

NOTES on DANIEL

"Diamonds from Daniel" is the title one Bible teacher gave to his commentary on the book of Daniel; and certainly that title is fitting and proper, for the book shines with spiritual, literary, and prophetic diamonds. Although it contains only twelve chapters, Daniel is classified with the major prophets; and although an O.T. book, it is almost indispensable to the study of N.T. prophecy. Filled with inspiring types and symbols, and amazingly accurate and detailed prophecies, it is an unlimited source of blessing and knowledge to the earnest, prayerful student.

Written during the Babylonian exile, it brought a message of hopeful strength to the discouraged Jews; for here was God revealing Himself to them despite their change in home and fortune. But the book is distinctive in that it is the only O.T. prophet which is concerned primarily with the "times of the Gentiles." And that, of course, is our main interest in this study.

CH: 1: Background and Personal History

- vs. 1: Neb. took his first captives in the third year of Jehoiakim, 606 B.C. in secular history. This was the beginning of the 70 year captivity. At this time Neb's father, Nabopolassar, was still king.
- vs. 2: "And the Lord gave...." Here God brings judgment upon his disobedient people through the ungodly.
- vs. 3: Four children of Israel were apparently of royal lineage.
- vs. 4: Stevens estimates Daniel's age at 19 because of the knowledge he possessed; other commentators suggest 12 - 14 because of the "children!" Daniel is gaining Chaldean lore as Moses received Egyptian learning.
- vss. 5-7 The four Israelites receive new names and a three years' scholarship, with provisions from the king's table. Daniel ("God is my judge") somehow kept his Hebrew name, even though it was officially changed.
- vs. 8: Daniel decided unhesitatingly to go through with God, thus proving worthy of his high calling. The undefiled life is most pleasing to God. "requested"--tact and testimony go well together.
- vs. 9: Cf. Acts 2:47; Luke 2:52; Romans 14:18.
- vss. 10-13 Prove God! Example of working faith.
"pulse" -- Vegetarian's diet.
- vss. 14-16 Something was behind this glorious victory of faith. Moody suggests: "This was the secret of young Daniel's success: He took his stand with God right on his entering the gate of Babylon, and cried to God to keep him steadfast."
- vs. 17: The reward of faithfulness. God is pleased to give His children wisdom. (James 1:5).
- vss. 18, 19: Examination Day comes, and the faithful four are put at the head of the class. Can a Christian be a success?
- vs. 20: Heavenly bestowal of wisdom, because they had long before learned the beginning of wisdom"--Prov. 9:10.

vs. 21: Daniel not only came in with the first of the captives, but he lived to see the day of Israel's release. Nearly all the 70 years he was in a position of responsibility, and he probably had a hand in Israel's subsequent freedom.

CH. 2: Nebuchadnezzar's Image

- vs. 1: Three years have passed since the opening of the book. Virtual ruler of the then-known world, Neb, was probably concerned about the future of his kingdom when God sent the dream (vs. 30). It is significant that the revelation came to Neb, first ruler of the Gentile dynasty, rather than to a Jewish prophet.
- vss. 2-12: God had allowed Neb to forget the dream so that it would be proved that both dream and interpretation were from Him. The request was far beyond the limited power of the professional soothsayers.
- From verse 4 of this chapter to Dan. 7:28, the writing is in Aramaic (Chaldaic) rather than Hebrew. "It is noteworthy that the Aramaic section is precisely that part of Daniel which most concerned the peoples amongst whom he lived, and to whom a prophecy written in Hebrew would have been unintelligible. The language returns to Hebrew in the predictive portions which have to do with the future of Israel (Scofield) *Significance Times of the Gentiles*
- vs. 13: A seeming tragedy foreshadows a glorious victory!
- vs. 14: A place where only the wisdom of the Holy Spirit could be effectual.
- vss. 15, 16: Again Daniel demonstrates his adventurous faith in God. There was a reason why God chose Daniel!
- vss. 17, 18: A united plea to God for mercy. Matt. 18:19.
- vss. 19, 20: Reciprocal religion: Daniel prays, God answers, Daniel thanks. "Changeth times and seasons; removeth kings and setteth up kings."--an introductory hint that the dream is concerned with changes in world political and military affairs.
- vss. 22, 23: He gladly gives all glory to God; but in referring to man's part in the matter he uses "we" and "us" several times in paying tribute to the three who prayed with him. Pleasing, unaffected humility.
- vs. 24: Willing, again, to be put to the test. Cf. 1:12.
- vss. 25, 26: Arioch and Neb, in true worldly fashion, could see only the man (1 Cor. 2:14). Evidently Arioch had much confidence in Daniel.
- vs. 27: Daniel, master of words, builds for a climax.
- vs. 28: "But...GOD"--in contrast with astrologers, magicians, etc. Again, man's extremity is God's opportunity. "latter days"--hinting already what is the most important portion of the vision (see vs. 45). Notice Daniel's certainty of tone. The confidence of faith.
- vss. 29, 30: Daniel continues to refuse any credit. "thoughts of thy heart"--The dream came as God's answer to Neb's secret heart questionings.
- vs. 31: This was a vision of Gentile dominion, viewed from the Gentile standpoint. Thus the words: "great" "brightness" "excellent" "terrible" (or "formidable").

- vss.32,33: The kingdoms begin in magnificent glory, and successively deteriorate in beauty, quality, unity, and power. The image's weak foundation of part iron, part clay seems typical of all man's works apart from God: -- imposing in outward appearance, but dependent upon a crumbling foundation. Matt.7:24-27.
- vs.34: The empire image, in all its pompous glory, is suddenly and completely crushed by a mere stone, insignificant in man's sight. This stone, which grows into an obliterating mountain, is of supernatural origin -- "cut out without hands."
- vs.35: When the feet are struck by the stone, the entire image crumbles to powder, for the manifested kingdom of God cannot exist contemporaneously with the kingdom of unregenerate man. It is an immediate destruction (2 Thess.2:8).
- vs.36: This verse makes plain that the preceding verses describing the dream were symbolical, while the interpretation following is literal.
- vss.37,38: The kingdom, of Neb was unique in that it was ordained of God. His kingdom, like the other four, did not actually possess the whole inhabited earth, but it was in their power to do so -- they were potentially able. Since Neb was the only great Babylonian ruler in their short term of power, he is spoken of personally ("thou") as the head.
- vs. 39: Because their prophetic importance is smaller, Media- Persia and Greece are considered together in this verse. That these are the nations referred to is made plain by Dan. 7: 5,6. These kingdoms are successively inferior.
- vs.40: The fourth empire, the Roman, was to be outstanding for its bruising, breaking strength. Alexander's Grecian empire split into four divisions at his death, but none of these divisions was great enough to be interpreted as the legs of iron.
- vs.41-43: Another division is now mentioned, feet composed of an iron and clay mixture; but this is not referred to as a fifth empire. Quite evidently it is a separate group, but Scripture shows it to be an outgrowth or revived form of the Roman legs of iron (Rev.13:3). This kingdom is even more divided: ten divisions instead of two. In other words, here we have a ten kingdom confederacy in two geographical groups, bound probable by political and military alliances. One well-known Pentecostal prophetic student makes an interesting comment in this connection: "We have it very vividly demonstrated to us in this vision just how near we now are to the coming of the Stone kingdom. Constitutional monarchies are already 100 years old in the earth. Republics and democracies intersperse monarchies of various types and the stage is set for a combination of these dissimilar political elements into a ten-kingdomed confederacy. They need not adhere more closely together in essence than they do now for they cleave not one to another! The League of Nations now functions as a tangible evidence that even now men contemplate an international confederacy. Singularly enough, there are ten nations that occupy seats on the Supreme Council of this League."

A VIEW OF NEB'S IMAGE

<u>Part of Image</u>	<u>Kingdom represented</u>	<u>Material</u>	<u>Atomic Weight</u>
1. Head	Babylon	Gold	197.2
2. Breast, arms	Media-Persia	Silver	107.2
3. Belly, thighs	Greece	Brass	64.17
4. Legs	Rome	Iron	55.84
5. Feet	Rome-revived	Iron and Clay	28.06
*	*	*	*

1. Babylon was a pure autocracy, and was the strongest of all the kingdoms, as symbolized by the purity and quality of gold.

2. Babylon was followed by Media-Persia (5:30,31), a dual kingdom represented by the arms and chest of silver. This gov't was inferior, since the power of the central gov't. was divided between nobles and king.

3. The learning and culture of the succeeding Grecian empire "shone" like brass; at the same time, like brass, it was a more inferior government -- weaker in central power. The time of Greece's greatest glory was under Alexander the Great.

4. The mighty Roman empire, hardiest of all, is fittingly pictured by the legs of iron. Iron, though, is yet more inferior, and the authority of this government was weaker, for the ruling power was actually the Senate. Each government finds itself more away from the complete autocracy of Babylon. This government is weak, too, because of its division into the Eastern and Western states, as symbolized by the two legs.

5. The feet, which represent a continuation or revival of the fourth kingdom, rather than a separate fifth kingdom, are of part iron and part potter's clay. This gives us an impressive picture of a democratic monarchy -- a form of government combining two diametrically opposed theories. As such it is doomed, for not only is it base in quality, but it lacks even the strength and hardness of the preceding kingdom. "The kingdom shall be partly strong and partly broken ("brittle") Ps.2:9. The Divine Stone shall crush this pitiful combination into the finest dust; and the preceding kingdoms, which had appeared so gloriously self-sufficient, simultaneously suffer the same fate as the feet.

vs.44:

a.) That this ten-kingdom confederacy is yet future is made plain by this verse, for these ten kings are to be ruling at the time the Kingdom of Heaven comes in power. This proves, too, that these kingdoms are under separate rulers, and are held together by some sort of treaty.

b.) The Stone "cut out without hands" is a kingdom, too, but it is a divine kingdom, set up and ordered by God -- the kingdom of Heaven! (Matt.3:2) And the stone (like the head of gold) represents not only the kingdom, but more important yet, the head of the kingdom, our Lord Jesus Christ! (In this connection consider carefully: Ps.118:22; Ps.2; Isa.28:16; Luke 20:17,18; Eph.2:20; I Peter 2:6-8).

c.) Note how violently this kingdom contrasts with the image-kingdoms of unregenerate man: The Gentile kingdom each fell in due time; this kingdom "shall never be destroyed." Babylon's glory passed to Media-Persia, theirs to Greece, and Greece's to Rome; this kingdom "shall not be left to other people." Man's kingdoms each destroyed and consumed until they were themselves destroyed and consumed; God's kingdom shall never meet defeat, but "it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms". The longest reign of any of these earthly kingdoms is only several hundred years; but the Kingdom of Heaven "shall stand forever". Hallelujah!!

vs.45:

The message of this vision was certainly timely, for here just as the times of the Gentiles are being inaugurated under Neb, God warns the Gentile world (and comforts the Jew) with the assurance that some day God's Stone will be all-victorious.

"Forasmuch" -- the fact of the Stone's ultimate triumph was proof that the dream and interpretation were of God.

In vs.28 of this chapter there was a strong intimation as to what would be the important part of the vision -- the "latter days." We can realize now the truth of that, for of the nine verses giving the interpretation of the dream, five are concerned with the revived Roman empire and the last days.

crises of all
Prophecy

vs.46:

The ringing tone of certainty that the Spirit of Truth had given to Daniel was completely convincing to Neb. Although he seems in this verse to be worshipping Daniel, the following verse makes clear that his praise has been directed to Daniel's God.

vs.47:

W.C. Stevens suggests that Neb. made a trinitarian confession in this verse. At any rate, Neb, who had been called "king of kings" in vs.37 here recognizes God as "LORD of kings!"

vs.48

A striking repetition of Joseph's case.

vs.49:

Daniel, the faithful friend, reminds Neb. of the three who fought the prayer battle with him.

"in the gate" -- there are two ways for Christians to obtain favour with man -- how different they are in every respect! Compare Lot -- Genesis 19:1.

CH. 3: The Fiery Furnace

Intro.: It is estimated that about 19 or 20 years have passed since the incident recorded in Ch. 2. In this time, Neb. has completed more foreign conquests, so that his own spirit had been captured and overcome by pride. Like Lucifer before him, he seems to have become convinced that he is greater than God, and all remembrance of his former confessions and praise of God apparently have disappeared. Thus, in Ch. 3 God proved to Neb. again that there is a power greater than any to which man can attain -- God is still on His throne!

vs.1: The dimensions of the image seem immediately to carry a typical truth -- 60 x 6 -- six is always symbolical of man in his utmost effort. The inspiration for this image probably came from his dream of 20 years before (ch.2) -- again man misuses a gift of God for personal glory. Neb. apparently was attempting to unify his great empire through self-deification: a remarkable foreshadow of the Beast (Rev.13:11-15).

vss.2,3 Neb. wisely brings both great and petty rulers for the unveiling, for the psychological effect on the masses.

vss.4-7 It appears that this edict would be irksome only to the Jews, who were loyal to their second commandment. Other nations could worship as many gods as they pleased. Bow or burn! Reminds us again of the final image of the Beast, Rev. 13.

vss.8-11: The conduct of these Chaldeans is quite different from Daniel's earlier treatment of them (2:24).

vs.12: Pearlman notices the three-fold appeal here:
 "certain Jews" -- racial prejudice
 "serve not thy gods" -- religious intolerance
 "have not regarded thee" -- personal pride

vs.13: Reason flees when anger enters.
By being put on trial instead of immediate execution, not only were the Israelites preserved, but their testimony was given to the glory of God.

v.14: Neb. can hardly believe that their action is pre-meditated.

vs.15: The Anti-christ will probably offer a similar opportunity to recant.

Demonstration of man's inconsistency. After the proofs of God's power in the past, now Neb. foolishly challenges, "Who is that God...?" Cf. 2 Kings 18:35; Exodus 5:2.

v.16: Again, an unhesitating stand for right. There are times when it is not wise to weigh both sides of a matter -- remember Adam's wife!

vs.17: A type of God's faithful remnant in all ages.

vs.18: Reckless, impudent faith! *The three children were going thro with God without considering the prerogatives*
 The perfect complement of vs. 17. They were certain of duty, if not of deliverance.

"But if Not"

- vs. 19: "But if not..." -- an unswerving resolve to be faithful, regardless of the outcome (Job 13 :15). Blessed is the man who does what is right without promise of reward!
The "time of Jacob's trouble" is here foreshadowed by the seven-fold heat of the furnace.
- vs. 20-23: "fire slew those men..." -- of. Ps. 7:16; Rev. 11:5.
- vs. 24,25: A glorious demonstration of the truth that God is with His people always. In the midst of the hottest fire they walked "as in a green pasture and beside still waters" (Moody), for Christ was with them! (1 Peter 4:12,13)
"Son of God" -- Neb unconsciously uttered a divine truth, for it would seem that he meant "angel" (vs. 28). Cf. John 11:49 - 52.
- vs. 26: Neb, who before challenged "Who is that God--?" (vs. 15), now humbly declares Him to be "The Most High God!"
- vs. 27: "upon whose bodies the fire had no power..." Isa, 43:2. The fire could only burn the bands! This was a greater testimony to God's power than if He had miraculously spared the three from ever entering the furnace.
- vs. 28: Vacillating Nebuchadnezzar makes another verbose confession of faith. Still it is glorifying to God. Here is practical proof of Proverbs 16:7.
- vs. 29: God, as always, brings glorious victory out of apparent defeat. Not only were the three delivered, but their experience brought religious liberty to the Jews and complete exaltation of God.
- vs. 30: And now the added temporal blessing of promotion. Remember Matthew 6:33.

