief power in the earth, and...

Revelation 17

¹⁸ ...reigns over the kings of the earth.

Thus the earlier part of the book of *Daniel* is truly a prophecy as well as a history, a history which is to be repeated...

Daniel 2

²⁸ ...in the latter days.

And inasmuch as we are now living in the last of the latter days, in the very generation when this history is to be re-enacted, this book in the fullness of its meaning ought to be known in all the earth, and the picture drawn by the Divine artist in the history of Babylon ought to be so clearly in the minds of all the people that its counterpart will be easily recognized. This is the true message of the Gospel of the kingdom, which...

Matthew 24

¹⁴ ...must be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations, and then shall the end come.

The book of *Daniel* opens with a statement of the controversy between Babylon of the Chaldees and Jerusalem of Judea, which ended in the utter overthrow of Jerusalem, and the captivity of the professed people of God. This loss of their city and their kingdom was due simply to the previous loss of

the kingdom of God from within, the apostasy of the people from right principles.

Being corrupted by the principles of Egypt and Babylon, having lost the true power of the kingdom, without acquiring even fleshly power in its place, they became worse and weaker than the nations about them, and were easily overcome by the king of Babylon.

But Daniel and his companions, having retained the kingdom of God within them, carried with them into Babylon a power which finally conquered the king himself, and made him a loyal subject of the true God.

Since the days of Nebuchadnezzar, the people of God have never been fully out of Babylon, although there have been faithful men in all the centuries who, like Daniel and his companions, have had the kingdom of God within them, and while they have been in outward Babylon yet they have not been identified with Babylonish principles. Through them the true Gospel of the kingdom of God has been preached, and a long line of witnesses has testified to the superiority of its principles.

In the meantime Babylon of the Chaldees has become a waste and a desolation, and Jerusalem of Judea has long since lost its opportunity of standing forever, and is no longer...

...Zion, city of our God.¹⁷

And yet the controversy today is still between Babylon and Jerusalem, between the kingdom of this world and the kingdom of God. At the close of this long controversy between the two kingdoms, which under ever-varying conditions and appearances is always...

¹⁷ John Newton, Hymn: *Glorious Things of Thee Are Spoken*, 1779. See also *Psalm* 48:1-2.

...the great controversy between Christ and Satan,¹⁸

–there will be a short but decisive struggle between “Babylon the Great,” the apostate church of any and every name which has adopted Babylonish or papal principles, and the citizens of “the heavenly Jerusalem,” those who stand for truth and righteousness. Then...

Revelation 18

²¹ ...shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all,

Daniel 7

¹⁸ But the saints of the Most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever.

As a preparation for this closing scene in the conflict, the message is now going forth...

Revelation 14

⁶ ...to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people,

–the same message which was proclaimed in Babylon of the Chaldees, and preserved for us as a living history in the earlier chapters of *Daniel*,

⁷ Fear God and give glory to Him.

And with it is now to be heard the further call as to Babylon,

Revelation 18

⁴ Come out of her, my people, that you be not partakers of her sins and that you receive not of her plagues.

Fall of Babylon the Great

We are now better prepared to understand why it is that the prophecies which speak of the ruin of Babylon of the Chaldees mention details and describe a situation which could

¹⁸ See Ellen White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 358; *Prophets and Kings*, p. 685; *The Desire of Ages*, p. 763; *The Great Controversy*, p. 518.

not possibly be fulfilled simply in the destruction of that city. Thus the prophet Isaiah says:

Isaiah 13

¹ The burden of Babylon, which Isaiah the son of Amos did see.

² Lift up the banner upon the high mountain, exalt the voice unto them,¹⁹ shake the hand, that they may go into the gates of the nobles.

⁴ The noise of a multitude in the mountains, like as of a great people; a tumultuous noise of the kingdoms of the nations gathered together: the Lord of hosts musters the host of the battle.

⁶ Howl you; for the day of the Lord is at hand; it shall come as a destruction from the Almighty.

⁹ Behold, the day of the Lord comes, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate: and He shall destroy the sinners thereof out of it.

¹¹ And I will punish *the world* for their evil, and the wicked for their iniquity; and I will cause the arrogance of the proud to cease, and will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible.

¹³ Therefore I will shake the heavens, and the earth shall remove out of her place, in the wrath of the Lord of hosts, and in the day of His fierce anger.

¹⁹ And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah.

Again the prophet Jeremiah says:

Jeremiah 51

⁴⁹ As Babylon both caused the slain of Israel to fall, so at Babylon shall fall the slain of all the earth.

⁵⁰ You that have escaped the sword, go away, and stand not still: remember the Lord afar off, and let Jerusalem come into your mind.

⁵² Wherefore, behold, the days come, says the Lord, that I will do judgment upon her graven images: and through all the land the wounded shall groan.

¹⁹ Compare *Isaiah* 40:9 and *Revelation* 14:7.

⁵⁷ And I will make drunk her princes, and her wise men, her captains, and her rulers, and her mighty men: and they shall sleep a perpetual sleep, and not wake, says the King, whose name is the Lord of hosts.

It is evident that the Lord has in mind, and is describing through the prophets, not simply the overthrow of Babylon of the Chaldees, but the final and complete overthrow of all which He calls Babylon in the earth. Thus the downfall of Babylon is a prophecy of the downfall of the whole world, the ruin of the nations, and in particular of that power which the Lord designates as...

Revelation 18

² Babylon the Great,

2 Thessalonians 2

⁴ Who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped; so that he as God sits in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.

And so the cause which led to the downfall of Babylon of the Chaldees will in the same way lead to the downfall of the world, and the same experience of the kingdom of God within and faithfulness to its principles, which not only gave light to Daniel concerning this downfall, but also saved him from it, will give light to the faithful, and will save them from the destruction which is even now threatening the world.

Therefore it is that this record of the fall of Babylon should be studied not simply as a record of a past event, but as a prophecy for the present generation, a prophecy which is even now ripe for fulfillment.

Jeremiah 51

⁶ Flee out of the midst of Babylon, and deliver every man his own soul: be not out off in her iniquity; for this is the time of the Lord's vengeance; He will render unto her a recompence.

12. The Wine of Babylon

Present Truth, April 12, 1900
Daniel 5:1-4

WITH the death of Nebuchadnezzar the greatness of Babylon began to wane, and at the end of only a quarter of a century the armies of Medo-Persia under Cyrus were before the city. Foreseeing this rapid decline of Babylon's glory, the God of heaven had said through the prophet Jeremiah,

Jeremiah 27

⁷ And all nations shall serve him [Nebuchadnezzar], and his son, and his son's son, until the very time of his land come: and then many nations and great kings shall serve themselves of him.

The Decay of Babylon

The history of Babylon under the immediate successors of Nebuchadnezzar plainly shows to what an extent the character of the king determines the greatness and the permanency of the dominion. Although it had been revealed in the experiences of Nebuchadnezzar that...

Daniel 4

¹⁷ ...the Most High rules in the kingdom of men, and gives it to whomsoever He will,

—and that He is...

³⁷ ...the King of heaven, all whose works are truth, and His ways judgment,

—and these great truths had been proclaimed to all the world, so that all men...

Psalm 78²⁰

⁷ ...might put their confidence in God, and not forget God's doings, and keep His commands,

–yet,

Psalm 106

¹³ They soon forgot His works.

The Gospel of the kingdom, which had been made known to Nebuchadnezzar in:

1. The great three-fold experience of the dream of the image,
2. The deliverance of the three Hebrews from the furnace, and
3. The dream of the tree,

–had been declared to all by a royal proclamation, and thus the lesson was just as personal as though each one had passed through the experiences for himself. But the message had been disregarded, and the living God had not been glorified, and now the armies of the conqueror were at the gates.

Trust in Human Strength

It is no wonder that Belshazzar the king regarded the city of Babylon as impregnable. Its wall was about 350 feet high, and about 85 feet thick at the top. There were one hundred gates...

...of solid brass, with brazen lintels and posts, and fastened with bars of iron.²¹

The river Euphrates flowed diagonally through the city, with strong walls built on each bank. A good proportion of the land enclosed within the walls was cultivated, so that it was able to produce enough to supply the actual needs of the

²⁰ *The Psalms translated from the Hebrew*, William Kay, D.D., 1871.

²¹ A. T. Jones, *The Great Empires of Prophecy*, Chapter 1, "The Empire of Babylon: Nebuchadnezzar."

people in the city. Thus with gates closed the inhabitants could endure a siege of indefinite duration, bidding defiance to any enemy however powerful.

But the sequel showed that walls lofty and thick, and gates of brass, are no protection against the enemy, when the men within the walls and gates refuse the God of heaven as their Rock and their Fortress.

Psalm 127

¹ Except the Lord keep the city, the watchman wakes but in vain.

The Crowning Act of Rebellion

In order to show his utter contempt for the besieging army, and his perfect confidence in the protection afforded by the walls and gates and the resources of Babylon, Belshazzar the king determined to celebrate with unusual abandon the annual feast of the god Tammuz.

Daniel 5

¹ Belshazzar the king made a great feast to a thousand of his lords, and drank wine before the thousand.

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

³ Then they brought the golden vessels that were taken out of the temple of the house of God which was at Jerusalem; and the king, and his princes, his wives, and his concubines, drank in them.

⁴ They drank wine, and praised the gods of gold, and of silver, of brass, of iron, of wood, and of stone.

What a picture of reckless and impious debauchery is here given. Wives, concubines, princes, and a thousand lords all joined in drunkenness and licentious revelry on by the king himself, while a powerful and determined foe were besieging

the city. And not only was the enemy outside the walls thus mocked at, but the “King of heaven” was himself insulted in the most studied and public manner by the king of Babylon.

The wine of Babylon was drunk in the vessels from the temple of the true God as an act of worship of the idols, and praise was given at the same time to the gods which were...

Acts 17

²⁹ ...graven by art and man’s device.

It was a public and formal repudiation on the part of Belsazzar the king, of that Gospel of the kingdom which had been received and proclaimed by his grandfather Nebuchadnezzar. Under the influence of the same messages, the one glorified Him that lives for ever, while the other praised the work of men’s hands. As an inevitable consequence, one was established in his kingdom, the other lost both his life and his kingdom. Each one made his choice, and the result indicated the nature of the choice.

Matthew 6

³³ Seek first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.

Matthew 21

⁴³ Therefore I say unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.

Future Prophetic Fulfillment

From our last study as to what the Lord includes under the name of Babylon, we are prepared to see that this account of the fall of Babylon is both a history and a prophecy, and that in the circumstances and causes which led to the fall of Babylon of the Chaldees are to be found a prophecy of the circumstances and the causes which lead to the fall of Babylon in our own time. We ought therefore to study in this connection some of the scriptures which deal with these things.

Of the woman described in the 17th chapter of *Revelation*, upon whose forehead was the name “Babylon the Great,” it is said that:

Revelation 17

² ...the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication.

And the message of the second of the three angels, who have...

Revelation 14 [RV]

⁶ ...the everlasting Gospel to preach to them that dwell upon the earth,

–to prepare a people for the coming of the Son of man, is given in these words:

⁸ Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great, which has made all the nations to drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.

The connection between these statements and the account of the idolatrous feast of Belshazzar and the fall of Babylon is certainly very clear. It was...

Daniel 5

² ...while he tasted the wine,

–or “through the counsel of the wine,” that Belshazzar gave the command to use the vessels from the house of God in the worship of the idols. Thus the vessels were from the city of God, having been made according to the Lord’s own instruction to be used in His worship, but in them was put the wine of Babylon, and as a result of this “confusion” of Jerusalem and Babylon, the praise which was due to the living God was given to the false gods.

But these idols were the work of men’s hands, the visible expression of their own ideas, and were therefore simply a defilement of their own thoughts concerning religion, which they put in the place of the revelation which the High God

had made of himself and the Gospel of His kingdom in His dealing with Nebuchadnezzar.

Thus in rejecting the Gospel of the kingdom and the authority of the Most High, and in teaching the heathen rites, Belshazzar was exalting himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, and was blinding the minds of all the people to the true teaching of the kingship of God.

This same thing has been done during all the centuries since the time of Belshazzar, by those who have either openly rejected the true God, or else have set aside the revelation which He has made of himself and His will concerning man's relationship to Him, the laws of His kingdom, and have substituted their own ideas of God, and their own ideas as to how He should be worshiped, and their own interpretation of His law, even when professing to be His loyal servants. Thus it was in the time of Jesus, and of such He said:

Mark 7

⁶ Well has Isaiah prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honor me with their lips, but their heart is far from me.

⁷ Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.

⁸ For laying aside the commandment of God, you hold the tradition of men.

To His people the Lord says,

Jeremiah 3

¹⁴ I am married unto you,

—and,

Isaiah 54

⁵ Your Maker is your husband.

Therefore when they leave Him, and refuse to live any longer in right relationship with Him, He speaks of such conduct as fornication or adultery; and to lead His people into

such a departure from Him is to cause them to commit fornication.

When the church as a whole has thus separated from God, it is no longer regarded as a “chaste virgin,”²² but as an impure woman, a harlot. And so the papacy, which claims to be the only true church, but which has in reality put man in the place of God, and the traditions of men in the place of the commandments of God, is represented under this symbol in the 17th chapter of *Revelation*. The influence of the example and teaching of the papacy in leading others to depart from obedience to the commandments of the true God is set forth in these words:

Revelation 17 [RV]

² ...they that dwell in the earth were made drunken with the wine of her fornication;

Revelation 19

² ...which did corrupt the earth with her fornication;

Revelation 14

⁸ ...which has made all the nations drink of the wine of her fornication.

The Light Rejected

In the great reformation of the sixteenth century there was a coming out from this apostate church with “the Bible only” as the watchword, and justification by faith as the platform. Those who thus received the true Gospel of the kingdom protested against the complete substitution of the human for the divine in all the worship and service of God, and so were called “protestants.”

Had the reform which was thus begun been consistently carried forward, it would have led to a complete return to the beliefs and experiences of the early Christian church, and a

²² 2 *Corinthians* 11:2.

people would thus have been made ready for the coming of the Lord.

But in the course of time the movement became crystallized around the reforms introduced by the leaders in this great work, and no further progress was made. And so another movement was necessary to reform the reformers, and to do the work which they might have done in preparing a people for the coming of the Lord.

Thus was inaugurated in 1830-40 the great advent message which is still being proclaimed, which is simply an appeal for the acceptance of the Word of God as it reads, a discarding of all the traditions of men, and a living faith in the fullness of the experience of justification by faith in Jesus Christ.

But alas! the successors of the reformers of the sixteenth century as a body rejected the message, clung to the traditions of the past, and became “protestants” only in name. They drank of the wine of her fornication, and while separated in name they really went over in principle to the ground held so long by the papacy,

Matthew 15

⁹ ...teaching for doctrines the commandments of men,

—depending upon the past history of the church and upon the names of men whom God had used in the commencement of the work of reform.

This has resulted in greatly increased worldliness in the church, in a loss of the old-time power, and in a general failure to recognize and to embrace the opportunity offered to preach this Gospel of the kingdom. And thus have the names and the forms of the house of God been used in professedly maintaining the principles of the kingdom, but in reality in exalting man above God, in substituting the traditions of men for the plain teaching of the Word of God.

All this is acted out before us in the record of Belshazzar's feast. In the cups from the Lord's house was the wine of Babylon drunk, and under its influence the creations of the minds of men were put in the place of the Creator of all things, and right principles became "confused." Thus because of the fall of the man in Babylon the way was prepared for the fall of Babylon, and that too during a time of feasting and drunkenness.

In our day this prophetic history is being repeated. The enemy of God and man is come down...

Revelation 12

¹² ...having great wrath,

1 Peter 5

⁸ ...[and] as a roaring lion walking about, seeking whom he may devour.

But instead of watching unto prayer, many are given over to...

