

# Daniel

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## LOOKS FORWARD

*A Hike Through the Prophetic and  
Narrative Chapters of the Book of Daniel*

THE SEQUEL TO LET'S LOOK FORWARD



**Simon Bennett**

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*Do not fret because of evildoers,  
nor be envious of the workers of iniquity.  
For they shall soon be cut down like the grass  
and wither as the green herb.*

*For evildoers shall be cut off;  
but those who wait on the LORD  
they shall inherit the earth.*

*Psalm 37:1,2,11*

## Introduction

I admired the pastor. His church was strong in Gospel teaching, the gifts of the spirit and mission to the poor. He listened kindly as I chatted of my struggles early in 2015. After nine happy years in Africa, I was back in the UK. It felt like a different planet, and I was struggling to adjust.

Towards the end of my visit, we talked about last days scripture. Not sure of his position, I asked him, “Do you believe Jesus can come back *any day*?” When he exclaimed, “Yes, I do!”, I was concerned. Did he not know about the landmarks that Jesus told us would precede His return? It was not the first time that I had come across a seeming lack of knowledge of last days scripture in otherwise exceptional churches and pastors.

The next day I took pen and paper with me on a trip down to the South African Consulate and started to write while on the bus, continuing as I sat in the queue. The result was *Let’s Look Forwards*, a book detailing the major landmark events of the last days. We found that when we planted our feet on the words of Jesus in the Olivet discourse of Matthew 24, the seemingly impenetrable mysteries of the last days opened to us, rather like vaults in an Indiana Jones movie, revealing a definite path of events to Christ’s return.

During the Olivet discourse Jesus refers to the Book of Daniel (Matthew 24:15), so we now move on to look at Daniel’s remarkable prophetic dreams and visions. This study which will upgrade our last days knowledge and equip us to continue to discern the signs of the times, especially during the current upheavals of the COVID crisis.

May you be blessed as God reveals Himself, in this instance, through the dreams and visions of His prophet Daniel.

*I, the LORD, reveal Myself to them in visions, I speak to them in dreams.*

Numbers 10:12

# **Chapter 1**

## **Last Days Review and Orientation**

## Biblical Bookends

*By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God.*

Hebrews 11:3 (NKJV)

Bookends are useful things. Books are not particularly happy standing upright and need support on both sides. Bookends provide that support and prevent your book collection from collapsing like dominoes into a heap.

The books of the Bible are bookended by the books of Genesis and Revelation, about the beginning and end of time, the creation and the last days.

Peter links and emphasises these bookends in I Peter 3.

*Above all, you must understand that **in the last days scoffers will come**, scoffing and following their own evil desires. **They will say, “Where is this ‘coming’ He promised? Ever since our ancestors died, everything goes on as it has since the beginning of creation.”***

***But they deliberately forget that long ago by God’s word the heavens came into being and the earth was formed out of water and by water.***

2 Peter 3:3-7.

Peter prophesies about scoffers who have no respect for warnings of a judgement day. He tells us they also ‘*deliberately forget*’ how the world was created by the Word of God. The bookend of the beginning of the world, creation, has largely been discarded in favour of the theory of evolutionary chance. Peter connects the fall of this bookend to many people’s lack of respect for last days teaching.

Peter emphasises that the bookends of creation and the last days, are important. They ‘frame’, provide vital underlying structure and support, for the Bible, our world, and our very existence

## The Spine of Last Days Scripture

Finding the ‘missing link’ has been the goal of palaeontologists since Charles Darwin’s evolutionary theories were published. Such a discovery would prove that our complex life on earth is the result of billions of years of cumulative mutations.

Despite palaeontologists’ best efforts, the ‘missing link’, the fossilized skeleton of an ape-man has never been found.<sup>1</sup> Interestingly students of last days scripture can be compared to palaeontologists organizing the bones of a skeleton. Derek Prince writes in ‘*Prophetic Guide to the End Times*’,

*Interpreting prophecy is just like putting together the pieces of a human skeleton.*

*If we want to do it successfully, we have to start with the right piece—and the right piece is the spine. When we get the spine in place, we can begin to fit the other members onto it.*

*The spine is Jesus’ discourse on the Mount of Olives, recorded in Matthew 24–25.*

*Sometimes we tend to overlook the fact that Jesus was a prophet. He was the greatest of all the great Hebrew prophets, and His greatest prophetic discourse is found in these two chapters*

If we are trying to identify the nature and course of last days events, we should not depend on the discovery of a single 'tooth' or 'vertebra' of scripture. We must first define and understand the spine of last days scripture, the words of Jesus in Matthew 24. This passage lays the foundation of our knowledge and studies..

*For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ.*

1 Corinthians 3:11

1The current entry to the 'missing link' in the Encyclopaedia Britannica is revealing **Missing link:** hypothetical extinct creature halfway in the evolutionary line between modern human beings and their anthropoid progenitors. ....Today it is recognized that the relationship of modern humans to the present anthropoid apes (e.g., chimpanzees) is through common ancestors rather than through direct descent. **These ancestors have yet to be identified, but ape-hominid divergence may have occurred 6 to 10 million years ago.**

## Let's Look Forwards

In *Let's Look Forwards*, we studied Matthew 24, while also paying attention to Paul's description of a final world leader in 2 Thessalonians 2. You can read these Bible passages in full in the Appendix.

In Matthew 24, Jesus taught us that He will return 'immediately' after a time of 'tribulation' prompted by 'the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet' (Matthew 24:29,21,15).

In 2 Thessalonians 2, Paul describes that a final world ruler, who the Apostle John calls the Anti-Christ (1 John 4:18), will 'set himself up in God's temple, proclaiming himself to be God' and be overthrown by Jesus, 'with the breath of His mouth and the splendour of His coming' (2 Thessalonians 2: 4,8).

In these passages, Jesus and Paul define the primary landmarks that we will pass before the Second Coming.

- |                                  |                                       |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1) The Rise of the Anti-Christ   | 2 Thessalonians 2:3-11                |
| 2) The Abomination of Desolation | Matthew 24:15-20                      |
| 3) The Time of Tribulation       | Matthew 24:21-28                      |
| 4) The Return of Christ          | Matthew 24:29-31, 2 Thessalonians 2:8 |

These are the 'spinal' events of the last days, as defined by Jesus and Paul.

## Daniel's Narrative and Prophetic Chapters

Since I was a small boy, I have enjoyed the Narnia books by CS Lewis and the films that followed. The first book of the series, *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, captured the hearts and imaginations of children around the world with its tales of an imaginary world with talking animals, a wicked witch who suspended Christmas, and the Lion, Aslan, who gave his life so that the deeper magic of good could triumph over evil.

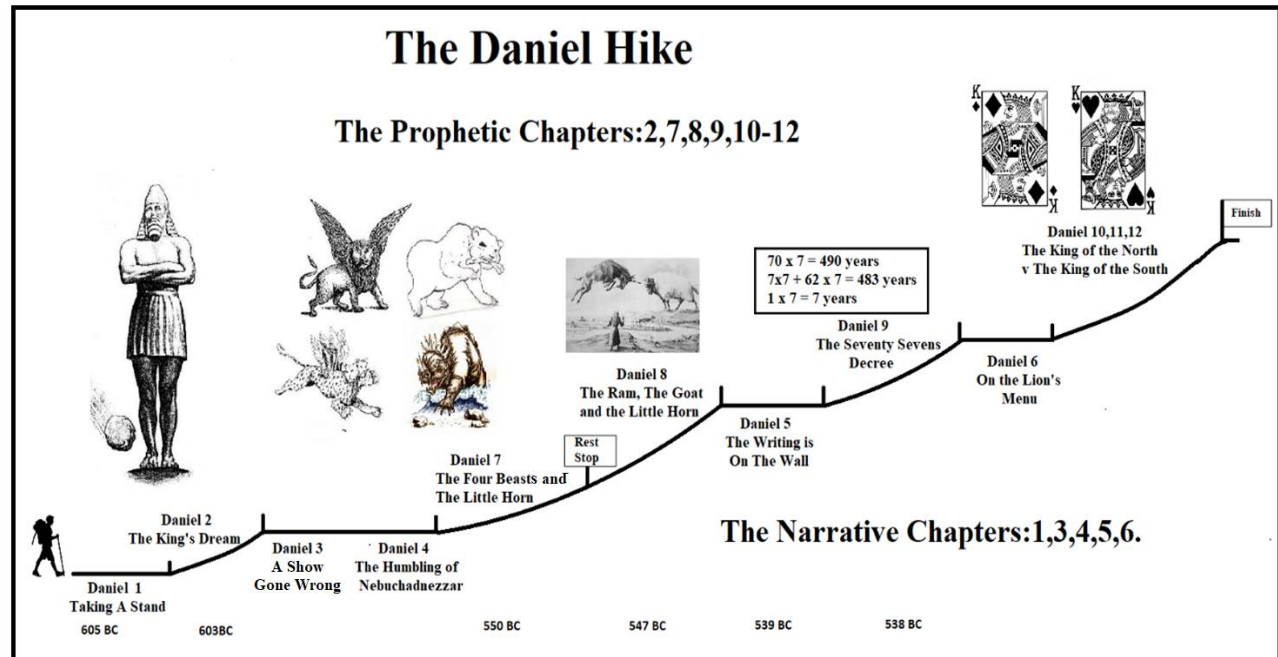
Later CS Lewis wrote two prequels, one of which, *The Magician's Nephew*, describes the history of Narnia, how it was founded and how the wicked witch ended up there.

If Matthew 24 represents *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* of last days scripture, the prophetic books of Daniel are *The Magician's Nephew*, providing historical background and perspective to these last days events.

In Daniel 2 we will read of the days when '*God will set up His kingdom that shall never be destroyed*' (vs 44). In Daniel 7, we will see the history of the empires of man, culminating with '*the son of Man coming with the clouds of heaven*' (vs 13). In Daniel 8, the Angel Gabriel teaches us about '*the time of the end*' (vs 17,19) and reappears in Daniel 9, with a timeframe for the '*abomination of desolation*' (vs 27). In the final three chapters, 10, 11 and 12, a heavenly visitor gives us in an in-depth description of the rise and reign of the Anti-Christ.

As well as seven prophetic chapters, the Book of Daniel also has five narrative chapters that describe Daniel's various adventures in ancient Babylon. They are also relevant because, in Revelation 17 and 18, we read of another Babylon who will once again '*rule over the kings of the earth*' in the last days just as ancient Babylon did in Daniel's time. (Revelation 17:18). As we read through the narrative chapters, we will take the opportunity to reflect on the reality that is 'Babylon' in the world today.

We will walk through the chapters of Daniel according to the chronology in which they took place. This will enable us to intersperse the steeper longer prophetic chapters with the gentler narrative chapters. The map below gives you an idea of the challenge in front of us.





## Acclimatization

Hikers and climbers in mountain ranges take time to acclimatize to conditions at high altitudes, where the air is thinner. To avoid altitude sickness, some climbers take pills that speed up the process of acclimatization.

Studying about the last days in the Book of Daniel can also give us a type of ‘altitude sickness’ for several reasons.

Firstly, we will be climbing some steep Everest-like prophetic mountains to look down at the world from God’s perspective.

*For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My thoughts than your thoughts (Isaiah 55:9).*

His perspective is so different from our own. The contrast can make us feel queasy, challenging the very way we look at the world and our place in it.

In addition to this, Daniel’s prophetic visions focus increasingly on the crisis that will envelop the world before Jesus returns. Daniel felt sick after them and dwelling on these times may have the same effect on us.

As we read, we must therefore keep reminding ourselves of God’s love, grace and provision. Gospel and Kingdom truths are our necessary ‘altitude pills’ to ensure that that we stay healthy and do not lose our balance as we hike through this challenging and somewhat daunting prophetic landscape. Some key principles, covered in *Let’s Look Forwards*, are included in the Appendix in the section ‘Troubled?’

## Solid Ground

The words ‘thin ice’ are frightening to those familiar with frozen lakes and rivers. “You’re walking on thin ice!” we warn, if someone lacks awareness and is skirting close to danger!

We sometimes treat last days scripture rather like ‘thin ice’, as if it is dangerous to study these prophetic passages. Instead of venturing onto passages of prophetic scripture ourselves, we tend to depend on what other people say. A broad brush of different opinions reported to us while we stand safely on the shore seems the safest option. After all, wouldn’t we be foolish to step out on the thin ice of Bible prophecy ourselves?

How different this is to what the Word of God says about prophecy. Jesus said that His words about the last days are the firmest ground imaginable.

*Heaven and Earth shall pass away, but my words shall never pass away.*

Matthew 24:35

Peter the Apostle agrees by describing the prophetic Word as ‘*completely reliable*’.

*We also have the prophetic message as something completely reliable, and you will do well to pay attention to it.*

2 Peter 1:19

We will therefore be walking through the prophetic chapters in full before studying them so that we can experience them first-hand. By God's grace, they will be imprinted on us as they were on Daniel.

### **Prayer**

Father,

We thank You for the solid rock of Your prophetic Word that You have provided for our instruction and encouragement. We thank You for the good news of Christ's return, which is confirmed throughout the Book of Daniel. We surrender to Your Holy Spirit as we read. We understand that *'the person without the Spirit cannot understand the things that come from the Spirit of God because they are discerned only through the Spirit'* (1 Corinthians 2:9). We pray therefore that you will fill us and renew us with Your Spirit as we read through these chapters. May we receive revelation, wisdom and understanding through Your Word. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

*The unfolding of your words gives light; it gives understanding to the simple. Psalm 119:130*

## **Chapter 2**

### **Taking a Stand**

#### **Daniel 1**

## Babylonian Boarding School

*In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came to Jerusalem and besieged it. And the Lord delivered Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand.*

*The king ordered Ashpenaz, chief of his court officials, to bring into the king's service young men to teach them the language and literature of the Babylonians.*

Daniel 1:1,3

At the age of seven I went to my first boarding school, Maidwell Hall in Northamptonshire. A large house set in beautiful grounds, with a lake and woodlands, it was an idyllic setting for a school with eighty boys aged from seven to thirteen. I thoroughly enjoyed the sports and academics and I flourished. It was a safe place.

The headmaster, Mr. Porch, was old-school. There was no written set of rules. He believed that rules merely encouraged children to break them for the sake of it. However, if a boy did something stupid or hurtful or messed around after lights out, a trip to the headmaster's study would follow where you would be disciplined by. We memorised scripture on Sunday before chapel, learning Psalm 23, 1 Corinthians 13 and the catechism of the Anglican Church. I was away from home, but I was secure, in this well-structured environment.

Like me, Daniel was enrolled at a boarding school. He had been taken from Jerusalem and marched about 1000 kms to Babylon, the largest, wealthiest and most powerful city in the world of that time. Daniel joined a three-year fast-track programme that trained government advisors and administrators. He flourished as I had.

Ancient Babylon was situated on a bend in the River Euphrates, about fifty miles south of Baghdad in present day Iraq. That part of the world was called 'Mesopotamia', Greek for 'Between the Rivers' – referring to the Tigris and the Euphrates.

Babylon's outer walls were wide enough for two chariots to pass each other along their top. Of its eight great gates, the Ishtar Gate was the widest, decorated in a blue lapis glaze and images of lions and bulls. It opened onto a broad central avenue along which great processions would pass during festivals. The Euphrates ran through the city and small boats would ferry people from side to side.

## Taking a Stand

*The king assigned them a daily amount of food and wine from the king's table. They were to be trained for three years, and after that they were to enter the king's service.*

Daniel 1:5

Eric Liddle, a devout Christian athlete, refused to take part in the qualifying races for the 100 metres at the 1924 Olympics because they were scheduled on the Sabbath. Eric instead entered the 400 metres. His previous best time of 49.6 seconds was modest by international standards and he did well to reach the final. On the morning of the race, he was handed a folded square of paper on which he read the message '*He that honours Me, I will honour*' (1 Samuel 2:30). Eric was deeply moved and won the race with a time of 47.6 seconds, a full two seconds faster than his previous best. His story is celebrated in the Oscar winning film, *Chariots of Fire*.

Like Eric Liddle, Daniel honoured God by taking a stand of faith in Babylon and then turned in a similarly successful performance.