CH. 4: The Humbling of a King

- Intro. Experience may be the best teacher, but it takes several lessons for even Experience to convince most of us; particularly when the lesson is Humility. So it was with Nebuchadnezzar. Despite the outstanding proofs of God's omnipotence recorded in the first three chapters, Neb. had to be brought to a spiritual crisis before he learned conclusively the great lesson of humility.
- vs. 1: This chapter is not only written in Chaldaic, but it is the king's personal decree to his entire kingdom. Here is one of the most amazing national documents of world history: a world ruler's personal testimony of God's dealings with his life. How this utterance of the first world ruler contrasts with the bold statement of the last, the Anti-christ! (2 Thess. 2:4).
- vs. 2: Not "through me" but "toward me." Neb was an object lesson of God's humbling, chastening power.
- vs. 3: Heartfelt praise makes any vocabulary search for words.
- vs. 4,5: In the midst of luxurious rest God sent the awful message that all was not well.
- vs. 6,7: Again all worldly wisdom fails, for the dream is from God.
- vs. 8: Despite all Neb's confessions to Jehovah, he still believes in a plurality of Gods.

- vs. 9: Daniel may have been a last resort (vs. 8), but he was a sure one. This is the worldly man's typical attitude toward God and Christians.
- vss. 10-12: The tree's description pictures well Neb's rise to prominence and world power. Vs. 12 shows him as a beloved, beneficent ruler.
- vss. 13-14: God's watcher-angel calls for judgment upon the prosperous tree. God sees farther than the outward appearance.
- vss. 15-16: The stump remaining showed that the kingdom would be held secure for him during his period of mental and physical abasement.
"Seven times" would seem to hint of seven years; but the certain significance is that it is a period of completeness: the time required for the perfect work.
- vss. 17-18: A council of heavenly beings demands that Neb suffer his due punishment so that all the world may know that it is God who rules the world, and even the individual nations.
- vs. 19: In his love for the king, Daniel is reluctant to bring the interpretation; but in his greater love for pleasing God, he willingly brings His message. The message of judgment should always be tempered by a spirit of sincere love.
- vss. 20-26: The purpose of the whole affair is forcibly brought out by Daniel in vs. 25: "till thou know that the most High ruleth..." The moment Neb comes to this realization, the judgment will cease, for God's judgments are only for man's own welfare.
- vs. 27: In inexplicable divine mercy, God offers Neb another chance. A permanent changing of his ways would probably have averted the tragedy.
- vss. 28-30: It seems there was a one year period of partial repentance before Neb gave completely away to his pride. There was good reason to exult, "Is not this great Babylon..." for it had been everywhere titled, "The Golden City." It was 14 miles square, and the huge walls surrounding it were pierced by 100 bronze gateways. But he was taking undue honor when he claimed, "That I have built," for a major part of the construction had been done by preceding kings, particularly his father Nabopolassar.
- vss. 31-33: The judgment of God came upon Neb not because of this immediate act of pride (vs. 30) but because of the many years of haughtiness that had gone before.
- vs. 34: "at the end of the days..." -- the lesson has been learned, the time is completed.
With the return of true understanding came the realization of God's wondrousness and an overwhelming desire to praise Him. When a man is saved, true understanding returns -- the understanding that was lost in the Edenic fall.
- vss. 35-36: Nebuchadnezzar could sing with Psalmist David in these verses -- the song of men who have been taught of God.
- vs. 37 What a contrast to vs. 30!
Here is an example of sincere humility: "those that walk in pride he is able to abase!"

CH. 5: Belshazzar's Feast

Intro.: We pass now from the glory of Nebuchadnezzar's confession to the shame of Belshazzar's drunken sacrilege. Approximately 30 years have gone by, and a long succession of kings have taken their turn on the throne: Evil-Merodach, Neriglissar, Labashi Marduk, and Nabonidus. Nabonidus' wife was Nebuchadnezzar's daughter, which made Belshazzar a grandson of the great king. Belshazzar came on the throne as co-regent with his father, Nabonidus, in about 540 B. C., and was in the second or third year of his power at the time of the events recorded in Daniel 5.

vss.1-4 The occasion was a national feast day to honor the god Bel. It was no time for revelry, for around the city were encamped the Media-Persian armies; but the Babylonians considered their city impregnable and laughed at the possibility of invasion. No wonder, for according to Herodotus the city was surrounded by walls 311 feet high and 87 feet thick. Under no circumstances, however, was there excuse for abusing the sacred vessels from the temple at Jerusalem.

vs.5: "In the same hour..." There are times when God's judgment tarries not.

vss.6-9: Even without knowing the interpretation, Belshazzar was struck with uncontrollable fear, for his own conscience was smitten by the conviction of the Spirit. In the manner typical of the worldly man, he calls for natural help, even though he recognizes that this is a Divine message.

vss.10-12: Again Daniel is the man of the hour. It is in the time of the sinner's deepest need that he realizes the Christian's hidden strength.

vss.13-16 In desperation the king humbly turns to Daniel, just as the world turns to Days of Prayer, etc., when war, depression, or national calamities come.

vss.17-23: These verses (climaxing in vs.22) make plain that God expects us to profit from the experiences of others. Belshazzar's prideful sin was without excuse, for he knew of Nebuchadnezzar's lesson in humility (ch.4), yet he was acting in direct opposition to that light.

vss.24-28: The mysterious words mean literally "Numbered, weighed, dividers." All Belshazzar's earthly wealth and glory could not influence God's balances -- in weightier matters he had been found wanting.

There was probably a prophetic reason for Belshazzar's removal, for it is not likely that he would have allowed the Jews to return to their homeland; and that event was only two years away in God's prophetic program. Cyrus came in time to release the Israelites in the 70th year, exactly as had been foretold many years before.

vs. 29: Despite Daniel's previous refusal (vs.17), Belshazzar insisted on rewarding him. In this we can see Divine providence, for thus Daniel was brought into a place of

- prominence where he would be able soon under the new government to aid in the release of the Jews.
- vs. 30: An impressive picture of quick, terrible judgment.
- vs. 31: Thus the first link in the prophecy of Daniel 2 is fulfilled, and the Medo-Persian dynasty begins.

CH. 6: The Lion's Den

- Intro. Through the fall of the Babylonian Empire and the advent of the Medo-Persian, Daniel somehow continued on in a position of power. Now in his late eighties, Daniel's testimony and life still ring true; and in this familiar story of the lion's den we see the last and most impressive picture of his godly character.
- vss.1-3: This event probably occurred in 538-537 B.C., since Darius' reign lasted only two years. Even though an old man, Daniel is now in a higher position than ever, for still "an excellent spirit" is in him.
- vss. 4,5: What a testimony to Christian character! Daniel's spirit was so Christ-like that his enemies could only say, in effect, "Daniel's only fault is that he is faultless."
- vss. 6-9: Here is an immediate example of the weakness of the Medo-Persian government: The subordinate officers could make their own statute and press the king for his official approval. In the Babylonian empire the king could be influenced or pressed by no one. Despite all his fine qualities, Darius had the one fault common to man; and when his under-officers made this complimentary appeal to his pride, he yielded without thought of the consequences.
- vs. 10: With the same steadfastness of purpose that had held him true nearly seventy years before, Daniel continued faithful to God. It was not arrogant presumption that prompted his actions, but he was simply proceeding "as he did aforesaid." If it were right for him to pray thrice daily last month, it is just as right this month.
- vss.11-15: The enemies knew that it would not be long until they could ensnare Daniel in a decree like this one: and they wasted no time in carrying the news of Daniel's disobedience to Darius. "sore displeased with himself..." --Darius realized the fault was his own, and accepted the blame. It is difficult to undo the results of our sins (vs.14), and the world is always quick to remind us of our rash statements (vs.15).
- vss.16,17: Here Darius expressed an unusual confidence in God, since he felt that he was responsible for Daniel's plight.
- vss.18-20: Here is a strange combination of apprehension and faith, if there can be such a combination. "living God..." -- strange words for a heathen king. Only a living God could preserve life.
- vss.21-23: If Satan be a "roaring lion", our God can "shut the lions' mouths." Daniel was innocent before God and man, so God's

protection was over him.

"because he believed in his God..." Hebrews 11:33.

*vs. 24: Any attempt to exterminate the Jew always boomerangs.
Cf. Esther 7:10; 8:7.

vss. 25-28: Another great national edict. This event undoubtedly paved the way for the release of the Jews just a short time later.

Kings and kingdoms come and go while Daniel, God's man continues steadfastly on!

CH. 7: Vision of the Four Beasts

Intro.

Even though interspersed with rich prophetic truths, the first six chapters of Daniel are mainly historical. But at the seventh chapter we enter into the prophetic half of the book -- a series of visions received by Daniel personally over a long period of time. Yet even in these chapters we are impressed with an outstanding quality in Daniel's nature: his continual hunger for Divine truth. Perhaps this was a reason why God revealed so many hidden mysteries to Daniel.

This seventh chapter is unique in its dual character and purpose. It was written originally in Chaldaic (Aramaic) which leads us to believe that the message was directed to the Gentiles. Yet the vision was received by the Jewish leader, Daniel, which would give it strong Jewish significance. This is brought out emphatically when a comparison is made with Ch. 2. Both chapters record the same message about the same world empires; but in Ch. 2 they are pictured as parts of a brilliant man image, while in Ch. 7 they are seen as four repulsive beasts. Ch. 2 would seem to be the view of unregenerate man; Ch. 7, the view of God through redeemed man.

Daniel gives the time of the vision as the first year of Belshazzar, which was probably about 541 or 540 B.C. Thus, as far as the order of the book is concerned, the vision occurred between the fourth and fifth chapters. It is interesting to remember that at this time Daniel was not so burdened with the affairs of state (5:11-13), which meant that he had more time to wait upon God.

Because of the intermingling of visions and interpretation in this chapter, we will probably get a more comprehensive view through topical study, rather than our usual verse-by-verse method. Since this vision is merely a different view and an enlargement of the image vision in Ch. 2, we shall use the same terminology, etc., so the connection may be plain and the prophetic plan more simple.

vss. 1, 15, 16: At this opportune time during the first year of Belshazzar, when his mind was not hindered with political matters, Daniel received a special revelation from God through a dream and visions. He recorded the dream, but then became deeply concerned and troubled over the interpretation. It was in answer to this earnest plea that further light was given him, as described in vss. 17 - 28.

vss. 2, 3, 17: The "four winds of heaven", would seem to symbolize the combined forces of wicked powers working in the heavenlies under the leadership of the Prince of the Powers of the Air.

The striving of these spiritual forces upon "the great sea" of humanity (Ps. 65:7; Isa. 17:12, 13:47; Rev. 17:15) brings forth four great beasts. Tregelles and some other authors consider "the great sea" to refer to the Mediterranean; but the words "out of the earth" in vs. 17 make it plain that the sea of humanity is referred to, as in the aforementioned Scriptures. However, since all four of these Empires border on the Mediterranean, it is permissible to give a dual interpretation to the phrase.

Notice again the difference in views: Neb's vision in ch. 2 showed the kingdoms as an illustrious, impressive image; here they are seen in their true light, as ferocious beasts. The initial characteristics of the bestial nature are self-preservation, survival of the fittest, and inability to recognize or know God. Certainly that is the spirit of every world empire under unregenerate man.

The successive deterioration of the kingdoms is shown here by the descent in power and nobility in the rank of the animal kingdom. The kingdoms begin with a lion-eagle creature and devolve finally to a horrible, nondescript beast. They are described from the beginning as being "diverse one from another."

The description in vs. 8 of their rise to power would make them appear as contemporary kingdoms; but in vs. 23 the words, "The fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom upon earth" show that the kingdoms will be successive, as described in ch. 2.

Babylonian Empire

vs. 4: "like a lion, and had eagle's wings:---The absolute monarchy of Babylon is symbolized by a combination of the king of the beasts and the king of the birds. Here is proof again that Babylon was the highest form of Gentile empire - government. The lion shows well the ravenous dominion of the empire; the eagle's wings show us their swiftness of conquest and wideness of power.

"wings...were plucked"--Nebuchadnezzar's abasement.

"lifted up from the earth, and made stand upon the feet as a man, and a man's heart was given to it."---His restoration and glorious conversion, which lifted him from the realm of beasts into communion with God. Here, as in Ch. 2, Neb. is spoken of synonymously as the Babylonian Empire, since it fell so shortly after his death.

Medo-Persian Empire

- vs. 5: "Like to a bear..." --second of the beasts of the field; ponderous and awkward. The Medo-Persian Army was known for its wholesale troop movements, and its stumbling, brute-force conquests.
- "raised up itself on one side"--The original Hebrew *Caldaic* gives this: "raised up one dominion," for the Medes and Persians, ancient and modern peoples respectively, formed one united people.
- "three ribs in the mouth"--Scofield suggests that this would mean their three-fold dominion, Media, Persia, and Babylon. But since the ribs are not actual parts of the bear's body, it would seem that this would represent the Triple Alliance of Babylon, Egypt, and Lydia, which was devoured by Media-Persia.
- "devour much flesh"---their ruthless, bloody conquests of many nations.

Grecian Empire

- vs. 6: "like a leopard..."--The swift-moving, rapacious leopard pictures well the career of Alexander and his short-lived but beautiful Grecian Empire.
- "four wings of a fowl..." --The Babylonian Empire was two-winged; this empire, which has been described as "not fighting, but conquering" had four wings, to show its unexcelled speed of troop movements and conquests.
- "the beast had also four heads..."--A clear preview of the four divisions of the Empire after Alexander's death. These divisions were given to his four generals, Cassander, Lysinachus, Ptolemy, and Seleucus.
- "dominion was given to it..."--In his Antiquities, Josephus tells that Alexander felt that God had assured him success in his Asiatic conquests. R. M. Riggs makes the following comment in connection with this phrase: "It is important here to note that the Grecian empire was considered by God to remain intact as such even though its territorial extent and governmental power were broken into four major divisions and, as secular history tells us, into many more small independent states. The last clause in the description of this empire, namely, that 'dominion was given to it', emphasizes the thought that, to the last, 'it' is still the third or Grecian empire and still, in God's sight, has dominion."

Roman Empire

- vss. 7, 19, 23: That the feet of iron and clay in the image vision represented only a continuation or revived form of the fourth empire, rather than a fifth government, is verified by this vision of Daniel's. Here the Revived Empire is not mentioned separately at all, and in his prophetic perspective Daniel mentions no interval between the fourth kingdom and its revived form. We know that it is a later empire because of the careful wording of the prophecy, as inspired of the Holy Spirit; and although they are not mentioned as an empire, the ten horns receive more attention and left a greater impression on Daniel than any of the four mentioned kingdoms.

"dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly"--the crushing strength of this Roman Empire of the Caesars is prominent again in this vision. Even their "iron" trait is re-mentioned, for this beast "had great iron teeth."

The devouring, breaking, annihilating strength of this empire is mentioned in all the verses referring to it. This contrasts vividly with the ten horn kingdom which grows out of it, for the warring conquests of the Revived Kingdom are passed over very briefly. In fact, there is no direct reference made to any military might or victory in the Ten Horn Kingdom.

Revivèd Roman Empire

- vs. 7: "and it had ten horns."--With no interval or explanation the prophet proceeds from his description of the Roman Empire to a description of the last Gentile dynasty--the ten-kingdom confederacy. These ten horns are synonymous, of course, with the ten toes of the image in ch. 2.
- vs.8: Here it is made plain that out of the ten-kingdom confederacy of the last days shall arise the final Anti-christ, the "little horn." Since this "little horn" arises after the ten horns are already in existence, apparently the Anti-Christ will make his appearance after the ten-kingdom coalition has been formed.

Since a head and a horn are both symbolical of governmental power, we see here a clearer conception of the ten-kingdom confederacy. It will be ten individual governments (horns), held together by one central, greater government (head).

- vss.20-22: The activities of the deca-federation under the Anti-christ absorb the interest of these verses. After an upheaval in their own ranks in which three of the original ten horns fall before the little horn, the confederacy seems to follow the little horn in a persecution of the saints. Since this is an Old Testament writer, "saints" refers here to the Jew.
- vss.24-26: Not only will he persecute God's people, the Jew; but in his blasphemous pride he will speak against God Himself, and he will think to change God's laws and ceremonies for the Israelites. This effrontery against God and His people will continue, as allowed by God, for a "time and times and the dividing of time," or three and one-half years. Then "the judgment shall sit," and the Anti-christ will be destroyed "with the brightness of His coming."