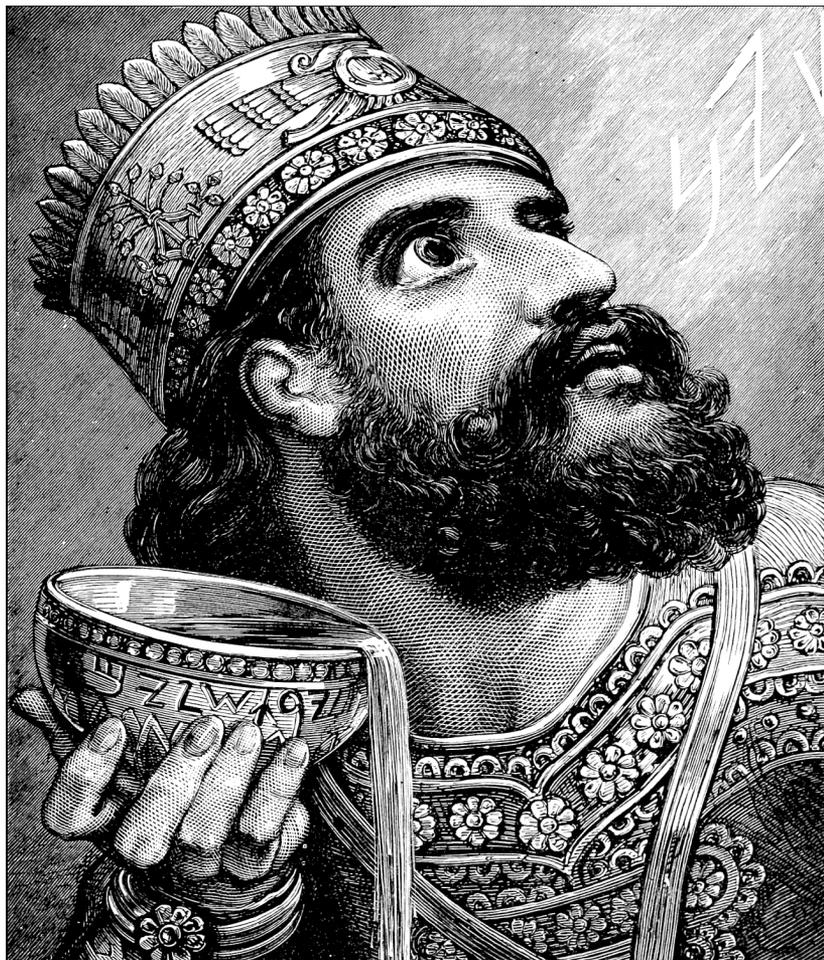
Luke 21

³⁴ ...surfeiting, and drunkenness.

The wine of Babylon is drunk even in the cup of the Lord, and the true God, the King of heaven, is not glorified. And even now the darkness of the last night of the feasting is settling down upon the inhabitants of the world. Who will give the true Gospel message? Who will cry,

Isaiah 40

⁹ Behold your God!



"...while he tasted the wine..." Daniel 5:2

(The Bible in Picture and Story, 1889)

13. The Time of Judgment Arrives

Present Truth, April 19, 1900
Daniel 5:5-16

THERE comes a time in the experience the individual who persists in rejecting the mercy of God, after which there is no hope for him. By his own act he has cut off all possibility of salvation. So it was with Esau:

Hebrews 3 [RV]

¹⁷ For you know that even when he afterward desired to inherit the blessing, he was rejected (for he found no place of repentance), though he sought it diligently with tears.

The same principle holds good in the life of a nation, inasmuch as the fortunes of a nation depend upon the character of those who shape its affairs. So it was with the Jewish nation when Jesus, looking upon Jerusalem,

Luke 19 [RV, margin]

⁴¹ ...wept over it,

⁴² Saying, O that you had known in this day, even you, the things which belong unto your peace! but now they are hid from your eyes.

In the same way the end of the world is determined, not by an arbitrary decree, but by the conduct of men. When the Gospel of the kingdom shall have been preached in all the world for a witness, and each one shall have fully made his choice for or against the King of heaven, then shall the end come.

All this is plainly shown in the simple account of the fall of Babylon of the Chaldees. When king Belshazzar and his thousand lords, the representatives of the whole nation, openly repudiated that Gospel of the kingdom which had been preached to Nebuchadnezzar, and had been both accepted and proclaimed by him, and made themselves drunken with the wine of Babylon from the vessels out of the Lord's house, they

finally and irrevocably rejected the protecting presence of the Lord of hosts, and in death and destruction they simply ate the fruit of their own doings. Sudden destruction came upon them, and they did not escape.

The Writing of God's Finger

Daniel 5

⁵ In the same hour came forth fingers of a man's hand, and wrote over against the candlestick upon the plaster of the wall of the king's palace: and the king saw the part of the hand that wrote.

⁶ Then the king's countenance was changed, and his thoughts troubled him, so that the joints of his loins were loosed, and his knees smote one against another.

⁷ The king cried aloud to bring in the astrologers, the Chaldeans, and the soothsayers. And the king spoke, and said to the wise men of Babylon, Whoever shall read this writing, and show me the interpretation thereof, shall be clothed with scarlet, and have a chain of gold about his neck, and shall be the third ruler in the kingdom.

⁸ Then came in all the king's wise men: but they could not read the writing, nor make known to the king the interpretation thereof.

⁹ Then was king Belshazzar greatly troubled, and his countenance was changed in him, and his lords were astonished.

That law which was originally...

Exodus 31

¹⁸ ...written with the finger of God,

—had been set forth in Babylon as...

Romans 8

² ...the law of the Spirit of life...

—in the preaching of the Gospel of the kingdom through human instrumentality, and had been rejected. The present king of Babylon would not allow this law to be written in his heart. Now while the...

Luke 21

³⁴ ...surfeiting and drunkenness,

and

1 Peter 4

³ ...abominable idolatries...

–were in progress, the result of his rejection of God was written where all the assembled rioters must see it,

Daniel 5

⁵ ...over against the candlestick.

And so the fall of Babylon was announced upon the wall of...

Daniel 4

²⁹ ...the palace of the kingdom of Babylon,

–the very palace in which Nebuchadnezzar took so much pride before his conversion, which he said he had built...

³⁰ ...by the might of my power, and for the honor of my majesty.

How often do what are intended to be the monuments of human greatness become the announcement of impending ruin!

Slavish, Unkingly Fear

The effect upon the king was most marked, but there was no sign of any repentance for his heaven-daring course. With changed countenance, loosened joints, and smiting knees, he was the very picture of abject fear. How plain it is that he was really king only in name!

He had sufficient of what is sometimes wrongly called courage to insult the King of heaven, so long as He kept silence, but when longer forbearance was useless, and the Lord of lords began to let him “see how the case stands,” then the real cowardice of his rebellious heart was revealed.

So it will be in the fulfillment of this historical prophecy when...

Revelation 6

¹⁵ ...the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man...

–in the agony of their fear will say to mountains and rocks,

¹⁶ Fall on us, and hide us from the face of Him that sits on the throne...

¹⁷ For the great day of His wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?

Isaiah 2

¹¹ The lofty looks of man shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down, and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day.

Men Who Cannot Read

The wise men of Babylon were utterly incapable of dealing with the revelations which were made in Babylon concerning the course of events in the kingdom. Twice had they failed to justify their claims to superior wisdom when Nebuchadnezzar had turned to them for help, and now for the third and last time it was revealed in Babylon that the education which ignores God, and substitutes human speculation for...

Proverbs 2

⁷ ...sound wisdom,

–cannot interpret to man...

Ephesians 1

⁹ ...the mystery of His will,

or...

Jeremiah 50

²⁸ ...declare in Zion the vengeance of the Lord our God.

These men handled words as dead things, and more frequently as a means of hiding thought than of revealing it. It was their task to maintain a reputation for wisdom, not by imparting light and understanding, but by confusing with high-sounding phrase and ambiguous construction the minds of those who sought unto them.

When, however, they were asked by the king of Babylon to make known to him the message which had been sent to him in a few simple words of their own language, and as a reward for so doing were promised the highest honors within the power of the king to bestow,

Daniel 5

⁸ ...they were unable to read the writing, so as to make known the interpretation to the king.

How vividly is this history being acted over again in this night of feasting and revelry when the end of all things is just at hand. The impending doom of the world has been plainly declared in the word of the Lord, in language simple enough so that the humble child of God may understand it, but how many professed religious teachers are only juggling with words to maintain a creed or to defend a ceremony, while the people are perishing for lack of knowledge.

Malachi 2

⁷ The priest's lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth; for he is the messenger of the Lord of hosts,

—and yet many are unable to read the message for this time so as to make known the interpretation to the people. The Spirit of prophecy is needed in order to read aright the prophecy:

1 Corinthians 2

¹¹ For what man knows the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knows no man, but the Spirit of God.

¹⁴ But the natural man receives not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.

On the walls of all the Babylonish temples of the present time it is written that:

Matthew 24

² There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down,

—and yet in many of them rites that are empty and ceremonies that are meaningless are maintained in the name of religion, with a zeal worthy of a better cause. Jesus has...

¹ ...departed from the temple,

—but His presence was not seen to be missed. O for men that are Hebrews indeed, who have not forgotten Jerusalem, and who will not shun to declare the whole counsel of God for this time!

The Man for the Occasion

The, consternation of the king and his lords, and the cause of it, soon became known outside the great palace, and reached the ears of the queen, who was doubtless the mother of Belshazzar and the daughter-in-law of Nebuchadnezzar.

Daniel 5

¹⁰ Now the queen by reason of the words of the king and his lords came into the banquet house: and the queen spoke and said, O king, live for ever: let not your thoughts trouble you, nor let your countenance be changed:

¹¹ There is a man in your kingdom, in whom is the spirit of the holy gods; and in the days of your father light and understanding and wisdom, like the wisdom of the gods was found in him; whom the king Nebuchadnezzar your father, the king, I say, your father, made master of the magicians, astrologers, Chaldeans, and soothsayers;

¹² Forasmuch as an excellent spirit, and knowledge, and understanding, interpreting of dreams, and showing of hard

sentences, and dissolving of doubts, were found in the same Daniel, whom the king named Belteshazzar: now let Daniel be called, and he will show the interpretation.

¹³ Then was Daniel brought in before the king. And the king spoke and said unto Daniel, Are you that Daniel, which are of the children of the captivity of Judah, whom the king my father brought out of Jewry?

¹⁴ I have even heard of you, that the spirit of the gods is in you, and that light and understanding and excellent wisdom is found in you.

¹⁵ And now the wise men, the astrologers, have been brought in before me, that they should read this writing, and make known unto me the interpretation thereof: but they could not show the interpretation of the thing:

¹⁶ And I have heard of you, that you can make interpretations, and dissolve doubts: now if you can read the writing, and make known to me the interpretation thereof, you shall be clothed with scarlet, and have a chain of gold about your neck, and shall be the third ruler in the kingdom.

Such genuine revelations of the wisdom which is from above had been made through Daniel in the days of Nebuchadnezzar that he was not wholly forgotten, even though it does not appear that he was occupying any official position under Belshazzar.

The great perplexity of the king, and the failure of the wise men of Babylon to satisfy his request for an understanding of the message which the fingers had traced upon his palace wall, would naturally bring to mind those remarkable experiences of Nebuchadnezzar, and the part which Daniel had acted in them. The occasion brought forward the man.

This makes it clear that the Gospel of the kingdom, and the preacher, had made an impression in Babylon, which the lapse of twenty-five years had not effaced, and shows why it was that the lessons to Nebuchadnezzar were not repeated to Belshazzar. A lesson given to one man and then made known by him to others is just as much a personal lesson to those who

hear it as to the one who experienced it. This is true in reference to all God's dealings with individuals and nations in the past.

1 Corinthians 10

¹¹ Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.

¹² Wherefore let him that thinks he stands take heed lest he fall.

Consequences of Rejecting Light

The Hebrew captive again stood before the king of Babylon, not now to preach the Gospel of God's everlasting kingdom, but to declare that the hour of His judgment is come.

The preacher's reputation had preceded him, and the promise had already been made that he would reveal what was hidden from the king's wise men. When he interpreted the first dream to Nebuchadnezzar, Daniel frankly said,

Daniel 2

³⁰ This secret is not revealed to me for any wisdom that I have more than any living.

He claimed nothing for himself, but acknowledged it all as a direct gift from God, and declared this source of wisdom to be open to all.

Thus Daniel set forth in Babylon principles of education which, if they had been followed, would have revolutionized the whole Babylonish system and established the Christian system in its place. Then the wisdom of God would have directed the affairs of the kingdom, and the pages of history would have told a different story.

But now that...

Daniel 5

¹⁴ ...light and understanding and excellent wisdom

–which was found in Daniel could only be used to read the sentence of destruction which was already upon the wall.

How much like a mockery must have seemed to Daniel the promise of preferment in the kingdom of Babylon! Being already clothed with the robe of righteousness, and having found that wisdom which is...

Proverbs 3

¹⁵ ...more precious than rubies,

and

Job 28

¹⁵ ...cannot be gotten for gold,

–and having the kingdom of God within, that kingdom which stands for ever, of what value was the scarlet clothing, the chain of gold, and the joint-dominion of Babylon, a kingdom which had already fallen beyond hope of recovery? With the same worthless promises does...

2 Corinthians 4

⁴ ...the god of this world...

–delude men in these days, offering if necessary all the kingdoms of the world, if they will fall down and worship him. How many hopes of worldly greatness, on which men have staked their souls, will be disappointed, in the great day of settlement so near at hand!

Psalms 107²³

⁴³ Whoso is wise, let him observe these things; and let them consider well the mercies of the Lord.

²³ *The Psalms translated from the Hebrew*, William Kay, D.D., 1871.



Daniel gives the interpretation of the Handwriting on the Wall
(Young Folks Bible History, 1880)

14. The Cause of Babylon's Fall

Present Truth, April 26, 1900
Daniel 5:17-23

THE light and understanding and excellent wisdom which were found in Daniel were recognized by him as gifts from God to be used to His glory. The gift of God cannot be purchased with money, neither is it to be made a matter of merchandise. The Gospel invitation is...

Isaiah 55

¹ ...without money and without price.

Matthew 10

⁸ Freely you have received, freely give.

Daniel 5

¹⁷ Then Daniel answered and said before the king, Let your gifts be to yourself, and give your rewards to another; yet I will read the writing unto the king, and make known to him the interpretation.

¹⁸ O king, the most high God gave Nebuchadnezzar your father a kingdom, and majesty, and glory, and honor:

¹⁹ And for the majesty that He gave him, all peoples, and nations, and languages, trembled and feared before him: whom he would he slew; and whom he would he kept alive; and whom he would he setup; and whom he would he put down.

²⁰ But when his heart was lifted up, and his mind hardened in pride, he was deposed from his kingly throne, and they took his glory from him:

²¹ And he was driven from the sons of men; and his heart was made like the beasts, and his dwelling was with the wild asses: they fed him with grass like oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven; till he knew that the most high God ruled in the kingdom of men, and that He appoints over it whomsoever He will.

²² And you his son, O Belshazzar, have not humbled your heart, although you knew all this;

²³ But have lifted up yourself against the Lord of heaven; and they have brought the vessels of His house before you, and

you and your lords, your wives, and your concubines, have drunk wine in them; and you have praised the gods of silver, and gold, of brass, iron, wood, and stone, which see not, nor hear, nor know: and the God in whose hand your breath is, and whose are all your ways, have you not glorified.

All Things are God's Gifts

The fundamental truth which every man is to recognize whatever station he may occupy and whether he has much or little, is that everything comes as a gift from God.

Daniel acknowledged this for himself and taught it to others. And so he repeated to Belshazzar what he declared to Nebuchadnezzar, in the interpretation of the dream of the great image, that the kingdom over which Nebuchadnezzar ruled, and all the glory of it, were bestowed upon him by...

Daniel 5

¹⁸ ...the most high God,

–and that all his great power among the people of the earth was due simply to...

¹⁹ ...the majesty that He gave him.

The real acceptance of this truth removes all ground for pride and self-glorification;

1 Corinthians 4

⁷ For who makes you to differ from another? and what have you that you did not receive? Now if you did receive it, why do you glory, as if you had not received it?

Daniel then reminded Belshazzar of the self-exaltation and the pride of Nebuchadnezzar and how they led to the loss of his kingdom and his place as a man among men, until he learned the lesson that...

Isaiah 40

⁶ ...all flesh is grass, and all the goodness thereof is as the flower of the field,

–and that the God of heaven is to be recognized as...

Ephesians 4 [RV]

⁶ ...over all, and through all, and in all.

But these facts were mentioned simply as preliminary to the personal message which was to be given to Belshazzar himself.

In the experiences of Nebuchadnezzar, the Gospel of the kingdom, the greatness of God, and the nothingness of man, had been preached, and by the royal proclamation these truths had been spread abroad in all the earth. No man could hear of these things and escape the responsibility which a knowledge of the truth involves.

By his acceptance or rejection of the message which had thus been proclaimed in Babylon, every man determined his own future. He would either glorify God and humble himself; or he would exalt himself in place of God. And the course which the king and his lords might take would determine the fate of the nation.

Rejection of the Gospel

The reason for the fall of Babylon of the Chaldees is plainly stated. The Gospel of the kingdom had been presented in a three-fold message, revealing the true God, His saving power, and His sovereignty both in heaven and earth, and all the people had thus been called upon to...

Psalm 96

⁷ ...give unto the Lord glory and strength,

to

⁸ Give unto the Lord the glory due unto His name.