As part of his training to become a King's Counsellor, Daniel and the other young men were privileged to eat and drink the same food as the King. Daniel knew that many items on their menu were forbidden by Mosaic law. He recognized that God's law was not restrictive for its own sake, but purposeful to assist him to live and perform to the peak of his abilities.

Daniel asked permission to eat from a healthier menu and negotiated a ten-day vegetable and water diet. At the end of the ten days, Daniel and his friends were visibly much healthier than the other students who are eating the luxuries of the king's table. From then on, they kept their healthy diet, forgoing the rich foods and wines.

At the end of the three-year course, Daniel and the other young men, interviewed by King Nebuchadnezzar himself, were found to be ten times wiser and more knowledgeable than their peers.

Daniel's obedience laid the foundation for his achievements throughout his life. His commitment to God and his spiritual disciplines enabled him to stand strong amid the many challenges he faced in a lifetime living in Babylon.

Like Daniel in the king's palace, we also live in a society that satisfies the appetites of an increasingly ungodly population. Compromise in our habits will hinder our ability to run the race and achieve all that God plans for us.

Reflecting on the lifestyle choices of Daniel and Eric Liddle makes me want to reassess everything in my life; from what I eat and drink, to my schedule and what I allow myself for 'entertainment'. I understand that there will be a great improvement in my performance if I keep my standards high, as they did. My attitude to worldly beliefs and practices will impact my altitude, how far and high I can go for God.

## **Babylon the Great**

Babylon the Great, the ruling last days power of Revelation 17 and 18 (see in the Appendix), is also marked by her '*excessive luxuries*' as ancient Babylon was (Revelation 18:3).

John visualizes this latter-day power as a woman, '*dressed in purple and scarlet . . . glittering with gold, precious stones and pearls*'. '*The inhabitants of the earth were intoxicated with the wine of her adulteries*'. '*She rules over the kings of the world*' and '*her merchants were the world's important people*'. (Revelation 17:4,2,18, 18:23).

Babylon the Great is rich, materialistic and decadent, much like ancient Babylon. As Daniel avoided the 'royal food and wines', God's children today need to discern and avoid the intoxicating adulteries and temptations of this great Babylon of the last days.

*If you stay away from sin you will be like one of these vessels made of purest gold—the very best in the house—so that Christ himself can use you for his highest purposes.*

2 Timothy 2:21 LB

## **Chapter 3**

### **The King's Dream**

#### **Daniel 2**

## A Hilltop View

From the age of twelve, I attended my next boarding school, Winchester College in Hampshire, UK. These were less happy days as I struggled to adapt to life as a teenager growing into adulthood. My father had passed on when I was four and I became acutely aware that I lacked any sort of male role model. I struggled to navigate the rather tumultuous and chaotic environment, which was less secure and ordered than my previous school.

Next to the school, stood St Catherine's Hill, which looked down on the town and the surrounding villages. As part of some longstanding tradition, once a year at the crack of dawn, six hundred College boys would troop up the hill for a five-minute prayer, watch the sun rise and drowsily stumble back down again. Though in times past this might have been a sacred event where the presence of God was keenly felt, it was certainly not the case in my time!

There was something, though, about climbing the hill. Sometimes in the summer I would go by myself up to the top and contemplate the town below, looking at the little 'matchbox' cars and 'shoebox' houses. I liked the perspective from the hilltop, where I could see the 'smallness' of daily human existence and sense within myself the possibilities of greater horizons, truths and purposes.

In Daniel Chapter 2, we climb to a prophetic hilltop with a panoramic view of world history. We will see world empires rise and fall like waves on the shore of time until the Kingdom of God reigns eternal over all.

## The King's Dream

At the beginning of the chapter, we join King Nebuchadnezzar as he wakes from a vivid dream. He wants to know what it means! There is one catch. It appears he has forgotten it. He wants his counsellors to tell him *both* the dream *and* the interpretation! His counsellors play for time, "*There isn't a man alive who can tell others what they have dreamed. This is an impossible thing!*" (vs 10). But to no avail! Nebuchadnezzar is so frustrated that he orders that all his counsellors be executed! The order goes out! In the nick of time, Daniel is granted an audience with the king and a stay of execution. That same night, in a vision, God reveals to Daniel the King's dream as well as its interpretation. We join the narrative as Daniel returns to the throne room.

### Daniel 2: 26-28, 31-35

26. The king asked Daniel "Are you able to tell me what I saw in my dream and interpret it?"

27,28. Daniel replied, "No wise man, enchanter, magician or diviner can explain to the King the mystery he has asked about, but there is a God in heaven who reveals mysteries. He has shown King Nebuchadnezzar what will happen in the days to come. Your dream and the visions that passed through your mind as you were lying in bed are these:

31. There before you stood a large statue—dazzling and awesome in appearance.

32,33. The head of the statue was made of pure gold. Its chest and arms of silver, its belly and thighs of bronze, its legs of iron, its feet partly of iron and partly of baked clay.



34. While you were watching, a rock was cut out, but not by human hands. It struck the statue on its feet of iron and clay and smashed them.

35. Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver and the gold were all broken to pieces and became like chaff on a threshing floor in the summer. The wind swept them away without leaving a trace.

But the rock that struck the statue became a huge mountain and filled the whole earth.



### **Daniel's Interpretation – Daniel 2:37-45**

36. This was the dream, and now we will interpret it to the King.

37,38. Your Majesty, you are the king of kings. The God of heaven has given you dominion and power and might and glory; in your hands he has placed all mankind and the beasts of the field and the birds in the sky. Wherever they live, he has made you ruler over them all. You are that head of gold.

39. After you, another kingdom will arise, inferior to yours.

Next, a third kingdom, one of bronze, will rule over the whole earth.

40. Finally, there will be a fourth kingdom, strong as iron—for iron breaks and smashes everything—and as iron breaks things to pieces, so it will crush and break all the others.

41-43. Just as you saw that the feet and toes were partly of baked clay and partly of iron, so this will be a divided kingdom; yet it will have some of the strength of iron in it, even as you saw iron mixed with clay. As the toes were partly iron and partly clay, so this kingdom will be partly strong and partly brittle. And just as you saw the iron mixed with baked clay, so the people will be a mixture and will not remain united, any more than iron mixes with clay.

44. In the time of those kings, the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be destroyed, nor will it be left to another people. It will crush all those kingdoms and bring them to an end, but this kingdom will endure forever.

45. This is the meaning of the vision of the rock cut out of a mountain, but not by human hands—a rock that broke the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver and the gold to pieces.

## God's History Lesson of the Future

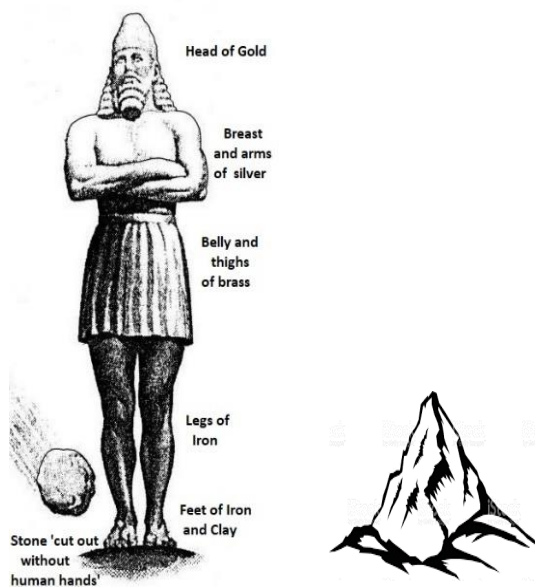
*But there is a God in heaven who reveals secrets, and He has made known to King Nebuchadnezzar what will be in the latter days.*

Daniel 2:28 NKJV

The king dreamt of an awesome multi-level statue, with a head of gold, breast and arms of silver, belly and thighs of brass, legs of iron, and feet and toes of iron and baked clay.

The statue looks formidable, but a stone, cut out without human hands, strikes the statue violently in its feet, turning it to dust. The stone grows and grows till it becomes a mountain that fills the whole world (vs 31-35).

It's a simple dream that can be described in two short paragraphs, yet as we will see, it encompasses 2,500 years of world history.



Daniel then gives the king the interpretation of the dream.

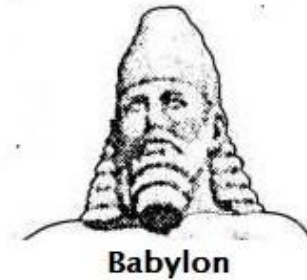
The four different levels of the statue represent four world kingdoms or empires.

Nebuchadnezzar himself is represented by the head of gold. The final empire, represented by the iron legs, will be especially brutal, crushing all opponents. Over time, this last empire will become divided into pieces, some strong and some brittle, represented by the statue's feet and toes that are part of iron and part of baked clay.

Daniel explains that it is '*in the time of those kings*' (vs 44), that God will set up His kingdom, which will endure forever.

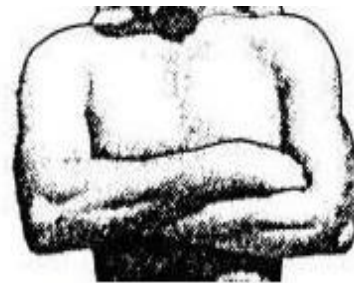
## The Four Kingdoms

**Daniel tells Nebuchadnezzar that he, the king, is the statue's head of gold.** The neo-Babylonian Empire dated from 626 BC – 539 BC and ruled much of the civilized world. Nebuchadnezzar was king from 606 BC – 562 BC, the longest ruling of all the Babylonian kings.



**Babylon**

**Daniel goes on to say an inferior kingdom will rise next.** Darius the Mede, who later put Daniel in the lion's den, led the invasion of Babylon in 539BC. He was eventually eclipsed by Cyrus the Great of Persia.



**Medo-Persian**

**This dual rule of Medes and Persians, or the Medo-Persian empire is suitably represented by the breast and two arms of silver.**

**Daniel says that a third kingdom will follow.** We know from history that the Greek empire led by Alexander the Great smashed the Persian armies at the battle of Gaugamela in 331 BC.

The Greeks were deeply interested in philosophy and spiritual matters as well as exploring sexuality. The Greek empire is therefore aptly represented by the thighs and belly of brass.



**Greece**

**Daniel says a fourth brutal kingdom will rise, as strong as iron that will crush all the others.**

The Roman empire is thought to have replaced the Greek empire around 44 BC. Its effects are still felt today with much of the world's languages deriving from Latin and much of its laws from the Roman legal system.

In around 285 AD Rome became so large and unwieldy that it divided into two separate sections the Eastern Roman Empire and the Western Roman Empire. How suitable that **the Roman Empire is represented by the legs of iron in Nebuchadnezzar's statue!**



Rome

In Daniel's dream the iron legs of this fourth empire continue into the feet of iron and clay. Since the end of Roman Empire, Europe has retained much of its world power. The UK, France, Germany, Spain, Portugal, Italy, Belgium and Holland, colonized most of the globe, while never uniting into a single power.

Daniel aptly describes the colonial powers in this way. *'And just as you saw the iron mixed with baked clay, so the people will be a mixture and will not remain united, any more than iron mixes with clay'* (Daniel 2:34).

These colonial powers, like Rome, crushed cultures and civilizations around the world imposing their own languages, customs and religious practices. Most recently the USA, a country born of European immigration, what one might call a child of Europe, has risen to dominance. In the feet of the statue, it appears that God sees the colonial system and possibly American power as well, as a continuation of the fourth 'Roman' empire.

**The feet and toes of iron and clay must represent our present divided system of power.** Some parts are strong, perhaps ruled by an 'iron' leader or dictator, and some are weaker, perhaps ruled by the more brittle democratic form of government.

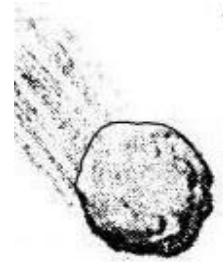


Dictatorships/ Democracies

**Daniel says of the toes, that 'In the time of those kings, the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be destroyed'** (Daniel 2:44).

**It is at this time that God's kingdom intervenes when the stone, 'cut out without hands', strikes the statue on the toes.**

What or who is this stone? Jesus, born not by human but divine will and power, is the stone who will return in the sky with power and glory to set up the Kingdom of God (Matthew 24:30).



**Jesus Returns**

Jesus' return will not reform or renovate man's kingdoms. They will be violently overthrown and shall be no more.

He will introduce the Kingdom of God, which will fill the whole world and stand forever. Praise God! Hallelujah! This is the first sight of the happy ending to earth's trials and troubles!



**The Kingdom of God**

*The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!*

Revelation 11:15

In Daniel 2, the return of Jesus is confirmed as the key last days event that will result in the kingdom of God replacing the kingdoms of man.

Nebuchadnezzar, astounded by the dream and its interpretation, fell at Daniel's feet, and promoted him to the top job in the entire province of Babylon; a testimony to the power and accuracy of the revelation!

*Then King Nebuchadnezzar fell prostrate before Daniel and paid him honour and ordered that an offering and incense be presented to him.... Then the king placed Daniel in a high position and lavished many gifts on him. He made him ruler over the entire province of Babylon and placed him in charge of all its wise men.*

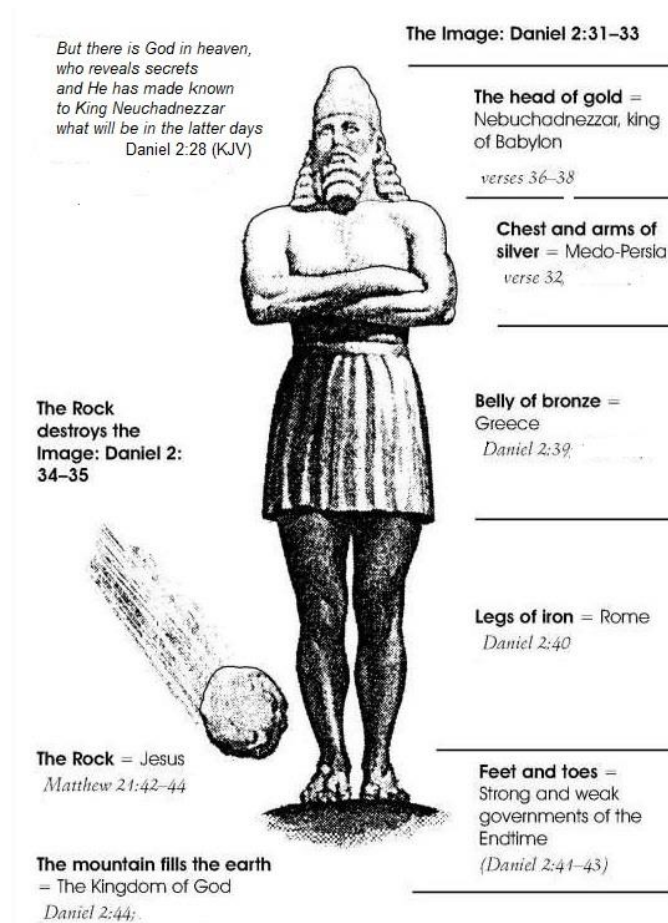
Daniel 2:46-48

## **Snapshot**

I trust you are thrilled by this grand prophetic view of world empires through history! Picture the prophetic statue in your mind's eye. Snap some photos to put in your scrapbook when you get home! We now have a 'God's-eye-view' of the geo-political history of the world from Daniel's time to today and into eternity. Remarkable!

In Daniel 2, God demonstrates that He lives outside of time and knows the beginning and end of all things. The revelation of God transcends our daily news and commentators. We understand from the dream that in God's eyes, the Roman Empire will endure, through European and American dominance, until Christ's return.

I feel like a grateful child on St Catherine's hill in Winchester. I am amazed that God has given us this grand view, so much more than the little 'match box' cars and 'shoe box' houses.



## **Chapter 4**

### **A Show Gone Wrong**

#### **Daniel 3**

## Building a Statue to Your Own Religious Experience

Coming back from Africa in 2018 was profoundly challenging for me. I had had so many wonderful experiences ministering the Gospel to teenagers in the township high schools in Johannesburg. God was *'near to them that are of a broken heart'* (Psalm 34:18) and manifested His love for these young people in our after-school meetings, touching and blessing us as we came into His presence.

However, when it was time to leave for family reasons, I found it hard. I had made a god of my experiences in these schools and when duty called elsewhere, I resisted the change and struggled to adapt to my new circumstances in the UK.