The Kingdom of Heaven

The kingdom which Nebuchadnezzar saw as a rugged stone, and which we know as the Kingdom of Heaven, is here fittingly termed the kingdom of the Son of Man. Again, what a contrast between man's view and God's view!

As in ch. 2, five of the nine interpretation verses were spent in describing the ten-kingdom confederacy and the crushing stone, here again emphasis is laid on these events of the latter days. In this chapter we notice that more than half the chapter is concerning these two final developments. By this emphasis we can appreciate more the importance of the latter days in God's prophetic program.

- vs.9: "thrones were cast down" -- as was shown in ch.2, God's kingdom cannot reign contemporaneously with the kingdom of unregenerate man. With the appearance of God's kingdom comes the disappearance of man's kingdom. "Ancient of days" -- some translators render this "the Removed from Time." The eternal God will head an eternal kingdom.
- vss.10,11: This description of the heavenly scene and of the praise given there to the Son of God is much like similar passages in Revelation.
- vs.12: The destruction of the non-descript beast is to be direct and immediate, while the other kingdoms have continued ("their lives were prolonged") even though "their dominion" has been "taken away."
- vss.13,14: Most commentators consider these verses to be parallel to Rev.5:6-10. Here, again, the eternity, immutability, and indestructibility of the Kingdom of Heaven are brought to our attention. "Son of man" -- Scripture associates this title always with His coming again, since in His return He will claim the title to man's lost inheritance which He has repurchased by becoming a Son of man.
- vs.18: According to parallel New Testament passages we find that church saints are referred to here as well as the Jew. (2 Tim.2:10-12 ; 1 Peter 2:9; Rev.3:21)
We are reminded here of the prophecy in Jude 14,15.
- vs.22: The rule of the saints under God (Rev.22:12).
- vss.26,27: The destruction of the Anti-christ and the forces of evil, and the final, conclusive victory of the kingdom of heaven are prophesied here. This kingdom which shall come will be "an everlasting kingdom!"
- vs.28: The weighing of this vision upon Daniel's mind and his continued search for truth probably prepared the way for the further vision recorded in chapter 8.

A View of the Anti-christ
as Seen in Daniel 7.

In chapter 7 our attention is focussed continually on two outstanding personalities -- the Son of Man; and his Imitator, the Anti-christ, or Little Horn. With the Son of Man we are well acquainted, for we have come to know Him as our Savior-Friend. But the Little Horn is to us a mysterious personage empowered by Satan, and we need to know more about him that we might not be deceived in our conception of him. It is for this purpose that we make this special study in chapter 7. *Daniel - first picture in Scripture*

Instead of putting this section in the more attractive and impressive essay form, we are striving for simplicity and usefulness by placing it in outline form, just as it has come to our own mind. We feel that this simple outline will be much more practical for study purposes and future reference than the more wordy form of an essay.

I. HIS ORIGIN (vs.8)

- A. Out of the head. The ten kingdom confederacy of the last days will be held together apparently by some sort of central government, or the head out of which the ten horns grow. It is from this head that the little horn appears.
- B. From among horns. Notice that the little horn does not grow out of any individual horn, but that he comes out of the head from among the horns. Thus he will not owe allegiance or favoritism to any special group. His origin is mysterious, and his quick rise sensational, for this man of destiny has an appointment from the powers of darkness.

Separate entity

II. HIS CHARACTER (vss.8,20)

- A. Super-sensitive, for he has "eyes like the eyes of a man." *Intelligence*
This man of otherwise bestial, natural character will have some sort of supernatural discernment, insight and judgment, which will aid him much in his ruling. Since eyes are symbolical of intelligence, we see that he will be an individual of super learning and culture; but certainly he does not have a "heart of man" such as Neb. received.
- B. Impressive, having "a mouth speaking great things." By his possessing arrogance and smooth oratory, the Little Horn will sway the multitudes. He will be impressive by the very audacity of his message, for he will "speak great words against the most High." The mass of people will be overwhelmed by his eloquence, and will follow his leadership in blind adoration.
- C. Belligerent, "whose look was more stout than his fellows."
His will be a challenging spirit, and amidst a crashing world of weak, iron-clay kingdoms, he will be hailed as the Man of the Hour -- the Governmental Superman. Right now, as the world rocks and reels in fear of the things coming upon it, a man with a "stout look" could take control. The world is looking for a man who is unafraid, and commanding in the crisis.

Stand out in the crowd

III. HIS POWER (vss. 8, 20, 21, 25)

- A. Great. That his power will be great is well proved by the things which he will do. Shortly after his debut he subdues three of the original ten kingdoms so completely that they are removed entirely. Some time later he will begin an aggressive campaign against God and His people, by defying God, and persecuting the Jews and changing their sacred practices.
- B. Diplomatic. This leader will be a diplomatic genius, rather than a military authority, as is shown by the words "a mouth that spake very great things." There is practically no reference made to his military efforts. A first hand example of his super diplomacy is seen in his subjugation of the three kings; for even though those three kings are bound in the deca-confederacy, the Little Horn will have such influence that the seven other kingdoms will not intervene at the fall of the three. Rather, they join behind the Little Horn after this conquest!
- C. Satanic. Such power is not ordinary, and it is not hard to see that this ruler is being impelled by some supernatural force. As further proof of this, we see him setting himself up against God -- then we know that his power is derived from Satan. ANTI-CHRIST
- D. Permissive. But no matter how hopeless the situation may appear, God is still on His throne; and even though the Great Tribulation is the time of God's wrathful judgment, everything is fully in His control. The words "given into his hand" (vs. 25) show us that all the Anti-christ's power is permissive; and when God's time of intervention comes, "the judgment shall sit'." Kingdoms given unto His Hands - Then They shall be taken from him.

IV. HIS ACTIVITIES (vss. 21, 25)

- A. Make war with the saints. This seems to be one of the first objects of the Little Horn, and he succeeds quite well in it. The war will probably be provoked by the refusal of the Jews to render to the Anti-christ the worship he demands.
- B. Speak against God. In an age when blasphemy is already so rampant it is easy to see how a man could be possessed with such a spirit. This, of course, is the most exact expression of the spirit of Anti-christ. This speaking against God will lead the world into universal apostacy.
- C. Wear out saints. His treatment of the Jews and of all who refuse to align themselves with him will be without precedent in world history. The cruelty will be such as to veritable "wear out" the saints. Follow Jews everywhere
- D. Change times and seasons. This phrase seems to speak of the Jewish feast times, or sacred religious observances. This is referred to in Dan. 9:27 as beginning to take place in the middle of the Tribulation period. It will be the introduction to the "Time of Jacob's Trouble." Change whole Jewish Set up -

V. HIS END (vss. 11, 26)

- A. Dominion taken away.
- B. Body destroyed and given to burning flames. But the time of his end will come and "none shall help him." His place of final abode will be the Lake of Fire (Rev. 19:20).

CH. 8: Two Kingdom Vision

Intro.: In this chapter we study the second of Daniel's visions, this one occurring about two years after the revelation of ch. 7. This vision gives a great deal more light concerning the Anti-christ, and portrays further the activities of the Medo-Persian and Grecian Empires which were then yet to come.

Beginning with this chapter, the remainder of Daniel is written in Hebrew. All of the final five chapters were of particular interest and significance to the Jews. Under ordinary circumstances we would not consider the Medo-Persian and Grecian Empires of particular importance; but they assume an entirely different position when considered in the light of their relationship to the Jewish people. It is important to remember as we study Biblical prophecy that God does not judge the consequence of nations or rulers as we do, but He sees them as they affect and are related to His people, be it the Jew or the Church.

- vs. 1 "after that which appeared...at the first" -- Daniel recognized the relationship of this vision to the preceding one recorded in ch.7. That chapter closed with the words "but I kept the matter in my heart" and when this vision of ch.8 appeared to him two years later, he realized that it was further enlightenment and enlargement of the former vision.
- vs.2: It was probably significant that Daniel received this vision while in Shushan, for that city later became the capital of the Ram (Medo-Persian) empire.
- vss.3,4,20: It is interesting while studying these verses to note that many ancient Persian coins have been found which have as their symbol a Ram. God made His symbol in accordance with man's knowledge. The two horns represent, of course, Media and Persia. The "higher" which "came up last" represented Persia, the younger kingdom which eventually became greater. "pushing westward...northward...southward" -- same as the three ribs of Ch.7: their conquering of Lydia (Westward), Babylon (Northward), Egypt (Southward).

Since Media-Persia is considered so briefly in this chapter we are led to believe that their only importance here is to serve as an introduction to the main subject, the Grecian Empire, which is important not only to the Jew of 350 B.C., but to the Jew of the Tribulation Days, because of the Anti-christ's relationship to the old Grecian Empire.

- vss.5,21: "he goat...from the west" -- the goat was the national emblem of the Macedonian kingdom under Alexander.
"face of the whole earth" -- their rapid universal conquest.

"touched not the ground" -- again, a striking picture of Alexander's blitzkrieg conquests. In less than three years he conquered much of the civilized world, including such powers as Babylonia, Egypt, Syria, and Phoenicia.

"a notable horn" -- "the first king," Alexander.

vss. 6,7: A picture of the ruthless, vengeful annihilation of the Medo-Persian Empire by Alexander.

vs. 8: At the height of Grecian power, as Alexander wept because there were no more worlds to conquer, his death came while in a state of intoxication. To take the place of this "great horn," "four notable ones" -- Cassander, Lysimachus, Seleucus, and Ptolemy -- arose "toward the four winds" -- each taking a directional section of the empire.

vs. 9: With this verse we begin a study of further information about the "Little Horn" of ch. 7. This is an especially interesting section because of its dual fulfillment. Except for vss. 24 and 25, it had remarkable application to Antiochus Epiphanes, the Grecian ruler of the second century before Christ; but its greater importance is in clarifying further the character of the final Anti-christ. The partial, but identical, fulfillment in Antiochus only serves to make more vivid the climactic fulfillment in the Little Horn of the last days.

Scofield calls this passage (vss. 10-14) "confessedly the most difficult in prophecy, "But it need not be if viewed properly. The striking similarity of the two characters should only make more clear the traits and activities of the Anti-christ.

"out of one of them" -- This shows the Anti-christ as coming out of one of the four divisions of the old Grecian Empire. By this prophecy our field of expectancy is made much smaller, and we can focus our attention more carefully. The matter of the Anti-christ arising from both the Grecian and Roman Empires engenders no difficulty, since the Old Grecian Empire was contained in and swallowed up by the succeeding Roman. From this prophecy it appears that the Anti-christ will arise from the Eastern division of the Empire.

"waxed exceeding great" -- The Anti-christ will enjoy remarkable success, but, as the word "waxed" shows, without military exercise or strenuous effort. We could conclude from this verse that he will arise from the western part of the Eastern division -- a strategic position.

"toward the pleasant land" -- could refer only to Palestine. The following verses give immediate confirmation to this.

The time of the Little Horn's entree is made plain by several references in vss. 17,19,23-25. Before proceeding further into a study of the Little Horn's character and exploits, it would probably be wise to examine these verses to learn the time of the whole event.

vss. 15-17: Daniel was not satisfied with the receiving of this heaven-sent vision, but earnestly "sought for the meaning." In answer, there stood before him "as the appearance of a man," and a voice by the River Ulai called for Gabriel to give Daniel an understanding of the vision. As the angel approached, Daniel fell upon his face in fear, not because of the angel's appearance, but because of a dread of his message of interpretation. Hence, Gabriel comforted him with his opening words, "Understand, O son of man: for at the time of the end shall be the vision."

Since this, again, is a vision of the Gentile world dominion, "time of the end" must refer to the end of the Times of the Gentiles. As in chapters 2 and 7 the "latter days" (2: 28) were the main burden of the revelation, here again it is the final happenings which are important. The account of the escapades of the Medo-Persian and Grecian Empires only serve as an introduction or foundation for a study of the events of "the last days".

vss. 18-19: "the last end of the indignation" -- the climax of God's displeasure with the Jew's stiffnecked, rebellious attitude. The end of the Times of the Gentiles will also be the end of God's indignation against the children of Israel. "at the time appointed the end shall be" -- this term, or a varied version of it, is reiterated several times in the remainder of the book (9:27; 11:27,35,36; 12:7). This would serve as a message of strength, hope, and comfort to the Jew who was discouraged with the thought that Jehovah didn't care or had lost control. No matter how black the tunnel of their circumstances, or how their enemies prosper against them, they know still that "at the time appointed, the end shall be." To the faithful, enlightened Jewish remnant of the Tribulation, this will probably serve as a continual encouragement to hold steady.

vss. 22,23: "in the latter time of their kingdom" -- After the death of Alexander the kingdom fell to his four generals, who continued, "but not in his power." Then, in the "latter time" of this kingdom, a king of fierce countenance arises. That the "latter time" of this kingdom is yet to come is shown several times. In 7: 2 we were told that even though the first beasts had their world dominions taken away, their lives were prolonged for a season. Just so, today these empires are in existence, but not as world kingdoms. "when the transgressors are come to the full" further identifies the time as yet future, for at the time of the fullness of transgression, the Tribulation period will begin.

The days immediately preceding the rapture of the church and the opening of the Tribulation are described as days when "some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;...having their conscience seared with a hot iron." "For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof." It is upon a condition such as this that God pours out His wrath in the tribulation "when the transgressors are come to the full."

"a king of fierce countenance" -- It is at this time that the Anti-christ comes into prominence. This description of him corresponds well with the words "whose look was more stout than his fellows" in ch. 7. A self-confident, powerful leader.

"understanding dark sentences" -- reminds us of his description in ch. 7: "eyes like the eyes of a man." His supernatural insight and peculiar discernment will fare him well in his handling of men and governments.

vss.10-13 He shall be mighty and "wax great," but he will derive 24: his might from another source. That his power is Satanic if verified by several New Testament scriptures (2Thess. 2:9,10; Revelation 13:2) *Jesus*

"the host of heaven" -- this phrase in vs.10 is explained by vs. 24 of the interpretation, "shall destroy the mighty and the holy people." This shows his persecution of God's people, the Jew. He will completely destroy and crush a portion of the Jews, not by peaceful, diplomatic methods, as in his other conquests, but by direct destruction of force.

Finally, in the arrogant pride of his success he will magnify himself "to the prince of the host," the High Priest. He will attempt (as did Antiochus, his pretype) to assume the duties of the High Priest, and to direct the worship toward himself (2Thess. 2:4).

He will then attempt (7:25) "to change times and laws," by removing the daily sacrifice and casting down the place of the sanctuary. In this verse we have an indirect testimony to the prophecy of the Jews' return to their Holy Land and their setting up again of Mosaic worship.

But that there will be apostate Jews in Palestine even at this time is shown by vs. 12, where we are told that a host will join with him against the daily sacrifice, "by reason of transgression."

Through all these activities he shall "prosper and practice," until, in sublime blasphemy, he "shall also stand up against the Prince of princes" -- the Lord Jesus Christ (Rev. 19:19).