Belshazzar knew all this, and yet he lifted up himself against the Lord of heaven, and did not glorify Him. In thus refusing to give unto God what was His due, and to acknowledge Him

as King over all, he deprived himself of that glory and honor with which God crowns His loyal subjects, and thus having no longer the power of a ruler he lost his kingdom. The gods which he praised were a falsehood.

Psalm 115

⁵ Eyes have they, but they see not;

⁶ They have ears, but they hear not.

Thus he...

Romans 1

²⁵ ...exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed for ever.

So Babylon of the Chaldees fell because man was put in the place of God, a lie in the place of the truth, and glory was not given to God.

History is Prophecy

We have already seen that this history of Babylon is also a prophecy, and that the experiences of ancient Babylon are to be repeated in modern Babylon. Thus we are able to see with perfect clearness in this lesson the cause of the fall of Babylon in our own time.

In the great three-fold message, recorded in *Revelation* 14:6-12, which is the everlasting Gospel to be preached in all the world, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord's coming, we have the same Gospel of the kingdom set forth, which was preached in Babylon.

Revelation 14

⁶ Every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people...

–are called upon to:

⁷ Fear God and give glory to Him,

—and to recognize the Creator as the only object of worship. This is followed by the proclamation, equally extensive, that:

⁸ Fallen, fallen, is Babylon the Great, which has made all the nations to drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.

From the experiences of Nebuchadnezzar, as given in the book of *Daniel*, and the lessons which were taught to him, we learn what it really means to fear God and give glory to Him, so that for a full understanding of what this Gospel message includes we must study the Gospel of the kingdom as preached to Nebuchadnezzar.

Furthermore, if we would understand the cause of the fall of Babylon in this time, we must note the cause of its fall in the olden time. In both instances the rejection of the Gospel message and the failure to give glory to God result in the fall. And in both instances the rejection of the Gospel message is shown by the exaltation of self, the putting of man in the place of God.

In the time of Belshazzar this refusal of the Gospel invitation to give glory to God and to worship the Creator was shown in open and gross idolatry.

Daniel 5

⁴ They...praised the gods of gold, and of silver, of brass, of iron, of wood, and of stone.

Romans 1 [RV]

²¹ Knowing God, they glorified Him not as God, neither gave thanks: but became vain in their reasoning, and their senseless heart was darkened.

²² Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools,

²³ And changed the glory of the incorruptible God for the likeness of an image of corruptible man, and of birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things.

In the Babylon of today the apostasy from God is revealed in the working out of the same principle under a different

form. Instead of deifying their own imaginations, or reasonings, by putting them into some material form and then worshipping the work of their own hands, there has been such a perversion of the Gospel, which is professedly accepted,

- by substituting tradition for the word of God,
- by putting man's idea of God and His character in place of the revelation made,
- by teaching for doctrines the commandments of men,

—that the true God is not worshiped any more than in Belsazzar's time. Now, as then, there are those in Babylon who are loyal to the living God, and obedient to the truth of the Gospel, who are witnesses for the principles of righteousness, but the very essence of idolatry pervades the hearts and minds of the great majority.

The Sign of the True God

The true God is distinguished from all false gods by the fact that He is the Creator.

Psalm 96

⁵ For all the gods of the nations are idols: but the Lord made the heavens.

And He himself has given a sign by which He may be known and acknowledged as the true God.

Ezekiel 20

²⁰ And hallow my Sabbaths; and they shall be a sign between me and you, that you may know that I am the Lord your God.

His Sabbath is the seventh day of the week, now commonly called Saturday.

Exodus 20

¹⁰ The seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord your God.

It was instituted as a memorial of His original creative work, and is a sign of His new creative work through which we are made new creatures in Christ Jesus.

Exodus 20

¹¹ For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.

Psalms 111²⁴

⁴ He appointed a memorial for His wondrous deeds.

Ezekiel 20

¹² Moreover also I gave them my Sabbaths, to be a sign between me and them, that they might know that I am the Lord that sanctify them.

The Sign Set Aside

But in the great falling away and the revealing of the man of sin,

2 Thessalonians 2

⁴ Who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped: so that he as God sits in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God,

—the true Sabbath was set aside and the first day of the week, commonly called Sunday, was substituted in its place, and this without any Divine authority whatsoever.

In the great reformation of the sixteenth century principles were adopted which, if only carried out, would have led to a return to the genuine Sabbath of the Lord, but the work was not actually extended so far as this.

The Sign Restored

In the message which is now going forth to all the world, calling upon all men to...

²⁴ *The Psalms translated from the Hebrew*, William Kay, D.D., 1871.

John 14

⁷ ...worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters,

—this Sabbath reform is found as the testing truth. Those who are willing to accept the Gospel of the kingdom, as it is now being preached to all the world, to submit to God as their King, and the law of His life as the controlling power in all their conduct, and thus give to the Word of God its rightful place as above all human tradition, will gladly accept His sign of loyalty, and will be found observing the seventh day of the week as the Sabbath of the Lord.

This will be simply the outward expression of the inward experience of the fullness of justification by faith in the work of God for man through Jesus Christ, and of complete deliverance through the creative power of God from sin and all its consequences.

This reform will involve the principles of all reform from the ways of Babylon, and an entire separation from all the perversions of Gospel truth brought in by her. In this way only will there be deliverance when...

Revelation 18

²¹ ...with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all.

Even now the call is heard,

Revelation 18

⁴ Come out of her, my people, that you be not partakers of her sins, and that you receive not of her plagues.

⁵ For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God has remembered her iniquities.

⁸ Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire: for strong is the Lord God who judges her.

O that everyone who reads these lines might accept in its fullness the truth as it is in Jesus, and stand in modern Baby-

lon, like Daniel of old, as a faithful witness to the Gospel of the kingdom, a loyal worshiper of the true God amid all the surrounding idolatry.

Matthew 7

²⁰ By their fruits you shall know them.

²¹ Not every one that says unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that does the will of my Father which is in heaven.

A Needed Warning

On that last night of feasting Belshazzar and his lords became drunken with the wine of Babylon and so perished in the downfall of their city. With a false feeling of peace and safety they gave themselves up to the fullest gratification of appetite and passion, and then in the very midst of their revelry and as a consequence of it, there came sudden destruction.

Looking forward to the time when this history would be repeated, the Saviour gave this warning:

Luke 21 [RV]

³⁴ But take heed to yourselves, lest haply your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and that day came on you suddenly as a snare:

³⁵ For so shall it come upon all them that dwell on the face of all the earth.

³⁶ But watch at every season, making supplication, that you may prevail to escape all these things that shall come to pass and to stand before the Son of man.



The sudden fall of Babylon
(La Sainte Bible, 1789)

15. Babylon is Fallen, is Fallen

Present Truth, May 3, 1900
Daniel 5:24-31

ON THREE distinct occasions the God of heaven sent messages of instruction and warning to Nebuchadnezzar, each one thing but a part of that complete revelation of the Gospel of the kingdom, which resulted in the conversion of the king, and his personal acknowledgment of God as worthy of all praise and glory.

Every one throughout the kingdom of Babylon who should learn of these experiences, whether he was the successor to Nebuchadnezzar on the throne, or the humblest person in a private station, was without excuse if he failed to give to God the glory due unto Him, and to yield himself to be His servant.

It was not necessary that the experiences themselves should be repeated. The revelation of the Gospel had been made with clearness and power, and it was sufficient that this revelation should be declared to all. And this was done so thoroughly by the testimony of Nebuchadnezzar, that no one perished in the fall of Babylon, except by his own choice. This is shown by the message which Daniel bore to Belshazzar.

Daniel 5

²² And you his son, O Belshazzar, have not humbled your heart, though you knew all this;

²³ But have lifted up yourself against the Lord of heaven...and the God in whose hand your breath is, and whose are all your ways, have you not glorified.

The fact that Belshazzar knew of these experiences of Nebuchadnezzar, and yet did not glorify God, was sufficient for his condemnation. He had rejected the Gospel of the kingdom.

It is clear from this that the story of God's dealings with Nebuchadnezzar ought to be made known in this day to all

the people of the earth, and that this is the distinct message for this time when the history of Babylon is being repeated. This is the fullness of the message, of which we have the mere syllabus in *Revelation* 14:6-12.

It is also clear that wherever this story of God's dealings with Nebuchadnezzar is told,

1 Corinthians 2

⁴ ...not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power,

—the Gospel of the kingdom will have been preached for a witness, and men will make their final choice, either to glorify God or to lift up themselves against the Lord of heaven. For this reason the book of *Daniel* and its meaning ought to be, and will be, taught as the Gospel of the kingdom in every corner of the earth.

Matthew 24

¹⁵ Whoso reads let him understand.

Judgments Never Arbitrary, Nor Matters of Chance

The varied experiences of men and of nations are not mere matters of chance, neither are they determined by arbitrary decrees on the part of the King of heaven. There are eternal principles of truth and righteousness which constitute the very essence of the character of God himself.

In the Gospel these principles are set forth, and provision has been made through the gift of Jesus Christ that they should be wrought out in the character of men. This glorifies God, and results in eternal salvation for man.

But when these principles are willfully rejected, there is no further hope, and the sentence of destruction is written. So it was in Babylon. Belshazzar's rejection of the Gospel of the kingdom was final, and then God himself made known to him the result of his choice.

Daniel 5

²⁴ Then was the part of the hand sent from Him; and this writing was written.

²⁵ And this is the writing that was written. MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN.

²⁶ This is the interpretation of the thing: MENE; God has numbered your kingdom, and finished it.

²⁷ TEKEL; You are weighed in the balances, and are found wanting.

²⁸ PERES; Your kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians.

It is evident that the sentence of destruction was not pronounced upon Babylon without a judicial investigation. The stability of the kingdom depended upon the character of the men in the kingdom, and when it was revealed by the conduct of these men that they had fallen beyond any hope of recovery, even God himself could not save them and their kingdom without denying His own character. The city fell because the men inside the walls had already fallen, having persistently refused that power by which alone men can be held up.

God himself had regarded the course of affairs in Babylon. He himself had noted the fact that the limit had been reached, that the cup of its iniquity was full, and that the end had come. No definite date had been indicated in the calendar of heaven, when Babylon should fall, but when the balances of the sanctuary, in which character is weighed, showed that all the essential elements of kingship were wanting in Belshazzar, the kingdom would inevitably be broken, and “another kingdom”²⁵ would succeed Babylon.

Necessity for the Spirit of Prophecy

From the way in which Daniel read the writing upon the wall it is evident that the same spirit of a prophet is required in order to read understandingly what God has written, or caused to be written, as is essential in the giving of prophecy.

²⁵ *Daniel 2:39.*

To the wise men of Babylon the words on the wall meant nothing. Not being themselves in the current of God's revelation or familiar with His thoughts, and having no experience of the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, they could not go beyond the letter of the writing. But when Daniel looked at the words on the wall he saw, through the Spirit of prophecy, the completed sentences from which these words were taken, and so he could read the writing, so as to make known the interpretation.

It is just such readers and teachers of the handwriting of God that are needed today, those who are sufficient to be ministers of the new covenant,

2 Corinthians 3

⁶ ...not of the letter, but of the Spirit: for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.

Luke 10

²⁶ What is written in the law? how do you read?

Worthless Rewards

Daniel 5

²⁹ Then commanded Belshazzar, and they clothed Daniel with scarlet, and put a chain of gold about his neck, and made a proclamation concerning him, that he should be the third ruler in the kingdom.

³⁰ In that night was Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans slain.

³¹ And Darius the Median took the kingdom, being about threescore and two years old.

Although the rewards bestowed by Belshazzar were worthless in themselves, since the kingdom of Babylon was at an end, yet there is a deep significance in the facts as a part of the Gospel of the kingdom. Mark well the contrasts between Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans and Daniel the Hebrew captive, on that last night in the history of Babylon.

The one had refused to acknowledge himself as the servant of the most high God, and had sought his own exaltation by lifting up himself against the Lord of heaven. When laid in the balance, he was found altogether lighter than vanity. His kingdom was broken, and he himself perished.

The other began his career in Babylon by purposing...

Daniel 1

⁸ ...that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat, nor with the wine which he drank,

—and his life had been the constant interpretation of his own words,

Daniel 2

²³ I thank You, and praise You, O God of my fathers, who has given me wisdom and might.

On that last night,

Daniel 5

¹¹ ...light and understanding and wisdom, like the wisdom of the gods, was found in him,

—and now with all the outward marks of a king he survived the fall of Babylon and its king, a ruler in the very territory where he had been a captive. So it will be in the days near to come when this history will be repeated.

Luke 12

³² Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.

Matthew 5

³ Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

⁵ Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.

Psalms 37

¹⁰ For yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be: yea, you shall diligently consider his place, and he shall not be.

¹¹ But the meek shall inherit the land; and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace.

Fulfillment of Prophecy

In two brief sentences is recorded all that is given in the book of *Daniel* of the fulfillment of many prophecies concerning the fall of Babylon. Some of the most striking of these prophecies are the following:

Isaiah 13

¹⁹ Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah.

²⁰ It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation: neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there, neither shall the shepherds make their fold there.

²¹ But the wild beasts of the desert shall lie there; and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures; and owls shall dwell there, and satyrs shall dance there.

²² And the wild beasts of the islands shall cry in their desolate houses, and dragons in their pleasant palaces; and her time is near to come; and her days shall not be prolonged.

Jeremiah 50

¹⁰ Chaldea shall be a spoil; all that spoil her shall be satisfied, says the Lord.

¹¹ Because you were glad, because you rejoiced, O you destroyers of my heritage, because you are grown fat, as the heifer at grass, and bellow as bulls;

¹² Your mother shall be sore confounded, she that bore you shall be ashamed: behold, the hindermost of the nations shall be a wilderness, a dry land and a desert.

¹³ Because of the wrath of the Lord it shall not be inhabited, but it shall be wholly desolate; every one that goes by Babylon shall be astonished, and hiss at all her plagues.

¹⁴ Put yourself in array against Babylon round about: all you that bend the bow, shoot at her, spare no arrows: for she has sinned against the Lord.

¹⁵ Shout against her round about: she has given her hand: her foundations are fallen, her walls are thrown down: for it is

the vengeance of the Lord: take vengeance upon her; as she has done, do unto her.

Jeremiah 51

³⁶ Thus says the Lord; Behold, I will plead your cause, and take vengeance for you; and I will dry up her sea, and make her springs dry.

³⁷ And Babylon shall become heaps, a dwelling-place for dragons, an astonishment and a hissing, without an inhabitant.

³⁸ They shall roar together like lions; they shall yell as lions' whelps.

³⁹ In their heat I will make their feasts, and I will make them drunken that they may rejoice, and sleep a perpetual sleep, and not wake, says the Lord.

⁴⁰ I will bring them down like lambs to the slaughter, like rams with he goats.

⁴¹ How is Sheshach taken! And how is the praise of the whole earth surprised! How is Babylon become an astonishment among the nations!

⁴² The sea is come up upon Babylon; she is covered with the multitude of the waves thereof.

⁴³ Her cities are a desolation, a dry land, and a wilderness, a land wherein no man dwells, neither does any man pass thereby.

A World-Wide Destruction

It is impossible to read these prophecies without seeing in them more than a description of the desolation of Babylon of the Chaldees. In them is also given a picture of the desolation of modern Babylon and the whole earth, when...

Jeremiah 4

²⁰ Destruction upon destruction is cried; for the whole land is spoiled.

In these predictions is also involved the fulfillment of this later prophecy concerning modern Babylon.

Revelation 16

¹⁷ And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air; and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done.

¹⁸ And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great.

¹⁹ And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell: and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of His wrath.

²⁰ And every island fled away and the mountains were not found.

But there is salvation from all this ruin. Sin is the cause of it all, and salvation from sin means salvation from all its consequences.

Revelation 18

⁴ ...be not partaker of her sins,...that you receive not of her plagues.

Heed the great message of warning and invitation which is now being sounded “with a loud voice” throughout the world,

Revelation 14

⁷ Fear God and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come: and worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.

Psalms 100

³ Acknowledge that Jehovah is God; it is He who has made us, and His we are.

And in that great day when...

Revelation 11

¹⁸ [He will] destroy them which destroy the earth,

–He will tenderly care for His own.

Isaiah 12

² Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid.

16. Men Ought Always to Pray

Present Truth, May 10, 1900
Daniel 6:1-17

THROUGH the faithful testimony of Daniel and his companions the Gospel of the kingdom was proclaimed in Babylon, and the knowledge of the true God was spread abroad throughout all the realm. And although...