Similarly, Nebuchadnezzar's dream in the previous chapter had been a powerful religious experience for him. Through the multi-layered statue, God had revealed to him the future of empires and acknowledged him as the head of gold.

Perhaps in memory of this, Nebuchadnezzar now builds his own statue or 'image' of gold, ninety feet or eight stories high. Maybe he wanted everyone to partake of his own religious experience! He literally made a god of it, just as I had.

## The Show Goes Wrong

After setting up the statue, Nebuchadnezzar calls his whole civil service to its dedication. He organizes an orchestra and orders that when the music plays everyone should bow down to the statue. If not, they will be thrown into a furnace set up nearby.

When the music plays, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego are the only men left standing! Embarrassed in front of his government, the furious king calls the three Hebrews and gives them another opportunity to bow before the statue and to help him save face. They bravely reply that their God is able to deliver them from the furnace: but even if He doesn't, they will still not bow down to the image.

Nebuchadnezzar is incandescent at this disruption of his carefully choreographed event. He calls for the furnace to be heated seven times hotter. This is overkill quite literally as the soldiers who throw the Hebrews into the furnace are themselves consumed by the fire.

Our God is able! Nebuchadnezzar looks into the furnace and sees the three Hebrews walking and talking with a fourth man who looks like a son of God! Nebuchadnezzar calls them to come out. When they do, there is not even a sniff of smoke on them. He praises them for their faithfulness to their God and decrees that anybody slandering the God of the Hebrews should be cut in pieces. He has seen the living God in action.

This ancient story of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego speaks to us of the blessed company of Jesus in every trial; that God often keeps us *through* trials and crises as opposed to delivering us *from* them. Scripture teaches us that trials and difficulties have a divine purpose to perfect us (James 1: 2-4) and fit us for heaven (1 Peter 4:13). We must be prepared to sometimes pass through rather than escape from them.

## Another Statue



There is another statue or image, seen by John in Revelation 13, set up in the last days.

*It ordered them to set up an image in honour of the beast . . . The second beast was given power to give breath to the image of the first beast, so that the image could speak and cause all who refused to worship the image to be killed. (Revelation 13;14,15).*

*All inhabitants of the earth will worship the beast—all whose names have not been written in the Lamb's book of life (Revelation 13:8).*

Knowing that Jesus will return for us, His children, '*immediately **after** the time of tribulation*' (Matthew 24:29-31), we recognize that, like Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, we ourselves may pass *through* the difficult times of the beast's image, rather than being delivered *from* them. This story will carry a special significance at that time.

## **Chapter 5**

### **Nebuchadnezzar's Transformation**

#### **Daniel 4**

## My Transformation on a Hill in Bristol

After Winchester College I went to Bristol University to study Economics, Politics and Philosophy. I continued to struggle without a blueprint to follow that a father might have provided. In my second year, I moved out of a shared accommodation into a room by myself to try to 'find myself'.

One day I was walking down the hill that led from Clifton, where most of the university activities took place, into Bristol. In the distance I spotted a teenager, stopping and engaging passers-by. He did not look like a Uni student and wore an old Parka jacket with a fur hood. I noticed he had a Bible in his hand and was impressed. Here was someone who had something important to say, something to impart, more than I could say for myself and my fellow students.

I stopped and he spoke to me at length about Christianity and the Bible. In response, I asked him, "What is the difference between you and me that you believe in all this and I don't? I wish it was true, but God seems so very far away."

He then asked the question that changed my life, "Have you ever asked Jesus into your heart?" I had never heard that question in all my days of attending school chapel. He suggested that we pray right there on the street. I had tried and done many stupid things in my short life, so I felt it was foolish to turn down such a simple invitation.

I stooped slightly and closed my eyes as I repeated the simple prayer the young man led me in. As I prayed, I saw in my mind's eye a vision of a resplendent spiritual dimension co-existing with our physical one. "This could be it!!" I thought, "Jesus could really be the truth!" It was the beginning, the first step, of my transformation.

## The Transformation of Nebuchadnezzar

In Daniel 4, we read of King Nebuchadnezzar's testimony of his own transformation in a letter to all the world. Nebuchadnezzar begins with these words,

*(From) King Nebuchadnezzar, To the nations and peoples of every language, who live in all the earth: May you prosper greatly! It is my pleasure to tell you about the miraculous signs and wonders that the Most High God has performed for me (Daniel 4:1,2).*

Nebuchadnezzar's letter begins with another dream which, once again, no-one is able to interpret! Daniel is finally called in to help again.

This time Nebuchadnezzar has dreamt of a magnificent tree, so tall it could be seen by the whole world. Its fruit could feed everybody, and its branches gave shade to all. Then an angel came from heaven and ordered that the tree should be cut down, leaving only its stump. The angel decrees that the tree, now referred to as a person, would eat grass and be given the mind of an animal for seven years.

Daniel is disturbed by the dream. He finally breaks it to the king that he, Nebuchadnezzar, is the tree. He will be humbled to live like an animal for seven years, until he recognizes that his power comes from God, not himself. It appears that success has gone to Nebuchadnezzar's head, resulting in the mistreatment of the workers who have built up Babylon into a super-power.

Daniel tells Nebuchadnezzar that there may still be time to repent. Perhaps the judgement can be deferred if the king stops sinning and is merciful to the poor. The king listens and perhaps makes some small adjustments to his behaviour, but evidently not enough, for exactly a year later the dream comes true.

Nebuchadnezzar is on the roof of the palace looking down at Babylon, and declares:

*“Is not this the great Babylon I have built as the royal residence, **by my mighty power and for the glory of my majesty?**” (vs 30).*

A voice comes from heaven, telling Nebuchadnezzar that he will be removed from the throne for seven years.

*“This is what is decreed for you, King Nebuchadnezzar: Your royal authority has been taken from you. You will be driven away from people and will live with the wild animals; you will eat grass like the ox. Seven times will pass by for you until you acknowledge that the Most High is sovereign over all kingdoms on earth and gives them to anyone he wishes” (Daniel 4:31,32).*

From that moment, the decree is fulfilled. Nebuchadnezzar becomes like an animal eating grass and remains the same for seven years.

Finally, at the end of that period, his mind is returned to him. He is restored to the throne, but he now gives glory to God, closing his letter with these words.

*“Now, I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and glorify and honour the King of Heaven, the Judge of all, whose every act is right and good; for He is able to take those who walk proudly and push them into the dust!” (Daniel 4, vs 37).*

Nebuchadnezzar was transformed! He gave God the glory and shared His testimony with the whole world! Praise God!

## **The Pride of Babylon in the Last Days**

The pride of Nebuchadnezzar is not confined to 6<sup>th</sup> century BC. Babylon the Great, the great last days power in Revelation, is depicted as a boasting prostitute.

*The name written on her forehead was a mystery: **BABYLON THE GREAT: THE MOTHER OF PROSTITUTES AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.***

*She held a golden cup in her hand, filled with abominable things and the filth of her adulteries.*

*In her heart she boasts, ‘I sit enthroned as queen. I am not a widow; I will never mourn’*

*Woe! Woe to you, great city, where all who had ships on the sea became rich through her wealth! (Revelation 17:3,5,7 18:19).*

The pride of Nebuchadnezzar is replicated in this last days Babylon. She believes her power and wealth make her invulnerable! Because of the language of adultery, we understand that this power may well once have been a bride of Christ, possessing a Christian heritage. But she has fallen:

*Fallen! Fallen is Babylon the Great! She has become a dwelling for demons and a haunt for every impure spirit, a haunt for every unclean bird, a haunt for every unclean and detestable animal* (Revelation 18:2).

It is important to discern this last days' power and the mystery of Babylon the Great.

We read that the woman '*sits on seven hills*' (Revelation 17:9), a reference to the seven hills that Rome was founded on. Many have thus concluded that Babylon represents ancient Rome, rich, powerful and cruel at the time Paul was writing, or the Roman Catholic Church that was so powerful in the Middle Ages in Europe.

However, as we saw in Daniel 2, in God's eyes the old Roman Empire continues to this day and may well be manifested in the colonizing European powers and the USA, which was founded by European immigrants.

As a small exercise, ask yourself these questions:

Which power rules today over the kings of the earth? Revelation 17:18

Which power is known for her pride? Revelation 18:7

Which power is the greatest importer of luxury items? Revelation 18: 3, 11-17

Which power is or has been a Christian nation? Revelation 17:2, 18:2,3,9

The answers to these questions will help you start to identify the last days Babylon.

## **Chapter 6**

### **The Four Beasts and the Little Horn**

#### **Daniel 7**

## Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde

In *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* by R L Stevenson, the main character, Dr Jekyll, created a potion that allowed him to satisfy his darker appetites without suffering the resulting stabs of conscience. At night, after taking the potion, Dr Jekyll turned into Mr. Hyde, sensual and devoid of morality. He then started to live a double life, respectable Dr Jekyll by day, unaware of the activities of the immoral Mr Hyde by night.

As time goes on, Mr Hyde grows increasingly violent and starts to manifest himself even without the potion. This finally leads to the death of both Dr Jekyll and his evil alter ego Mr Hyde.

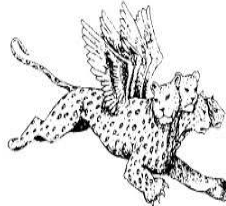
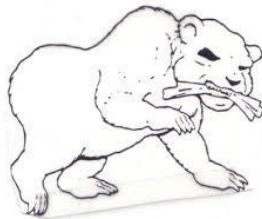
The label 'Jekyll and Hyde' describes a person with wildly contradictory behaviour, especially in their private and public selves. We are shocked when we discover that a seemingly respectable person, 'Dr Jekyll', also behaves like 'Mr Hyde'.

Our human empires can outwardly appear to be 'developed' and 'highly civilized' like Dr Jekyll. In Daniel 7 we will learn that in God's eyes they are brutal and destructive like Mr Hyde.

## Empires as Beasts

In Daniel 7, we see a divine vision of man's empires as brutal beasts.

Daniel has this dream or 'night vision' in the first year of the reign of Belshazzar, the grandson of Nebuchadnezzar.



### The Dream – Daniel 7: 2-14 (NIV)

1. In the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon, Daniel had a dream, and visions passed through his mind as he was lying in bed. He wrote down the substance of his dream.

2,3. In my vision at night I looked, and there before me were the four winds of heaven churning up the great sea. **Four great beasts, each different from the others, came up out of the sea.**

4. **The first was like a lion, and it had the wings of an eagle.** I watched until its wings were torn off and it was lifted from the ground so that it stood on two feet like a human being, and the mind of a human was given to it.

5. **And there before me was a second beast, which looked like a bear.** It was raised up on one of its sides, and it had three ribs in its mouth between its teeth. It was told, 'Get up and eat your fill of flesh!'

6. **After that, I looked, and there before me was another beast, one that looked like a leopard.** And on its back, it had four wings like those of a bird. This beast had four heads, and it was given authority to rule.

7. **After that, in my vision at night I looked, and there before me was a fourth beast—terrifying and frightening and very powerful.** It had large iron teeth; it crushed and devoured its victims and trampled underfoot whatever was left. **It was different from all the former beasts, and it had ten horns.**

8. While I was thinking about the horns, **there before me was another horn**, a little one, which came up among them; and three of the first horns were uprooted before it. **This horn had eyes like the eyes of a human being and a mouth that spoke boastfully.**

9,10. As I looked, thrones were set in place, and the Ancient of Days took his seat. His clothing was as white as snow; the hair of his head was white like wool. His throne was flaming with fire, and its wheels were all ablaze. A river of fire was flowing, coming out from before him. Thousands upon thousands attended him; ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him. The court was seated, and the books were opened.

11,12. Then I continued to watch because of the boastful words the horn was speaking. **I kept looking until the beast was slain, and its body destroyed and thrown into the blazing fire.** <sup>12</sup> (The other beasts had been stripped of their authority but were allowed to live for a period of time.)

13,14. **In my vision at night I looked, and there before me was one like a son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven.** He approached the Ancient of Days and was led into his presence. He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all nations and peoples of every language worshiped him. **His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed.**

### **The Interpretation – Daniel 7: 16-27**

16. I (Daniel) approached one of those standing there (at the throne of God) and asked him the meaning of all this. So, he told me and gave me the interpretation of these things.

17,18. **‘The four great beasts are four kings that will rise from the earth. But the holy people of the Most High will receive the kingdom and will possess it forever—yes, for ever and ever.’**

19-22. Then I wanted to know the meaning of the fourth beast, which was different from all the others and most terrifying, with its iron teeth and bronze claws—the beast that crushed and devoured its victims and trampled underfoot whatever was left.

I also wanted to know about the ten horns on its head and about the other horn that came up, before which three of them fell—the horn that looked more imposing than the others and that had eyes and a mouth that spoke boastfully.



As I watched, this horn was waging war against the holy people and defeating them, until the Ancient of Days came and pronounced judgment in favour of the holy people of the Most High, and the time came when they possessed the kingdom.

23. He gave me this explanation, **‘The fourth beast is a fourth kingdom that will appear on earth. It will be different from all the other kingdoms and will devour the whole earth, trampling it down and crushing it.**

24,25. **‘The ten horns are ten kings who will come from this kingdom. After them another king will arise, different from the earlier ones; he will subdue three kings. He will speak against the Most High and oppress His holy people and try to change the set times and the laws. The holy people will be delivered into his hands for a time, times and half a time.**

26,27. **‘But the court will sit, and his power will be taken away and completely destroyed forever. Then the sovereignty, power and greatness of all the kingdoms under heaven will be handed over to the holy people of the Most High.** His kingdom will be an everlasting kingdom, and all rulers will worship and obey him.’

28. This is the end of the matter. I, Daniel, was deeply troubled by my thoughts, and my face turned pale, but I kept the matter to myself.

## **The Dream: Summary**

Daniel sees four beasts rising out of a tumultuous sea: the first like a lion, the second like a bear, the third like a leopard. The fourth beast is indescribable and cruel. It has ten horns.

Daniel sees one more horn rise, having eyes and a mouth that speaks boastfully. It uproots three of the ten horns.

Then Daniel sees the judgement throne of God. The final beast is destroyed as the Son of God appears in the clouds of heaven. At the judgement throne of God, the Son of God is given eternal authority and glory and all nations shall worship him forever.

Amazingly in the dream, Daniel personally approaches the throne of God. He asks one of the people standing there what his dream meant.

He is told, *‘The four great beasts are four kings that will rise from the earth’* (vs 17).

## The Interpretation of the Four Beasts

Let us first look at the first three beasts in detail.

*The Dream: The first was like a lion, and it had the wings of an eagle.*

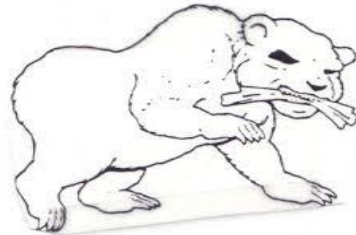
*I watched until its wings were torn off and it was lifted from the ground so that it stood on two feet like a human being, and the mind of a human was given to it (vs 4).*



The first beast is like a lion that is transformed into a human being! Theologians conclude the lion represents Babylon and its longest-reigning ruler, Nebuchadnezzar. As we read in the previous chapter, God humbled Nebuchadnezzar for a seven-year period. When his mind was restored, Nebuchadnezzar repented of his pride and cruelty and gave glory to God. This beast ceased being bestial and became a godly human! The lion in the vision tells of Nebuchadnezzar's transformation.

*And there before me was a second beast, which looked like a bear.*

*It was raised up on one of its sides, and it had three ribs in its mouth between its teeth. It was told, 'Get up and eat your fill of flesh!' (vs 5)*



The second beast, the bear, represents the Medo-Persian empire, which would conquer the Babylonians at the end of Belshazzar's reign. The fact that it was raised up on one side is an illustration of the fact that Cyrus the Persian's power was greater than the first ruler, Darius the Mede. The three ribs are understood to be the three empires that the Medo-Persians consumed: the Egyptian, Assyrian and Babylonian.

*After that, I looked, and there before me was another beast, one that looked like a leopard.*

*And on its back it had four wings like those of a bird. This beast had four heads, and it was given authority to rule (vs 6)*



The third beast, a four headed leopard, represents the Empire of Greece, which was swift as a leopard and conquered the Medo-Persian Empire.