But in his effort against the Stone "cut out without hands", "he shall be broken without hand" (Rev.19:20). This is well confirmed by 2 Thess. 2: 8 -- "the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming." -- a supernatural destruction, without the aid of any of man's devices. An interesting feature of the Anti-christ's power is again brought out in these verses. It is said in vs. 24 that "he shall destroy wonderfully." The great wonder of his destroying power is explained in vs.25 -- "through his policy also he shall cause craft to prosper in his hand...and by peace shall destroy many." Here is a forceful picture of the super diplomat who shall work his desires through alliances, international intrigue, and the power of "amouth speaking great things," rather than by military effort.

vss.13,14: Here we have one of the climaxes of the vision in a conversation between two Jewish saints. In vs.13 the one queries as the length of the desecration of the sanctuary and sacrifices; the other replies (vs. 14), "Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed." In other words, it will be six years, four months, and twenty days after the desecration of the pre-millennial temple by the Anti-christ before it is cleansed. Since the desecration comes in the middle of the Tribulation week, and the Anti-christ is destroyed three years and six months after his act of desecration, it seems entirely correct to believe that the remaining time of two years, ten months and twenty days will be needed for the construction and consecration of the Millennial Temple. In this connection we quote W. C. Stevens: "It is reasonable for us to surmise that this will be the length of time required to build and consecrate the Millennial temple according to Ezekiel 40-44."

vss.26,27: The message of the vision is here confirmed, but Daniel is advised that the main fulfillment is still distant, so he should "shut up the vision." In John's vision, (Rev.22:10), he is given contrary instructions: "Seal not the vision, for the time is at hand." The effect of the whole matter was so great upon Daniel that he was sick for a period of days; and even after returning to do the king's business, the matter was still weighing heavily upon his mind.

* * * * *

Since many capable Bible scholars interpret this chapter as referring almost entirely to Antiochus Epiphanes, or at least primarily to him, we feel it would be well to explain the reasons for our view. Ch.7 closed with Daniel's words "but I kept the matter in my heart;" and

Since ch. 8 is an account of his next recorded vision, it is evident that ch. 8 is a completion or addendum to ch. 7. The remarkable similarity of the vision of ch. 8 to that of ch. 7 further verifies that thought. The very term "Little Horn" which was of such importance in ch. 7 is significantly used to describe an almost identical character here in ch. 8, the vision which was to clear up and simplify the preceding vision. Naturally, to Daniel's mind, and to any reader's mind, there is an immediate association at the use of the same term in two such closely related chapters. It hardly seems likely that God would use such terminology simply to confuse His people.

Then, too, in vs. 17 and 19 the phrase "time of the end" is used freely in defining the time of the Little Horn. Since that term heretofore in this book has referred to the end of the Times of the Gentiles, it can only seem reasonable that it would take the same interpretation here. In vs. 23 the time is mentioned as "latter time of their kingdom" -- we have already learned in 7:12 that the Grecian Empire would have its world dominion taken away, but that its life would be prolonged, just as we see it is today. The phrase "when the transgressors are come to the full" (vs. 23) is associated unhesitatingly with the time immediately preceding the Tribulation and appearance of the Anti-christ, when the cup of man's iniquity is full to the brim. It is in consideration of these reasons that we feel the entire primary reference

in ch. 8 is to the Anti-christ, and that the reference to Antiochus is only secondary; and that his importance is only in his foreshadowing and emphasizing the picture of the final Anti-christ.

CH. 9: Daniel's Seventy Weeks

Intro.: An interval of approximately one year has elapsed since the vision of ch. 8. In that time has come the change of empires mentioned in ch. 5, and Daniel is now serving under King Darius. Daniel is praying in this chapter for the soon release of the Jews as prophesied by Jeremiah, when his prayer is interrupted by the angel Gabriel with a further prophetic message from God. Daniel is concerned with the end of the Seventy Year Captivity, but the angel informs him that the Jews are yet to suffer seventy weeks of years, in order to "make an end of sins" and "bring in righteousness." (vs. 24). The prophecy of this chapter is something of a complementary climax to all the preceding prophecies of this book.

- vss.1,2: In admirable spiritual ambition, Daniel had been searching for truth, until he came to realize that the end of Israel's captivity was near. Jeremiah had prophesied (Jer.25: 11,12; Jer.29:10) that the captivity was to last for seventy years, and since this was probably about 538 B.C., the time of their release was not more than two years away. Perhaps he recognized too that the rapidly prospering Cyrus was the Cyrus of Isa.44:28 and 45:1.
- vs.3: Even though God's prophecies definitely foretold Isreal's return, Daniel felt pressed to pray for the prophecy's fulfillment. "God's promises are conditional, and He has ordained prayer as one means for the attaining of divine ends." (Pearlmen). Perhaps we today could apply this same truth to the prophecy of the Second Coming. Notice the deep intensity of Daniel's prayer -- "supplications...fasting...sackcloth, and ashes." Prayer is not play when a burden weighs heavily upon us.
- vss.4-17: Here is an outstanding Scriptural example of intercessory prayer. Daniel alternately praises God for His mercy, forgiveness, and righteousness; and confesses Israel's sinfulness and oft-repeated failures. Through it all he humbly associates himself with the transgressions of his people, as if he were himself a partaker. But he reminds God (vss.17,19) that the forgiving of Israel and the answering of this prayer will only be for His Own glory and honor.
- vs.18: The Prayer Perfect: "we do not present our supplications before thee for our righteousnesses, but for thy great mercies."
- vs.19: "These are thy people, Lord," (Cf. Exodus 33:13).
- vss.20-23: In the midst of his prayer Daniel is visited by Gabriel, who had been sent to give him "skill and understanding." It appears from vss.22,23, that the succeeding verses are the interpretation and explanation of an unrecorded vision of Daniel's.
- vs.24: "thou art greatly beloved" -- a beautiful testimony to Daniel's admirable spiritual character.
- vs.24: "Seventy weeks are determined" -- The literal translation is "seventy sevens" or "seventy heptiads." While Daniel is inquiring concerning the end of the seventy year captivity, God sends this message to show him that Isreal is soon to enter upon a period of seven times seventy years, or 490 years.
- vs.24: "upon thy people and upon thy holy city" -- makes this a distinctively Jewish vision. The primary object of this prophecy is to be the Jews and Jerusalem. It will be well to keep this in mind when studying the Seventieth Week, or the Tribulation period.
- The remainder of this verse tells the purpose of the Seventy Weeks: "to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity" -- all of which will be preparation "to bring in everlasting righteousness." The words "everlasting righteousness" bring to mind immediately the Millenium, which will be

ushered in at the close of these Seventy Weeks. During this time, too, prophecy and vision will be sealed, for they will no longer be needed, since the Word will be present in visible manifestation.

"to anoint the most Holy" refers both to the consecration of the holy of holies in the Millennial temple, and to the perfect mercy seat, Jesus Christ.

vs.25:

"from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem" -- This important event marks the beginning of the 490 year period, and is easily identified in secular history as the second decree of Artaxerxes Longimanus, for of the four recorded edicts concerning the Jews' return to Jerusalem, this is the only one which specified that the city be rebuilt. In Nehemiah 2 we learn that this decree was issued in the 20th year of Artaxerxes. Most historians agree on the date as the first of Nisan (March 14), 445 B.C. It is encouraging to remember that this is one of the best known dates in history.

"unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks and threescore and two weeks" -- From the 14th of March, 445 B.C. until the Messiah the Prince was to be sixty-nine weeks of years, or 483 years (7x7=49; 62x7=434; 49 plus 434=483). The exact fulfillment of this prophecy is one of the most remarkable of Christian Evidences found in the Word of God. From the Edict to rebuild Jerusalem (March 14, 445 B.C.) until Christ's Palm Sabbath (April 6, 32 A.D.) entrance into Jerusalem (the only time when he was hailed as "Messiah the Prince") was 476 years and 24 days, according to our Gregorian calendar. ("The days reckoned inclusively, as required by the language of the prophecy, and in accordance with Jewish practice." Pearlman).

476 years of 365 days each	173,740 days
From March 14 to April 6	24 days
(both inclusive)	
Add for leap years	<u>116 days</u>
	173,880 days

The prophetic years must be calculated at 360 days each, rather than our present system of 365 $\frac{1}{4}$. 360 days is correct according to both Jewish usage and Biblical usage (as shown by the interchanging of terms: "42 months" "1260 days" "time, times, and the dividing of time"). So, to figure our sixty-nine weeks of prophetic years from the Decree to Messiah the Prince:

$$69 \times 7 \times 360 = 173,880$$

Thus, the Prophetic Calendar is correct to the very day!
This can hardly be passed by as a coincidence!

On this day the Jewish prophetic clock stopped (Matt.21: 43; 23:34-39), for on this day God stopped dealing with the Jews as a nation. The clock will begin again at the opening of the Tribulation, the Seventieth Week.

"the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times" -- This undoubtedly refers to the difficulties which Nehemiah had to meet in rebuilding Jerusalem (Nehemiah 4 - 6).

vs.26:

This verse is greatly simplified by the legitimate insertion of the article "the" so that it reads: "And after the three score and two weeks..." This can be titled the "Gap Verse" since it describes the events after the sixty-ninth week, but preceding the seventieth. This parenthesis in the prophetic plan has caused a good deal of conjecture among some, but it need not; for it only confirms further the interval between the Roman and the Revived Roman Empires in the prophecies of Daniel 2 and 7. There are many examples of an unseen gap in prophetic time (Isa.9: 6,7; Zech.9:9,10), and the principle of "gap" interpretation was justified and proved by Christ Himself in His reading of Isa.61:1,2. (Luke 4: 18,19).

"shall Messiah be cut off" -- Thus was the crucifixion of Christ prophesied as occurring sometime after the sixty-ninth week; for at the close of the 69th week he was presented to the people as "Messiah, the Prince," and was rejected.

"but not for himself" -- is better interpreted "shall have nothing." The entire universe was His rightful possession, but at His crucifixion He had nothing. "and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary" -- After the cutting off of the Messiah there was to be another great event in this "gap" period. Jerusalem and the Temple were to be destroyed by "the people of the prince that shall come." To Daniel's mind there could be no doubt but that this "prince" referred to the Little Horn, the Anti-christ. But he himself was not to take part in the destruction -- it was to be "the people of the prince that shall come" -- in other words, the Romans who effected the Destruction of Jerusalem in 70 .D. under Titus. This further identifies the ten kingdom confederacy as the Revived Roman Empire in actuality, not just in spirit.

The last portion of this verse is translated literally: "unto the end wars and desolations are determined." This agrees with Christ's own words in Matt.24: 6.

vs.27:

This verse gives further information about the Anti-christ, "the prince that shall come." The events described in this verse are those of the Seventieth Week, or the Tribulation. Here is primary evidence that the length of the Tribulation

is to be seven years; and here we see, too, that the Seventy Weeks and the Times of the Gentiles end simultaneously.

"And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week"--The Anti-Christ shall enter into a seven year covenant with the Jews which will allow them, among other things, to re-establish worship in their Temple. At the making of this covenant the Seventieth Week begins, and it will be exactly even years of 360 days each until the Anti-christ is destroyed at Armageddon.

"in the midst of the week" (Dan. 7:25; Rev. 11:2; Rev. 13:5). After three and a half years, or in the middle of the agreed time, the Anti-christ will break his covenant, and "cause the sacrifice and oblation to cease," (7:25) and shall bring abominations into the Temple by demanding that he himself be worshipped. (2 Thess. 2:4; Matt. 24:15). He shall continue "until the consummation," and then "that determined shall be poured upon the desolator" (literal translation) as he is "broken without hand." (Dan. 8:25).

CH. 10: Daniel's Prayer Battle

- vs.1: Since the time of this chapter was the third year of Cyrus, the Israelites had probably been released from captivity for nearly two years. Now nearly ninety years old, Daniel likely felt that he would be of more value in the Persian court than in Jerusalem, so he has remained on in his position.
- Apparently Daniel had received another vision, although it is not recorded; and this vision, too, is concerned primarily with the latter days.
- Vss.2,3: At about this time, the Israelites in Jerusalem were running into some serious difficulties, and it seems that this was the goad driving Daniel to such earnest prayer and mourning. While in such supplication of soul he received further light concerning the future of his people. Here is a demonstration of a form of fasting different from that commonly practised. Daniel abstained from all meat, wine, and "bread of desires," or sweets and luxuries, and subsisted on a diet of the barest necessities.
- vss.4-9 The description of this angel would seem to correspond with other descriptions of the Son of God; but his admission in vs. 13 that he had been withstood by the prince of Persia for three weeks denies all possibility of this being Christ. Most likely it was again the angel Gabriel, who had appeared to Daniel in several other visions (8:16; 9:21).
- vss.10-21: These verses give a remarkable picture of the continual conflict in the heavenlies. We are shown here that each nation of the world has a fallen spirit defending it, influencing its policies, controlling its actions. Israel,

however, is supervised and jealously guarded by Holy Michael (vs. 21).

This chapter makes the words of Paul in Ephesians 6 very real. We can understand from this what Paul meant when he wrote: "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against wicked spirits in high places." This explains, too, the conflict we meet in earnest prayer, and makes us realize more than ever that "the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds." (2 Cor. 10:4).

CH. 11: The King of the North

The conversation of Gabriel continues into this chapter as he explains the future fortunes of the Persian and Grecian Empires. Gabriel had hinted of his message already in the 20th verse of ch. 10 as he told Daniel, "...now will I return to fight with the prince of Persia: and when I am gone forth, lo, the prince of Grecia shall come."

- vs. 1: In the first year of Darius, only a short time before the time prophesied for the release of the Jews, Gabriel had stood to strengthen Michael in his conflict with the prince of Persia, who was striving to hinder the promised release. We can never realize how many climactic battles have been fought in the heavenlies before the fulfillment of Scriptural prophecies!
- vs. 2: As a basis for the main message concerning the "latter days" Daniel is told first of more immediate happenings. The three kings of Persia following Cyrus are recorded by secular and Bible history as Cambyses (Ezra 4:6), Pseudo-Smerdis (Ezra 4:7), Darius Hystaspes (Ezra 4:24). The fourth king who "through his riches...shall stir up all against the realm of Grecia" was Xerxes.
- vs. 3, 4: These verses, of course, speak of the might of Alexander and the dividing of his kingdom among his four generals, and "not to his posterity, nor according to his dominion which he ruled." (Cf. 7:6; 8:8, 22).
- vs. 5 Ptolemy Soter was "the king of the south" (Egypt), who was overshadowed eventually by his prince, Seleucus Nicator. Seleucus had "a great dominion," for he captured Babylon and brought Syria under his control.
- vs. 6 After some time the second king of the Egyptian division, Ptolemy Philadelphus, tried "to make an agreement" with Antiochus Theos (third king of Syria) by marrying his daughter, Bernice, to Laodice, the Syrian king who put away his wife. As prophesied here, the entire plan was a failure, for Bernice and her child were poisoned and Laodice was taken back.

- vss.7-9 These verses tell of the victorious invasion of the Northern kingdom by Ptolemy Euergetes, a brother of Bernice ("out of a branch of her roots"). He outlived the reign of his northern rival ("he shall continue more years than the king of the north").
- vs.10: But the sons of this Northern king became "stirred up" after their father's death, and one of them, Antiochus II made two successful attacks on Egypt, and even assailed the fortress of Gaza.
- vss.11,12: In response, "the king of the south" (Ptolemy Philopater) was "moved with choler," and made a successful attack on the hordes of Antiochus. He failed, however, to clinch his victory.
- vs.13: As a result, Antiochus came back in renewed strength after several years for an invasion of Egypt.
- vs.14: Several groups under the control of Egypt took advantage of this situation and revolted from Ptolemy. The Jews of Palestine were in this effort, for they hoped to gain by following Antiochus.
- vs.15: This added strength enabled Antiochus to take Sidon, Egypt's "city of munitions" (margin).
- vs.16: Then the wilful, unconquerable king literally consumed "The glorious land," Palestine.
- vs.17: The following year he made a mass advance upon Egypt, planning to win favor by his offer of "equal conditions" (margin). He proffered his daughter, Cleopatra, to get control of Egypt; but she failed her father in this plan, as prophesied here.
- vs.18: After this failure he moved toward the Rome-supervised isles of the Mediterranean, and overcame a number of them. Scipio Asiaticus, a Roman general, retaliated by delivering the islands from the "reproach" of being under Antiochus' power.
- vs.19: Thus Antiochus was forced to "turn his face toward the fort of his own land" in retreat, but he was finally captured and later slain while attempting to plunder a temple.
- vs.20: He was followed by his son, Seleucus Philopater, who had to raise taxes to meet Rome's requirements. He was mysteriously "destroyed, neither in anger, nor in battle."
- vs.21: Seleucus was succeeded by his younger brother, Antiochus Epiphanes, "a vile person," who came in "peaceably, and ...by flatteries."
- vs.22: In his quick rise to power he deposed the "prince of the covenant," high priest Onias.
- vs.23: By intrigue and convenient alliances he succeeded in becoming "strong with a small people."
- vs.24: Then by an unheard of policy of scattering his riches and spoil he entered "peaceably even upon the fattest places of the province," until he was strategically situated to strike at Egypt.