Isaiah 13

¹⁹ Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency,

—had fallen, because Belshazzar, the king, had lifted up himself against the Lord of heaven, with a full knowledge, too, of God's dealings with Nebuchadnezzar, yet Daniel, who was in himself a representative of the kingdom of God, was brought safely through this crisis, that he might still be a witness to the superiority of the principles of the kingdom of God, and their power to bring salvation to those who accepted them.

As the God of heaven had made himself known in the court of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, so He would do in the court of Darius the Median, and the way was opened for this in both cases by the loyalty to principle on the part of those who were known to be His worshipers.

That same "excellent wisdom" which brought to Daniel the highest honors which Belshazzar the king had it in his power to bestow, was recognized by King Darius in the re-organization of the affairs of the kingdom, and Daniel was again given a leader's place.

Faithful in Everything

Daniel 6

¹ It pleased Darius to set over the kingdom a hundred and twenty princes, which should be over the whole kingdom;

² And over these three presidents; of whom Daniel was first: that the princes might give accounts unto them, and the king should have no damage.

³ Then this Daniel was preferred above the presidents and princes, because an excellent spirit was in him; and the king thought to set him over the whole realm.

Under this new plan for the administration of the affairs of the kingdom, the responsibility of guarding the interests of the king was equally divided²⁶ between three men, each one of whom had the same opportunity for promotion; but Daniel's loyalty and faithfulness to the King of heaven made him a faithful servant to King Darius, and thus he exemplified in his experience the Gospel instruction that all service should be rendered...

Ephesians 6

⁵ ...in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ;

⁶ Not with eye-service, as men-pleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart;

⁷ With good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to man.

The contrast between the service which was rendered upon such a basis as this, and that which was prompted by merely selfish policy, soon attracted the attention of King Darius, and naturally led him to the conclusion that it would be for his own interest to entrust Daniel with the charge of the whole kingdom.

But the unfaithful servants, who were thinking only of themselves, and not of the good of the kingdom, were not willing that the character of a leader should give to one the place of a leader, and so they laid their plans to prevent it.

²⁶ **Daniel 6** [RV] ² And over them three presidents, of whom *Daniel* was *one*.

The Wicked Plots Against the Just

Daniel 6

⁴ Then the presidents and princes sought to find occasion against Daniel concerning the kingdom; but they could find none occasion or fault; forasmuch as he was faithful, neither was there any error or fault found in him.

⁵ Then said these men, We shall not find any occasion against this Daniel, except we find it against him concerning the law of his God.

⁶ Then these presidents and princes assembled together to the king, and said thus unto him, King Darius, live for ever.

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

⁸ Now, O king, establish the decree, and sign the writing, that it be not changed, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which alters not.

⁹ Wherefore King Darius signed the writing and the decree.

What a testimony was here borne to the superiority of the principles of the heavenly kingdom when they have been given an opportunity to reveal themselves in practical life. With an eagerness and a keenness stimulated by the envy of their own selfish hearts, these men hunted for the evidence upon which to base a charge against Daniel, which would defeat the plan to promote him above them, but after the closest examination they could find nothing against him.

No record of a mere politician would stand such a scrutiny as this. It was the triumph of principle over policy. A thousand mere sermons would not have preached the Gospel of the kingdom like that faultless record of public life. The testimony borne concerning Jesus,

Hebrews 3

¹ ...the Apostle and High Priest of our profession,

-is that...

² [He] was faithful to Him that appointed Him,

-and thus He revealed the character of...

Deuteronomy 7

⁹ ...the faithful God, which keeps covenant and mercy with them that love Him and keep His commandments to a thousand generations.

So of Daniel it is written that:

Daniel 6

⁴ ...he was faithful, neither was there any error or fault found in him.

Thus his administration of public affairs was a living testimony to the perfection of Him...

1 Peter 2

²² Who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth.

The plan which these men adopted in order to get Daniel within their power, as they supposed, and to preserve their own dignity of position by destroying him, was in itself a testimony to their confidence in his faithfulness to the God whom he worshiped.

The success of their plan depended wholly upon the certainty that Daniel would not be prevented from offering his tribute of praise and thanksgiving to God, even when forbidden to do so under pain of death.

Thus their own course in this matter was the strongest evidence that Daniel had in his life proclaimed that faithfulness to God was the true basis of faithfulness to man, and that although he was himself in high position, yet he regarded himself as simply a servant of the most high God. This is the true Gospel of the kingdom.

The Working of Envy

Of course it was envy which led these presidents and princes to seek some evidence to be used against Daniel. They were not looking for a weak point in his character, in order that they might help him to strengthen it. They could not bear the thought that he should be preferred above them, even though the excellent spirit which was in him suggested the promotion and showed that he was worthy of it. This is the spirit of...

Galatians 1

⁴ ...this present evil world.

It is the spirit which was at the foundation of the whole rebellion against God and the law of His kingdom, and which led Lucifer to say,

Isaiah 14

¹³ I will exalt my throne above the stars of God...

¹⁴ ...I will be like the Most High.

And as this spirit could not endure the revelation of the character of God in His Son, and sought His destruction when He was manifested in the flesh, so it has in a special manner directed its efforts against those who have in any marked degree represented the Divine character. Thus Korah, Dathan, and Abiram...

Psalms 106

¹⁶ ...envied Moses also in the camp, and Aaron the saint of the Lord.

Thus...

Acts 7

⁹ The patriarchs, moved with envy, sold Joseph into Egypt.

Thus when Jesus was brought before Pilate,

Matthew 27

¹⁸ He knew that for envy they had delivered Him.

And so in Daniel and his accusers we have presented before us in striking contrast the spirit of the two kingdoms.

Two Ways of Exalting Self Above God

The experience of the three Hebrews under the decree of Nebuchadnezzar, as related in the 3rd chapter, and the experience of Daniel, as related in this chapter, set forth the two ways of interfering with the duty of every man to render his service to the true God.

In the first case they were not forbidden to worship the true God, but were commanded to...

Daniel 3

⁵ ...worship the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king has set up.

Now it was forbidden to ask any petition of any God or man, save of King Darius, during the whole of the time specified in the decree.

But when these instances are closely examined, they both reveal one purpose, the exaltation of man in the place of God. They both make the duty of man to God as secondary, and demand the recognition of the right of some men not to be servants of God, but to show themselves that they are gods.

But this is wholly contrary to the principles of the Gospel of the kingdom of God, and both Daniel and his companions preached the Gospel of the kingdom by fulfilling their duty...

Acts 5

²⁹ ...to obey God rather than men.

His Servants You Are to Whom You Obey

The provision of the decree which these men prepared for King Darius to sign showed that there was a spirit working through them which they did not themselves understand.

It was just at this time, as is shown by the first two verses of chapter 9, that it was made clear to Daniel through the prophecies of *Jeremiah* that the set time for the restoration of God's people from Babylonish captivity was at hand, and then it was that Daniel set his face...

Daniel 9

³ ...unto the Lord God, to seek by prayer and supplications, with fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes.

It was sin which had brought the people into captivity, and it was only through repentance and confession of sin that they could be delivered. If this could be prevented by forbidding all communion with God, then there was hope of holding the people longer in the bondage of sin and so in the bondage of Babylon. Thus does the god of this world use men who scorn the idea that they are anyone's servants, as his agents in trying to accomplish his own plans.

With a great outward show of loyalty to the person of King Darius, and with a flattery which appeared to make him as God, these presidents and princes were really using the king as a more tool for the accomplishment of their purpose to prevent the recognition of true worth and real regard for the interests of the king. They cared much less for the prosperity of the kingdom than did Daniel, whom they were seeking to destroy, and yet they were professing extreme loyalty and devotion to the king.

But Daniel revealed the highest loyalty to king Darius by maintaining his loyalty to the King of heaven, and by refusing to compromise in the slightest degree the principles of the Gospel of the kingdom.

Deification of Human Law

Daniel 6

¹⁰ Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house; and the windows being open in his

chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime.

¹¹ Then these men assembled, and found Daniel praying and making supplication before his God.

¹² Than they came near, and spoke before the king concerning the king's decree; Have you not signed a decree, that every man that shall ask any petition of any God or man within thirty days, save of you, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions? The king answered and said, The thing is true, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which alters not.

¹³ Then they answered and said before the king, That Daniel, which is of the children of the captivity of Judah, regards not you, O king, nor the decree that you have signed, but makes his petition three times a day.

¹⁴ Then the king, when he heard these words, was sore displeased with himself, and set his heart on Daniel to deliver him: and he labored till the going down of the sun to deliver him.

¹⁵ Then these men assembled unto the king, and said unto the king, Know, O king, that the law of the Medes and Persians is, That no decree nor statute which the king establishes, may be changed.

¹⁶ Then the king commanded, and they brought Daniel, and cast him into the den of lions. Now the king spoke and said unto Daniel, Your God whom you serve continually, He will deliver you.

¹⁷ And a stone was brought, and laid upon the mouth of the den; and the king sealed it with his own signet, and with the signet of his lords; that the purpose might not be changed concerning Daniel.

By comparing verse ten of this chapter with the portion of Solomon's prayer, at the dedication of the temple, which is recorded in *1 Kings* 8:44-50, it is evident that Daniel was praying with special reference to the deliverance of his own people from Babylon; and it is further evident that there would be no hope of such a deliverance if Daniel regarded the king of

Babylon as greater than the King of Heaven, and acknowledged his right of precedence in the matter of service.

But with full knowledge of the provisions of the decree, he still recognized God as supreme,

Daniel 6

¹⁰ ...as he did aforetime.

He did not change his course either to defy king Darius or to slight the claims of the King of heaven.

By falsely representing it as the desire of..

Daniel 6

⁷ All the presidents of the kingdom,

—as well as of the other officials of the realm, these men had prevailed upon the king to issue a general decree, while they had in mind the case of just one man, against whom they fully intended to use it.

And after having made use of the governmental power in this way to accomplish their own private ends, they now professed great respect for that creature of their own making, the law, and appealed to the ancient traditions of the kingdom to prevent the king from saving himself from the trap into which he had fallen.

“The law, the law,” said they, “It is the law, and it must be enforced.”

And so it has ever been. Those Roman emperors, under whose rule the Christians suffered the most, were those who were most faithful in enforcing the laws of the empire. Even during the dark ages, when the victims of religious persecution were numbered by the hundreds of thousands, the so-called heretics were all tortured in strict accordance with the laws of the state.

And even when the Saviour of the world was accused before Pilate, the Jews said,

John 19

⁷ We have a law, and by our law He ought to die because He made himself the Son of God.

King Darius yielded to the pressure brought to bear upon him, and an innocent man was cast into the den of lions because the man who sat upon the throne was not a king but simply the tool of designing men.

This history is a prophecy, as well as that which has already been studied, and its fulfillment is near at hand. And that is why the message must go forth to all the world,

Revelation 14

⁷ Fear God and give glory to Him...and worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.

⁹ ...If any man worship the beast and his image...the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God.

Matthew 4

¹⁰ You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only shall you serve.

Isaiah 40

⁹ Behold your God.

Revelation 2

¹⁰ Be faithful unto death, and I will give you a crown of life.

17. Deliverance from Death

Present Truth, May 17, 1900
Daniel 6:18-28

IT HARDLY seems possible that any thoughtful student of the Scripture can read the experience of Daniel so recorded in this 6th chapter, without noting the parallel between it and the experience of the Son of man when He was betrayed into the hands of sinners:

- They were both delivered up on account of envy;
- They were both falsely charged with such disregard of the civil authority as really amounted to treason;
- In both cases the accusers made use of the civil power as a means of accomplishing their own personal ends;
- In both cases the ruler before whom the case was tried, was satisfied of the innocence of the accused, and desired to set him free, but was led to pronounce sentence against him by the clamor of the accusers and through fear of loss of his own position;
- In both cases extra precautions were taken to prevent any human interference with the complete success of the plan, the seal of the civil power being set upon the stone which closed the door of hope;
- In both cases those who came “very early in the morning” found that a great deliverance had been wrought through the innocence of the accused; and
- In both cases the Gospel of the kingdom was proclaimed throughout all the world, as the direct result of the effort to destroy the life which was revealing it.

If the Jews in the time of Christ had understood this lesson from the book of *Daniel*,

1 Corinthians 2

⁸ ...they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.

And if the people of this generation understood it, there would never be a decree passed...

Revelation 13

¹⁵ ...that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed.

Matthew 24

¹⁵ Whoso reads, let him understand.

Although the presidents and the princes were apparently much concerned for the welfare of the king, and the stability of the kingdom, and had acted in this matter with a great outward show of regard for the person of the king, yet the sequel showed that this was all a hollow mockery, and that they cared only for their own selfish ends with an utter disregard for the effect of their conduct upon the peace of mind of the king.

The Royal Bond-Slave and the Free Captive

Daniel 6

¹⁸ Then the king went to his palace, and passed the night fasting; neither were instruments of music brought before him: and his sleep went from him.

¹⁹ Then the king arose very early in the morning, and went in haste to the den of lions.

²⁰ And when he came to the den, he cried with a lamentable voice unto Daniel: and the king spoke and said to Daniel, O Daniel, servant of the living God, is your God, whom you serve continually, able to deliver you from the lions?

²¹ Then said Daniel unto the king, O king, live for ever.

²² My God has sent His angel, and has shut the lions' mouths, that they have not hurt me: forasmuch as before Him innocency was found in me; and also before you, O king, have I done no hurt.

²³ Then was the king exceeding glad for him, and commanded that they should take Daniel up out of the den. So Daniel was taken up out of the den, and no manner of hurt was found upon him, because he believed in his God.

The contrast is again sharply drawn between the kingdom of this world and the kingdom of heaven, between the one who is surrounded with the outward indications of royalty, the pomp and circumstance of the court, and the one who has the kingdom of God within him.

¹⁸ The king went to his palace.

But the palace could give him neither peace of mind nor rest of body. Daniel spent the night in the den of lions, but had both, because...

Romans 14

¹⁷ The kingdom of God is...peace and joy in the Holy Ghost.

And the king was glad to go from the palace to the den of lions “very early in the morning,” and found peace of mind only in learning that the wicked scheme, in which he had acted big part, had failed of its purpose.

How plain it is again made that he who sits upon a throne is not always a king, and that character is the true test of membership in the royal family.

Darius did not dare to stand for the right regardless of the consequences to himself, and the consequences of this course were destructive to his own peace of mind; he was the slave of corruption, the mere creature of circumstances.

Daniel remembered that he was a servant of the living God and was loyal to Him regardless of the consequences to himself and the consequences were full of glory. He was the Lord’s free man, the ruler of circumstances.

Cooperation of the Human and the Divine

The cooperation of the human with the divine in the Lord’s provision to deliver man from all the destructive power of him who...

1 Peter 5

⁸ ...as a roaring lion, walks about, seeking whom he may devour,

...is plainly brought out in the experience of Daniel. God sent an angel and shut the lions' mouths, but this was made possible by the fact that Daniel maintained his communion with God. He did not himself cut off the channel of communication.

Daniel 6

²³ No manner of hurt was found upon him;

But this deliverance was not the result of any arbitrary act upon the part of God, merely to show His power, but...

²³ ...because he believed in his God.

Faith is the key which God has placed in the hand of man, with which he may unlock the storehouse of heaven, and share with God all that He has. He is thus brought into the current of God's own life, and experiences the power of the endless life, and becomes a partaker of the divine nature.

Being thus united with the whole thought and purpose of God, all heaven is at his command to give him success in the way of the Lord, and he will experience the fulfillment of the promise that:

Psalm 1

³ ...whatsoever he does shall prosper.

Thus it was with all those...

Hebrews 11

³³ Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions,

³⁴ Quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens.

Thus it is that:

Mark 9

²³ ...all things are possible to him that believes.

An Innocent Lawbreaker

In continuing his communion with God,

Daniel 6

¹⁰ ...as he did aforetime,

–even when he...

¹⁰ ...knew that the writing was signed,

–Daniel had openly disregarded a decree which had been passed in due form, and established,

⁸ ...according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which alters not,

–and yet in his deliverance from death the testimony was borne that he was innocent before God and had done the king no hurt. This makes it clear that God has never conferred upon any civil ruler the power to interfere with His servants in rendering to Him what is His due as Lord of all.

Ruler and subjects alike are the servants of the most high God, and each one in his place is to serve Him continually. It was because Daniel recognized that he was a servant of the living God, and then served Him continually, that his God was able to deliver him from the lions. Any other course on the part of Daniel would have separated him from the protecting presence and power of God, and would have left him alone with the wild beasts.

It is...

Matthew 1

²³ ...Emmanuel,...God with us,

–who is...

Romans 11

²⁶ ...the Deliverer.

The testimony of Paul the apostle is,

2 Timothy 4

¹⁷ The Lord stood with me...and I was delivered out of the month of the lion.