At the height of its power, in 331 BC, its renowned military leader, Alexander the Great, died of fever aged thirty-three. The Greek Empire was then divided between Alexander's four generals, Cassander,

Lysimachus, Seleucus and Ptolemy. They are aptly represented by the four heads and the four wings of the leopard.

These simple images foretell the future of the world many hundreds of years before it happened. They give us confidence that the latter parts of the prophecy will be fulfilled in the same way.

*After that, in my vision at night I looked, and there before me was a fourth beast—terrifying and frightening and very powerful. It had large iron teeth; it crushed and devoured its victims and trampled underfoot whatever was left.*

*It was different from all the former beasts, and it had ten horns (vs 7)*



At the throne of God, Daniel is told:

*The fourth beast is a fourth kingdom that will appear on earth. It will be different from all the other kingdoms and will devour the whole earth, trampling it down and crushing it (vs 23a).*

The Empire of Rome followed the Greek empire and crushed all other powers.

Rome's destruction of Carthage was particularly cruel. Though Carthage, the capital of the ancient Phoenician empire, posed no military threat, the senator Cato the Elder repeatedly declared "*Delenda est Carthago*" meaning Carthage must be destroyed.

Roman envoys demanded the Carthaginians evacuate their capital city and move it fifteen kilometres back from the sea. This would have destroyed Carthage and its ability to trade. Carthage refused and Rome attacked and laid waste to one of the greatest cities of ancient times. The war in the end was about financial power and trade and not about security.

In this dream, as in Daniel 2, this fourth empire endures to the return of Christ. How can this be if the Roman Empire came to its end in 476 AD?

As in Daniel 2, we are faced with the possibility that the European powers, their colonial system and offspring America, that grew out of the old Roman Empire, are the ongoing part of this fourth beast, that has continued to '*devour the whole earth*' (vs23).

## Ten Horns

*The ten horns are ten kings who will come from this kingdom (vs 23b).*

Daniel is told that the ten horns that rise from this beast are ten kings that will come out of this empire (Daniel 7:23).

We remember that Daniel prophesied about the (presumably ten) toes of Nebuchadnezzar's dream in Daniel 2.

*In the time of **those kings**, the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be destroyed (Daniel 2:44).*

We also read of ten kings in Revelation 17.

*The ten horns you saw are ten kings who have not yet received a kingdom, but **who for one hour will receive authority as kings along with the beast** (Revelation 17:12).*

These three passages describe ten final rulers or leaders that will rise to power out of this final beast in the last days. This is important new information not revealed to us previously in Matthew 24 or 2 Thessalonians 2.

## The Little Horn

*(From the dream) While I was thinking about the horns, there before me was another horn, a little one, which came up among them; and three of the first horns were uprooted before it.*

*This horn had eyes like the eyes of a human being and a mouth that spoke boastfully (vs 8,9).*



Daniel is given the interpretation of the little horn.

*And, another king will arise, different from the earlier ones; he will subdue three kings.*

*He will speak against the Most High and oppress his holy people and try to change the set times and the laws. The holy people will be delivered into his hands for a time, times and half a time (Daniel 7:24,25).*

We learn of one final king, who will rise and destroy three of the ten kings.

This is the first view we have of the final world leader, the Anti-Christ, referred to by Paul in 2 Thessalonians 2.

*Don't let anyone deceive you in any way, for that day (of the Lord's coming) will not come until the rebellion occurs and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the man doomed to destruction. (2 Thessalonians 2:3).*

In Daniel 7 we learn that this final 'king' will subdue or uproot three of the ten kings. He will 'speak against the Most High' (God) and 'oppress the Holy people'. He will try to change 'the set times and laws' and God's people will be delivered into his hands for 'a time and times and half a time'.

'A time and times and half a time' is understood by theologians to represent a three and a half year period. The rule of this Anti-Christ has a specified time-limit of three and a half years. (This the first of eight times that we see this time-frame in last days scripture – Daniel 9:27, Daniel 12:7, Revelation 11:2,3, 12:6,14 13:5).

## The End of the Horn and the Return of Christ

In his dream, the throne of God appears, and Daniel watches as the beast or Anti-Christ is destroyed, and Jesus comes in the clouds of heaven (vs 9-11).

*As I looked, thrones were set in place, and the Ancient of Days took his seat (vs 9) . . . I continued to watch because of the boastful words the horn was speaking (vs 11). I kept looking until the beast was slain and its body destroyed and thrown into the blazing fire (vs 12)... there before me was one like a son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven (vs 13).*



The little horn, the Anti-Christ, is destroyed at Jesus' return and the fourth beast is finally overcome.

The interpretation given to Daniel finishes with these words:

*But the court will sit, and his (the final king's) power will be taken away and completely destroyed forever.*

*Then the sovereignty, power and greatness of all the kingdoms under heaven will be handed over to the holy people of the Most High. His kingdom will be an everlasting kingdom, and all rulers will worship and obey him (Daniel 7:26).*

As in Daniel 2, God's Kingdom reigns supreme at the end of the vision. The power and the sovereignty of all the nations will be handed over to Christians!

## Conclusion

What a remarkable, astonishing dream! The major empires of man are graphically depicted as cruel beasts. The fourth Roman Empire proves to be the most cruel and ungodly of them all. We see in this dream that, in God's eyes, this fourth empire continues and is living and active today.

We learn of ten final kings and a final proud leader, who will persecute God's people for three and a half years, a great time of trouble, until Christ returns bringing in God's everlasting kingdom.

We therefore have confirmation of both the time of trouble or tribulation spoken of by Jesus in Matthew 24, and of the Anti-Christ and his destruction described by Paul in 2 Thessalonians 2.

*And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will overthrow with the breath of his mouth and destroy by the splendour of his coming (2 Thessalonians 2: 8),*

We introduce a new landmark: ten final kings.

- |                                  |   |
|----------------------------------|---|
| 1) The Ten Kings                 | Daniel 7:23, Daniel 2:44, Revelation 17:12. |
| 2) The Rise of the Anti-Christ   | 2 Thessalonians 2:3-4, Daniel 7:23.         |
| 3) The Abomination of Desolation | Matthew 24:15-20.                           |
| 4) The Time of Tribulation       | Matthew 24:21-28, Daniel 7:23.              |
| 5) The Return of Christ          | Matthew 24:29-31, Daniel 2:44, 7:13         |
|                                  | 2 Thessalonians 2:8                         |

The Anti-Christ, the little horn, the final world leader, is the prominent character of the remaining prophetic chapters in the book of Daniel. We will start to build his scriptural profile, which we will add to as our journey continues.

**The Anti-Christ**

Daniel 7:20,23


He will subdue or 'uproot' three of the ten kings

He will speak against the Most High.

He will oppress the Holy people

He will try to change the laws and customs

God's people will be delivered into his hands for a time and times and half a time (3.5 years)



We can place the vision of Daniel 7 next to the Kings Dream of Daniel 2.

*But there is God in heaven, who reveals secrets and He has made known to King Neuchadnezzar what will be in the latter days Daniel 2:28 (KJV)*

**The Image: Daniel 2:31-33**

**The head of gold =** Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon  
*verses 36-38*

**Chest and arms of silver =** Medo-Persia  
*verse 32*

**Belly of bronze =** Greece  
*Daniel 2:39*

**Legs of iron =** Rome  
*Daniel 2:40*

**Feet and toes =** Strong and weak governments of the Endtime  
*(Daniel 2:41-43)*

**The Rock destroys the Image: Daniel 2:34-35**

**The Rock =** Jesus  
*Matthew 21:42-44*

**The mountain fills the earth =** The Kingdom of God  
*Daniel 2:44*

**The Four Beasts of Daniel 7**

**Babylon**

**Medo-Persia**

**Greece**

**Rome**

**The Final Ten Kings and the Anti-Christ**  
*Daniel 7:26*

*'His power will be taken away and completely destroyed for ever.'*

**In my vision at night I looked, and there before me was one like a son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven. Daniel 7:13**

**Then the sovereignty, power and greatness of all the kingdoms under heaven will be handed over to the holy people of the Most High. His kingdom will be an everlasting kingdom, and all rulers will worship and obey him. Daniel 7:27**

We see the consistency of Bible prophecy when describing the rise and fall of the kingdoms of the world and the final victory for Jesus, His people and His Kingdom. These prophetic chapters lay a firm historical foundation for the visions that are to come.

## Cognitive Dissonance

When I read Daniel's vision of the fourth beast I struggle with cognitive dissonance. I suffer psychological stress trying to reconcile God's perspective of the fourth beast with my own experience and view of the West and the UK in particular, where I grew up.

I have always seen our Roman-based, Western civilization, with some exceptions, as generally a force for good, like the good Dr Jekyll. On a personal note, I am British 'for goodness sake', impeccable manners, stiff upper lip, Shakespeare, Dickens, the Beatles, the internet, James Bond and the Queen! We are not only good, we are great! Great Britain! Yes, we may have been a little over-zealous in spreading our wonderful culture around the world, but wasn't it basically for everyone else's good?

However, on the other hand, I have come to see God's Word as the final authority on truth. He knows more than me, basically! He has a way of looking beyond the outward appearance and seeing the heart of the matter. I trust Him and I should consider His viewpoint that perhaps, we are part of this fourth



wild beast '*devouring the whole earth, trampling it down and crushing it*' (Daniel 7:23). God is telling us that in reality, in His perspective, we are more like Mr Hyde in our immorality and brutality.

When I study the back story of British and European colonialism and American foreign policy, I start to understand why God could see the Roman Empire and its descendants as a cruel beast. Haven't we trampled on other people's cultures, devoured other people's resources, and crushed resistance when it arose? As I contemplate these things, I realize that I have been deceived by outward appearances, that God's picture is true and the popular images of the benevolent British Empire and the American Dream are actually an illusion.

### **Adopting a New Nationality**

What is the path then for us who are citizens of these nations and cultures?

I believe it is to recognize that through the Gospel of Jesus Christ, we as Christians are already adopted into a new citizenship, the one eternal citizenship, that of the Kingdom of God. When I was born again, I stepped *fully* into the rights and responsibilities of a citizen of God's kingdom. God sees me not as a Brit but as a citizen and ambassador of the Kingdom of God.

*They (the followers of Jesus) are not of the world, even as I am not of it* (John 17:16).

*For He has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son He loves* (Colossians 1:13).

*But **our citizenship is in heaven**. And we eagerly await a Saviour from there, the Lord Jesus Christ* (Philippians 3:20).

That is my true identity.

My cognitive dissonance can dissolve away as I accept God's perspective on the fourth beast and recognize that I am no longer its citizen.

Instead, through the Gospel and the blood of Jesus, I am a fully-fledged citizen of the supernatural Kingdom of God. *Her ways are pleasant ways, and all her paths are peace* (Proverbs 3:17)!

I can enjoy my new citizenship while accepting the sad reality of my old one. Praise God and thank you Jesus! I hope you might be able to begin to do the same.



## Rest Stop

We have made it through the first five chapters of the hike. We have seen the return of Christ in both the King's Dream and Daniel's vision of the Four Beasts and the Little Horn. After receiving this last vision, Daniel wrote, *'I, Daniel, was deeply troubled by my thoughts, and my face turned pale, but I kept the matter to myself'* (Daniel 7:28). Perhaps you are also feeling troubled and shaken by what you have seen and read.

I would advise taking a little break. Have a drink from your flask, eat a sandwich and enjoy the view. We are in the Highlands of God's country. We can see both historical and future events laid out beneath us. Let the view imprint itself on you. Review some of the detail, so that when you return to the lowlands, you will not forget what you have seen. Congratulate yourself that you have made it this far and take some time to read from other devotional material to encourage yourself in God and His continual faithfulness.

It takes time to acclimatize to the altitude that God's Word has taken us to. Like climbers who spend several days at base camps so they can adjust to the conditions, I believe we too need time to adjust to the realities that the Book of Daniel has revealed.

## **Chapter 7**

### **The Ram, the Goat and the Big Horn**

#### **Daniel 8**

## Let's Talk About It

Stephen Jenkinson is the author of the award-winning book, *Die Wise*. Heading the counselling team of Canada's largest home-based palliative care programme, he worked with hundreds of dying people and their families. He encountered what he calls '*the deep death phobia and grief illiteracy*' that exists in the West.

He describes how families struggle to talk about the reality of death and dying. 'Love becomes a sheet of Teflon,' he explains, 'a firewall that the loved ones built around the dying person. Their understanding of love manifests in a grim refusal to inhabit the time that they're actually in.' This is sad. To make the most of any stage of life we need to be 'present' in the moment, acknowledge where we are, and embrace the reality of our journey.

Many are equally uncomfortable with conversations about the last days. Even though scripture speaks repeatedly of the last days and we are surrounded by many 'signs of the times', many churches are reluctant to acknowledge the reality of the times we live in, preferring to talk and behave as if it is not happening.

In the 6<sup>th</sup> Century BC God was *already* preparing us for the last days. In this vision of Daniel 8, received by Daniel in the third year of Belshazzar's reign, the angel Gabriel teaches Daniel about the time of the end.

"Son of man," he (Gabriel) said to me, "understand that **the vision concerns the time of the end**" (Daniel 8:17).

### The Vision: Daniel 8:1-14



1,2. In the third year of King Belshazzar's reign, I, Daniel, had a vision; after (similar to) the one that had already appeared to me. In my vision I saw myself in the citadel of Susa in the province of Elam; I was beside the Ulai Canal.

3. **I looked up, and there before me was a ram with two horns**, standing beside the canal, and the horns were long. One of the horns was longer than the other but grew up later.

4. I watched the ram as it charged toward the west and the north and the south. No animal could stand against it, and none could rescue from its power. It did as it pleased and became great.

5. As I was thinking about this, suddenly a goat with a prominent horn between its eyes came from the west, crossing the whole earth without touching the ground.

6,7. It came toward the two-horned ram I had seen standing beside the canal, and charged at it in great rage. I saw it attack the ram furiously, striking the ram and shattering its two horns. The ram was powerless to stand against it; the goat knocked it to the ground and trampled on it, and none could rescue the ram from its power.

8. The goat became very great, but at the height of its power the large horn was broken off, and in its place four prominent horns grew up toward the four winds of heaven.

9,10. Out of one of them came another horn, which started small but grew in power to the south and to the east and toward the Beautiful Land. It grew until it reached the host of the heavens, and it threw some of the starry host down to the earth and trampled on them.

11,12 It set itself up to be as great as the commander of the army of the LORD; **it took away the daily sacrifice from the LORD, and his sanctuary was thrown down. Because of rebellion, the LORD's people and the daily sacrifice were given over to it.** It prospered in everything it did, and **truth was thrown to the ground.**

13,14 Then I heard a holy one speaking, and another holy one said to him, "How long will it take for the vision to be fulfilled—the vision concerning the daily sacrifice, the rebellion that causes desolation, the surrender of the sanctuary and the trampling underfoot of the LORD's people?" He said to me, "It will take 2300 evenings and mornings; then the sanctuary will be re-consecrated."

### **The Interpretation: Daniel 8:15-26**

15. While I, Daniel, was watching the vision and trying to understand it, there before me stood one who looked like a man.

16,17. And I heard a man's voice from the Ulai calling, "Gabriel, tell this man the meaning of the vision." As he came near the place where I was standing, I was terrified and fell prostrate. "Son of man," he said to me, "**understand that the vision concerns the time of the end.**"

18,19. While he was speaking to me, I was in a deep sleep, with my face to the ground. Then he touched me and raised me to my feet. He said: "I am going to tell you what will happen later in the time of wrath, because **the vision concerns the appointed time of the end.**"

20, 21,22. "The two-horned ram that you saw represents **the kings of Media and Persia.** The shaggy goat is **the king of Greece,** and the large horn between its eyes is the first king. The four horns that replaced the one that was broken off represent four kingdoms that will emerge from his nation but will not have the same power.

23. "**In the latter part of their reign,** when rebels have become completely wicked, **a fierce-looking king, a master of intrigue, will arise.**"

24. "He will become very strong, but not by his own power. He will cause astounding devastation and will succeed in whatever he does. **He will destroy those who are mighty, the holy people.**"

25. **“He will cause deceit to prosper, and he will consider himself superior. When they feel secure, he will destroy many and take his stand against the Prince of princes. Yet he will be destroyed, but not by human power.**

26. “The vision of the evenings and mornings that has been given you is true, but seal up the vision, for it concerns the distant future.”