- vss.25,26 Ptolemy, "the king of the south," resisted with a great army, but through treachery in his own ranks and associates he was overcome by Antiochus.
- vss.27,28: The two met at a conference table, each planning to deceive the other; but eventually Antiochus returned to his own land "with great riches." On the return he stopped at Jerusalem long enough to slay 40,000, and put as many more into slavery. He then stole treasures from the temple which were valued at 1800 talents.
- vs.29: Again he headed toward Egypt, and this time came within four miles of Alexandria.
- vs.30: There he was forced to retreat by an admiral of the Roman fleet. In his return north he took spiteful vengeance against the Jews. He was aided by counsel from the apostate Jews -- "them that forsake the holy covenant."
- vs.31: With the aid of armed apostates, he polluted the sanctuary took away the daily sacrifice, and defiled the temple and the altar by killing and offering a sow there, and then sprinkling the broth in the sanctuary. (Cf. 2 Thess.2:4)
- vs.32: After this act there came a sifting among the Jews. A number turned "against the covenant" because of the corrupting flatteries of Antiochus; but many others remained true to Jehovah, and out of this group came the Maccabbar revolt. The Maccabees finally obtained more independence than the Jews had had at any time since the captivity under Nebuchadnezzar, and they were able to hold this independence until they were taken by Rome in the century before Christ.
- vss.33,34: Much of the strength for this religious rebellion came from the "Maskilim," a group of faithful, learned men who instructed the people in righteousness. But the flattering policies of Antiochus kept a great host with him, and many of the faithful Jews were killed.
- vs.35: Early in the vision (10:14) the angel declared, "I am come to make thee understand what shall befall thy people in the latter days." Now, in 11:35, we are brought finally to the main burden of the vision, "the time of the end." This must refer to the final end, for certainly there was no "end of any importance in the time of Antiochus. At this verse, then, we jump from the events of 150-165 B.C. to the events of the final days; another example of the prophetic "gap." Here, again, it is well to remember that God views history and the affairs of nations only as they are related to His people. That truth is demonstrated many times in this chapter, as the Holy Spirit faithfully points to events concerning the Jews, and skips over and omits intermediary happenings.

Beginning in verse 32 we have been noticing the "Maskilim" men of understanding who guided Israel in the time of Antiochus. Verse 35 describes these men as being yet in existence "even to the time of the end." It is entirely

reasonable for the prophecy to jump from these men of Antiochus' day to a similar remnant in the tribulation, which will resist the Anti-christ. The prophecies of this chapter have carried us up to the time of Antiochus -- now notice the Jewish prophetic happenings that must occur between Antiochus and Anti-christ:

1. Rejection of Messiah -- already fully considered in chapter 9.
2. Destruction of Jerusalem, 70 A.D. -- also prophesied in chapter 9.
3. Gap between 69th and 70th weeks -- not considered in prophecy, because God is not dealing with the Jews as a nation in this period.

Thus it is easy to see that the prophecy would naturally go from these men of Antiochus' time to the similar group of the Tribulation, for there was no prophecy between that needed to be considered.

- vs. 36: "the king" -- must certainly refer to "the prince that shall come." (9:26). The description of his activities in this verse coincide perfectly with the Anti-christ's description in chapters 7, 8 and 9.
- "till the indignation be accomplished" -- points again to the "indignation" against the Jews in the time of the end.
- vs. 37: Several references in this verse would give us strong reason to believe that the Anti-christ might be a Jew. The phrase "God of his fathers" would give that idea; and his rejection of this God would show him as an apostate.
- "the desire of women" -- to the Jew this could only mean the Messiah, the desire of every true Israelitish woman since Genesis 3:15.
- "magnify himself above all" -- This man will not "regard any god," but will make his own ego the center of his worship. This phase of his nature is mentioned a number of times in the various prophecies concerning him.
- vs. 38: "the God of forces" will instead be the object of his worship. This can only refer to Satan, from whom he derives his power. This is "a god whom his fathers knew not," for although Israel fell into the worship of many false gods, never were they guilty of the direct worship of Satan. It seems likely that Satan will require worship from the Anti-christ before giving him the kingdoms of this world, just as he sought to have the worship of Christ (Matt. 4:8-10; Revelation 13:2-4).
- vs. 39: Through the help of Satan he will continually prosper until he is taking the "strongest fortresses" (R.V.).
- vs. 40: We have noticed before that the four divisions of the old Grecian empire would be in existence in the last days. Here this fact is proved again by reference to kings of two of the divisions. The "king of the north", as shown by the context, is the Anti-christ; and if he is to come from the same territory as the kings of the North in the earlier part of the vision, his dominion will begin in

- vs.41: Syria. In these verses his few military conquests are pictured, as he strikes at the king of the south and several other countries, including "the glorious land," Palestine. He will not succeed, however, in bringing under his dominion Edom, Moab, and part of Ammon. In Isa.11:14 these three countries are listed as being Millennial tributaries of Israel.
- vss.42,43: In his victorious march he will take in Egypt, Libya, and Ethiopia -- probably much of it by subtility.
- vs.44: Troublous tidings from the east and north will draw him away from Africa, and cause him to destroy many. This will reveal to the world more of his true character.
- vs.45: In blasphemous pride he will have his tabernacle-palace (the center of both government and religion for this self-styled god-ruler) "in the glorious holy mountain" of Jerusalem. There with his armies (rev.19:19) he shall come to his end, and none shall help him." Again we are shown the glorious final victory of our Lord Jesus Christ!

CH. 12: The Last Things

- vs.1: "at that time" -- During the Great Tribulation Michael, the defender of Israel, will arise to the defense of his people, and presumably to take part in the destruction of the Anti-christ.
"there shall be a time of trouble" -- This portion tells in briefly powerful style the horrors awaiting the Jews in the last half of the Tribulation Week. No wonder that another prophet refers to this period as "the time of Jacob's Trouble!" (Jeremiah 30:7). The deliverance of a group of Jews mentioned in this verse would seem to refer to the remnant of Jews who are saved out of the tribulation when they refuse the mark of the beast (Rev.14:9,10; Zechariah 13:8,9).
- Vs.2: This verse is better translated: "Many from among the sleepers...shall awake; these shall be unto everlasting life; but those (who do not awaken at this time) shall be unto shame and everlasting contempt." The first resurrection, which takes place when Jesus comes, is referred to here. (1 Thess.4:16,17; Rev.20:4-6).
- Vs.3: Probably the primary reference here is to the "Maskilim" although certainly the general promise is to all God's children.
- vs.4: From this verse we gather that there will be greater understanding of this book in the "time of the end" than at any other time, especially by the Maskilim. Most Jewish scholars interpret the latter half of the verse as referring to the sincere seeking for greater knowledge and understanding of God's word in the last days. This seems to be most reasonable, according to all the context.

- vss.5-7 In a conversation between two angels, Daniel learns again that this period of Jewish suffering is to be for "a time, times, and an half." (Cf. 7:25; 9:27; Rev.11:2).
- vss.8,9: This time Daniel's request for further light is refused, "for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end." This confirms, then, the thought that in the "time of the end" there will be extraordinary understanding of this book.
- vs.10: Those who are doing wickedly will find these prophecies a mystery; but those who have been "purified, and made white, and tried" will have divine understanding.
- vs.11: Here we are told of a 1290 day period, beginning in the "middle of the week" (9:27); but this period will last thirty days past the end of the tribulation week. We have no explanation what will occur during these thirty days, but it is generally considered that this time will be needed for the judgment of nations and the purifying of the earth for Christ's millennial reign.
- vs.12: For those who wait forty-five days longer yet, a blessing is promised -- the blessing of being present as the millennial reign of peace begins.
- vs.13: Daniel's ministry is completed, and he is honorably discharged with the words, "...thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at the end of the days." (Job 19:25 - 27). So ends the beautiful ministry of God's faithful Hebrew servant, Daniel.

NOTES on REVELATION

To most Christians the book of Revelation is a mysterious and foreboding volume; and the thought of studying it seems almost to strike terror to some. It seems strange that Christians should have this attitude toward any portion of God's Word; but it is even more strange when the portion is the book of Revelation. Because of this paradox, we have felt it wise to introduce our study of the book with a few pertinent facts which should lead us into a healthier attitude toward this rich and sacred portion of the Word of God.

An insight into the practical content and message of Revelation is greatly enhanced when one remembers that it was one of the first books accepted enhanced when one remembers that it was one of the first to be finally and completely canonized. To the persecuted Church of John's day, the book held a dual promise of freedom from persecution, and judgment to their oppressors. However, as years went by the Church was less persecuted, and the coming of Jesus faded from thought so that the final canonizers were inclined to speculate over the tremendous declarations of the book; but under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, eventually gave it their approval.

Its importance to this dispensation and to the church can be realized by the fact that this is the only prophetic book in the New Testament. It is of further significance that this is the closing book of the Bible, which gives it a place of unique importance. The time element of the message cannot be overemphasized; for at the very outset of the book (1:3) the inspired writer declared, "...the time is at hand."

Of final and greatest importance are the two Scripture promises that are contained in the book. Significantly enough, the first promise is contained in the book's prologue: "Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand." Then, in the last chapter of the book, John receives the command, "Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book: for the time is at hand." To us, this is nothing less than a promise; for if the book was to be left unsealed, it is plain that it is for our understanding and enlightenment. Thus we can enter hopefully into a study of the book, claiming God's promise of blessing and understanding as we proceed! More than ever before, "the time is at hand," so, more than ever before, we need to search earnestly and prayerfully the pages of this prophecy.

John, the beloved disciple, received the book by revelation while in banishment on the Isle of Patmos in the Aegean Sea, just twenty-four miles from Ephesus. To him, it was the "Revelation of Jesus Christ" to show His servants "things which must shortly come to pass." The first century was in its evening hours at the time John received the Revelation, and Christianity was becoming well established.

CH. 1: Vision of Christ

- vs.1: "The Revelation of Jesus Christ" -- This book, like all the Scriptures, converges upon the cross; but this one in a special way reveals Jesus, the Christ, more vividly than any other. Strive to keep your eyes upon Christ through all of the study, no matter how far removed some portions may seem at the first reading.
In another sense, this is the Revelation of future things, which Christ has given to His church for their edification. Notice the progress of the message: Given by God to Christ, who through an angel reveals it to John that it might be passed on to "His servants" of all ages.
"must shortly come to pass" -- "It is necessary that these things happen speedily."
- vs.2: John's testimony that he has fulfilled his commission.
- vs.3: "Blessed" -- Note to the Fearful Student: This word can also be correctly translated "Happy!"
This is the only book which carries such a particular and specific promise. The reason for this encouraging, compelling promise is found in the latter part of the verse: "the time is at hand."
- vs.4,5: Notice the particular significance of each title given to Christ:
"faithful witness" -- Encouraging the Church to follow the example of their leader, in spite of the consequences. We derive the word "martyr" from the Greek word here interpreted "witness." (cf. 2:2,3; 3:8).
"first begotten of the dead" -- which forecasted the absolute victory over death, which takes place in this book. (cf. 20:14; 22:17).
"the prince..." -- After the rulers of this world have run their course, they will fall before this Prince, the King of Kings! (cf. 17:14; 19:16.)
Then, in the latter half of the verse is shown His peculiar and precious relationship to His purchased bride.
- vs.6: A tribute of praise to His redemptive work.
- vs.7: "Behold, he cometh..." -- The theme of the book, Thus you find it repeated in the middle (11:15), and at the end (22:20).
- vs.8: The One Who knows not time!
- vss.9,10: Circumstances of the Vision: Exiled from man ("in...Patmos") but separated unto God ("in the Spirit").
- vss.11,12: A trumpet-like voice commissions John to send the message to seven churches in Asia.
- vss.14-18: John had often laid his head upon the Master's breast, but now as he surveys Him in His glory, he is overwhelmed -- "And when I saw Him, I fell at his feet as dead."
- vs.19: Here is given to us a perfect outline of the book:
I. "Things which thou hast seen" -- ch. 1.
II. "Things which are" -- ch. 2,3.
III. "Things which shall be hereafter" -- chs. 4-22.
- vs.20: An explanation of the opening vision.

CH. 2: Messages to the Churches

Many commentators have considered lightly or ignored completely this section of Revelation which records the messages to the seven churches. But since the Holy Spirit has given the matter quite lengthy attention, we can do no less than briefly summarize the section. In these seven messages you will find rich spiritual blessing, as well as much worthwhile knowledge.

There can be four distinct views of these messages:

1. The apparent -- The messages as directed to the churches named.
2. The individual -- The messages as they can be applied to any individual Christian.
3. The church -- The messages as they reveal the spiritual condition of individual churches.
4. The dispensational -- The messages portraying clearly the seven periods of church history, from about 70 A.D. to the coming of Christ.

These seven churches have found remarkable consecutive fulfillment in the chronological stages of church history. It is apparent from this that the Holy Spirit was, through this medium of messages to seven churches then existent, describing prophetically the future of the Church.

In construction, these messages are similar, with only a few slight exceptions. They each contain:

1. Picture of Christ
2. Commendation
3. Reproof
4. Admonition
5. Warning
6. Encouragement
7. Promise

Sardis and Laodicea are exceptions, in that they receive no commendation; Smyrna and Philadelphia in that they receive no reproof. Remember while reading these two chapters that these are the personal messages of Christ to the church.

The dates which we have presented for each church era are those propounded by several competent prophetic teachers. They are not meant to be binding, absolutely inclusive, or exact, but merely suggestive.

- vss.1-7: EPHEBUS. A.D. 70 - 170.
This church was zealous, holy, and sincere, but they had left (not lost) their "first love" -- the first step downward. They still followed the same rules and rituals, and still went through the same efforts, but the burning heart passion was gone.
- vss.8-11: SMYRNA. 170 - 312.
This church suffered ten persecutions ("ye shall have tribulation ten days"), mainly under Nero and Domitian. They were bothered, too, by Judaizers, who are described

here as "them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan."

vss.12-17: PERGAMOS. 312 - 606.

The church which could not be hindered by persecution and bloodshed is now weakened tragically by "the doctrine of Balaam." (Cf. Numbers 31:15,16). Just as Israel became defiled by intermarriage with Moab, in this period the church became corrupted by her fateful union with State.

vss.18-29: THYATIRA. 606 - 1520.

As a result, the Church and the world were plunged into the Dark Ages, and one heathen, ungodly practise after another was introduced into this church that had become defiled by her popularity. "Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess" likely refers to the Papacy, the Church's only teacher during this dark period of vile and pernicious doctrines.

To this church Christ speaks of His coming again (vs.25); so we know that the Church of this era will still be in existence when Christ returns.

CH. 3: Messages -- continued

vss.1-6: SARDIS. 1520 - 1750.

Here is a perfect description of the early Reformation Church. This Church received a heavenly visitation ("Remember...how thou hast received and heard"), but apologetics, creeds, and dogmas sapped their original message until they were warned, "strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die." Yet there are "a few names even in Sardis." This Church, too, will be in existence at the coming of Christ: "...thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee."

vss.7-13: PHILADELPHIA. 1750 - 1900.