2 Chronicles 15

² The Lord is with you, while you be with Him; and if you seek Him He will be found of you: but if you forsake Him, He will forsake you.

When the three Hebrews were delivered in the burning fiery furnace by the presence of the Fourth with them, the mighty men who cast them into the flame were destroyed by the intense heat, thus showing to all that the deliverance was a genuine one.

In a similar manner is testimony borne in this case that the escape of Daniel from death was not due to the gentle disposition of the lions.

The Wicked Snared in Their Own Trap

Daniel 6

²⁴ And the king commanded, and they brought those men who had accused Daniel, and they cast them into the den of lions, them, their children, and their wives: and the lions had the mastery of them, and broke all their bones in pieces or ever they came at the bottom of the den.

How true it is that...

Psalm 9

¹⁶ ...the wicked is snared in the work of his own hands.

Psalm 7²⁷

¹⁵ He dug a hole and scooped it out, and fell into the pit he made.

²⁷ *The Psalms translated from the Hebrew*, W. Kay, 1864.

¹⁶ His mischief shall return on his own head, on his own scalp shall his violence descend.

“Such—under the rule of the All-righteous—is the final issue of impenitent wickedness. Evil is made to recoil with ruinous force on the head of him who put it in motion. So it was with Absalom and Ahithophel. So it had been with Pharaoh. Must we not ascend higher yet? So it shall be with the Arch-enemy. The heel which he wounds shall wound his head. His temporary triumph over man shall issue in his own utter and final discomfiture.” See *1 Samuel* 25:39; *1 Kings* 2:44.²⁸

Since the kingdom of God was within Daniel and the presence of the King of heaven was with him, he had the mastery over the lions, thus showing the place which God intended that man as His servant should occupy with reference to all the animal creation.

But when his accusers were cast in among the same wild beasts, knowing no kingdom but the outward and the fleshly and believing only in themselves,

Daniel 6

²⁴ ...the lions had the mastery of them.

Where Daniel lived, they perished. So,

2 Thessalonians 1

⁷ ...when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels,

⁸ In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ,

—those who have known God and believed in Him will say,

Isaiah 25

⁹ Lo, this is our God; we have waited for Him, and He will save us: this is the Lord; we have waited for Him, we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, notes on *Psalms* 7:16.

That “breath of His mouth” which is death to the wicked, is the breath of life to the righteous.

Kept From Hurt

Daniel 6

²⁵ Then King Darius wrote unto all people, nations, and languages, that dwell in all the earth; Peace be multiplied unto you.

²⁶ I make a decree, That in every dominion of my kingdom men tremble and fear before the God of Daniel: for He is the living God, and steadfast for ever, and His kingdom that which shall not be destroyed, and His dominion shall be even unto the end.

²⁷ He delivers and rescues, and He works signs and wonders in heaven and in earth, who has delivered Daniel from the power of the lions.

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

When Nebuchadnezzar was on the throne of the world, the King of heaven made known to him, through Daniel’s interpretation of his dream, that the kingdom of God was the only one which would...

Daniel 2

⁴⁴ ...stand for ever.

And now that “another kingdom”²⁹ had succeeded Babylon, in harmony with that same interpretation, the same truth was made known through Daniel’s experience. It was the power of the kingdom of God within which delivered and rescued Daniel. It was the power of the principle of this kingdom which kept him so that he did...

Daniel 6

²² ...no hurt,

–and so the same power could be revealed in his behalf to deliver him...

²⁹ **Daniel 2** ³⁹ And after you [Babylon] shall arise *another kingdom*.

²⁷ ...from the power of the lions,

–so that...

²³ ...no manner of hurt was found upon him.

This was the convincing evidence to King Darius that the God whom Daniel worshiped was...

²⁶ ...steadfast for ever, and His kingdom that which shall not be destroyed,

–or *hurt*, as the word here translated “destroyed” is simply another form of the word translated “hurt” in the other verses.

The power of the kingdom working in Daniel kept him from being “hurt” and gave him the mastery over the wild beasts. The same power of the kingdom will keep every one who believes in his God so that...

Luke 10

¹⁹ ...nothing shall by any means hurt [him],

–and,

Revelation 2

¹¹ He...shall not be hurt of the second death.

The same power will cause the kingdom to “stand for ever,” changing the nature even of the beasts so that...

Isaiah 65

²⁵ ...they shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, says the Lord.

This is the everlasting Gospel.

The Gospel of Deliverance

The Gospel is the Gospel of deliverance.

Luke 4

¹⁸ He has sent me...to preach deliverance to the captives.

And so in the great Gospel object lesson the Lord said,

Exodus 3

⁷ I have seen the affliction of my people which is in Egypt,...

⁸ And I am come down to deliver them.

So Nebuchadnezzar learned to know God as the One who...

Daniel 3

²⁸ ...delivered His servants that trusted in Him.

The same Gospel of deliverance was preached in the kingdom of the Medes and Persians, and King Darius bore testimony to...

Daniel 6

²⁶ ...the God of Daniel,...

²⁷ [that] He delivers and rescues,...who has delivered Daniel from the power of the lions.

So we pray,

Matthew 6 [RV]

¹³ ...deliver us from the evil one,

–and should give thanks unto the Father,

Colossians 1

¹³ Who has delivered us from the power of darkness, and has translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son.

Psalms 32

⁵ You forgave the iniquity of my sin.

⁷ You shall compass me about with songs of deliverance.

Continuing and Prospering

In the 1st chapter it was stated that:

Daniel 1

²¹ Daniel continued,

–and now it is added that:

Daniel 6

²⁸ Daniel prospered.

He continued and prospered because he served God continually, and sought first the prosperity of the everlasting kingdom. And as...

Genesis 39

² The Lord was with Joseph, and he was a prosperous man;...

³ And his master saw that the Lord was with Joseph, and that the Lord made all that he did to prosper in his hand,

—so it was with Daniel; but both of these men met the test of maintaining their integrity under false accusations and when they were captives in a strange land. Because they submitted to an undeserved punishment rather than...

⁹ ...sin against God,

—and thus sever their close union with Him, the prosperity of the kingdom which was within them was soon revealed in their experience among men, and they were then recognized by the world as prosperous men.

But Joseph in the prison and Daniel in the den of lions were prosperous men in the eyes of the Lord, because they had steadfastly maintained the principles of the kingdom of heaven, the law of their God.

Joshua 1

⁸ This book of the law shall not depart out of your mouth; but you shall meditate therein day and night, that you may observe to do according; to all that is written therein: for then you shall make your way prosperous, and then you shall have good success.



God shuts the Lions mouths for Daniel
(Bible Brilliants, 1889)

18. Modern Babylon in Prophecy

Present Truth, May 24, 1900
Daniel 7:1-18

THE theme of what is usually called the prophetic portion of the book of *Daniel* is the same as that presented in the chapters already studied. The subject is still the Gospel of the kingdom.

Daniel the prophet, the seer, sees the rise and fall of the successive kingdoms of the world, and the setting up of that kingdom...

Daniel 6

²⁶ ...which shall not be destroyed.

He sees the long contest between the kingdom of heaven, the spiritual kingdom which is within men, and the kingdom of the world, the kingdom which is outward and fleshly.

He sees the “dreadful and terrible”³⁰ power which is exercised in the attempt to crush truth out of the earth, and to substitute a lie in its place.

He sees that the union of the Divine with the human, the true Gospel of the kingdom,

Colossians 1

²⁷ Christ in you the hope of glory,

—brings victory in the great controversy. And he sees that a godlike character,—righteousness,—is the one thing which endures and gives stability.

Psalms 97³¹

² Righteousness and judgment are the basis of His throne.

Isaiah 32

¹ Behold, a king shall reign in righteousness.

³⁰ *Daniel 7:7.*

³¹ *The Psalms translated from the Hebrew, William Kay, D.D., 1874.*

And so these visions of the course of empire until “the end of the days,”³² simply revealed in a wider range the application in the experience of nations and kingdoms of those same principles which had been revealed in Babylon through the faithful testimony of Daniel, the servant of the living God.

What Babylon had seen in the history of Daniel, Daniel now saw in the history of Babylon in its widest application, that loyalty to the God of heaven, seeking first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, is the only basis of permanent prosperity. The writing of these prophecies was therefore the preaching of the Gospel beforehand, and the teaching of them now...

Revelation 14

⁶ ...to every nation and kindred, and tongue, and people,

–for what they really mean, will be the preaching of the Gospel of the kingdom in all the world for a witness,

Matthew 24

¹⁴ ...and then shall the end come.

The Vision

Daniel 7 [RV]

¹ In the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon, Daniel had a dream and visions of his head upon his bed: then he wrote the dream, and told the sum of the matters.

² Daniel spoke and said, I saw in my vision by night, and, behold, the four winds of the heaven broke forth upon the great sea.

³ And four great beasts came up from the others, diverse one from another.

⁴ The first was like a lion, and had eagle’s wings: I beheld till the wings thereof were plucked, and it was lifted up from the earth, and made to stand upon two feet as a man, and a man’s heart was given to it.

³² *Daniel* 12:13.

⁵ And behold another beast, a second, like to a bear, and it was raised up on one side, and three ribs were in his mouth between his teeth: and they said thus unto it, Arise, devour much flesh.

⁶ After this I beheld, and lo another, like a leopard, which had upon the back of it four wings of a fowl; the beast had also four heads; and dominion was given to it.

⁷ After this I saw in the night visions, and behold a fourth beast, terrible and powerful, and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth: it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with his feet: and it was diverse from all the beasts that were before it; and it had ten horns.

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

⁹ I behold till thrones were placed and One that was Ancient of Days did sit; His raiment was white as snow, and the hair of His head like pure wool: His throne was fiery flames, and the wheels thereof burning fire.

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

¹¹ I beheld at that time because of the voice of the great words which the horn spoke: I beheld even till the beast was slain, and his body destroyed, and he was given to be burned with fire.

¹² And as for the rest of the beasts, their dominion was taken away: yet their lives were prolonged for a season and a time.

¹³ I saw in the night visions, and, behold, there came with the clouds of heaven one like unto a Son of man, and He came even to the Ancient of Days, and they brought Him near before Him.

¹⁴ And there was given Him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all the peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him: His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.

¹⁵ As for me Daniel, my spirit was grieved in the midst of my body, and the visions of my head troubled me.

¹⁶ I came near unto one of them that stood by, and asked him the truth concerning all this. So he told me and made me know the interpretation of the things.

¹⁷ These great beasts, which are four, are four kings, which shall arise out of the earth.

¹⁸ But the saints of the Most High shall receive the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever.



Daniel dreams of Four Beasts
(van Doetechum 1643, Rijksstudio)

The interpretation of this vision is given on Divine authority. Four, successive world kingdoms occupy the whole field of history until the everlasting kingdom of God is established. The kingdoms which arise...

Daniel 7

¹⁷ ...out of the earth,

—earthly kingdoms,—have no permanent foundation, but the heavenly kingdom...

¹⁴ ...shall not pass away.

This is individual experience applied to the nations, and it says to all,

1 Corinthians 15

⁴⁸ As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly.

1 John 2

¹⁷ And the world passes away, and the lust thereof: but he that does the will of God abides for ever.

An Outline of the World's History

The simple reading of the record is sufficient to make it clear that it was not intended to be a history in detail of the four universal kingdoms which have borne rule over the earth, beginning with the Chaldean supremacy.

The distinguishing characteristics of the first three kingdoms are given with a brevity and yet a completeness sufficient to identify them beyond question. Babylon, the head of gold of the 2nd chapter, is here the lion, the king of beasts, and the eagle's wings mark it as the...

Habakkuk 1

⁶ ...hasty nation, which shall march through the breadth of the land.

The plucking of the wings and the unsteady erect position,

Daniel 7

⁴ ...upon the feet as a man,

–tell the story of its later degeneracy.

The kingdom which was to succeed Babylon and be “inferior”³³ to it, that of the Medes and Persians, is designated by the prophet Jeremiah as “the spoiler,”³⁴ and its career of con-

³³ *Daniel* 2:39.

³⁴ *Jeremiah* 6:26; 48:8, 18, 32; 51:56.

quest and rapine is fittingly represented by the bear to which the command was given,

⁵ Arise, devour much flesh.

The wonderful rapidity with which Alexander with a comparatively small army covered the long distances, subdued the Oriental world, and established the third universal kingdom, Greece, is set forth by the leopard with its four wings; and the subsequent division of his kingdom,

Daniel 8 [also 11:4]

⁸ ...toward the four winds of heaven,

–is indicated by the four heads. Then comes the fourth beast,

Daniel 7 [RV]

⁷ ...terrible and powerful,

–to which no name is given, but which is later declared to be:

Daniel 7

²³ ...the fourth kingdom upon earth,

–and that is Rome. A more particular interpretation of this symbol, and the ten horns, and the little horn with eyes of a man and a mouth speaking great things, is given later in response to the special request of the prophet.

A View of the Judgment

A judgment scene is then introduced.

Daniel 7 [RV]

⁹ ...thrones were placed,

–and,

Genesis 18

²⁵ ...the Judge of all the earth,

Psalm 104 [RV]

¹ ...clothed with honor and majesty,

and

Psalm 104³⁵

² Putting on light as a robe,

–whose glory was...

Exodus 24

¹⁷ ...like devouring fire,

–presided. Another seer beheld this same scene centuries later, and thus describes it:

Revelation 20

¹¹ And I saw a great white throne, and Him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them.

¹² And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; said the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.

A Mysterious Power

While this judgment work is in progress the attention of the seer is attracted by...

Daniel 7

¹¹ ...the great words which the horn spoke,

–and he watched the career of this power until...

Daniel 7 [RV]

¹¹ ...he was given to be burned with fire.

This last expression, taken in connection with other parallel descriptions, identifies this horn with the beast whose prophetic history is given in the 13th and 14th chapters of the

³⁵ *The Psalms translated from the Hebrew*, William Kay, D.D., 1874.

book of *Revelation*, and whose destruction is described in verse twenty of chapter 19:

Revelation 19

²⁰ And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet...These both were cast alive into the lake of fire burning with brimstone.

In the same way there is the plainest connection established between the little horn of this chapter and the woman of the 17th chapter of *Revelation*, who sat upon seven mountains (the seven-hilled city)...

Revelation 17

⁴ ...arrayed in purple and scarlet,

—and upon whose...

⁵ ...forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT.

The woman who wore this title was declared to be:

Revelation 17

¹⁸ ...that great city, which reigns over the kings of the earth.

This is the power known in human history as ecclesiastical Rome, but in the divine history as:

⁵ Babylon the Great, the mother of harlots, and abominations of the earth.

And her end is thus described:

Revelation 18

⁸ ...she shall be utterly burned with fire: for strong is the Lord God who judges her.

⁹ And the kings of the earth, who have committed fornication and have lived deliciously with her, shall bewail her, and lament for her, when they shall see the smoke of her burning.

Modern Babylon the Chief Subject of the Prophecy

It is thus made clear that the little horn of the 7th chapter of *Daniel* is modern Babylon, and this is the principal object of the prophecy. The four great kingdoms which are so briefly characterized in the description of the four beasts are simply so many steps leading up to and locating modern Babylon,

2 Thessalonians 2

⁷ The mystery of iniquity.

The connection between those portions of the book of *Daniel* usually designated as the historical and the prophetic is thus clearly shown. The prophecies of *Daniel*, are supplemented by the prophecies of John, recorded in the book of *Revelation*, and in connection with the prophecies of *Jeremiah*, were given to reveal the fact that the history of Babylon was to be repeated in the latter days, and to give such warnings and instruction as would enable all who are willing to separate themselves from Babylon to be saved from the everlasting destruction which awaits her.

It is thus evident that Babylon is the very incarnation of the idea of self-exaltation, in opposition to the revelation of the character of the true God as manifested in Jesus Christ the meek and lowly One.

Babylon therefore stands for:

- man lifted up against God;
- “that spirit of Antichrist,” which “confesses not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh”³⁶;
- salvation through the works of the flesh instead of righteousness by faith;
- the traditions of the church made to take the place of a plain “Thus says the Lord”;

³⁶ 1 John 4:3.

- “the mystery of iniquity”³⁷ in contrast with “the mystery of godliness”³⁸;
- the papacy, and the papal idea as opposed to genuine Christianity.

All this will appear with greater fullness of detail in the next study, when the special work of the little horn as described in the prophecy will be considered.

The Destruction of All Worldly Kingdoms

The fourth beast, little horn and all, was “destroyed,” but the rest of the beasts...

Daniel 7

¹² ...had their dominion taken away, yet their lives were prolonged.

When the Babylonian monarchy...