## The Dream Part 1: Summary

We will look at the first part of the dream and its interpretation, before moving to the final part.

Daniel sees a great two-horned ram, powerful and all-conquering. One of its horns comes up later and grows longer than the other.



A goat with a single prominent horn charges at the ram and shatters its horns and destroys its power. The goat becomes powerful but, at its peak, the single horn is broken, and four horns grow to take its place.

## The Interpretation Part 1: Medo-Persia and Greece

Let's see how Gabriel interprets the first part. He repeats that this dream is about the time of the end.

*I am going to tell you what will happen later in the time of wrath, because **the vision concerns the appointed time of the end** (vs 17).*

*The two-horned ram that you saw represents **the kings of Media and Persia**.*

*The shaggy goat is the **king of Greece**, and the large horn between its eyes **is the first king** (vs 20,21).*

Gabriel tells us that the ram represents the kings of Medo-Persia. The two horns are understood to represent the two kings, Darius the Mede and Cyrus the Persian. Cyrus, rising after Darius, became greater.

Gabriel then names the goat as the king of Greece. Its large horn represents the first great king, Alexander the Great, who led the smaller Greek army in lightning strikes to defeat the amassed armies of Medo-Persia. Their power was broken just as the ram's horns were in the dream.

Gabriel has prophesied the name of the Greek empire 200 years before it rose, stamping this prophecy with God's sovereignty and authority. It is reported that when Alexander the Great came to Jerusalem, the High Priests showed him this prophecy and as a result Alexander treated Jerusalem mercifully.

Gabriel continues: *The four horns that replaced the one that was broken off represent four kingdoms that will emerge from his nation but will not have the same power (vs 22).*

Alexander died of fever, was 'broken', at the age of 32.

Alexander's empire was then divided between his four generals, Cassander, Lysimachus, Ptolemy and Seleucus.

Gabriel's interpretation is unerringly accurate in predicting the four empires of the Greeks that emerged after Alexander's death.



We now continue to the second part of the dream.

### The Dream Part 2: Daniel 8: 9-12

*Out of one of them came another horn, which started small but grew in power to the south and to the east and toward the Beautiful Land.*

*It grew until it reached the host of the heavens, and it threw some of the starry host down to the earth and trampled on them. It set itself up to be as great as the commander of the army of the LORD; it took away the daily sacrifice from the Lord, and his sanctuary was thrown down.*

*Because of rebellion, the LORD's people and the daily sacrifice were given over to it.*

*It prospered in everything it did, and **truth was thrown to the ground** (Daniel 8: 11,12).*

### Gabriel's Interpretation Part 2: Daniel 8:23-25

Gabriel interprets this section.

*In the latter part of their reign, **when rebels have become completely wicked**, a fierce-looking king, **a master of intrigue**, will arise.*

*He will become very strong, but not by his own power. He will cause astounding devastation and will succeed in whatever he does. **He will destroy those who are mighty, the holy people.***

***He will cause deceit to prosper**, and he will consider himself superior. **When they feel secure, he will destroy many** and take his stand against the Prince of princes. Yet he will be destroyed, but not by human power (Daniel 8: 23-25).*

### The Horn of the Time of the End

*Out of one of them came another horn, which started small but grew in power... (vs 9).*

The second part of the dream focuses on one person, represented by a horn that grows out of one of the horns of the Greek Empire, growing in power towards the Holy Land. Who is this horn?

In relation to this ruler in Daniel 8, some theologians bring up Antiochus IV, a Greek, who persecuted the Jews in 165 BC. He sacrificed pigs and other unclean animals on the altar of the Jewish temple.

Though Antiochus might seem a good fit, Gabriel tells us *twice* that this dream is for the '*time of the end*' (vs 17,19). We have a choice. Does the horn refer to Antiochus, ruler in 165 BC, or to the Anti-Christ, the final leader of '*the time of the end*'? I believe Gabriel that, like Daniel 2 and 7 before it, Daniel 8 is about the last days before Christ returns, '*the time of the end*'.

## The Threads of Daniel 8 in Last Days Scripture

We find many threads in Gabriel's description of the Anti-Christ that are confirmed in other passages of last days scripture.

### Great Wickedness

We learn that the Anti-Christ will appear at a time when wickedness reaches its climax, '*when rebels have become completely wicked*' (vs 23).

Scripture Confirmation:

*Because of the increase of wickedness, the love of most will grow cold* (Matthew 24:12).

*In the last days... evildoers and impostors will go from bad to worse* (2 Timothy 3:13).

### Deception

The Anti-Christ will be a master of deception, turning the truth on its head.

*Truth was cast to the ground...* (Daniel 8:12).

*A master of intrigue . . . He will cause deceit to prosper . . .* (Daniel 8: 23, 25).

*As a result, truth and righteousness perished, and evil triumphed and prospered. **He will be a master of deception*** (Daniel 8: 12,25 LB).

Scripture Confirmation:

*For false messiahs and false prophets will appear and perform great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect* (Matthew 24:24).

*The coming of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan . . . with all unrighteous deception* (2 Thessalonians 2:8)

### Peace and Safety

The Anti-Christ's deception will be to appear to provide safety and security. He will flourish by masquerading as a saviour, making it virtually impossible for the world's population to discern him for what he is.

*When they feel secure, he will destroy many* (Daniel 8:25 NIV).

*Defeating many by catching them off-guard as they bask in false security* (Daniel 8:25, TLB).

Confirmatory Scripture

*While people are saying, "Peace and safety," destruction will come on them suddenly, as labour pains on a pregnant woman, and they will not escape (1 Thessalonians 5:3).*

*And no wonder, for Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light (2 Corinthians 11:14).*

### **Persecution of God's People**

*He will destroy those that are mighty, the holy people (Daniel 8:24).*

Gods people will be persecuted by this final world leader.

Scripture Confirmation:

*Then you will be handed over to be persecuted and put to death, and you will be hated by all nations because of me (Matthew 24:9).*

*He will oppress the holy people . . . the holy people will be delivered into his hands for a time, times and half a time (Daniel 7:23).*

*Now when the dragon saw that he had been cast to the earth, he persecuted the woman who gave birth to the male Child (Revelation 12:13).*

### **The Daily Sacrifice**

*It took away the daily sacrifice from the Lord, and his sanctuary was thrown down (vs 11).*

The daily sacrifice took place in the sanctuary of the Jewish temple in Jerusalem. Jesus references important activity in the Holy Place, the Temple, in Matthew 24, and we will learn more detail of this in Daniel 9.

Scripture Confirmation:

*So, when you see standing in the holy place 'the abomination that causes desolation . . . (Matthew 24:15).*

*He will put an end to sacrifice and offering. And at the temple he will set up an abomination that causes desolation (Daniel 9:27).*

### **Opposes Jesus but destroyed by divine power**

*It set itself up to be as great as the commander of the army of the LORD. Yet he will be destroyed, but not by human power (vs 11,25).*

The Anti-Christ will stand against Jesus and will be defeated by divine rather than human power.

Scripture Confirmation:

*And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth and destroy with the brightness of His coming (2 Thessalonians 2:8)*



*And I saw the beast . . . gathered together to make war against Him who sat on the horse and against His army. Then the beast was captured, and . . . cast alive into the lake of fire burning with brimstone (Revelation 19:19,20).*

## **The End of the Vision**

Towards the end of his vision, Daniel hears the angels talking about a timeframe for the vision to be fulfilled.

*Then I heard a holy one speaking, and another holy one said to him, “How long will it take for the vision to be fulfilled—the vision concerning the daily sacrifice, **the rebellion that causes desolation**, the surrender of the sanctuary and the trampling underfoot of the LORD’s people?”*

*He said to me, “It will take 2300 evenings and mornings; then the sanctuary will be re-consecrated.”*

In his interpretation Gabriel confirms these times.

Gabriel tells Daniel, *“The vision of the evenings and mornings that has been given to you is true. But seal up the vision. It is about a time far off.”*

The words ‘*rebellion that causes desolation*’ reminds us of the ‘*abomination of desolation*’ of Matthew 24.


The figure of 2300 days is a mystery and is only found in this one place in scripture. We could make suppositions, but I believe it’s best to let this one lie and focus on the timeframes which have several confirmations in other places in scripture.

## **Conclusion**

In this remarkable vision, Gabriel demonstrates God’s sovereignty over time by naming the Medo-Persian and Greek empires that will follow the Babylonian empire.

Gabriel then shifts to ‘*the time of the end*’ to give us more vital detail of the Anti-Christ, which we can add to our profile.

## The Anti-Christ

Daniel 7:20,23		Daniel 8:23-25
He will subdue or 'uproot' three of the ten kings		He will rise in a time of great wickedness
He will speak against the Most High.		He will be a master of deceit and intrigue
He will oppress the Holy people		He will destroy those who are mighty the Holy people
He will try to change the laws and customs		He will give the people a false sense of security
God's people will be delivered into his hands for a time and times and half a time (3.5 years)		He will stand against Jesus and will be destroyed by divine power

## Gospel Equipping for the Last Days

*For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands.*  
2 Timothy 1:6

Saleem Siddique stayed with us for several months in Johannesburg. As a young man, he had attended Rhema Bible College but, after some time spent in church work, had then gone into business, importing leather jackets from Pakistan for the large motorcycle community in South Africa. When we met him, his business had gone into decline, so he decided to join us for our township schools ministry, becoming a key part of our team.

Touched by the power of God that was working in the township youth, a burden grew in his heart to return to Pakistan to reach the youth there with the Gospel. Shortly before his planned departure, we met to pray for Saleem's new ministry in Lahore.

As we were praying for him, I saw a picture in my mind's eye of him as the '*Iron Man*' from the blockbuster movie of the same name. When Tony Stark, the billionaire main character of the movie, *steps out on a mission* to confront an evil in the world, his armoured suit attaches itself to his limbs, his torso and finally his head, giving him extraordinary strength and abilities.

Saleem was stepping out in a mission to bring the Gospel of Jesus to the youth, and I saw in the vision that he would be supernaturally equipped by God for the task.

Sure enough, Saleem made a huge impact in Lahore and the surrounding rural areas, leading many of the youth to Christ, with the Lord confirming the Gospel with many miraculous healings.

As we too, step out on mission in the last days, God will similarly powerfully equip us with His spiritual gifts to enable us to live victoriously for Jesus in difficult times. It's what He does and what He has promised to do.

*In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams (Acts 2:17).*

There will be a sufficient 'iron man' equipping of spiritual gifts for us all.

One gift we will all need is the gift of discernment.

# **Chapter 8**

## **Discernment**

## Pull Back the Curtain

In the film *The Wizard of Oz*, Dorothy and her friends visit the wizard to get help to return Dorothy home to Kansas. At his castle, the wizard appears as a disembodied booming voice along with impressive noise and light effects. He seems so powerful and authoritative, silencing Dorothy and her fellow travellers.

However, Dorothy's little dog Toto discovers the deception. Running over to a small cubicle, he pulls back a curtain, revealing that the wizard is just an old man, operating a machine.

The Apostle Paul tells us of the power of the 'the god of this world' to pull a curtain over the truth to blind the minds of the earth's population.

*'In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.'*

2 Corinthians 4:4

On the website 'Got Questions' we read this explanation of the term 'god of this world'.

*The phrase "god of this world" (or "god of this age") indicates that Satan is the major influence on the ideals, opinions, goals, hopes and views of the majority of people. His influence also encompasses the world's philosophies, education and commerce. The thoughts, ideas, speculations and false religions of the world are under his control and have sprung from his lies and deceptions.*

The 'god of this world', like the Wizard of Oz, presents his views with impressive effects. We have read that the Anti-Christ himself will be 'a master of intrigue' and 'will cause deceit to prosper' (Daniel 8:23,25). Like Dorothy, the world's population will be awed into silence and compliance.

We therefore must learn to interrogate what we are told in the media, and like Toto, 'pull back the curtain' to discern that which is the truth and of God and that which is not.

God's Spirit will help us when we activate our gift of discernment.<sup>1</sup>

*Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world. This is how you can recognize the Spirit of God: Every spirit that acknowledges that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, but every spirit that does not acknowledge Jesus is not from God.*

*They are from the world and therefore speak from the viewpoint of the world, and the world listens to them. We are from God, and whoever knows God listens to us; but whoever is not from God does not listen to us.*

*This is how we recognize the Spirit of truth and the spirit of falsehood (1 John 4: 1-3,5,6).*

<sup>1</sup>In the Appendix are lists of New Testament verses on discernment and last days verses on deceit.

## COVID 19

For instance, in this current Covid situation you might ask yourself the following questions:

Why did Luc Montagnier, Nobel Prize winner in 2008 for his work on HIV, say in March 2019, '*We have arrived at the conclusion that this virus was created*', condemning scientists for '*the work of a sorcerer's apprentice*.'<sup>1</sup>

Why in the UK was *everyone* who died within three months of a positive Covid test counted as a Covid death, irrespective of their age, their underlying health conditions or if they died in an accident or by suicide? The same counting method has now been revised to a twenty-eight-day period. However, wouldn't you expect scientists to be more accurate in their statistics?

Is it appropriate to have a chief scientific advisor, who previously served for six years as president of a major pharmaceutical company's research and development?<sup>2</sup>

Is it healthy to have someone who is not medically trained and whose company was previously fined for monopolistic practices directing and advising governments on vaccine policy?<sup>3</sup>

Is it important that scientists to this day do not know the effect of mineral contents of vaccines on the brain?

It's important to pick up our gift of discernment and exercise it! Take it for a walk, throw it a ball to chase, make it active! Ask questions and interrogate the issues.

Like Toto, as Christians we must 'pull back the curtain' to see if the 'god of this world' is at work distorting facts and deceiving people.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.theweek.in/news/world/2020/04/19/coronavirus-man-made-in-wuhan-lab-says-nobel-laureate.html>

<sup>2</sup> From 2012 to 2018 Sir Patrick Vallance, the UK's chief scientific advisor, served as president of research and development (R&D) at the multinational pharmaceutical company GlaxoSmithKline (GSK).

<sup>3</sup> In the 1998 *United States v. Microsoft* case, Bill Gates gave deposition testimony that several journalists characterized as evasive. *BusinessWeek* reported:

*Early rounds of his deposition show him offering obfuscatory answers and saying "I don't recall" so many times that even the presiding judge had to chuckle. Worse, many of the technology chief's denials and pleas of ignorance were directly refuted by prosecutors with snippets of e-mails that Gates had both sent and received. Despite Gates's denials, the judge ruled that Microsoft had committed monopolization, tying and blocking competition, each in violation of the Sherman Antitrust Act.*

## Pharmakeia

God's Word is a vital asset when discerning good and evil. Jesus told the undiscerning Pharisees, '*You study the Scriptures diligently because you think that in them you have eternal life. These are the very Scriptures that testify about me*' (John 5:39).

Scripture testifies to what is good and what is evil in the world.

In Revelation 18:23 we read: *By your (Babylon's) sorceries all nations were deceived* (Rev 18:23 NKJV).

In the Strong's Concordance, the Greek word in the original manuscripts for sorceries is *pharmakeia*, from which we get our words pharmacist and pharmaceutical.

The concrete noun is *pharmakon*, the primary meaning of which is poison; its secondary meaning is magic potion or charm to achieve a desirable objective; and its tertiary meaning is medicine, remedy or drug for healing.

We are told in God's Word that in the last days all nations will be deceived by a 'pharmaceutical' sorcery.

Slow down for a minute and consider the pharmaceutical industry's promotion of vaccines.

Are they godly or are we in danger of infecting our bodies, the temple of God, with mixtures that are closer to potions than true, natural God-created medicine? Is all this in response to a man-made virus?

When we pull back the curtain, do we see 'sorcerers' in the 'king's palace' today, just as there were in Daniel's time? (Daniel 2:3). Revelation 18:23 suggests that possibly that we do.

As we seek Him, may God grant us His gift of discernment at this time.

**Chapter 9**  
**The Writing Is on the Wall**  
**Daniel 5**



## A False Sense of Security

France built the Maginot Line in the 1930s to deter invasion by Germany. Behind the line of concrete fortifications, obstacles and weapon installations, the French thought they were safe and secure. But they were caught off-guard when German forces by-passed the Maginot Line and attacked them through the Low Countries and the impenetrable Ardennes forest. The French and Allied soldiers were then encircled, leading to the desperate British evacuation at Dunkirk. The Maginot Line has become a byword for a false sense of security.