In this church we have the greatest interest, for as true believers we can consider ourselves members of this church. God has given this group "an open door, and no man can shut it;" for this church has enjoyed the greatest evangelistic and missionary efforts. In this period have come the revivals of the Wesley's, Whitefield, Booth, Finney, Cartwright, Moody, (to mention only a few), the Holiness groups, Christian and Missionary Alliance, and finally, the great latter rain outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

This church is warned that the coming of Christ is near ("Behold, I come quickly"); and they are assured that they will escape the ensuing Tribulation ("I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation which shall come upon all the world.").

vss.14-22: LAODICEA. 1900 - ?.

The Church of our present day is a sad conclusion to the age. The sorrowful state of this group is that they are lukewarm -- not cognizant of their real spiritual condition. They are so busy gloating in their wealth and at-

tainments that they never realize how pitifully wretched and naked they are in God's sight. But notice (vs.19) that Christ still loves this church; and that He is continually striving and pleading for entrance. As the people of the Philadelphia Church, we carry a grave responsibility for this neighbor church that Christ loves, and is seeking to enter. Finally -- let us remember that the spirit of the Laodicean Church is the spirit of our age, and that it will creep in on us almost imperceptibly the moment we slip an inch from the cross. This spirit of easy self-satisfaction we must fear, and shake off like a deadly viper. PRESS ON -- HE COMETH!

CH. 4: The Heavenly Throne

With the closing of Ch 3 comes the last mention of the church until the epilogue of the book (22:16). At Ch. 4 we begin the study of the "things which shall be hereafter" (1:19); and although immediately in Ch. 4 we enter into the Tribulation period, our first view is one of celestial glory as we gaze upon the heavenly throne with the raptured saints.

- vs.1: "door was opened in heaven" -- An open door to welcome the victorious pilgrims.
 "as...a trumpet talking with me" --Here is the fulfillment of I Thess. 4:13-17. The "trump of God" which sounds will be as a voice to the saints, inviting them, "Come up hither."
- vs.2: "immediately I was in the Spirit" -- Still a picture of the Raptured Church, as well as of John at that time. Since "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God" (I Cor. 15:50), at the Rapture "this mortal must put on immortality" (I Cor. 15:53). John's first sight is of the throne, and the One upon the throne.
- vs.3: John uses precious stones to describe the beauty of the glory of the Lord. Perhaps the most important part of the vision to us is the "rainbow round about the throne," for that is a reminder that He is a covenant-keeping God. Compare this description with Eze. 1:26-28.
- vs.4: "four and twenty elders" -- Representative of the Old and New Testament saints (Cf. 21:12,14), since both will be taken in the Rapture. "White raiment" shows their purity; and the "crowns of gold" proves that they are redeemed men and not angels.
- vs.5: Majesty and power surround the throne.
- vs.6-8: Four beasts, perhaps typical of the creation that is soon to be delivered from the bondage of sin. These are the same four figures that were on the four divisional standards in the old Camp of Israel. Like the cherubim, these

creatures seem to play a part in the plan of redemption, acting as God's agents on the earth. (Four is the number of earth). But their main and only task in this scene is described in vs. 8: "they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come."

vss.9,10: The worship of the four living creatures is followed by the adoration of the four and twenty elders. In heaven there will be perfect unity of the Spirit, for all will be absorbed in the worship of God. There will be no ego-centrics, for all will be God-centrics. "cast their crowns before the throne" -- Here is the compelling reason to strive for heavenly crowns: that we might have something suitable to cast at the feet of the Eternal King.

vs.11: "Thou art worthy...for thou hast created all things." Since He is the creator of all things, all things owe Him homage and praise. "Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord!" (Ps.150:6). Thus we fulfill the pleasure of God, since it was for His pleasure that we were created!

CH.5: The Book with Seven Seals

vs.1: John's attention is drawn to a seven-sealed book in the right hand of the One on the throne. It has been suggested that the book may be the title deed to the earth, because of the general contents of this chapter. As you study the chapter, consider:

1. No man will be worthy to open the book; for no man could redeem the earth. (vss.2-4)
2. The titles of Christ would speak of the fulfilled covenants:
 - a. "Lion of the tribe of Juda" (vs.5) -- Fulfillment of Abrahamic Covenant.
 - b. "Root of David" (vs.5) -- Davidic Covenant.
 - c. "Lamb as it had been slain" (vs.6) -- The sacrifice that fulfilled the Edenic Covenant and made the Perfect Covenant. He is "in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders" because His redemption reached from the throne of heaven to man and all of groaning creation.
3. The worship of the living creatures and the elders. They extol Christ as worthy because:
 - a. He was able to effect the redemption of the world by His blood (vs.9).
 - b. He will put His redeemed to rule the earth as kings and priests (vs.10).
4. The worship of the angels. They declare the redeeming Lamb worthy of power, riches, etc. (11,12).

5. The entire creation joins to worship God and the lamb (vss.13,14).

In this book is pictured the wrath of God upon His world that has gone far from His original purpose, and that has rejected His plan of redemption. (Cf. Ezekiel 2:9,10).

vs.2: By this verse we are made to realize the importance of the book, for all of heaven is asked the question, "Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof?" An exceptional worthiness is required.

vs.3: Not a man in all creation, of all the ages, is qualified. No wonder the entire universe rejoices when the worthy One is found! (vss.13,14).

vs.4: John wept, not because of unsatisfied curiosity, but because of an overwhelming sense of the importance of the book.

vs.5: Again, the Lion of Judah hath prevailed!

vs.6: Even in heaven Christ is exalted as a slain Lamb -- the Perfect Sacrifice.

vss.7,8: Here we see the deep concern of the living creatures and the four and twenty elders. The presence of the stored-up "prayers of saints" would show us that his has been a burden of prayer of God's people in all ages.

vss.9,10: "a new song" -- A choir of every race, tongue, and time join in an anthem that only the redeemed can sing: "Thou ...hast redeemed us to God by thy blood." Tryouts for this Heavenly Choir are now being conducted.

These verses confirm further that the four and twenty elders represent the raptured group of all ages, and not just twenty-four men. ("redeemed...out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation").

vss.11,14: Angels and all creation join in the worship, but they sing not the song of the redeemed; and while they sing, the living creatures shout "Amen," and the elders fall in worshipful adoration! All hail the power of 'esus' name!

CH: 6: The Seals Opened

vs.1: "the Lamb opened one of the seals" -- The opening of the seven-sealed book by the Lamb begins. Thus we see Christ, the Savior of the world, now pouring out wrathful judgment upon the world. (Isa.11:3,4).

vs.2: " behold a white horse" -- Here is one of the major points of Revelation controversy. It is quite evident what the following three horses are from their descriptions, but the description of this horse seems rather paradoxical. Because white is the color of righteousness, many have concluded that this horse represents a world-wide revival following the rapture; but the remainder of his description would discredit that interpretation. Never is the

Gospel propagated by force, as is described here: "had a bow" would speak of judgment and force; as would also the phrase "conquering and to conquer." Even the "crowns.... given unto him" would not speak of righteousness, for crowns are symbolical of power of rulership, both righteous and unrighteous (consider that the terrible beast representing the Anti-christ in Ch.13 has ten crowns).

In fact, since the horse is white, and a Crown was given unto him," it seems apparent that this is God's messenger which allows the Anti-christ to conquer. You will remember that we learned in Daniel 7:25 that although Anti-christ's power is Satanic, it is also permissive. Certainly the context of the chapter bears out this interpretation.

- vss.3,4: "another horse that was red" -- This messenger has the power "to take peace from the earth." Since red is symbolical of sin, we can conclude that with this horse sin will be unbridled to a greater extent than ever before, so that the world is engulfed in hatred and murder.
- vss.5,6: "and lo a black horse" -- Famine follows in a manner so terrible that the price of a quart of wheat will be a day's wages.
- vss.7,8: "behold a pale horse: and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed with him." -- The fourth horse brings a wave of suffering and death upon the earth, and Hell follows after to reap her harvest. "beasts of the earth" might refer to the kingdoms of the world, and the havoc of death they will cause.
- vss.9-11: At the opening of the fifth seal we hear the cry of a group of martyred saints under the altar. Their cry is satisfied for the moment by white robes, and they are instructed to "rest yet for a little season." Since this is the time of vengeance, intercessory prayer has been replaced by imprecatory prayer. (Cf. Jeremiah 7:16).
- vss.12-14: Words are too feeble to describe the horror that follows the opening of the sixth seal, as all of nature is violently shaken. Notice that the entire universe is affected:

earth	-- "earthquake"
sun	-- "black as sackcloth of hair"
moon	-- "became as blood"
stars	-- "fell unto the earth"
heaven	-- "departed as a scroll"
mountains,	-- "moved out of their place"
islands	

- vss.15-17: In this connection, consider: Heb.12:25-29; Haggai 2:6,7. The terror of this hour will be great enough to awaken men to a realization of what is happening, and in their uncontrollable fear they will search madly for a place of shelter.

"the great day of his wrath is come" -- This proves conclusively that the seals are a part of the Tribulation period; and although the time of the greatest wrath is not yet, already the judgments are increasing in severity.

CH. 7: The Two Multitudes

vs.1: "After these things" -- The vision moves from the opening of the six seals to another scene. Apparently the opening of the seventh seal is postponed for a time because of some other events that must take place before the final seal.

vss.2,3: The reason for this postponing may be seen in these two verses. A select group is to be sealed by some angels, and the plea is: "Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads." The more terrible judgments to come following the opening of the seventh seal are to be held back until this group is sealed. The Greek word here interpreted "hurt" would seem to carry the idea of a more severe injuring of the earth.

vss.4-8: Notice that it is not said that these Israelites will be then raptured. They are only sealed, or put under Divine protection.

Perhaps this remnant of Jews who are sealed before the world's time of still greater woe could be compared with the Jews of old who dwelt in Goshen -- while all Egypt suffered, they were spared, from the fourth plague on. Particularly would the comparison be true in the slaying of the firstborn, for there the blood literally sealed a house against the death angel.

The exact number from each tribe would suggest that this is a representative or symbolic number; especially since twelve can be considered the number of God's people -- twelve tribes, twelve apostles, etc.

Notice the peculiarity of this list. Ephraim and Dan are completely omitted (they were the particularly idolatrous tribes); while Levi and Joseph are included. Yet the number is to be "of all the tribes" (vs.4), so we may conclude that Ephraim and Dan have been swallowed up in the other groups. They are mentioned in Ezekiel as taking part in the Millenium.

You will notice in vs.3 that this group is spoken of as "the servants of our God". The word here interpreted "servants" is the same Greek word as used in Rev. 1:1 -- "The Revelation...to show unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass." The word actually means "bond-servants." By this inter-use of the same term we may safely deduct that this group is the "Maschilim" of the last days. (Dan. 11:33,35; 12:3,10).

Notice, finally, that this group is not sealed by the Holy Spirit, but by angels; and that their sealing is not in the heart, but in the forehead (vss.2,3). John's attention is directed to another group, innumerable, and from "all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues."

vss.10-14: That this group is saved and blood-bought is evident by their white robes and by their praise of God and the Lamb. Their origin and late arrival are explained in vs.14: "These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."

From this, then, we know that not only will there be people saved in the tribulation, but there will even be a number raptured. Comparing this Scripture with the parables of Matt.25, it would seem reasonable to conclude that this group is a number who were not qualified for the first rapture, prior to the tribulation, but that they were awakened (probably after the sixth seal, ch.6: 15-17) and turned to God sometime early in the Tribulation. It would seem possible, too, that the Holy Spirit will still be on earth during the first half of the tribulation, dwelling in Christians who have missed the rapture. (Cf. 2Thess.2:6-8).

R. M. Riggs has made an interesting comparison between this group and the four and twenty elders. We quote:

- " 1. They are uncrowned; the elders are crowned.
2. They are standing; the elders seated.
3. They are before the throne; the elders on thrones.
4. They are serving God; the elders reigning with Christ.
5. They are coming out of the great tribulation; the elders were in heaven before it began."

vss.15-17: Their happy state is beautifully described here, as an absolute contrast to what they have been delivered from.

CH. 8: Seventh Seal and Seven Trumpets

vs.1: "silence in heaven" -- The glorious anthems of praise give way to a strange period of silence. This would seem not only to be an ominous silence, but also a silence of love, as God and heaven deliberate over the dreaded pouring forth of wrath.

This seventh seal brings the period of silence in heaven, and introduces the next series of judgments, the seven trumpets.

vs.2: Again, the number seven. These seven trumpets are trumpets of both warning and judgment.

vss.3-5: In 5: 8 and 6:9-11 we read of the prayers of the saints. Perhaps the prayers which are here mixed with the angel's incense are those prayers previously referred to. As the angel's censer is cast into the earth, there is a violent response from the elements.

vss.6,7: The first trumpet causes a third of the trees and green grass to be consumed as the world is scorched with a heat it has never before known.

- vss.8,9: With the blowing of the second trumpet a third part of the sea will become blood, and resultantly, a third of marine creatures and of ships will be destroyed.
- vss.10,11: Wormwood, a symbol of the bitterness of Satan, is the messenger of the third trumpet. This Wormwood is cast into a third of the drinking water of the earth, making it bitter, and causing the death of many.
- vs.12: The sounding of the fourth trumpet causes the smiting of the heavenly bodies, as the sun, moon, and stars lose a third of their light and a third part of the day and night are darkened.
- vs.13: The earth is warned that the first four trumpets have been mild in comparison to what is yet to come upon the earth. The first four trumpets have been in the realm of nature; the final three are to be like the torments of hell.

CH. 9: Fifth and Sixth Trumpets

- vs.1: "a star fall from heaven" -- Probably a fallen angel, delegated to the opening of the bottomless pit.
- vss.2,3: The fifth trumpet brings indescribable suffering to the earth through a plague of locusts. Since these locusts originate in the bottomless pit, they are probably incarnated imps; note, too, that they are "given power."
- vs.4: Their power is limited to only those who "have not the seal of God in their foreheads, "as described in ch.7.
- vss.5,6: Theirs will be a ministry of hellish torment which will so harass men that they will seek and cry for death, only to find that "death shall flee from them." The only relief in this picture of torture is that their power is limited to a five months' period.
- vss.7-10: Their description only adds to the horror of the picture, and confirms more definitely the fact that they are inhabited by demons.
- vs.11: Since the name of their king is given in both Hebrew and Greek, we can be more sure that the punishment will be universal. Only the God-sealed will escape.
- vss.12,13: Apparently the sixth trumpet is a further answer to the imprecatory prayers of 8:3.
- vss. 14,15: These four angels had been prepared (vs.15) for the purpose of slaying "the third part of men," so they are bound until their season comes. The River Euphrates, which had been the Cradle of Life in Genesis 1-3, now becomes the Cradle of Death in the Revelation.
- vss.16-19: An army of two hundred million horsemen goes out to slay a third of mankind. Notice (vs.18) that the slaying is done by the strange horses and not the riders. These horses bring into the earth the torments of hell, for not only do fire, smoke, and brimstone issue from their mouth, but in their tail is the sting of the serpent.

vss. 20, 21: "by these plagues" -- This would show that the horsemen are not literal, but only a picture of the horrible suffering upon the earth. Man has become so much the bond-slave of sin, and Satan's power of deception is so strong in the earth that even after seeing a third of their fellowmen slain, the living remainder rebelliously ignore the opportunity to repent.

CH. 10: The Little Book

- vss. 1, 2: John's vision of the seven trumpets is interrupted temporarily by an impressive angelic messenger. This angel comes to introduce and make way for the seventh trumpet.
- "a little book open" -- It would seem as we study further into this chapter, that this little book was of significance at that time to John; yet the message of the book must affect the whole world, for when the angel appeared with the book "he set his right foot upon the sea, and his left foot on the earth."
- vss. 3, 4: At a cry from this angel, seven thunders voice a message; but as John prepares to record the message, immediately he is instructed to seal up the message and write it not.
- vss. 5-7: "there should be time no longer" -- ie, no further delay. "mystery of God should be finished" -- We have clearer understanding concerning this "mystery" when we look into the sounding of the seventh angel (11:15), for it is "in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound," that the mystery will be finished.
- vss. 8, 9: A voice from heaven instructs John to take the little book from the angel; and as John proceeds to obey this command, the angel declares that John must eat the book.
- vs. 10: John found, as the angel predicted, that the book was sweet in his mouth, but "as soon as I had eaten it, my belly was bitter."
- vs. 11: Now we see the relationship of this book to John, for he is informed that his ministry is not yet completed, but "thou must prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings." This book which he has eaten would seem to symbolize these future prophesyings.