...met its death at the hands of Cyrus the Great, the nationality of the Chaldeans was not swept away.³⁹

The same was true in the experience of Medo-Persia and Greece.

The ruling power was transferred, but the national life continued.⁴⁰

All three have been combined with the fourth kingdom and will meet their death with it. This is also shown in the description given of the beast (identical with the little horn) in the 13th chapter of *Revelation*:

³⁷ 2 Thessalonians 2:7.

³⁸ 1 Timothy 3:16.

³⁹ George Rawlinson, M.A. *The Seven Great Monarchies*, Chapter 8 “History and Chronology.”

⁴⁰ A. T. Jones, *The Great Empires of Prophecy*, Chapter 38 “Rome Divided.”

Revelation 13

² And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard [Greece], and his feet were as the feet of a bear [Medo-Per-sia], and his mouth as the mouth of a lion [Babylon].

Thus the whole world will perish in the fall of modern Babylon, except those who heed the call to come out of her.

The Final Settlement of All Things

The closing scene in the vision presents the final settlement of the kingdom question when...

Daniel 7

¹⁴ ...dominion, and glory, and a kingdom,

—were given to:

¹³ ...one like the Son of man,

—thus teaching that in the union of the Divine with the human is the secret of that Gospel power which makes it possible for...

1 Corinthians 1

²⁷ ...the weak things of the world to confound the mighty.

And this Son of man, to whom the kingdom was given, was the same one of whom Zacharias, “filled with the Holy Ghost,” prophesied:

Luke 1

⁶⁸ Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for He has visited and redeemed His people,

⁶⁹ And has raised up a horn of salvation [not one that destroys] for us in the house of His servant David;

⁷² To perform the mercy promised to our fathers, and to remember His holy covenant.

He it is of whom it is written:

Hebrews 2

¹⁴ Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also himself took part of the same.

So also Isaiah prophesied of Him:

Isaiah 9

⁶ For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given: and the government shall be upon His shoulder...

⁷ Of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever.

But this union of Divinity with humanity was made in order that humanity might share with Divinity in all the blessings which are ensured by a righteous character, the kingdom of God within. And so the kingdom which was given to the Son of man belongs also to all who are...

Hebrews 3

¹⁴ ...are partakers of Christ.

Who are the Real Possessors of the Kingdom

Thus the final triumph of the Gospel,

Colossians 1

²⁷ Christ in you, the hope of glory,

–is seen in the fact that:

Daniel 7 [RV]

¹⁸ The saints of the Most High shall receive the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever.

He who receives the kingdom and then loses it, never really had it at all.

Daniel 5 [RV]

³¹ Darius the Mede received the kingdom,

–but he did not retain it, and so it has been with all the rulers of the world. He who would...

Daniel 7 [RV]

¹⁸ ...possess the kingdom for ever,

—must know in his own flesh...

Ephesians 1

¹⁹ ...the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power,

²⁰ Which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places,

²¹ Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come.

This is the Gospel of the kingdom, and this Gospel experience by which...

2 Corinthians 4

¹¹ ...the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh,

—the sinless life in the sinful flesh,—brings to weak humanity, overcoming power.

1 John 4

⁴ You are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is He that is in you, than he that is in the world.

And to all such the promise is made:

Revelation 3

²¹ To him that overcomes will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in His throne.

And thus was the Gospel of the kingdom preached in this vision given to Daniel the prophet.



Daniel's Vision of the Four Beasts
(Icones Biblicae, 1679)

19. The King of Modern Babylon Exalts Himself

Present Truth, May 31, 1900

Daniel 7:19-28

THE brief interpretation given of the vision by “one of them that stood by” simply stated that the four beasts represented four kings, or kingdoms, which would arise one after the other, and that it would all end in the kingdom being given to the saints of the Most High.

But the terrible appearance of the fourth beast, its destructive character, and the sight of its ten horns, and the coming up of the little horn with its human eyes and blasphemous mouth, had made such an impression upon the mind of the prophet that he desired more accurate information as to its significance.

Daniel 7 [RV]

¹⁹ Then I desired to know the truth concerning the fourth beast, which was diverse from all of them, exceeding terrible, whose teeth were of iron, and his nails of brass; which devoured, broke in pieces, and stamped the residue with his feet;

²⁰ And concerning the ten horns that were on his head, and the other horn which came up, and before which three fell; even that horn that had eyes and a mouth that spoke great things, whose look was more stout than his fellows.

²¹ I beheld, and the same born made war with the saints, and prevailed against them;

²² Until the Ancient of Days came and judgment was given to the saints of the Most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom.

²³ Thus he said, The fourth beast shall be a fourth kingdom upon earth, which shall be diverse from all the kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, and shall tread it down, and break it in pieces.

²⁴ And as for the ten horns, out of this kingdom shall ten kings arise and another shall arise after them; and he shall be diverse from the former, and he shall put down three kings.

²⁵ And he shall speak words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High: and he shall think to change the times and the law; and they shall be given into His hand until a time and times and half a time.

²⁶ But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end.

²⁷ And the kingdom and the dominion, and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High: His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey Him.

²⁸ Here is the end of the matter. As for me Daniel, my thoughts much troubled me, and my countenance was changed in me; but I kept the matter in my heart.

Prophecy Concerning Rome

The fourth beast was...

Daniel 7 [RV]

¹⁹ ...diverse from all of them.

The distinguishing characteristic was its strength, and with this strength,

¹⁹ ...it broke in pieces.

The facts of history point to Rome as fulfilling to the letter these specifications.

There was not a single organized people in the world that did not either feel or fear the power of Rome.⁴¹

The arms of the Republic, sometimes vanquished in battle, but always victorious in war, advanced with rapid steps to the Euphrates, the Danube, the Rhine, and the ocean; and the

⁴¹ A. T. Jones, *The Great Empires of Prophecy*, Chapter 23 "Rome: The Empire."

images of gold, or silver, or brass that might serve to represent the nations and their kings, were successively broken by the iron monarchy of Rome.⁴²

Thus was fulfilled the declaration of the prophecy, which said,

Daniel 7

²³ 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.

Breaking Up of the Roman Empire

But the most important symbol in the prophecy was not yet reached, and so the interpretation proceeded a step further toward it. The ten horns on the head of the fourth beast signified that...

Daniel 7 [RV]

²⁴ ...out of this kingdom shall ten kings arise.

Thus in one brief sentence is stated the result of that long struggle which ended in the downfall of the Roman empire, and the establishment of ten kings or kingdoms in its place.

This breaking up of the Roman empire, an event of such magnitude that it would be sure to be definitely fixed in the current of history, is mentioned here in order to locate the rise and work of the little horn, whose career it is the chief purpose of this prophecy to set forth.

It is therefore important to note the time when the last of these ten kings arose, and the ruin of the Roman empire was accomplished, as it is definitely stated that this little horn...

²⁴ ...shall arise after them.

Trustworthy history furnishes the desired information.

⁴² Gibbon, *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, Chapter 38 "Reign of Clovis."

Thus by the establishment of the Herulian kingdom of Italy, 476 AD, the final destruction of the Western Empire was accomplished.⁴³

This makes it clear that the king who arose “after them” and who was represented by the little horn, “came up” after 476 AD. It was furthermore predicted of this power that he should...

Daniel 7 [RV]

²⁴ ...put down three kings.

This work of conquest was shown in the vision by the fact that before this little horn...

Daniel 7

⁸ ...were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots.

This language would indicate the utter extinction of these three kingdoms as the method of establishing the new power, and the time when the last of them was overthrown would mark the time of the establishment of the kingdom of the little horn.

Now the three that were plucked up by the roots were the Heruli, the Vandals, and the Ostrogoths; and the date of the plucking up of the first of the three, is March 5th, 493 AD, and of the last, March, 538 AD.⁴⁴

These easily authenticated facts of history mark the year 538 AD as the time from which to reckon the supremacy of that power signified by the little horn.

The Papacy Pointed Out

A consideration of the nature and the work of this power, as declared in this prophecy and in other prophecies which manifestly deal with the same subject, forces upon every candid

⁴³ A. T. Jones, *The Great Empires of Prophecy*, Chapter 45 “Rome Divided: The Herulian Kingdom.”

⁴⁴ *Idem*, Chapter 46 “The Ten Kingdoms.”

mind the conviction that ecclesiastical Rome, the papacy, in its long-continued warfare against the kingdom of God in the earth, is here described.

With the time and manner of its rise so exactly determined, and its blasphemous utterances, and its blasphemous persecution of those loyal to the Word of God, its presumptuous efforts to overthrow the very foundation of the government of God by tampering with His law, all pictured so plainly, and the exact duration of its divinely-permitted supremacy so clearly stated, there can be no mistake in applying these divine descriptions to that religio-political power, whose history in complete fulfillment of the prophecy might be written in the blood of the martyrs, and punctuated with groans from the inquisition—the papacy, modern Babylon.

Revelation 13

⁶ ...blasphemy against God,

Revelation 17

⁶ ...drunken with the blood of the saints,

2 Thessalonians 2

⁷ ...the mystery of lawlessness.

This is the three-fold indictment which a Divine hand has written upon the triple crown of the Roman pontiff.

A Priest Kingdom

The prophecy says of the little horn that:

Daniel 7

²⁴ ...he shall be diverse from the [former kings].

The ten horns represented “ten kings,”⁴⁵ and so “another horn” would be another king, and yet this power was to be diverse from the preceding. From the work ascribed in the prophecy to this little horn it is evident that it combines the

⁴⁵ **Daniel 7** ²⁴ And the ten horns out of this kingdom are ten kings that shall arise.

office of priest with that of king, and that it would therefore claim to exercise both temporal and spiritual dominion.

As a king it was to be small, a little horn, but in its spiritual jurisdiction it was to be satisfied with nothing short of putting itself in the place of God. As a temporal ruler, the papacy has never extended its territory beyond narrow limits, and in 1870 it was deprived even of this; but as a spiritual ruler this modern Babylon...

Revelation 17

¹⁸ ...is that great city, which reigns over the kings of the earth.

Revelation 13

⁸ And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

In that perversion of the Gospel, in which the visible is substituted for the invisible, so that “the mystery of godliness”⁴⁶ became “the mystery of iniquity,”⁴⁷ the circumstances demanded that the Pope in his assumed office of “true vicar of Christ” should be a priest-king.

Of the Messiah it was prophesied:

Zechariah 6

¹³ Even He shall build the temple of the Lord; and He shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon His throne, and He shall be a priest upon His throne.

The “King of glory”⁴⁸ was also to be...

Hebrews 2

¹⁷ ...a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.

⁴⁶ 1 Timothy 3:16.

⁴⁷ 2 Thessalonians 2:7.

⁴⁸ Psalm 24:7.

And when the Gospel has completed its work, the praise will all be given...

Revelation 1

⁵ Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood,

⁶ And has made us kings and priests unto God and His Father.

It is a fundamental teaching of the Roman Catholic Church that:

The Pope is the Representative of Christ on earth,⁴⁹

–the Visible Head of the church, and in assuming this role he must necessarily conform, at least in outward appearance, to the pattern which he imitates, the true Head of the church. It was inevitable, therefore, that he should be a priest-king and the prophecy has so declared it.

Haughtiness and Blasphemy

Daniel 7

⁸ [The] mouth speaking great things,

and the...

²⁰ ...look...more stout than his fellows,

–haughtiness both of speech and of aspect, were prominent characteristics of the little horn, and the presumptuous words are not simply directed against man, but...

²⁵ ...against the Most High.

While claiming to act for God, and to be His vicegerent in the earth, yet...

⁴⁹ James Cardinal Gibbons, *The Faith of Our Fathers*, Chapter XII “Temporal Power of the Popes,” 1917.

2 Thessalonians 2

⁴ [He] opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped; so that he as God sits in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.

While pretending to take the place in the earth of Him who is...

Matthew 11

²⁹ ...meek and lowly in heart,

–he has for many centuries against king and subject alike uttered his great swelling words, pronouncing his anathemas upon anyone who declined to submit mind, soul, and body to his absolute control. These utterances he himself calls “thunders,” as though claiming equality with the Deity, even as...

Job 37

⁵ God thunders marvelously with His voice,

⁴ ...He thunders with the voice of His excellency.

In the titles which the Roman pontiff assumes, he arrogates to himself the honor due to God alone. He has permitted himself to be called:

“The Holy Father,”

“The Most Holy Father,”

“His Holiness,”

“God on earth.”

And as the climax of all his blasphemous claims and assumptions, by the action of the Vatican Council it was taught and defined as:

...a dogma divinely revealed: that the Roman Pontiff, when he speaks *ex cathedra*...is possessed of that infallibility with which the divine Redeemer willed that His church should be endowed for defining doctrine, faith, or morals.⁵⁰

⁵⁰ Archbishop Kenrick, *An Inside View of the Vatican Council*, Chapter IX “The Acts of the Council.”

The new doctrine was promulgated July 18th, 1870, in the midst of a storm which darkened the church of St. Peter's. Within a few hours there burst over Europe a storm of war, which stayed not until it had swept away the throne of the infallible pope from underneath him.⁵¹

It was this crowning act of blasphemy which attracted the attention of the prophet, and which he thus describes:

Daniel 7

¹¹ I beheld then because of the voice of the great words which the horn spoke.

This was after...

¹⁰ ...the judgment was set, and the books were opened.

What an astonishing situation is revealed by these facts! At the very time when the conduct of men is being investigated and their character weighed in the balances of the sanctuary and tested by the eternal law of God, the papacy, which had for centuries warred against the kingdom of God in the earth, and had poured out like water the blood of the subjects of that kingdom, and had even openly changed the law of the kingdom; now by a formal, weighty decree claimed for its head an attribute which belongs only to...

Titus 1

² God, that cannot lie.

Was the name and the character of God ever more openly blasphemed?

On that last night in the history of Babylon of the Chaldees, Belshazzar exalted himself against God and offered insult to His face by using the vessels from the house of God in which to drink the wine of Babylon, while they praised the false gods. To do this after the knowledge of the true God had been revealed, and the Gospel of the kingdom had been proclaimed,

⁵¹ *Idem*, Chapter VI "Proceedings of the Council."

sealed the fate of the king and his kingdom. To exalt himself then instead of glorifying...

Daniel 5

²³ ...the God in whose hand your breath is, and whose are all your ways,

–was a sufficient cause for the hand-writing on the wall.

And so in adopting this dogma of infallibility, which renders impossible any repentance for the past and reform for the future, the papacy has sealed its own destruction. Individuals who now hold the teaching of the papacy may be saved through their personal repentance and faith, but this modern Babylon is doomed. And so the call is even now being sounded,

Revelation 18

⁴ Come out of her, my people, that you be not partakers of her sins, and that you receive not of her plagues.

Wearing Out the Saints

Other powers have caused the death of thousands and hundreds of thousands of men, but the remarkable thing about this little horn is that it...

Daniel 7

²⁵ ...shall wear out the saints of the Most High.

²¹ The same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them.

John saw in vision the same power under the symbol of:

Revelation 13

¹ ...a beast...having seven heads and ten horns,

–to whom...

⁷ ...it was given...to make war with the saints.

And again he saw the woman, who wore the title,

Revelation 17

⁵ ...Babylon the great,

⁶ ...drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus.

John 10

¹¹ The Good Shepherd gives His life for the sheep,

–but the “universal chief Pastor [Shepherd], the Roman Pontiff,” has reversed this, and has taken the lives of the sheep. For hundreds of years any who were unwilling to accept the Word of God as interpreted by popes and councils, or the traditions of the church in the place of the Word of God, were anathematized as heretics, and their lives and their property were forfeited.

The duty of putting heretics to death is among the infallible and irrevocable decrees of its general councils, like those of the mass and purgatory; and when Luther dared to say that “it was against the will of the Holy Spirit, to burn with fire men convicted of error,” the Court of Rome, in its bull *Exsurge*, placed this declaration among the number of the forty-one propositions for which it condemned Luther, and ordered, under severe penalties, that he should be seized and sent to the Pope.⁵²

To the woman taken in open sin Jesus said,

John 8

¹¹ Neither do I condemn you: go and sin no more.

John 3

¹⁷ God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through Him might be saved.

In what marked contrast with this has been the course of the self-styled vicegerent of Christ! From city and country, from mountain and valley, from palace and dungeon, from

⁵² Professor Gaussen, *Popery, an Argument for the Truth, by its Fulfillment of Scripture Prophecies*. As published in *The Advent Herald*, Vol. VII, No. 23, July 10, 1844.

rich and poor, through the long night of the dark ages there comes a volume of testimony, so terrible as to be almost incredible, and yet unimpeachable, which is the answer of history to the statement of the prophecy,

Daniel 7

²⁵ He shall...wear out the saints of the Most High.