Babylon's walls were its very own Maginot Line. One of the seven great wonders of the ancient world, the walls measured between twenty-five and thirty metres thick. Two chariots could ride side-by-side on top of them! They were thought to be impregnable.

No wonder Nebuchadnezzar's descendant, Belshazzar, thought Babylon was safe. At the beginning of the book, in Daniel 5 we find him throwing a great party for a thousand of his lords, despite the massed Medo-Persian armies encamped outside the city.

## The Writing Is on the Wall

As the Babylonian lords were feasting, a mysterious disembodied hand appeared and wrote a message on the wall! Colour drained from Belshazzar's face and *'he was so frightened that his legs became weak and his knees were knocking'* (Daniel 5:6).

Calling the wise men and astrologers to interpret the writing, Belshazzar offered the tantalizing prize of promotion to the third ruler of Babylon. Again, none of them could help! Belshazzar's wife remembered how in times past Daniel had helped Nebuchadnezzar. He is summoned and asked to interpret the handwriting on the wall.

Daniel takes the opportunity to school the king on Nebuchadnezzar's transformational experience of Chapter 4, when he lost the throne for seven years. He notes that Belshazzar has not humbled his heart despite knowing his father's history. Daniel delivers his soul to the king, calling him out on his sin before turning to read the writing on the wall and give the king the interpretation.

*This is the inscription that was written:*

*MENE, MENE, TEKEL, PARSIN*

*Here is what these words mean:*

*Mene : God has numbered the days of your reign and brought it to an end.*

*Tekel : You have been weighed on the scales and found wanting.*

*Peres: (the singular of Parsin): Your kingdom is divided and given to the Medes and Persians*

Daniel 5:24-28.

Daniel was honoured, robed in purple and promoted to third in the kingdom. But before day broke, Babylon fell to the Medo-Persians and Belshazzar was dead. The security of the walls of Jericho was

circumvented by the Medo-Persians, just as the Germans had nullified the defensive strength of the Maginot Line.

Babylon's water supply came from the River Euphrates that ran beneath the city walls. The Medo-Persians, led by Darius the Mede, diverted the river upstream. As a result, the water level of the river was lowered just enough for the invading soldiers to enter the city, via the waterway, *under* the walls. They then opened the gates for their army to enter! In the end, the thick walls provided no security at all.

## **The Judgement of the Last Days Babylon**

In Revelation 18 the last days Babylon, in her wealth and power, is as deluded by a false sense of security as her ancient predecessor.

*She boasts, 'I am queen upon my throne. I am no helpless widow. I will not experience sorrow'* (Revelation 18:7).

Like Belshazzar's empire, she is also weighed and judged by God for her pride, materialism and cruelty to other nations.

*Render to her just as she rendered to you, and repay her double according to her works; in the cup which she has mixed, mix double for her. In the measure that she glorified herself and lived luxuriously, in the same measure give her torment and sorrow.*

*Therefore, the sorrows of death and mourning and famine shall overtake her in a single day, and she shall be utterly consumed by fire; for mighty is the Lord who judges her* (Revelation 18: 5-8 LB).

A voice from heaven warns God's children to come out of this last days Babylon, to avoid the effects of His judgement.

*Come out of her, my people, so that you will not share in her sins, so that you will not receive any of her plagues; for her sins are piled up to heaven, and God has remembered her crimes* (Revelation 18:3).

There is a popular myth that frogs are unable to save themselves from gradually boiling water. Their bodies adapt to the temperature around them and they do not discern the danger they are in. When I consider life in the West and the fate of Babylon, the myth always comes to mind.

Do we discern the levels of evil in our society or have we grown accustomed to the rising temperature of sin and consider it 'normal'? Can we see ourselves in the Babylon of Revelation? Do we realise how 'hot' it is in 2021? Once again, we pray for discernment.

**Chapter 10**  
**Gabriel's Decree**  
**The Seventy Sevens**  
**Daniel 9**

## Forecasting

I remember waking up in the night during the UK hurricane of 1987. The wind howled and whistled, rattling the windows and keeping me awake for several hours. The Great Storm struck in the night without warning, with winds reaching highs of 122 mph. Twenty-two people died in England and France in the storm that was called a 'weather bomb' due to its rapid development. As a result, major improvements were made in computer modelling and the training of forecasters, enabling us all to be better prepared for future events.

In the Bible, we see God has 'history' in accurately forecasting the timeframes of major events. He told Abraham how long the children of Israel would be in Egypt: 400 years (Genesis 15:13). He told Joseph via Pharaoh's dream about 14 years of Egyptian plenty and famine. God told Jeremiah that the captivity in Babylon would last 70 years (Jeremiah 25:11-12, 29:10). In Daniel 4, Daniel decreed that Nebuchadnezzar would live seven humbling years as an animal (Daniel 4:24-26).

In Daniel 9 the angel Gabriel again appears to Daniel and on this occasion announces a heavenly decree, with specific time forecasts for the future.

## The Everest of Prophetic Chapters

If the prophetic peaks of Daniel can be compared to the Himalayas, Gabriel's decree is Mount Everest, steeply rising above the rest peaks. In four concise verses, we receive a vitally important timetable for both the First and Second Coming.

The angel Gabriel makes an appearance while Daniel is praying for his exiled people and their capital Jerusalem, a year after Babylon fell to the Medes and Persians.

Take a deep breath and prepare yourself for an amazing journey with unimaginable views.

### Gabriel's Decree: Daniel 9:22-27

21-23. *While I was still in prayer, Gabriel, the man I had seen in the earlier vision, came to me in swift flight about the time of the evening sacrifice. He instructed me and said to me, "Daniel, I have now come to give you insight and understanding. As soon as you began to pray, a word went out, which I have come to tell you, for you are highly esteemed. Therefore, consider the word and understand the vision:*

**24. Seventy 'sevens' are decreed for your people and your holy city to finish transgression, to put an end to sin, to atone for wickedness, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy and to anoint the Most Holy Place.**

**25. Know and understand this: From the time the word goes out to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until the Anointed One, the ruler, comes, there will be seven 'sevens,' and sixty-two 'sevens.'** It will be rebuilt with streets and a trench, but in times of trouble.

**26. After the sixty-two 'sevens,' the Anointed One will be put to death and will have nothing. The people of the ruler who will come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end will come like a flood: War will continue until the end, and desolations have been decreed.**

**27. He will confirm a covenant with many for one 'seven'. In the middle of the 'seven' he will put an end to sacrifice and offering. And at the temple he will set up an abomination that causes desolation, until the end that is decreed is poured out on him."**

## Seventy Sevens

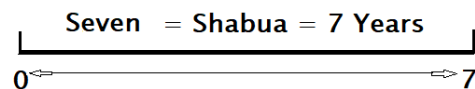
Gabriel began

***Seventy 'sevens' are decreed for your people and your holy city*** (Daniel 9:22-24).

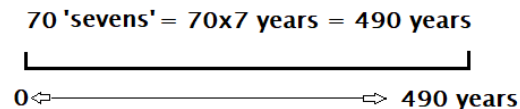
Gabriel's announcement is a decree, an authoritative order having the force of law. Gabriel is making a decree that carries the weight of heavenly authority and knowledge. Once it has been spoken, it will come to pass.

Gabriel decreed seventy 'sevens' over Israel and Jerusalem.

The word 'seven' is the Hebrew word 'shabua', meaning a seven-year period. In Genesis 29:27 and 30, the word 'shabua' refers to the seven-year period that Jacob served Laban for his daughters. A 'seven' is a seven-year period.



Gabriel's decree of seventy sevens therefore describes a period of  $70 \times 7$  years or 490 years.



The decree proclaims six events that will have taken place in Israel by the end of these 490 years.

*To finish transgression, to put an end to sin, to atone for wickedness, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy and to anoint the Most Holy Place* (Daniel 9:24).

Theologians argue endlessly about these six parameters! We can short cut the arguments by spotting the '*abomination of desolation*' in the last verse of Gabriel's decree (Daniel 9:27). Jesus refers to '*the abomination of desolation, spoken of Daniel the prophet*' in Matthew 24:15, telling us that it will initiate the time of great tribulation, after which He will immediately return.

Because the '*abomination of desolation*' is bound by Jesus to His Second Coming, we can conclude that the decree and the parameters do refer to the return of Christ, in line with the other prophetic chapters of Daniel 2,7,8.

## The Sixty-Nine Sevens

Gabriel continues:

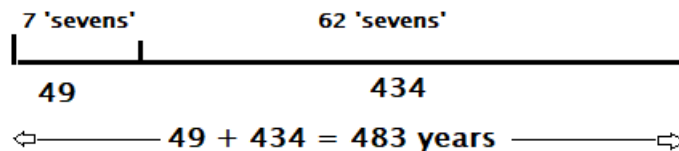
*Know and understand this: From the time the word goes out to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until the Anointed One (Jesus), the ruler comes, there will be 7 'sevens', and 62 'sevens'.*

*It will be rebuilt with streets and a trench, but in times of trouble (Daniel 9:25).*

Gabriel breaks down the 70 'seven' decree into two parts; the first part, made up of 7 'sevens' and '62' sevens, consists in total of 69 'sevens'.

$$7 \text{ 'sevens'} = 7 \times 7 = 49 \text{ years} \quad 62 \text{ 'sevens'} = 62 \times 7 = 434 \text{ years}$$

$$49 \text{ years} + 434 \text{ years} = 483 \text{ years} = 69 \text{ 'sevens'}$$



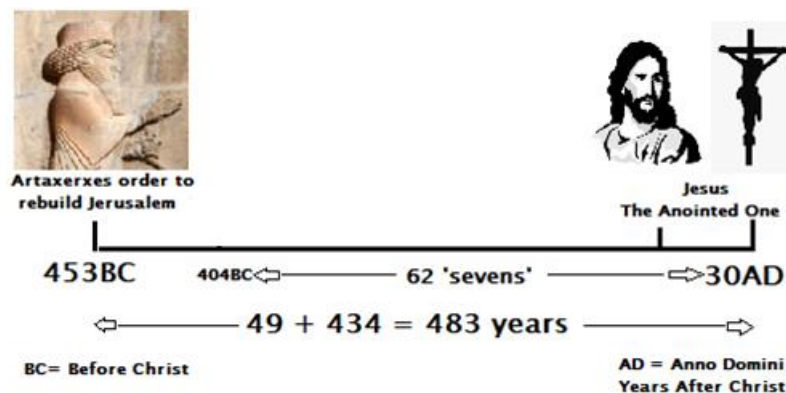
The 69 'sevens' or 483 years begin with the order to 'restore and rebuild Jerusalem' and end with the 'Anointed One' or Messiah.

The city of Jerusalem was destroyed by the invasion of Nebuchadnezzar, but in **453 BC** the order was given by King Artaxerxes to Nehemiah, permitting the Jews to rebuild the wall and the city of Jerusalem (Nehemiah 2:5). You can read about the struggle and trouble rebuilding the wall in the book of Nehemiah.

The Anointed One will come after the combined 7 'sevens' and 62 'sevens' or 483 years.

If we add 483 years to 453 BC, the date the word went out to rebuild Jerusalem, we see that Gabriel decreed 30 AD as the date when 'the Anointed One' Jesus would come.

*After the sixty-two 'sevens', the Anointed One will be put to death and will have nothing (Daniel 9:26).*



Gabriel decreed that Jesus, the Messiah would be put to death after the second period of 62 sevens or 434 years, in 30 AD. If Jesus was born in 4 BC, as historians believe, this decree, written over 500 years before, accurately announces the year of Jesus' crucifixion.

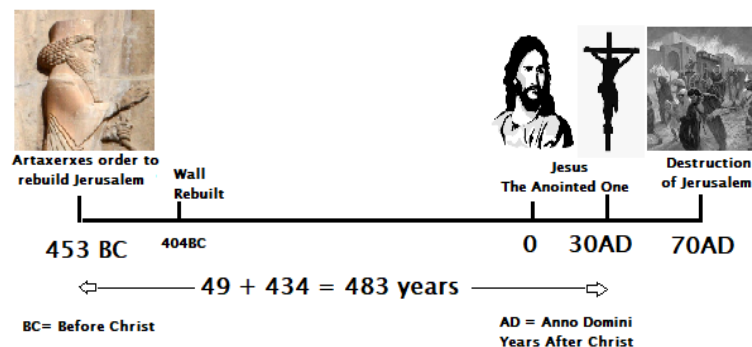
Astounding! Only God himself could have made this decree through Gabriel. The first part of the decree has come to pass with astonishing accuracy! Amazing! God loves to give His children information to prepare them for coming events. We must pay attention to the sure prophetic Word.

## Jerusalem Destroyed

Gabriel then tells us what happens to Israel and Jerusalem after the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus.

*The people of the ruler who will come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end will come like a flood: War will continue until the end, and desolations have been decreed (Daniel 9:26).*

In 70 AD, under orders from the Emperor Vespasian, General Titus brought his armies to Jerusalem and destroyed the city and the temple. As Jesus prophesied about the Temple in Matthew 24:2, '*Not one stone was left upon another.*' This part of the decree was fulfilled in 70 AD.



Who are '*The people of the ruler who shall come*'? They are the Romans, who invaded Israel and destroyed Jerusalem.

'*The ruler who **shall** come*' is not the ruler at the time of the invasion, but a future ruler related in some way to Rome or Europe, who as we shall see in the next verse '*sets up the abomination of desolation*'. '*The ruler who shall come*' is therefore the final world leader, the Anti-Christ, who rises out of the Roman Empire.

We have so far looked at 483 of the 490 years. There is one more '*seven*' or seven- year period. '*The ruler that shall come*' is the principal actor.

## The Final Seven Years

*He will confirm **a covenant** with many for one 'seven'. In the middle of the 'seven' he will put an end to sacrifice and offering. And **at the temple** he will set up **an abomination that causes desolation**, until the end that is decreed is poured out on him (Daniel 9:27).*

This last verse of the decree is a lynch pin for last days scripture; so much so that Jesus points us to its importance in Matthew 24:15.

*Therefore, when you see the 'abomination of desolation', spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (whoever reads, let him understand) (Matthew 24:15).*

We are going to examine Daniel 9:27 piece by piece, looking in depth at the three main components.

- the covenant,
- the temple
- the abomination of desolation

## The Covenant

On September 30, 1938, Neville Chamberlain, Prime Minister of Great Britain, landed in England from Munich, Germany, in triumph. He carried with him a peace treaty that he had signed that day with Adolf Hitler. The streets were so packed with cheering people that it took Chamberlain an hour-and-a-half to drive the nine miles to the Palace. After reporting to King George VI, Chamberlain and his wife appeared on the palace balcony. He then went to Downing Street, heading upstairs to address the crowd from a first-floor window. He announced, "I believe it is peace for our time."

Sadly, this hope was short-lived. September 1, 1939, less than a year later, marked the start of World War 2 in which approximately 50 million people lost their lives.

Daniel 9 tells us that like Chamberlain, *'the ruler who shall come'* shall also confirm a covenant. This will be a 7-year covenant.

***He will confirm a covenant with many for one 'seven' (Daniel 9:27).***



The final seven years begins when the 'ruler that shall come', the Anti-Christ, confirms this covenant with many.

What is this covenant that the ruler confirms with many? The Hebrew word for covenant is 'b'rit', meaning covenant, pact or treaty. This covenant is confirmed with many, an agreement between many parties.

In Daniel 11 the covenant is referred to three times, twice as the Holy Covenant. This indicates that the covenant may have some sort of religious connotation.