CH. 11: The Two Witnesses

- vss. 1, 2: Now John is given a measuring rod, and told to measure the temple, the altar, and the worshippers. But the outer court was to be left unmeasured, because "it is given unto the Gentiles." "holy city" -- not only will the Gentiles desecrate the temple, but all of Jerusalem. Since we see the temple

here as a place for the worship of God we know that Jewish national worship has been restored; or, in the words of Daniel 9:27, the covenant between the Jews and Antichrist has been confirmed.

6 "forty and two months" -- With this description of Gentile desecration, we know that we are being told of the middle-of-the-week breaking of the covenant. The Gentiles are to exercise this blasphemous control for forty-two months, or for "a time and times and the dividing of time," as it is phrased in Daniel. The end of this period will come, of course, with the revelation of Christ, as He Himself foretold in Luke 21:24-27.

vs.3: Our attention is directed to another matter -- two witnesses who are to prophesy 1260 days. This is exactly the same length of time as the forty-two months, or the $3\frac{1}{2}$ times; but we will see as we study further that the ministry of these two prophets is to be during the first half of the tribulation week, and not contemporary with the desecration of the temple.

Their ministry will be of sorrow and urging to repentance, as shown by their sackcloth garb: a ministry of judgment, by the power bestowed upon them (vss.5,6).

vs.4 "the two olive trees" -- By this phrase we are referred back to Zechariah 4, where we learn that "these are the two anointed ones, that stand by the Lord of the whole earth!" This scripture in Zechariah was speaking immediately of Joshua and Zerubbabel, God's faithful duo who labored to the construction of the temple after the Babylonian captivity -- a beautiful pretype of these two witnesses of the last days.

vss.5,6: In these verses we get a clear view of the ministry and power of these strange witnesses. Their message is in violent contrast to the New Testament message of grace and reconciliation. Thus we are again reminded that this is the time of heaven's wrath.

vs. 7: Here we have the first mention in Revelation of the Anti-christ, as he effects the murder of the two witnesses. They are not destroyed, however, until "they shall have finished their testimony." Since their ministry covers the first three and a half years of the Tribulation period, it is exactly in the crucial "middle of the week" that they are killed. Until this time the Anti-christ will not be recognized in his true capacity, but by all these blasphemous and murderous acts shall "that man of sin be revealed" (II Thess. 2:3).

In this verse we learn another fact about the Anti-christ: he is "the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit." This could refer either to his actual personal origin, or to the spirit that inhabits and empowers him.

vss.8-10: The message and ministry of the two witnesses will not be a popular one, and news of their death will be welcomed by the world's wicked inhabitants. Their bodies will

remain in the streets of Jerusalem three and one half days, while the world rejoices and celebrates a sadistic parody of Christmas in gift-exchanging.

- vs.11: The triumph of evil is short, for at the end of the three and half days the witnesses are resurrected, and thus become more fearsome than ever to the inhabitants of the earth.
- vss.12,13: Their resurrection is followed by their translation; and in the same hour a tenth part of the city is destroyed by an earthquake, and seven thousand men die. The remainder of the city's inhabitants render glory to God.
- vs.14: By this we know that the events of chapters 10 and 11:1-13 are actually part of the sixth trumpet and not the happenings of some separate or unrelated time.
- vss.15-19: We see immediately that the seventh trumpet is of special importance, for when it is sounded great voices in heaven respond with the message, "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ; and he shall reign forever and ever." Here, then, we are to see something that bears definitely upon the redemption of the world by Christ, and upon his rulership of the world. "And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come..." Compare Psalm 2.

CH. 12: The Woman and the Man Child

- vs.1: "a great wonder" -- By these words we know that the ensuing description is to be symbolical. Because the definitely symbolic portions are so designated, we can conclude that the other portions of the book are to be interpreted literally.
- "a woman" -- Although this character is never definitely identified by Scripture, it is apparent by every deduction that she represents Israel.
- It is interesting to remember that the moon, sun, and twelve stars were associated in another symbolic message-- Joseph's dream in Genesis 37.
- "twelve stars" -- The twelve tribes of Israel.
- vs.2: "travailing in birth" -- Consider that although the Church is never described as travailing in birth, Israel is so mentioned several times (Isa.66:7-9; Micah5:2,3; Isa.9:6).
- vs.3: "a great red dragon" -- Another sign appears in violent contrast to the first; and later, in violent opposition. The dragon is, of course, Satan.
- "seven heads" -- By this we are reminded immediately of the seven great kingdoms of world history: Early Babylonian, Assyrian, later Babylonian, Medo-Persian, Grecian, Roman, Roman Revived. All these kingdoms have been in conflict with God's people, just as is shown in this chapter. That these seven heads represent world empires is made certain by their crowns -- the symbol of rulership. The kingdoms of the world are a part of, and are inspired.

and controllingly guided by Satan, the Dragon, just as is pictured here. Particularly is this true in their treatment of the Jewish people.

"ten horns" -- The ten kingdom confederacy of the last days (Dan.7:7,24), which is the last, and prophetically most important of all the world empires.

vs.4: "third part of the stars of heaven" -- Here the dragon is described as casting to the earth a third of the stars of heaven, just as prophesied in Daniel 8:10.

"for to devour her child" -- But the dragon's main interest is in something more important than the woman, and that is the man child which the woman is about to bring forth.

vs.5: "she brought forth a man child" -- The child whom Satan desired and endeavoured to destroy was Jesus, the Messiah, who was the offspring of Israel. At the nativity, Satan attempted through Herod "to devour her child as soon as it was born." This man child will "rule all nations with a rod of iron" in the Millenium (Ps.2:9; Rev.19: 15).

vs.6: We see later in the chapter that a great deal intervenes between vs.5 and vs.6, and these intervening events are described in vss.7-13, so we shall consider these verses first.

vs.7: "there was war in heaven" -- Here we see in clearness the conflict hinted of in Daniel 12:1a. Michael, the defender of Israel, arises in wrath to war against the dragon and his angels in the final battle of the heavenlies (Daniel 10; Eph. 6).

vss.8,9: The army of Michael is victorious, and succeeds in casting the army of Satan from heaven into the earth, "which deceiveth the whole world" -- Then, more than ever, Satan will deceive the whole world, as he makes a great intensified effort against God and man. With the casting of Satan into the earth the world enters into "a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation, even so that same time" (Dan.12:16), the last 3½ years of the Tribulation.

vss.10,11: Satan's expulsion from the heavenlies is greeted by great rejoicing in heaven by "a loud voice."
 "the accuser of our brethren" -- By this verse we see just how great and unceasing have been Satan's efforts against us, for he "accused them before God day and night." But here we see, as well, our secret of victory over these hellish attempts, for "they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony."

- vs.12: The heavens are told to rejoice, for they have been relieved of their obnoxious inhabitants. But to the earth and sea is a pronouncement of woe, "for the devil is come down...having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time."
- vss.13,6, 14: The dragon reeks his vengeance upon the woman who is responsible for much of his sorrow, because she brought forth the man child. But God has prepared a place for this woman in the wilderness where she will remain 1260 days, or "for a time, and times, and half a time." (Daniel 7:25; 12:7; Revelation 11:2; 13:5.)
- vss.15,16: "water as a flood" -- In this terrible time of Jacob's trouble Satan makes every effort to destroy the Jew, and although this is the time of their greatest suffering, still they are nearly indestructible, for "the earth helped the woman, and...opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood." Still God's hand of protection rests over the Jew, to keep their chastening within the territory where it will most effectively work His purpose.
- vs.17: In helpless rage, Satan turns his attention to the remnant of Jews who are saved even at this time in the tribulation (Isaiah 66:8)

CH. 13: The Beast

- vs.1: "a beast...having seven heads and ten horns" -- Our attention is directed from the dragon to a beast of similar description which rises "out of the sea." This would refer to the sea of humanity, just as it did in Daniel 7. This beast is different from the dragon, in that the dragon had crowns on the seven heads, while this beast has crowns instead on the ten horns. We see the ten horns crowned because now the center of attention is upon the final world government, the ten kingdom confederacy, over which the Anti-christ rules.

The seven heads represent the seven world empires, just as they did in ch. 12. We will find the inspired explanation concerning these seven heads in ch. 17. Each head wears "the name of blasphemy" because all the kingdoms of unregenerate man have been in opposition to God, and have attempted at times to usurp the powers of deity.

- vs.2: In this verse the beast is described in more detail, and we notice that it is actually a composite of the four beasts of Daniel 7.
- "like unto a leopard" -- The primary resemblance of the beast is to a leopard, for as we learned in Daniel 8, the Grecian Empire is of great importance because it is out of the old Grecian Empire that the Anti-christ arises.

Concerning the Rapture of the Church

I believe that probably the most discussed question in prophecy today is the question we are going to investigate this afternoon. A few years ago the popular discussion was whether Mussolini was the antichrist; and then a little later as the war began to shape up and Russia and Germany made an alliance and then broke it, people began asking about Gog and Magog. Then as the war came, folk inquired about the Battle of Armageddon. All of these questions have answered themselves, and now the question which I am discussing today has become predominant in every mind. It can't be answered by the event until Jesus comes, but in the meanwhile we can reach some very pertinent conclusions about His coming.

Recognize, first of all, that there are two phases to the second coming: there is the coming of Christ for His Church, and the coming of Christ with His Church. Keep that in mind, and keep in mind that we are speaking about His coming for His people. The return of Christ for His bride is naturally our main concern just now. Through my study I have become convinced that the coming of Christ for His Church will take place preceding the seven year tribulation period.

These conclusions have been gained through a careful, prayerful, open-minded study of the Word of God. I am not bringing you a new doctrine; nor a separate revelation, nor something I cannot back up by men who know more about it than I do; but it is the opinion of most prophecy students of the last 100 years, to say nothing of the Early Church.

I have reached this conclusion because of three facts. First of all, because of Scriptural prominence; secondly, because of Scriptural precedence; and thirdly, because of Scriptural promises. I am basing my thoughts on nothing else but the plain facts of Scripture.

Consider first of all, the Scriptural prominence. To begin with, notice what the Tribulation is. When we realize what and when it is, we will realize the relationship of the Church to it. The Tribulation is the Seventieth Week of Daniel. Thus it must be definitely related and parallel to the preceding sixty-nine weeks of Daniel. The sixty-nine weeks of years of God's dealing with the Jews was to bring them to Himself. The seventieth week will be the capstone and climax to the entire period of the seventy weeks. In the seventieth week the Jews will be brought to the crisis when they must decide for God. In the seventieth week a remnant of the Jewish nation that has wandered away from God will be brought back to God, and will be saved and prepared for His coming. When we realize that the seventieth week is the same as the Tribulation period and that it is vitally related to the preceding sixty-nine weeks, much of our problem is made clear.

Thus the Tribulation is not only to pour out wrath, but to bring men to a recognition of God. God doesn't pour out wrath for the sake of judgment alone, but to reach men. In fact, that is a main purpose of judgment -- to bring men to God.

As you read Revelation you will notice that the language -- the symbols, the types, the pictures -- are all Old Testament imagery. The book of Revelation could easily be put in the Old Testament with

Ezekiel, Daniel, Jeremiah, and Isaiah except that the Church is mentioned in the first three chapters. It is a book dealing with Old Testament facts, especially in relation to the Jews. It is a book dealing with the Tribulation period and the glorious revelation of Christ after the Tribulation.

As you read through the Epistles of Paul, notice that never does Paul mention the Tribulation period in connection with the Church. It would seem most reasonable that if the Church is going to go through part or all of the Tribulation, that Paul would have told them something about it to warn them, and to tell them how to be ready and how to live in that time of trouble. Paul talks about the last days, and the perilous times and the falling away, but he never talks about the Tribulation, in relationship with the Church.

Consider, too, that in all the Scriptures concerning the Tribulation period the Church is never mentioned. In those Scriptures about the Tribulation period we read something about Israel and the ungodly world, but we never read a thing about the Church of Jesus Christ. Why? Because the redeemed Church has no part in the Tribulation.

When Christ was on the earth He told His disciples, and He tells us through His Word, when His coming shall be. I think that here is our safest guide -- His Word. Look with me in Matthew 24:36-39. Christ has just finished answering three questions for His disciples and as He climaxed these three questions, the main one of which was "When are you going to return?" He concluded with an appeal. "But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only. But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating, and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be."

You do not read about the Tribulation time coming upon the earth as a sign that He is going to come, but instead it is going to be "as in the days of Noe." The days of Noah were conditions quite ordinary, quite everyday: marrying, giving in marriage, eating and drinking. But the important thing was that in the days of Noah those things were intensified. They became prominent and the things of God were forgotten That is what will be happening before His return.

The same thing is emphasized in Luke 17:28-38. This time Christ is talking about Lot. Do you see then that the things preceding the coming of Christ are going to be natural happenings, intensified to such a degree that God's people will recognize them and turn more to Him? The half-hearted Christian and the man of the world says, "all these things continue as they were from the foundation of the world." These things of the natural world around us have become the predominant things in the lives of people everywhere. All over the United States Christians are backsliding because the natural things have become all-important. More money, higher salaries, increased appetites for luxuries, and as a result the things of God are in the background. But these are not Tribulation days -- they are only a preparation for those days, exactly as Christ said.

Consider, too, that in the book of Revelation there is no mention made of the Church after the third chapter, for with the fourth chapter the description of Tribulation events begins. We read about the Church

in chapters 1, 2, and 3, and then in the fourth chapter there is a transitional phrase in the first verse: "After this...which must be hereafter." The same Greek words are used in each place: "Meta Tauta." Those two words mean "after these things." Thus the verse reads, "After these things I will show things which must be after these things." After what things? After the things just preceding: the Church. And the Church is never mentioned again during the whole Tribulation account and not until the epilogue of the book, near the end of the 22nd chapter.

There is a symbolic reference to the Church in the fourth chapter. We see them around the throne in the person of the four and twenty elders. These four and twenty elders are undoubtedly representative of Old and New Testament saints. Twenty-four is a number representative of God's people -- twelve and twelve. In Revelation 21 we read about the New Jerusalem having twelve gates and twelve foundations. One is the twelve tribes and the other the twelve apostles.

How do we know these twenty-four are definitely redeemed men? It is proved by their description and by their song in the fifth chapter. We see them clothed all in white and they sing this song, "For thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth." If these twenty-four elders were just twenty-four people they wouldn't sing "redeemed from every kindred, and tongue, and tribe, and nation."

It seems that the main consideration of those that believe in the "middle-of-the-week" rapture is found in Revelation 10:7: "But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets." Now let us turn to the place that tells about the sounding of the trumpets: Revelation 11:15-19. What happened when the seventh trumpet began to sound? A shout goes throughout all of heaven. It is a declaration that things are reaching a crisis and that soon the kingdoms -- the Babylonian, Medo-Persian, Grecian, Roman, and Roman Revived -- are going to be hit by the Stone cut out without hands, and it will grind them to powder. The time is near! The mystery of God -- the Church -- receives this message: "You are going to rule, to reign, for ever and ever." The Church is going to be made manifest to the kingdoms of the world as the body of Jesus Christ and as a Stone cut out without hands!