The Little Horn represents the Papal power
(Daniel and the Revelation, 1912)

20. Works Substituted for Faith

Present Truth, June 7, 1900

Daniel 7 (continued)

IT WOULD be profitable to read again with care the whole of the 7th chapter of *Daniel*, giving special attention to the latter part of the chapter, where the time for the rise of the little horn is declared, and the character of its work is described.

The last study in this series made it clear that in the papacy, —modern Babylon,—is found the fulfillment of this symbol. And the year from which its supremacy is to be dated (538 AD) was definitely determined, and its work in blaspheming God and persecuting His saints was considered.

The next indictment against this power is that:

Daniel 7 [RV]

²⁵ ...he shall think to change the times and the law.

Inasmuch as his blasphemous words were...

²⁵ ...against the Most High,

—and the saints worn out by him were...

²⁵ ...the saints of the Most High,

—it is evident that “the times and the law” which he would think to change would be those of the Most High. It is proper therefore to inquire whether the papacy has done anything which would meet this specification of the prophecy.

In order to give an intelligent answer to this inquiry it is necessary to consider what is comprehended in *the law of the Most High*, and how man may obtain the righteousness set forth in it.

What the Law of God is

The law of God as stated in the ten commandments is simply the revelation of His character as applied to human conduct. The eternal principles of truth and righteousness which are the very essence of His being and the basis of His throne, are there put into a formal statement.

Psalm 119

¹⁴² Your law is the truth.

¹⁵¹ All your commandments are truth.

¹⁷² All your commandments are righteousness.

As first created, perfect in his being and in harmony with God, in His image and after His likeness, man revealed His character as expressed in these commandments, and the Divine life worked unhindered and unchecked in human flesh.

But sin marred the image of God, and alienated man from the life of God, so that the glory (character) of God departed from the temple which He had created.

Romans 3

²³ For all have sinned and come short of [or lack] the glory of God.

With the loss of the glory with which he was originally crowned, came the loss of his kingship and his kingdom. It is the work of the Gospel to restore the image of God in the soul, to bestow again the crown of glory, and to bring back the kingship and the kingdom. This is the Gospel of the kingdom. But,

Romans 14

¹⁷ The kingdom of God is...righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost,

and,

Luke 17

²¹ ...the kingdom of God is within you.

And as “righteousness by faith”⁵³ is the only real righteousness, it is evident that it is only through faith that the lost character can be regained and the kingship restored. This is the warp and the woof of all the inspired teaching concerning the Gospel.

What the Gospel Is and Does

The Gospel of Christ is...

Romans 1

¹⁶ ...the power of God unto salvation to every one that believes.

In it...

¹⁷ ...is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith.

By it provision has been made for restoring the image of God in man by...

Romans 5

¹⁷ ...the gift of righteousness,

Romans 3

²² Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe.

²⁵ God has set forth [Jesus Christ] to be a propitiation through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God;

²⁶ ...that He might be just, and the justifier of him that believes in Jesus.

²⁷ Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay: but by the law of faith.

³¹ Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law.

It is evident from this scripture that a personal faith in Christ as the Redeemer, “faith in His blood,” is the one and only way by which the gift of righteousness is received, and a

⁵³ *Galatians 5:5.*

sinful man is justified. Through faith in Christ, the law, by which “is the knowledge of sin,”⁵⁴ becomes in Him the very life of our life, the power of God unto salvation.

Romans 8

² For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death.

³ For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh:

⁴ That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

Everything Depends on Personal Faith

In the practical experience therefore of sins forgiven and righteousness bestowed, everything depends upon the faith of the individual.

Matthew 9

²⁹ According to your faith be it unto you.

The natural man, in the pride of his own self-assertion, seeks either directly or indirectly to save himself by his own works, not being willing to acknowledge his entire dependence upon God, both for the gift, and for the power with which to receive the gift. To him the whole law is,

“Do and live.”

This is the law of works, which always gives to man some ground for boasting. But this substitutes sin for righteousness,

Romans 14

²³ ...for whatsoever is not of faith is sin.

It puts man in the place of God, and ends in death instead of life. God’s plan for the salvation of man is just the opposite to this.

⁵⁴ *Romans 3:20.*

Ephesians 2

⁸ For by grace are you saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:

⁹ Not of works, lest any man should boast.

¹⁰ For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God has before ordained that we should walk in them.

To the self-sufficient inquiry,

John 6

²⁸ What shall we do that we might work the works of God?

–the answer is given,

²⁹ This is the work of God, that you believe on Him whom He has sent.

John 20

³¹ ...[By] believing, you might have life through His name.

And then good works follow as the fruit of this life.

“Live and do,”

–this is the law of faith, which leaves no opportunity for rejoicing in the flesh.

Relation of Great Apostasy to Law and Gospel

In the great apostasy which began before the death of the apostles and in its complete development resulted in the papacy, the Gospel was so perverted that man's way was substituted for God's way, and a counterfeit gospel was proclaimed in the place of the true. The works of the law superseded the hearing of faith.

- The forgiveness of sin was made chiefly dependent upon the absolution of the priest rather than simply upon the faith of the individual.
- The power and authority of the church were substituted for the power and authority of God.

- Tradition was exalted above the Bible, and
- The simplicity of the Gospel was corrupted by changing the law of faith into the law of works.

Through that period which is rightly designated in history as “the dark ages,” men groped in darkness, shut away from the Word of God, the lamp to the feet and the light to the path.⁵⁵ They were held in the bondage of superstition and error, and their consciences were ruled over by priests and popes, and their salvation was oftentimes made a matter of mere merchandise.

In the reformation of the 16th century, under the leadership of Luther and his associates, a protest was made against all this reversal of the Gospel and men asserted their privilege to be guided by the Word of God rather than by tradition, to have communion with God through Jesus Christ without the intervention of popes or priests, and to receive forgiveness of sins through their own repentance toward God and faith toward the Lord Jesus Christ.

Thus was the foundation of Protestantism laid, and the very essence of the Gospel,—justification by faith in the saving power of God, brought into the life of each individual through the gift of Christ,—was again taught to the people.

Papacy Relies on “The God of This World”

But behind the organization known as the papacy is...

2 Corinthians 4

⁴ ...the god of this world,

—seeking to overthrow the kingdom of God in the earth, and to establish his own in its place. Having insinuated himself into the very midst of the professed church of God by substituting worldly principles for the Divine, he has made his crowning effort by striking directly at the foundation of the

⁵⁵ *Psalm* 119:105.

whole Gospel, and attempting to out off man from the direct working of the creative power of God in his soul, through the union of the Divine life with human flesh.

On the one hand, in order to out off man from direct communion with God, the pope, the priests, and the church were made to take the place which belonged to God himself; the law of works took the place of the law of faith, and forgiveness of sin was asserted to be under the control of the human agent.

On the other hand, in order to cut off God from His work in behalf of man,—the revealing of His creative power to create anew in Christ Jesus,—the law of God, as expressed in the ten commandments, was so changed through the instrumentality of the papacy as to hide from men the knowledge of God as the Creator.

This was simply the natural outgrowth of the first step. Having made man his own saviour through an outward observance of the traditions and ordinances of the church, the way was easily open for the next step, which was to remove as far as possible any reminder of that genuine saving power which alone could accomplish salvation.

Plan of Redemption is Plan of Creation

The plan of redemption is simply the carrying out of the original plan of creation, that man should be made in the image of God. And so David prayed,

Psalm 51

¹⁰ Create in me a clean heart.

And so,

2 Corinthians 5

¹⁷ If any man is in Christ, there is a new creation.

Galatians 6

¹⁵ For neither is circumcision anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation.

Therefore in the experience of the genuine Gospel, God in Christ must be known as the Creator, and the work which He has accomplished in the flesh of Christ must be accepted through faith, and thus the fruits of that life will again appear in the flesh.

All this is found in the Sabbath of the fourth commandment, as embodied in God's law, and as declared by Him to be the sign of His saving power. The fourth commandment of the decalogue sets forth God as the Creator of all things, thus showing His power and His right to reign as Lord over all, and establishes the seventh day of the week, now commonly called Saturday, to be observed as the weekly day of rest. This day, blessed and sanctified by the Creator, was given to man before sin entered into the world that man might share with God in the joy of a perfect creation.

Genesis 2

¹ Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them.

² And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had made; and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made.

³ And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it He had rested from all His work which God created and made.

After sin had marred the image of God in man, this same Sabbath was continued to man as the sign and the seal of God's creative power to restore man to his place in a perfect creation.

Ezekiel 20

¹² Moreover also I gave them my Sabbaths to be a sign between me and them, that they might know that I am the Lord that sanctify them.

Exodus 31

¹⁶ Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations, for a perpetual covenant.

¹⁷ It is a sign between me and the children of Israel for ever: for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day He rested, and was refreshed.

Thus the seventh day Sabbath, as given to man in the Gospel, stands for justification by faith, and the real experience of the observance of this Sabbath is the experience of justification by faith. It is the sign of the creative power of God as revealed in Jesus Christ and trusted in for salvation.

A False Gospel: Man's Work Instead of God's Work

In the effort to defeat God's plan for the salvation of man, the enemy of the truth first put forth a false gospel in which the power of man and man's works take the place of the power of God and the work which He wrought in Christ, and then logically enough substituted another day as the sign of the new power which was to be trusted in for salvation.

Thus Sunday was brought into the professed Christian church to take the place of the Sabbath of the Lord. For ages it had been observed among the heathen, even in Babylon of old, in honor of the sun-god, and now that modern Babylon has usurped the place of the church, it was only natural that this chief sign of heathenism should take its place as the sign of the universal power of this Babylon to rule in things spiritual.

Thus in this perversion of the Gospel, the Sunday sabbath, which has no foundation in the Word of God but rests wholly upon human tradition, stands for justification by works, and to hold to its observance after its origin and meaning are made clear is simply to choose justification by the works of the flesh instead of justification by faith,—to trust in man for salvation rather than in the living God.

A few simple facts will serve to connect the papacy directly with the statement of the prophecy that he would “think to change the times and the law.”

Any standard Roman Catholic catechism will show how the ten commandments have been so changed that the fourth is numbered as the third, the larger part of the commandment being omitted, and what is left is made to apply directly to Sunday, the first day of the week, instead of to the seventh.

Having exalted tradition above the written Word of God, the Catholic Church is consistent in its teaching, and does not claim to rest the observance of Sunday upon any Bible authority. Thus Cardinal Gibbons says:

You may read the Bible from *Genesis to Revelation*, and you will not find a single line authorizing the sanctification of Sunday. The Scriptures enforce the religious observance of Saturday, a day which we never sanctify.⁵⁶

And further, the general observance of Sunday, contrary to the plain teaching of the Bible is appealed to by Catholics as a proof of the authority of the Church even over Protestants. One Catholic writer puts it in this way:

It was the Catholic Church which, by the authority of Jesus Christ, has transferred this rest to the Sunday in remembrance of the resurrection of our Lord. Thus the observance of Sunday by the Protestants is an homage they pay, in spite of themselves, to the authority of the Church.⁵⁷

Is it not high time for every true Protestant to stand upon the Protestant platform of “the Bible and the Bible alone,” and cease to worship according to the command of this modern Babylon?

⁵⁶ James Cardinal Gibbons, *The Faith of Our Fathers*, 1876.

⁵⁷ Mgr. Segur, *Plain Talk About the Protestantism of Today*, p. 213.

21. Paganism Substituted for Christianity

Present Truth, June 14, 1900
Daniel 7 (continued)

IT SHOULD constantly be borne in mind that the book of *Daniel* is the book of the Gospel of the kingdom, and that it is the purpose of the book to show what kingdom will stand forever, and to set forth the principles upon which this everlasting kingdom is established. And this is no more true of the prophetic portion than of that which is usually called the historical portion.

We have seen that the chief subject of the prophecy in the 7th chapter is the little horn, modern Babylon, the papacy. In the brief prophetic sketch which is given of the great world kingdoms, the outline is made with such clearness that the time of the rise of this power is definitely determined, and the divinely drawn indictment is made up under three counts:

Daniel 7 [RV]

²⁵ He shall speak great words against the Most High,
and shall wear out the saints of the Most High:
and he shall think to change the times and the law.

His whole career is thus shown to be one of direct opposition against God, against the subjects of the kingdom of God, and against the law of the kingdom,

Romans 8

² ...the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus.

From our last study upon this subject it is evident that the intent of the papacy to change the law of the Most High involved much more than a mere change of some outward form, but that it took hold upon the very foundations of the Gospel.

It is nothing less than Satan's chief effort to pervert the Gospel of Christ so completely, by substituting a counterfeit so perfect that no merely human wisdom could ever have in-

vented it, that the wondrous gift and sacrifice of Christ would be in vain. Only the direct inspiration of Satan, who as Lucifer, the light-bearer, had been...

Ezekiel 28

¹⁴ ...upon the holy mountain of God,

–could give birth to such a scheme as this, and then develop it under the outward pretense of burning zeal for the advancement of the kingdom of God in the earth.

In this study we shall look still further at the meaning of this purpose on the part of the papacy to change the law of faith into the law of works. Recognizing the papacy as the product of more than human wisdom, as the masterpiece of Satan in his long-continued warfare against the Gospel of the kingdom of God, we can see in it the far-reaching purpose to nullify as far as possible all the effects of the sacrifice which he could not prevent.

The Purpose of the Gospel is Deliverance

It is evident that the purpose of the Gospel is to deliver man and the earth from sin and the results of sin. The central thought and all the efficacy of the Gospel are found in the gift of Christ to man. It is faith in the person, Jesus Christ, and the actual acceptance of Him, rather than an assent to a creed, however true that creed may be, which renders the provision of the Gospel of saving value to man.

These simple but fundamental principles may be stated in the exact words of the scripture:

Romans 11

²⁶ There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob.

Matthew 1

²¹ You shall call His name Jesus: for He shall save His people from their sins.

John 3

¹⁶ For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

The one thing essential to be done, and without which the plan of the Gospel could not be accomplished, was that the Son of God should be manifested in the flesh. From the time that the Gospel was first preached in Eden in the promise of the seed of the woman who should bruise the serpent's head, this great fact has been kept in the foreground:

- In the seed promised to Abraham;
- In the deliverances wrought through Joseph and Moses;
- In the promise, "I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren" (*Deuteronomy* 18:18);
- In the very name of him who led the children of Israel into the promised land (the Greek form of the name *Joshua* and *Jesus* is the same, *Hebrews* 4:8 and margin);
- In the law that only a near kinsman could redeem the inheritance (see the whole book of *Ruth*);
- In the promises to David, "Of the fruit of your body will I set upon your throne" (*Psalms* 132:11), and "His seed also will I make to endure for ever, and his throne as the days of heaven" (*Psalms* 89:29);
- In Isaiah's wonderful prophecies of Immanuel (*Isaiah* 7:14), and the Branch out of the roots of Jesse (*Isaiah* 11:1);
- In Zechariah's prophecy of "the man whose name is the Branch" (*Zechariah* 6:12);

—in all these and many other ways was the revelation made again and again, that in human flesh was the power of salvation to be made known. Where sin abounded,—in the flesh,—just there must redeeming grace be made to abound.⁵⁸ And

⁵⁸ *Romans* 5:20.

not only so, but it must be in the very same kind of flesh in which the sin reigned that the victory over sin must be gained. Otherwise the victory *for* man would not mean victory *in* man.

The Vital Union of Christ with Mankind

The Scripture is most explicit upon this vital feature of the Gospel.

Hebrews 2 [RV]

¹¹ For both He that sanctifies and they that are sanctified are all of one...

¹⁴ Since then the children are sharers in flesh and blood, He also himself in like manner partook of the same; that through death He might bring to nought him that had the power of death, that is, the devil;

¹⁵ And might deliver all them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

¹⁶ For verily not of angels does He take hold, but He takes hold of the seed of Abraham.

¹⁷ Wherefore it behoved Him in all things to be made like unto His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God to make propitiation for the sins of the people.

What was impossible by the law because of the weakness of sinful flesh was accomplished for man through the incarnation of that same law in sinful flesh, and thus the hope of righteousness was actually brought within his reach.

Romans 8

² For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death.

³ For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh:

⁴ That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

Thus,

John 1

¹⁴ The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us,
and,

2 Corinthians 5

¹⁹ God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself.
And so divinity was clothed with humanity that...

2 Corinthians 4

¹¹ ...the life also of Jesus might be manifest in our mortal
flesh.

The Expression of a Genuine Gospel Experience

The experience of this genuine Gospel is thus expressed:

Galatians 2

²⁰ I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but
Christ lives in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I
live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave
himself for me.

This is...

Colossians 1

²⁶ ...the mystery which has been hid from ages and from gen-
erations, but now is made manifest to His saints:
²⁷ To whom God would make known what is the riches of the
glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in
you, the hope of glory.