*The king of the North's heart will be set against the Holy Covenant (Daniel 11:28).*

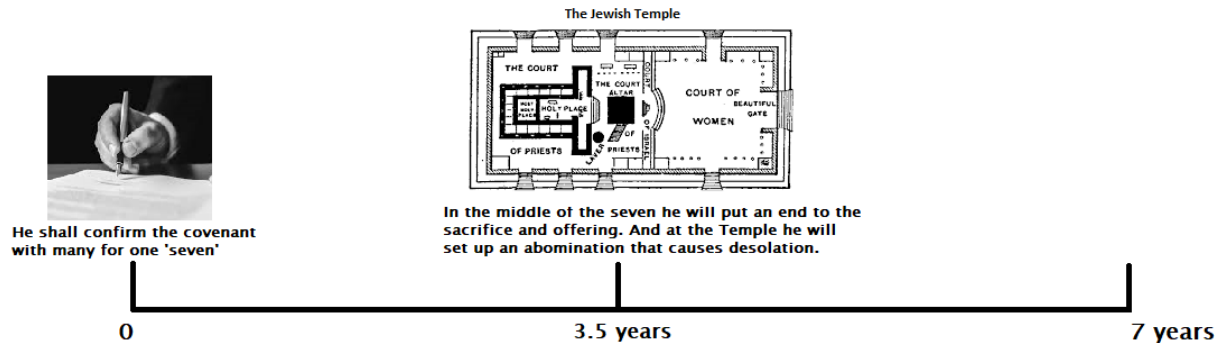
*He will return and show favour to those who forsake the Holy Covenant (Daniel 11:30).*

*With flattery he will corrupt those who have violated the covenant (Daniel 11:32).*

Like the Munich agreement, this covenant is fragile. It appears the ruler breaks the covenant in the middle and sets up the infamous 'abomination of desolation' that Jesus referred to in Matthew 24.



*In the middle of the 'seven' he will put an end to sacrifice and offering. And at the temple he will set up an abomination that causes desolation, until the end that is decreed is poured out on him (Daniel 9:27).*



In 2015, 193 countries signed up to the 17 Sustainable Development Global Goals for 2030, to create a better world, ending poverty, fighting inequality and addressing climate change. If world leaders convene to 'confirm' it and other initiatives in 2023, it will become a 'seven year' covenant. It is at the very least a prototype of the Anti-Christ's covenant, promising peace and security to those who sign it. A summary can be seen in the Appendix.

## The Temple

*And at the temple he will set up an abomination that causes desolation (Daniel 9:27).*

There are few places in the world quite like Jerusalem, the site of holy places for all three major religions, Judaism, Christianity and Islam. It's a focal point of the world's attention nearly 2,000 years after the crucifixion of Christ in 30 AD and the destruction of the Jewish Temple in 70 AD. At present it hosts the Dome of the Rock, Islam's holiest mosque, and one of the longest running international disputes concerning the rights of the Palestinians to have partial sovereignty over this ancient city.

In Matthew 24, Jesus states that the abomination of desolation will stand in the Holy Place. This is a term used to describe the Temple in Jerusalem.

*So, when you see standing in the holy place the abomination that causes desolation . . . (Matthew 24:15 KJV).*

This confirms Gabriel's decree that the abomination of desolation will be located at the Temple. (See also Daniel 11:31, 2 Thessalonians 2:4.)

Jerusalem and the Jewish temple will once more become a Biblical focal point. For these verses to be fulfilled, a third Temple will need to be built and the daily sacrifice of the Temple re-instituted. The following article from [www. breakingisraelnews.com](http://www.breakingisraelnews.com) indicates that this is a realistic scenario.

*The Bible repeatedly describes the Temple as the spiritual centre of the world and the source for peace and prosperity. In Isaiah's famous vision the prophet describes, "They shall beat their swords into ploughshares . . . for my house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations." The absence of the Temple is seen in the stories reported on the nightly news and its void adversely affects nations, geopolitics and global peace.*

*Director of the Temple Institute in Jerusalem, Rabbi Chaim Richman, explains that the 9th of Av 'is not about bemoaning the Temple. It's about bemoaning the world without the Temple. A world that has lost its light, its colour and its direction.' Indeed, there is a growing 'Temple Movement' in Israel today with thousands of Jews working to rebuild the Temple.*

*According to a poll taken last year in a leading newspaper Ha'aretz, one-third of Israelis believe that Israel should erect the Temple on the Temple Mount. Israel's Housing Minister called publicly for the rebuilding of the Temple. "We've built many little, little temples," MK Uri Ariel said, referring to synagogues, "but we need to build a real Temple on the Temple Mount."*

*Rabbi Richman explains that far from being an extremist, "our desire to see a rebuilt Temple is an expression of healthy, normative Judaism." While it is true that our generation has much to be grateful for and that our return to Israel is nothing short of miraculous, the golden dome sitting atop the Temple Mount provides a constant reminder that the Torah cannot be fulfilled perfectly and Judaism cannot be expressed fully until the Third Temple is rebuilt in Jerusalem.(End)*

It will take a remarkable resolution of the political and religious tension in the Middle East in order for the third temple to be built. Is it possible that the Covenant will facilitate this?

Daniel 9:27 has told us the abomination will be set up in the middle of a seven-year covenant or accord at the rebuilt Jewish Temple. But what is it?

## **The Abomination of Desolation**

Bob Dylan wrote and recorded *Serve Somebody* on his 1979 album *Slow Train Coming*. He sings in the chorus, 'It may be the devil, it may be the Lord, but you're gonna have to serve somebody.' He's saying that ultimately, all our lives consist of worship of some sort or another. Though many people believe themselves to be in a place where they worship nobody, Bob Dylan says no such place exists. 'It may be the devil, it may be the Lord, but you're gonna have to serve somebody!'

Throughout Scripture we find instances where populations are brought to points of decision about who they will serve. Elijah proclaimed to the gathered host of Israel on Mount Carmel: '*How long will you waver between two opinions? If the Lord is God, follow Him: but if Baal is God, follow him* (1 Kings 18:21). It was time to make a choice. There was no longer a middle ground option.

The Scriptures we are about to read indicate that the abomination of desolation will precipitate a similar time of decision for the whole earth.

So, what is this abomination of desolation? We find the term first in Daniel chapters 9 and 11.

*And at the temple he will set up an abomination that causes desolation (Daniel 9:27).*

*Then they will set up the abomination that causes desolation (Daniel 11:31).*

The abomination of desolation is something that *is set up*. Although we have found information about who sets it up, where it is set up and when it is set up, there is no further information in the Book of Daniel about what it is.

Let us therefore turn to the Book of Revelation to see if there is anything that is a desolating abomination or sacrilege that is set up just before Christ's return, that leads to a great time of trouble.

We read in Revelation 13:

*It ordered them to set up an image in honour of the beast . . . It was given power to give breath to the image of the beast, so that it could speak and cause all those who refused to worship the image to be killed (Revelation 13:14-15).*

An image will be set up – an image of the beast. (This beast is defeated by the returning Christ in Revelation 19: 19-20). This image that is set up will speak. A talking image would've been a strange and unreal concept at the time when the Revelation was delivered in the first century, but with television, the internet, advances in AI technology, talking images that impact the world are now commonplace.

This image will cause all who refuse to worship it to be killed. Reminiscent of Nebuchadnezzar's statue in Daniel 3, this is the very definition of an abomination that will lead to an unprecedented time of great trouble. The nature and timing of this image of Revelation 13 make it a prime candidate to be the abomination of desolation of Daniel 9 and Matthew 24. It's a sacrilege that occurs shortly before Christ's return, that leads to a time of great trouble.

Pauls' description of the final world leader in 2 Thessalonians reinforces this.

*He will oppose and will exalt himself over everything that is called God or is worshipped, so that he sets himself up in God's temple, proclaiming himself to be God (2 Thessalonians 2:3-4).*

Therefore, the Scriptures indicate that the abomination of desolation may well be an image of a world leader, set up in God's Temple, kicking off a time of tribulation. Like Nebuchadnezzar's statue in Daniel 3, death will be the consequence of refusing to worship it. At that moment Bob Dylan's lyrics will quite literally be fulfilled:

*'It may be the devil, it may be the Lord, but you're gonna have to serve somebody.'*

It will be time to choose.

## **The End**

***'Until the end that is decreed is poured out on him.'***

Daniel 9:27

The end of the Anti-Christ marks the end of both this final seven- year period and the 490-year decree.

We know from 2 Thessalonians 2 that the Anti-Christ is destroyed at the coming of Jesus.

*And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will overthrow with the breath of his mouth and destroy by the splendour of his coming (2 Thessalonians 2: 8).*

So as in Daniel 2, 7 and 8, we have once again reached the endpoint of Christ's return. How glorious! And what remarkable information we have been given.

We have a definitive timeframe for the last seven years before Christ returns.

- A covenant will be confirmed for 7 years.
- The Abomination will set up after 3.5 years, leading to a time of Tribulation (Matthew 24:15,21).
- 'The prince that shall come', the Anti-Christ, will meet his end at the culmination of the 7-year period.

In Daniel 7 we read that God's people will be delivered into the hands of the 'little horn', the Anti-Christ, for three and a half years; Daniel 9:27 gives further confirmation that the time of tribulation will last three and a half years.

This prophetic decree locks these crucial last days events into a timetable.

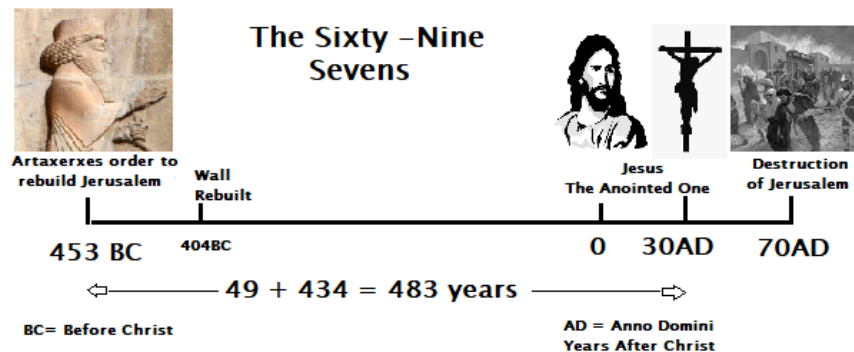
Like the ring of the bell on the last lap of a long-distance race, the setting up of the abomination of desolation will sound a clear signal that a last three-and-a-half-year period has begun. Like athletes in sight of the finishing line, Christians will take courage and press on, knowing that the return of Christ is imminent.

## Reaching the Peak

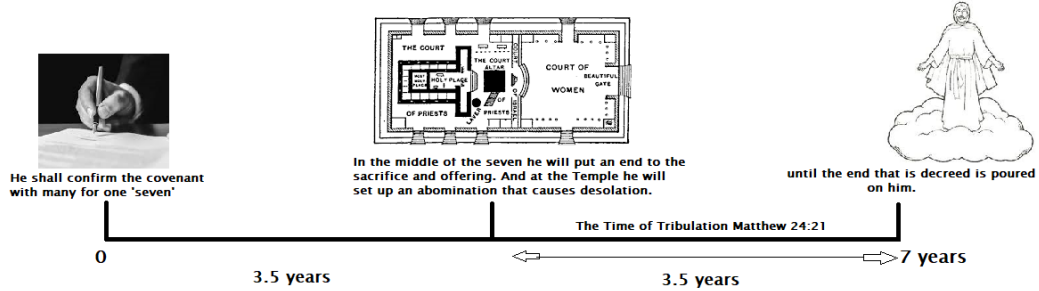
You have reached the peak of Daniel 9. Take a few minutes to take in the breath-taking view of the First and Second Comings of Christ.

We have heard the infallible revelation of the Word of God. This divine decree contains within itself the power to fulfil itself.

## The Seventy Sevens



## The Final Seven

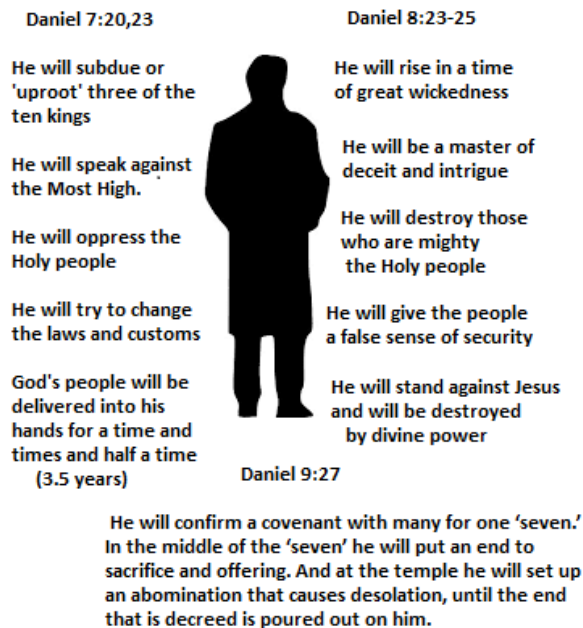


The decree ordains the timing of events leading to Christ's first appearance and crucifixion, the destruction of Jerusalem, and finally encompasses a crucial final seven-year period, which includes the rule of the Anti-Christ, the abomination of desolation, the time of tribulation and the return of Christ.

We see the congruency developing between the prophetic chapters of Daniel, Matthew 24 and 2 Thessalonians 2. We also continue to build the profile of the Anti-Christ with the wealth of information that God's Word provides us with.

- |                                     |   |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| 1) Ten Last Kings                   | Daniel 2:44, Daniel 7:24, Revelation 17:12      |
| 2) The Rise of the Anti-Christ      | 2 Thessalonians 2:3-11, Daniel 7:23, 8:23, 9:27 |
| 3) The Confirmation of the Covenant | Daniel 9:27                                     |
| 4) The Abomination of Desolation    | Matthew 24:15-20, Daniel 9:27, 11:31            |
| 5) The Time of Tribulation          | Matthew 24:21-28, Daniel 7:23, 8:24, 9:27       |
| 6) The Return of Christ             | Matthew 24:29-31, Daniel 2:44, 7:13, 9:27       |

## The Anti-Christ



## **Chapter 11**

### **On the Lion's Menu**

#### **Daniel 6**

## You Can Stand Your Ground

I love the story of *Pilgrims Progress*, written by John Bunyan while he was in Bedford Prison for his faith in 1678. At the beginning of the book, Christian leaves his hometown, the City of Destruction, anticipating the coming judgements of God. After a great many adventures, he and his companion Hopeful finally arrive in full view of the Heavenly City. One final obstacle separates him from his destination: a fast-flowing river.

Christian enters the river with his friend Faithful. Soon he loses his footing and calls out, “My head is going under! I am sinking beneath the waves!” Faithful responds, “Be of good cheer! I feel the bottom! Everything is going to be OK!” But a horror-filled fear falls on Christian. He remembers his sins and failings and sinks further into despair beneath the waves.

Hopeful shouts out, “Be of good cheer Jesus Christ makes you whole!” With that, Christian’s head rises and he says, “Oh! I see Him again and He is telling me, ‘When you pass through the waters, I will be with you, and through the rivers, they will not overflow you.’” And Christian discovered there *was* ground to stand on. He stood up and continued to the other side of the river and then to his angelic reception at the gates of the Heavenly City.

Crisis management for Christian was to *stand his ground*.

## A Prayer Restriction

In Daniel Chapter 6, Daniel, like Christian, appears about to be swept away by yet another crisis. When Darius the Mede began his rule, Daniel retained his position of power as one of three presidents overseeing one hundred and twenty provinces. Because of Daniel’s abilities, Darius was considering setting him over the entire empire as administrative officer. However, this incurred the jealousy of the other administrators and they hatched a plot to scupper Daniel’s career. They flattered the king into unwittingly passing an edict that would outlaw Daniel’s prayer life.

*The royal administrators, prefects, satraps, advisers and governors have all agreed that the king should issue an edict and enforce the decree that anyone who prays to any god or human being during the next thirty days, except to you, Your Majesty, shall be thrown into the lions’ den.*

*King Darius put the decree in writing.*

Daniel 6:7,9

Daniel heard about the law, returned home, opened his window and prayed to God with his face turned to Jerusalem. He remained steadfast, unmovable! He was soon reported to the king who spent the rest of the day trying to no avail to repeal his law and save Daniel who was now on the lion’s evening menu.

Let’s slow down and think what alternative responses were open to Daniel? What would we do or say now under the same circumstances? Would we have taken such a stand?

We might have said,

“God’s Word says, ‘*Obey the government in power*’ (Romans 13:1). Let’s just do that and not pray for thirty days. Simple!”

Or alternatively,

“If we pray openly today, it will be the last time we will ever pray! So, surely, it’s better to obey the government for these thirty days. After that we can pray every day for the rest of our lives!”

Or,

“Let’s pray secretly! No-one needs ever know. After all it’s not about who sees you praying. It’s between you and God . . . Shut that window!”