Some say that the "last trump" in 1 Corinthians 15:52 is the seventh trumpet, and that this must be when He comes for His own. I think this is a good place to read Scripture simply as it is supposed to be read. This word "last" is used in a relative sense. We say, "This is the last day." The last day of what? The last day of exam week, etc. It is the last trump, for Jesus Christ is come! The seventh trump isn't the last trump, for Jesus Christ is come! The seventh trump isn't the last one in an absolute sense, for another is heard later on. In Matthew 24:30,31, we read that when we come back at the end of the Tribulation that the trumpet will sound. 1 Corinthians 15:52 cannot be last in the absolute sense; therefore it must be in a relative sense. Shall we be sensible enough to realize that if the first six trumps of Revelation are the time of God's wrath upon the Christians, and the Mid-Weekists maintain, how could the seventh be the time when Christians would be raptured? Certainly here is an inconsistency in interpretation: six trumpets are wrath and violence on Christians, and the seventh calls them into their heavenly home? Hardly! It is only reasonable tha

this seventh has nothing to do with the rapture of the Church, for the Church will have already been long gone from earth's scene.

We notice as we read about the first three and one-half years of the Tribulation period that there are people translated several times. If the Church is not translated until the middle, why are people translated before the Church? Then, too, we notice that the two witnesses of the eleventh chapter are witnessing on the earth during the first three and one-half years of the Tribulation. They are here for 1260 days. Why would God send two prophets with an Old Testament message into the world in the first half of the Tribulation if the Church is still here to minister? If we are here with the gospel of grace, why does God send two witnesses with the message of judgment? We are here with the message of love, and if the Church is still functioning on the earth during the first half, then there is no room for the two witnesses. Scripture presents no thought of the Church being on the earth during any part of the Tribulation.

Now I would like to have you notice briefly Scripture precedence. There are three or four incidents of God's judgment coming on the earth, and in each incident God's few were taken out. Look at Enoch. The world in iniquity was reaching a peak. God was soon to have to pour out judgment, so Enoch was removed. Notice Noah. The world had reached the limit of sin, and God must pour out wrath by the flood, but before the flood ever began, they were shut in. Not in the middle of the flood, but before wrath ever began to fall. Notice righteous Lot. He was in Sodom and Gomorrah. Iniquity had reached its full, and now God must stamp out this wicked people; but He took Lot out first; and then the wrath fell. Notice again that Lot was not delivered in the middle of the wrath, but before judgment ever came! He was gone when the brimstone began to fall. If this is true throughout the Old Testament that God's select few have been taken out before judgment, how much more in these last days of iniquity are we going to be delivered!

I move on rapidly to the fact of Scripture premises. This is the most precious of all, for now we come to the glorious promise of the Lord Jesus Christ that "we are not appointed unto wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ." Turn to 1 Thessalonians 1:10. Thank God for it! We have been saved from sin and now are serving the living God and waiting for His Son from heaven Whom He raised from the dead, even our Lord Jesus Christ, "who will deliver us from the wrath to come." Does "wrath" refer to the Tribulation period? Turn to Revelation 6:17. As the sixth seal is opened men cry, "For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall stand?"

Turn with me, please, to Luke 21:36. The message here is practically the same as in Matthew 24. As Christ completes the message, listen to the climax: "Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man." It doesn't say to escape one-half, but ALL of these things. We are going to be delivered from all of it. We have no part when the Jews are brought to the place of judgment; we have no business here at that time.

Now turn, please, to 1 Thessalonians 5:9. That poor Thessalonian church was going through some hard places, and they were without a pastor to guide them. "Paul, can't you help us?" Then Paul answers, "God has not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord

Jesus Christ." This is not taken out of its context, for all of the context is about the second coming of Jesus Christ and about the rapture and revelation. "Don't you saints worry; you are not appointed to wrath, but to salvation through Jesus Christ."

We are members of the Philadelphia Church. To us God has given a special promise. In Revelation 3:10,11, the message of Christ to the Philadelphia Church era is this: "I am going to keep you from the day of wrath which is coming on the world to destroy them, but hold that fast which I have given you, because I am coming quickly." We are not appointed to wrath, but salvation through Jesus Christ -- the promise of Jesus Christ.

Notice, "I will keep thee from." In the Greek the word "from" is "ek." It is usually translated "out of." I will keep you out of." Not in it or through it, or through part of it, but out of it!

All through the Word of God, to the saints of all ages, there has been a blessed hope -- the hope of His coming. When the Church was discouraged; when the going was hard; when all the world was pressing in, then Paul always said, "You have a hope; you have something to look forward to!" Could I believe that my hope in Jesus Christ is the hope of being on the earth when the wrath of God is poured out? Could I be persuaded to preach to a congregation of people that the tribulation is on us; that this is the time of God's wrath? Such a message could only cause people to say, "My Lord delayeth His coming."

It shall be as in the days of Noah and Lot, and then shall Jesus Christ come to take His own out of the world. I would hate to think my hope was to stay here. We have been purchased by His blood. I ask anyone here this afternoon who might be in love: If you were going to be married to your bride in a short time, would you send her wrath and judgment before you came? Would you send a man to punish and beat her, and then say, "I am getting my bride ready?" She was ready when you became engaged to her. We were washed in the blood of Christ -- what more preparation do we need? We are becoming more and more beautiful to our heavenly bridegroom, for we are His "glorious church without spot or wrinkle."

In view of this glorious hope, John wrote these words, "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God (would God leave His sons here to be punished with the world of iniquity?)...and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." There is our hope; our promise!

Look over Scriptural prominence, Scriptural precedents, and the multitude of Scriptural promises, and you can reach the conclusion easily: Jesus Christ is coming for His blood-bought Church before the Tribulation, for He has not appointed us to wrath, but to salvation through His Own precious blood!

- vss.17,18: The seventh and last vial is poured out, and with it comes a climaxing spasm from nature.
- vss.19,20: Included in this outburst is the greatest earthquake of all the earth's ages -- an earthquake so great that many cities fall, and islands and mountains are moved. The events of this seventh vial seem to occur concurrently with the gathering of the nations for Armageddon, and perhaps extend until the coming of the Son of Man.
- vs.21: Along with the other natural phenomena come hailstones of one hundred pounds' weight; but because of the darkness of their hearts, men continue to blaspheme God.

CH. 17: The Woman on the Beast

- vs.1: "one of the seven angels" -- By this we know that the vial angels will be somehow related to the judgment of Babylon.
- vss.2-7: In these verses we have a vivid description of the mystery woman, Babylon the Great. From this description we conclude that she is symbolical of the false, deceptive cults and religions of all time. Consider:
- a. She has been related to the kings of the earth, particularly of the seven great world empires.
 - b. She has made the inhabitants of the earth "drunk" with her pernicious teachings.
 - c. She is associated with the beast who is full of the names of blasphemy.
 - d. She is drunken with the blood of saints and martyrs.
 - e. She has reigned over the peoples and nations of the earth.
- vs.8: Our attention now is directed to the beast upon whom the woman rides. We see here both the beast's origin, and his final destiny. His mysterious semi-eternal characteristics bewilder the inhabitants of the earth, except for those whose names are written in the Book of Life.
- vs.9: "seven heads...mountains" -- Both are symbolical of kingdoms and rulership. These are the same kingdoms seen in Ch. 13.
- vs.10: "five are fallen" -- Early Babylonian, Assyrian, Later Babylonian, Medo-Persian, and Grecian.
"one is" -- Roman Empire, which was existent as John received the vision.
"the other is not yet come" -- Revived Roman Empire. The reign of this empire is only for "a short space."
- vs.11: The Antichrist, who is doomed to perdition, is an eighth king, yet is of the seven.
- vs.12: Again, the ten-kingdom confederacy which has power "as kings one hour with the beast."
- vs.13: As shown before, these ten are in a national coalition, and inspired by Satan, they gladly forfeit all their power and strength in support of the beast.
- vs.14: It is this final world government under the sway of the beast which rises to "make war with the Lamb." Just as

is shown several times in Daniel, the Lamb is mightily victorious.

vs.15: Further explanation concerning the woman and her seat of power.

vss.16-18: The former kings of the earth have been subject to the woman, but because the Beast desires that the world's worship shall be directed toward himself, he destroys the woman through the medium of his ten petty rulers. Thus "the words of God shall be fulfilled," as evil paradoxically destroys evil.

CH. 18: Babylon's Fall

vss.1-3: We studied, in ch. 17, of the fall of spiritual Babylon; now, in ch. 18 we read of Babylon again, in the double declaration, "is fallen, is fallen," but apparently now our view is of the secondary phase of her fall -- the fall of commercial Babylon.

vss.4-8: A voice from heaven mentions briefly her sins, and asks that she be punished "double according to her works." "her plagues come in one day" -- Words showing the suddenness and completeness of her fall are repeated several times in the chapter: vss. 10,17,19.

vss.9-19: When spiritual Babylon fell, the kings of the earth rejoiced; but at the fall of commercial Babylon "the kings of the earth...bemoan her," and "the merchants of the earth shall weep and mourn over her." The destruction of spiritual Babylon by the ten kings is a lengthy orgy; this destruction of commercial Babylon is "in one hour."

vss.20-24: Her destruction is to be complete and irrevocable; and the apostles, prophets, and heavens are told to rejoice in her fall, for in her, too, "was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth." The love of commerce and business has long held first place in men's hearts, but now the center of their affection has been destroyed. Thus we have further preparation for the Millennium, and the centering of all minds upon Christ.

CH. 19: Marriage Feast and Armageddon

vss.1-3. Babylon has now been completely destroyed, and the multitudes in heaven rejoice, and worship God.

vss.4-6: The worship and praise continues and increases, not only because of Babylon's destruction, but now because the marriage supper of the Lamb is come, and the bride is ready.

vs.7: By its position here in Revelation, we may conclude that the marriage supper of the Lamb takes place near the end of the Tribulation period, only shortly before the revelation of Christ at Armageddon.

vss.8,9: The purity, holiness, and righteousness of the Bride is shown here -- a glorious spotless Church, washed in the blood of the Lamb.

- vss.10-16: The Son of God appears now, ready for the conflict with the hosts of Satan who have gathered in the Valley of Megiddo. The Day of the Lord is come, and soon the world is to enter upon its Millennial Sabbath of peace under the King of Kings and Lord of Lords.
Here it is that the kingdoms of the earth are to be crushed to powder by the Stone cut out without hands. This is the revelation of Christ which concludes the Tribulation period. Read Matt.24:27-31; Jude 14,15; 2 Thess.2:8.
- vss.17-21: The victory of righteousness is quick and complete, and the armies of the Anti-christ are disposed of rapidly by the scavengers of the air. The beast and False Prophet are both cast alive into the lake of fire (Dan.7:11).

CH. 20: The Final Events

- vss.1-3: The beast and false prophet are disposed of at Armageddon, but the arch-enemy, the dragon, escapes that fate. Shortly after Armageddon an angel binds Satan and casts him into the bottomless pit, where he lies bound for the 1,000 years of the Millennium.
- vs.4: During this Millennial reign of Christ the saints sit as co-regents, including the martyrs of the latter half of the Tribulation period.
- vss.5,6: The two resurrections suggested in Daniel 12:2; John 5:29; Luke 14:14; etc., are here clearly defined. The first resurrection, that of the Just, occurs before the Tribulation; while the second resurrection, of the Unjust, precedes the Great White Throne judgment.
- vss.7,8: At the completion of the joyous, heavenly Millennial reign, Satan is loosed for a little season. He goes forth "to deceive the nations" and succeeds in collecting together a mighty army "the number of whom is as the sand of the sea."
Here is the climaxing example of the corruption and depravity of the human heart: After knowing what the reign of Satan means, and after enjoying one thousand years of Edenic happiness under Christ's righteous hand, and innumerable host of mankind will follow after Satan in rebellion against Christ!
- vs.9: Their attempt against the saints can hardly be termed a battle, for they are momentarily destroyed by fire from heaven.
- vs.10: Now Satan is forced to join his two cohorts in the lake of fire, where they suffer eternal torment.
- vss.11-15: Following this the wicked dead are raised in the second resurrection, to appear in judgment before the Great White Throne. Finally death and hell and "whosoever was not found written in the book of life" are all cast into the lake of fire -- the second death.

CH. 21: The New Jerusalem

vs.1: "new heaven and a new earth" -- The former creation has been defiled by sin, and must be removed before the beginning of the endless age of righteousness. (Cf. 2 Peter 3:10-13). Then will be introduced the new heaven and new earth -- the perfect creation. More perfect even, will it be, than the Edenic, for "there was no more sea." (The sea brings always to our minds pictures of unrest, separation, danger, and death).

vss.2-4: The joyous, eternal life is here briefly, but effectively, described. No more pain, death, sorrow, nor crying, for these are among the "former things" which are passed away. Instead the tabernacle of God is with men, and God and man enjoy the perfect communion relationship that God has eternally desired.

It has been reasonably suggested by many Bible scholars that since the New Jerusalem is inhabited by the bride, the new earth will be inhabited by the saved of the Millennium.

vss.5-8: Here is the offer, and the contrasting results -- the water of life is free, and if received, will bring eternal life; those who instead continue in their wickedness are condemned to the second death, the lake of fire. "It is done"-- Christ's cry on Calvary, "It is finished," is now repeated by the Father, for the redemption purchased at the Cross is realized completely in the Triumphant heavenly scenes of Revelation 21 and 22.

vs.9: One of the vial angels, who apparently is a redeemed man (19:10; 22: 8,9), calls John to show him the bride.

vss.10-14: Because a city is made up of its inhabitants, the New Jerusalem is referred to several times as the bride. To the Lamb, that is the greatest beauty of the Eternal City -- the inhabitants, who make up the body of the blood-redeemed bride.

Since no reference is made to the city's description as being a "wonder" or "sign," we may unhesitatingly conclude that the description is the literal beauty of a literal, eternal city, inhabited by an eternal race.

Undoubtedly many of the beauties of the city will typify and remind us of our salvation, just as the articles of the Old Testament Tabernacle predicted in sign language this same great salvation.

"twelve gates...twelve foundations" (vss.12,14) -- Here, again, we are reminded that this city is to be inhabited by both Old and New Testament saints, just as the four and twenty elders (ch. 4) showed us that both are included in the rapture.

vss.15-21: The City Foursquare! Fifteen hundred miles long, broad,

and high, here the cube shows in actuality the perfect communion with God that was predicted in type by the Old Testament Holy of Holies. Expense will be no worry here, for He Who owns the cattle on a thousand hills and the fortunes hidden in the earth and sea will make His concrete and building blocks of the articles the world terms precious jewels. The saints of God who gladly sacrificed such finery for the Kingdom's sake, in that day will probably reminisce over their sacrifices with a smile as they walk on transparent gold streets. Then we will see in right proportion the comparison of earthly riches and eternal values.

- vs.22: No place of worship will be necessary, for the object of our worship will be among us.
- vs.23: Not only artificial light, but even the natural firmament, will be unnecessary.
- vss.24-26: These verses likely refer to the inhabitants of the new earth.
- vs.27: Pure and perfect as only God can make it, here is the eternal home of those whose names by grace "are **written** in the Lamb's book of life."

CH. 22: He Cometh!

- vss.1-8: The description continues into the final chapter of the book, and after viewing the city with John, it would seem difficult to return to the present.
"water of life...tree of life...healing of the nations... no more curse...throne of God and the Lamb...no night... there...the Lord God giveth them light..." -- but to the earnest children of God who have prayed so often for a clearer glimpse of their Lord, the most appealing and blessed promise of all is in the words, "And they shall see his face..."
- vss.9-16: The imminence of His return is the message of these verses. The return is so near that John is instructed, "Seal not the sayings of the prophecy...for the time is at hand."
- vs.17: A final loving, all-inclusive invitation to COME.
- vss.18,19: The great importance of this book is made more impressive by these last admonitions to leave the book exactly as it has been given.
- vss.20,21: "I come quickly" -- For the third time in this brief closing chapter, the Lord repeats these words. This time John adds his personal prayer, the prayer of God's own for all ages,

"Even so, Come, Lord Jesus!"