The work of the minister of this Gospel is to preach...

Ephesians 3

⁸ ...the unsearchable riches of Christ;
⁹ And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mys-
tery, which from the beginning of the world has been hid in
God.

And the sum of it all is,

Ephesians 3

¹⁷ That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith.

The reality of this experience marks the difference between being in the flesh and in the Spirit.

Romans 8

⁸ So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.

⁹ But you are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His.

¹⁰ And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness.

¹¹ But if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead, dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwells in you.

¹² Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh.

¹³ For if you live after the flesh you shall die: but if you through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, you shall live.

All this is simply the full revelation of the Gospel of the kingdom, the kingdom within, that everlasting kingdom which will continue, as long as the eternal God lives.

When Jesus, the Son of God, became united to this human family by birth, taking upon himself the same sinful flesh which every son and daughter of Adam bears, He revealed in His own person that mystery which had been the hope of the church in all the ages.

In Him all the human family conquered sin through the power of the indwelling Spirit; in Him all the human family paid the penalty of sin,

2 Corinthians 5

¹⁴ ...because we thus judge, that one died for all, therefore all died.

In Him all the human family was raised from the dead and seated on high, since...

Ephesians 2

⁶ [He] has raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.

But all this...

Romans 4

¹⁶ ...is of faith, that it might be by grace.

No outward form, not even the observance of a Gospel form when the observance is merely outward, can take the place of living faith.

Galatians 5

⁶ For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision avails anything, nor uncircumcision; but faith which works by love.

Characteristics: Paganism and Christianity

Previous to the actual revelation in the flesh of God's...

Ephesians 3

¹¹ ...eternal purpose which He purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord,

–Satan's counterfeit of the Gospel consisted chiefly in obscuring the truth that...

Deuteronomy 6

⁴ The Lord our God is one Lord,

–and substituting for it the falsehood that:

1 Corinthians 8

⁵ ...there be gods many, and lords many.

The perversion of the truth that God is revealed in everything which He has made was the foundation of all theistic systems, in which it was taught that everything was God. This was paganism, open and gross idolatry.

And this system of paganism found its highest expression in all lands in the worship of the sun, and in the many and varied rites and ceremonies connected with it. The day which

was especially devoted to the worship of the sun-god was the first day of the week, which was by the heathen very properly designated as Sunday, and has since been known as:

The wild solar holiday of all pagan times.⁵⁹

When the children of God anciently departed from the pure faith in the one Jehovah, they invariably fell into the idolatrous worship of their pagan neighbors, and as the inevitable consequence they violated the true Sabbath, the seventh day of the week, and paid special honor to the day devoted to sun worship, the first day of the week, now called Sunday.

Thus the observance of the true Sabbath of the Lord, the seventh day of the week, was a sign of the worship of the one true God as opposed to the special honor placed upon Sunday, the first day of the week, the distinguishing mark of paganism.

Christianity and Papacy Compared and Contrasted

After the incarnation of the Son of God was an accomplished fact, and by His life, death, resurrection, and ascension the truth was wrought out that...

1 Timothy 2

⁵ There is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus,

–the “god of this world” attempted to crush out this truth by persecution, but as this simply opened the way for the power of the Divine life to be perfectly revealed in the flesh, and resulted only in maintaining and spreading a pure Gospel, it became necessary for Satan to change his principle of warfare.

⁵⁹ *North British Review*, Vol. xviii, p. 409; as quoted in J. N. Andrews, *History of the Sabbath*, Part II “Secular History”, Chapter 16 “Origin of First-Day Observance.”

Then out of the councils of darkness was brought forward that counterfeit of the Gospel which afterward developed into the papacy,

...a system of unrighteousness so set forth as to seem that system of righteousness which God has revealed for the salvation of the world,⁶⁰

a system which...

...presents to the world a spiritual and saving apparatus for the salvation of men, and yet it neither sanctifies nor saves anyone.⁶¹

This is the...

2 Thessalonians 2

⁷ ...mystery of iniquity,

–which finds its incarnation in:

³ ...the man of sin,

–the pope; in opposition to:

1 Timothy 3

¹⁶ ...the mystery of godliness,

–which finds its incarnation in Him,

2 Corinthians 5

²¹ ...who knew no sin.

Both systems culminate not simply in forms of doctrine, but in a person. But while alike in outward appearance, as any counterfeit and genuine must needs be, the contrast between the two is in reality as great as that between light and darkness, between the Divine and the human, the Spirit and the flesh.

⁶⁰ J. A. Wylie, *The Papacy is the Antichrist*, Chapter 12 “The All-deceivableness of Unrighteousness.”

⁶¹ *Ibid.*

But all this wideness of difference turns upon one pivotal point. In the genuine Gospel we have Emmanuel,

Matthew 1

²³ God with us.

1 Timothy 3 [RV]

¹⁶ He who was manifested in the flesh,

Galatians 4 [RV]

⁴ ...born of a woman, born under the law,

⁵ That He might redeem them which were under the law.

And sinful flesh becomes the dwelling place of divinity, the temple of the Holy Ghost. The whole creed is found in the one statement of the eunuch,

Acts 8

³⁷ I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.

This union of the divine with the human in the flesh of Jesus of Nazareth, and therefore in all flesh, is the rock upon which the true church is built,

Matthew 16

¹⁸ ...and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

In the counterfeit gospel, the perversion of the true, we have the self-styled “representative of Christ on the earth,” who...

2 Thessalonians 2

⁴ ...as God sits in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.

While assuming the titles and prerogatives which belong only to the divine Author of our salvation, he yet denies to the Christ whom he pretends to represent that very experience which alone constitutes Him the Saviour of a fallen race, the incarnation in sinful flesh.

Here is the crucial test. Here is where the counterfeit reveals itself. Here is where the divinely-appointed detector will show that not the Spirit of God but the spirit of Satan is working under this mask of a pretended gospel.

1 John 4

² Hereby know you the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh [or confesses Jesus Christ as having come in the flesh, all flesh, and therefore in sinful flesh] is of God:

³ And every spirit that confesses not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof you have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world.

2 John [RV]

⁷ For many deceivers are gone forth into the world, even they that confess not that Jesus Christ comes in the flesh. This is the deceiver and the antichrist.

In its doctrine of the immaculate conception, which is...

...the Catholic belief that the Blessed Virgin was, by a special privilege, preserved Immaculate, that is, free from the stain of original sin, from the first moment of her conception,⁶²

–the papacy denies that Jesus of Nazareth...

...took human nature from a corrupt, source,⁶³

–and asserts that:

God the Son, by assuming this perfect human nature, which He took from the Blessed Virgin, was born in the flesh.⁶⁴

⁶² Henry A. Brann, *The Triumphs and Glories of the Catholic Church*, Chapter XXXIII “The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary,” 1895.

⁶³ *Ibid.*

⁶⁴ *Idem*, Chapter XXXII “The Blessed Virgin Mary justly called Mother of God.”

But this separates the Divine Redeemer so far from the sinful flesh in which we live that the whole human scheme of priests, saints and the Blessed Virgin with good works of many kinds become necessary in order to have communion with the Divine life.

In other words, man is effectually cut off from the only saving power, the only real means of salvation, the Divine life working in sinful flesh to give victory over sin. Such is the terrible, outcome of this counterfeit gospel.

Changing the law of faith into the law of works is simply the introduction of paganism under the form of Christianity. And the natural result of this change, as shown in the last study, has been to substitute by the authority of this counterfeit church the observance of the first day of the week, Sunday, the chief mark of paganism, for the observance of the seventh day of the week, commonly called Saturday, the true Sabbath of the Lord, the sign of His creative power, the sign of the true Gospel that really saves from sin.

Such is the work of the papacy, modern Babylon.

Revelation 18

⁴ Come out of her, my people, that you be not partakers of her sins, and that you receive not of her plagues.

22. The Gospel is the Answer

Present Truth, June 21, 1900
Daniel 7 (continued)

IN PREVIOUS studies we have considered some phases of the work of the papacy in its opposition to the Gospel of the kingdom, in fulfillment of the prophecy in this 7th chapter of *Daniel*.

We have seen the spirit of pride, of self-exaltation, and of arbitrary power, the marked characteristics of Babylon of the Chaldees, again revealed in this modern Babylon.

We have seen how that paganism, which had its rise in Babylon of old when they built the tower of Babel, took the place of Christianity, and the human was substituted for the divine. Thus in this system known as the papacy, this prophecy has undoubtedly had its definite fulfillment.

It is important to note, however, that these same principles are often found showing themselves outside of this organization. In order therefore that we may be saved from the sure results which will attend this departure from the Gospel, we must keep clear, not only of the organization known as the papacy, but also of the principles which make the papacy what it is.

A Living Principle, not a Formal Creed

The purpose of the Gospel of the kingdom is to reveal the principles of the kingdom of heaven in opposition to the principles of the kingdom of this world.

This work is not accomplished in organizations, or by teaching mere forms and creeds. It is a question of the relation of each individual with God, and this is determined by the fruits seen in the life rather than by a mere connection with some outward organization, whether that organization be the papacy or the true church.

Whenever an effort is made either by the individual or by an organization to discard Babylonish principles and to accept the principles of the Gospel, then the god of this world, who is the inspiration of all the ways of Babylon seeks to defeat this effort, or failing in this, to introduce the same old principles under new names, and thus to accomplish the same result in another way. This has been the history of nearly all the movements for the restoration of the pure Gospel.

The Reformation and its Perversion

In the Reformation of the 16th century a protest was made against the perversion of the Gospel in the papal system, and a work of reform was inaugurated which if it had been carried to its full extent, would have restored a pure Gospel and prepared a people to stand in the great day of the Lord.

But this great movement soon ceased to make further progress in bringing the people back to the old paths, because it began to crystallize the teachings of the reformers into a creed, and to look to them for light rather than to follow the principles which they adopted in seeking light direct from the Scriptures for themselves.

But this was simply to put man in the place of God again, the difference now being that it was another man instead of the pope. Whenever any revelation of truth from the Scripture is rejected because it is not in harmony with a creed previously accepted, then the papal principle is adopted, and even that which was formerly light becomes darkness.

A New Reformation Needed

It was just this departure of Protestantism from its original principles which has made necessary another world-wide message to reveal the full light of the truth of the Gospel which will deliver the people not only from the papacy as a system but also from all the principles of the papacy wherever found.

Adopting “the Bible and the Bible alone” as the sufficient rule of faith and practice, and taking for its keynote the fundamental principle of the Reformation, “justification by faith alone,” it has sent forth fresh rays of light and hope in many parts of the earth.

For the last half century it has been calling the attention of the people to the true Sabbath of the Lord, the seventh day of the week, the sign of genuine sanctification through faith which is in Christ Jesus, and urging a complete reform from all the methods and principles of the papacy whether found in the Roman Catholic or the Protestant churches.

The foundation principle of the everlasting Gospel, that God the Creator is alone to be worshiped, the results of following in the ways of Babylon, and the fearful punishment awaiting all those who obey the dictates of the papacy, as set forth in *Revelation* 14:8-11, are to be proclaimed...

Revelation 14

⁶ ...to every nation and kindred, and tongue and people,

–in order that a people may be brought out who shall not be partakers of the sins of Babylon and so shall not receive of her plagues. Every individual is thus called upon to decide whether he will follow papal principles in opposing God and changing the law of faith into the law of works, thus himself becoming a part of the mystery of iniquity; or whether he will accept the Gospel message,

⁷ Fear God and give glory to Him,

–and thus become a part of the mystery of godliness.

Joshua 24

¹⁵ Choose you this day whom you will serve.

1 Kings 18

²¹ If the Lord be God, follow Him: but if Baal, then follow him.

Prophetic Time Period Concerning the Papacy

In the farther consideration of this prophecy we must notice the definite time allotted to this little horn during which by divine permission it was to reveal in its completeness the working of the mystery of iniquity.

Daniel 7 [RV]

²⁵ He shall speak words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High: and he shall think to change the times and the law; and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and half a time.

We have already seen in the study of the experience of Nebuchadnezzar related in the 4th chapter of *Daniel* that a “time” is a year. The basis for this interpretation is seen in *Daniel* 11:13 and margin. A time and times (two times) and a half would therefore be 3½ years, or 42 months. Following the Bible mode of reckoning 30 days to the month,⁶⁵ this period would be 1260 days.

But in symbolic prophecy a day represents a year, as will be seen by reading *Numbers* 14:34 and *Ezekiel* 4:4-6. The time covered by this expression “a time and times and half a time” would therefore be 1260 years. The beginning of this period is determined by the facts stated in the 24th verse. Ten kings were to arise...

²⁴ ...and another shall arise after them...and he shall subdue three kings.

The time and the manner of the appearance of the little horn are here given. What was here foreseen was wrought into history when the Heruli, the Vandals, and the Ostrogoths were...

⁸ ...plucked up by the roots,

⁶⁵ See *Genesis* 7:11 and 8:3-4.

–in order to the complete establishment of the papacy. The last of these kingdoms was overthrown in 538 AD, and this would therefore be the time from which to reckon the time mentioned in the prophecy, and the 1260 years would extend to 1798 AD.

In that very year the French general, Berthier, entered Rome with his troops, took as his prisoner Pope Pius VI, and carried him away into foreign territory where he afterward died in exile. And thus was the prophecy,

Daniel 7 [RV]

²⁵ They shall be given into his hand until a time, times, and half a time,

–exactly fulfilled. In the prophecies in the book of *Revelation* this same period is again mentioned. In the 12th chapter where the persecution of the church is described, it is stated that she is nourished in the wilderness...

Revelation 12

¹⁴ ...for a time, and times, and half a time.

And in the same chapter the stay in the wilderness is declared to be...

⁶ ...a thousand two hundred and threescore days.

In the 13th chapter this same blasphemous power is again described, and it is said that:

Revelation 13

⁵ ...power was given unto him to continue forty and two months,

–which would be 1260 days, or years. These four instances in which this same period is mentioned serve to explain each other, and to make it clear beyond doubt that the same experience is under consideration in each case.

It is evident that the 1260 years do not extend to the time of the complete destruction of the papacy, as the very next verse speaks of the sitting of the Judgment, and declares that:

Daniel 7

²⁶ ...they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end.

The exact duration of the time during which saints, times, and the law were given into his hand is stated, but the final overthrow will be at the second coming of Christ after the revealing of...

2 Thessalonians 2

⁸ ...that Wicked...whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of His month, and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming.

The Final Result of the Great Controversy

The final result of this long controversy between the two kingdoms is the same as already brought out in the previous chapters of the book of *Daniel*. It will then be seen that the...

Daniel 7

¹⁸ ...saints of the Most High,

—the very ones who were worn out by the persecutions of the papacy, are rewarded with the gift of the kingdom, even the everlasting kingdom which shall stand for ever, and all rulers shall serve and obey the Most High.

This is the triumph of the Gospel. After centuries of apostasy during which every means which Satanic wisdom could devise was employed to crush out the truth and to substitute a lie in its place, the power of a genuine Gospel, the power of the kingdom of God within, wins an eternal victory over every other king or kingdom.

Well may those who have a part in the closing scenes of this great controversy and in...

Revelation 15

² ...the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name,

–join in that triumphant chorus,

³ Great and marvelous are your works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are your ways, You King of the ages.

Revelation 19

⁶ Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigns.

How wonderful the promise,

Revelation 3

²¹ To him that overcomes will I grant to sit with me in my throne.

2 Corinthians 2

¹⁴ Now thanks be unto God, which always causes us to triumph in Christ.

What a wonderful Gospel is the Gospel of the kingdom!





Christ returning to Earth, to reap the Harvest of the Righteous
(Battle Hymn of the Kingdom 1898)

23. Afterword

Present Truth, June 21, 1900

By E. J. Waggoner

WITH this issue of *Present Truth* the studies in the book of *Daniel*, entitled "The Gospel of the Kingdom," by W. W. Prescott, will end for a season.

Lack of time at present to give the subject all the attention that it deserves is the cause of the cessation of the studies, which we trust will be only temporary.

The stoppage does not involve any abrupt change, since the subject is complete with the close of the 7th chapter. The last five chapters form the second division of the book of *Daniel*, and can be taken up by themselves at a later time without any embarrassment either to reader or writer.

Meanwhile those who have read the articles in the preceding chapters, and have preserved their papers, will do well to read them again; and those who have not saved the papers or who have never had them, will do well to secure them, for the article will well repay study, and will wonderfully assist anybody in the study of the book of *Daniel*.

We know of nothing else published, which touches and makes clear the keynote of that book as these articles do.



(Icones Prophetarum Veteris Testamenti)