Or,

“Prayer is something we are doing all the time in our hearts. There does not have to be a special time or way. We can just *passively* pray without anybody knowing.”

However, compromise is a slippery slope. Once we start giving ground, we might find that in time there is precious little ground left to stand on!

In the current Corona virus crisis, Christians, at different times, have been forbidden to gather, and singing together has been banned. What would Daniel’s response have been? To what degree should we bend and alter our behaviour and in what areas should we stand our ground? Only the Spirit and Word of God can lead us in this imparting, faith and spiritual discernment.

Paul tells us that, as Jesus’ return approaches, believers need to gather together.

***And let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage one another, especially now that the day of His return is drawing near*** (Hebrews 10:25, NLT).

The Day of Pentecost occurred when the disciples were ‘*all with one accord in one place*’ (Acts 2:44). Paul encouraged Timothy ‘*to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands*’ (2 Timothy 1:6).

There is power when we gather in His presence to honour Him and receive His gifts. How we do it and whether online meeting is sufficient, is a matter for further prayer and discussion.

At some stage in the last days, we as Christians will find ourselves in the same position as Daniel in Darius’s court. Like Christian crossing the river to get to his heavenly home, the ‘worldly’ ground will give way beneath our feet and we will have to stand solely on the Word of God and its sure promises.

***So that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand*** (Ephesians 6:13).

Daniel took his stand. As the sun rose over the lion’s den, Daniel greeted the king with the good news that God had sent an angel to shut the lions’ mouths. Darius ordered the other administrators for the lions’ breakfast menu and the lions pounced, breaking their bones before they hit the floor.

Yet again, as Nebuchadnezzar did in Daniel 3 and 4, Darius pens a testimonial letter to the whole empire of God’s miracle working power and faithfulness!



In the time of crisis, Daniel chose neither fight nor flight. He discovered that the divine ground he was standing on was firm; it could never shift. It was solid rock! May we also stay faithful to God and our spiritual disciplines! May we keep moving forward towards our heavenly goal. Let us stand! Christian was welcomed by the angels with joy in the heavenly city. May we also endure, because of the joy and reward that is set before us!

*For in the day of trouble  
He will set me high upon a rock.*

Psalm 27:5

## **Rest Stop: How is Your Hike Going?**

The hike through these last chapters about the activities of the Anti-Christ and the judgement of Babylon has been steep! It's quite likely you are tired!

Remember that Daniel had these visions over his entire lifetime. It's unhealthy for you to try to digest all of this in one go or even in one week! Please once again take a break if you need it before we move on the last prophetic chapters.

Once you are ready, we will move on. We might be hoping for a soft landing, an easy exit from the hike, a downhill walk home. Yes, there are no more visions of statues, beasts and horns, no more lengthy mathematical equations in Daniel 10, 11 and 12.

Instead, over the next three chapters, Daniel receives another heavenly visitor and is given a detailed revelation of the future that includes the political and military exploits of the Anti-Christ before Christ's return. This is the longest section of the hike, encompassing seventy-two verses, a fitting finale to our hike through the book of Daniel.

## **Chapter 12**

### **A Heavenly Visitor**

#### **Daniel 10**

## Heavenly Visitors

“You might think I am talking nonsense, but do you know that two of my friends, who have passed on, have come back to visit me as animals?” I was surprised to hear this from my practical and sensible aunt.

She went on to tell me about these events:

“I went to visit the family of one of my friends who had passed on. They told me, ‘Did you know that Dad has come back to us as a barn owl?’ Well I didn’t know what to think or say! But the next day as I was walking in my garden this barn owl swooped down from behind me, ruffled my hair and flew off again and I just knew that it was him!”

“On another occasion I visited a friend shortly before he passed from cancer. He was very sick and we sat by a lake in Gloucestershire, admiring a group of swans. I was in Scotland one morning when I heard that he had passed on. That day I went out fishing on the part of the river where this friend had loved to fish. As I sat there thinking of him, this swan came and just sat peacefully on the water near to me for the longest time. I have never seen a swan in that area before or after. And I just felt it was him!”

I liked these stories. I am not suggesting that those who have passed on are confined to life as an animal, but I believe some are perhaps permitted to bring encouragement to those they are close to and have left behind. I thought her experiences were fascinating examples of the peculiar and charming ways that heaven intersects with our life on earth.

In this final prophetic chapter, Daniel himself entertains a luminescent heavenly visitor in a vision that details the rise and rule of the Anti-Christ.

### Daniel 10:1-21

*1. In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia, a revelation was given to Daniel. **Its message was true and it concerned a great war.** The understanding of the message came to him in a vision.*

*2,3. At that time, I, Daniel, mourned for three weeks. I ate no choice food; no meat or wine touched my lips; and I used no lotions at all until the three weeks were over.*

*4-6. On the twenty-fourth day of the first month, as I was standing on the bank of the great river, the Tigris, **I looked up and there before me was a man dressed in linen, with a belt of fine gold from Uphaz around his waist. His body was like topaz, his face like lightning, his eyes like flaming torches, his arms and legs like the gleam of burnished bronze, and his voice like the sound of a multitude.***

*7-9. I, Daniel, was the only one who saw the vision; those who were with me did not see it, but such terror overwhelmed them that they fled and hid themselves. So I was left alone, gazing at this great vision; I had no strength left, my face turned deathly pale and I was helpless. Then I heard him speaking, and as I listened to him, I fell into a deep sleep, my face to the ground.*

*10,11. A hand touched me and set me trembling on my hands and knees. He said, “Daniel, you who are highly esteemed, consider carefully the words I am about to speak to you, and stand up, for I have now been sent to you.” And when he said this to me, I stood up trembling.*

12,13. Then he continued, “Do not be afraid, Daniel. Since the first day that you set your mind to gain understanding and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard, and I have come in response to them.

14. But the prince of the Persian kingdom resisted me twenty-one days. Then Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, because I was detained there with the king of Persia. **Now I have come to explain to you what will happen to your people in the future (latter days NKJV), for the vision concerns a time yet to come.”**

## Is it Jesus?

Daniel has been in prayer for three weeks, when a man appears to him next to the River Tigris. Compare Daniel’s description of this man with John’s description of Jesus in the first chapter of Revelation.

*I looked up and there before me was a man dressed in linen, **with a belt of fine gold from Uphaz around his waist.**<sup>1</sup>*

*His body was like topaz, **his face like lightning,**<sup>2</sup> **his eyes like flaming torches,**<sup>3</sup> **his arms and legs like the gleam of burnished bronze,**<sup>4</sup> and **his voice like the sound of a multitude.**<sup>5</sup> (Daniel 10: 5,6)*

*Someone like a son of man, dressed in a robe reaching down to his feet **and with a golden sash around his chest.**<sup>1</sup> The hair on his head was white like wool, as white as snow, and **his eyes were like blazing fire.**<sup>3</sup> **His feet were like bronze glowing in a furnace,**<sup>4</sup> and **his voice was like the sound of rushing waters.**<sup>5</sup> In his right hand he held seven stars, and coming out of his mouth was a sharp, double-edged sword. **His face was like the sun shining**<sup>2</sup> in all its brilliance. (Revelation 1:12-16)*

The similarities in the descriptions are striking. Is it Jesus appearing to Daniel? We wonder, however, how it’s possible that Jesus could be resisted for three weeks on his journey to Daniel!

*But the prince of the Persian kingdom resisted me twenty-one days. Then Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, because I was detained there with the king of Persia (Daniel 10:13).*

It’s a mystery and I am happy to leave it that way!

## Who are Daniel’s people?

*Now I have come to explain to you what will happen to your people in the future (Daniel 10:14).*

The man tells Daniel that he has come to declare to Daniel what will happen to ‘your people’ in the future (latter days KJV). We come to the issue of who God is referring to. Is God referring to Israel or is he referring to the Christian church, or to both?

Throughout Daniel, we have had many references to God’s people, ‘holy people’ in Daniel 7:25, 8:24, (translated ‘saints’ in the King James Version), and ‘your people’, in Daniel 9:24.

If we look forward to Daniel 12:3, the end of this vision, we find this phrase:

*But at that time your people—everyone whose name is found written in the book—will be delivered.*

Here we have a definition of God's people. In Daniel 12, Jesus refers to '*your people*' as '*everyone whose name is found written in the book*'.

We read of this book in Revelation 13.

*All inhabitants of the earth will worship the beast—all whose names have not been written in the Lamb's book of life, the Lamb who was slain from the creation of the world* (Revelation 13).

There is only one book, the book of life of the Lamb. His Holy people are those whose names are written in that book, the book of life of the Lamb. There is one saved people, saved Jews and saved Gentiles, grafted together in Jesus' book of life, saved by faith and grace.

**Chapter 13**  
**The King of the North**  
**v**  
**The King of the South**  
**Daniel 11**

## When Two Tribes Go To War

The song *When Two Tribes Go To War* by the band *Frankie Goes to Hollywood* was released at the height of the Cold War. The video showed Ronald Reagan and the then President of the USSR, Konstantin Chernenko, squaring up to each other in a boxing ring, while playing up to the gathered media cameras. Growing up in the 1980s, we were all aware of the possibility of a nuclear confrontation, and the song illustrated the danger posed by two polarised superpowers.

In Daniel 10, Daniel's heavenly visitor describes the geo-political future of the area, featuring an epic confrontation between two superpowers that he calls the King of the North and the King of the South.

### The Kings of the North v The Kings of the South: Daniel 11:1-21

*And in the first year of Darius the Mede, I took my stand to support and protect him, "Now then, I tell you the truth: Three more kings will arise in Persia, and then a fourth, who will be far richer than all the others. When he has gained power by his wealth, he will stir up everyone against the kingdom of Greece (Daniel 11:1,2).*

This fourth King of Persia was Xerxes.

*Then a mighty king will arise, who will rule with great power and do as he pleases. After he has arisen, his empire will be broken up and parcelled out toward the four winds of heaven. It will not go to his descendants, nor will it have the power he exercised, because his empire will be uprooted and given to others (Daniel 11:3,4).*

This mighty king was Alexander the Great, who after great conquests, died at thirty-two years old. As we saw in Daniel 8, his empire was divided between his four generals.

*The king of the South will become strong, but one of his commanders will become even stronger than he and will rule his own kingdom with great power (Daniel 11:5).*

The king of the South is understood to be one of these four generals, namely Ptolemy of Egypt. One of his princes called Seleucus took power over Syria to the north of Israel. He became more powerful than his former Egyptian ruler and he and his descendants are called the Kings of the North.

The next 16 verses (5-21) detail the many wars and power struggles between these two powers.

From verse 21 we read of a new King of the North whose forces in verse 31 '*set up the abomination of desolation*'. Some understand this to represent Antiochus 1V, the Seleucid king, who attacked Jerusalem in 168 BC, killing up to 80,000 Jews and plundering the temple. He also sacrificed a pig in the temple and demanded sacrifices to his image.

However, Jesus made it clear in Matthew 24 that '*the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel*' was not a past event that had already happened but a future one, taking place shortly before His Second Coming.

Therefore, this King of the North, who sets up the ***abomination of desolation (vs 31)*** and ***will exalt and magnify himself above every god and will say unheard of things against the God of gods (vs 36)***, is



the Anti-Christ, the little horn of Daniel 7, the big horn of Daniel 8, and the 'ruler that shall come' of Daniel 9. There is a prophetic leap in time to the last days.

Let's read the passage in full and glean information from it.

## **The King of the North versus the King of the South: Daniel 11:21-45**

21,22. *He (The King of the North) will be succeeded **by a contemptible person** who has not been given the honour of royalty. **He will invade the kingdom when its people feel secure and he will seize it through intrigue.** Then an overwhelming army will be swept away before him; both it and a prince of the covenant will be destroyed.*

23,24. *After coming to an agreement with him, **he will act deceitfully, and with only a few people he will rise to power.** When the richest provinces feel secure, he will invade them and will achieve what neither his fathers nor his forefathers did. **He will distribute plunder, loot and wealth among his followers.** He will plot the overthrow of fortresses—but only for a time.*

25,26. ***With a large army he will stir up his strength and courage against the king of the South.** The king of the South will wage war with a large and very powerful army, but he will not be able to stand because of the plots devised against him. Those who eat from the king's provisions will try to destroy him; his army will be swept away, and many will fall in battle.*

27,28. ***The two kings, with their hearts bent on evil, will sit at the same table and lie to each other, but to no avail, because an end will still come at the appointed time.** The king of the North will return to his own country with great wealth, but his heart will be set against the holy covenant. He will take action against it and then return to his own country.*

29,30. ***At the appointed time he will invade the South again, but this time the outcome will be different from what it was before.** Ships of the western coastlands will oppose him, and he will lose heart. Then he will turn back and vent his fury against the holy covenant. He will return and show favour to those who forsake the holy covenant.*

31,32. *His armed forces will rise up to desecrate the temple fortress and will abolish the daily sacrifice. **Then they will set up the abomination that causes desolation.** With flattery he will corrupt those who have violated the covenant, **but the people who know their God will firmly resist him (will be strong and do exploits KJV).***

33,34,35. ***Those who are wise will instruct many,** though for a time they will fall by the sword or be burned or captured or plundered. When they fall, they will receive a little help, and many who are not sincere will join them. **Some of the wise will stumble, so that they may be refined, purified and made spotless until the time of the end,** for it will still come at the appointed time.*

36,37. ***The king will do as he pleases. He will exalt and magnify himself above every god and will say unheard-of things against the God of gods.** He will be successful until the time of wrath is completed, for what has been determined must take place. **He will show no regard for the gods of his ancestors or for the one desired by women, nor will he regard any god, but will exalt himself above them all.***

38,39. ***Instead of them, he will honour a god of fortresses; a god unknown to his ancestors he will honour with gold and silver, with precious stones and costly gifts.** He will attack the mightiest*

*fortresses with the help of a foreign god and will greatly honour those who acknowledge him. He will make them rulers over many people and will distribute the land at a price.*

**40,41. At the time of the end the king of the South will engage him in battle, and the king of the North will storm out against him with chariots and cavalry and a great fleet of ships.** *He will invade many countries and sweep through them like a flood. He will also invade the Beautiful Land. Many countries will fall, but Edom, Moab and the leaders of Ammon will be delivered from his hand.*

*42,43. He will extend his power over many countries; Egypt will not escape. He will gain control of the treasures of gold and silver and all the riches of Egypt, with the Libyans and Cushites in submission.*

*44,45. But reports from the east and the north will alarm him, and he will set out in a great rage to destroy and annihilate many. **He will pitch his royal tents between the seas at the beautiful holy mountain. Yet he will come to his end, and no one will help him.***

We are going to pick out the major threads, themes and highlights of this detailed prophecy.

## **Rising to Power**

*He (The King of the North) will be succeeded by a contemptible person who has not been given the honour of royalty.*

*He will invade the kingdom **when its people feel secure, and he will seize it through intrigue.** Then an overwhelming army will be swept away before him; both it and a prince of the covenant will be destroyed.*

*After coming to an agreement with him, **he will act deceitfully**, and with only a few people he will rise to power (Daniel 11:21-23).*

We read here how the King of the North, the Anti-Christ, will rise to power. He seizes power through 'intrigue' and 'deceit'.

Deceit is defined as: *the action or practice of deceiving someone by concealing or misrepresenting the truth.*

Intrigue is defined as: *the secret planning of something illicit or detrimental.*

This repeats the words of Daniel 8.

***He will cause deceit to prosper*** (Daniel 8:24).

There are secret plans, there is deceit. We need to pray for discernment and not blindly believe everything we are told. The Anti-Christ offers a *false* sense of security and seizes power and control.

## **With only a Few People**

*With only a few people he will rise to power (Daniel 11:23). (For he shall come up and become strong with a small number of people. NKJV)*

This is an interesting descriptive detail.

Will the Anti-Christ be the member of a minority or the citizen of a small country?

Or could this future world leader possibly be a scientist, or come to power on the back of scientists? They would be considered 'a small people' and at this time we see scientists rising to positions of great influence and power.

We should not jump to conclusions, but we remember this detail in the landscape as we move on.

## Sharing the Wealth

*When the richest provinces feel secure, he will invade them and will achieve what neither his fathers nor his forefathers did. He will distribute plunder, loot and wealth among his followers (Daniel 11:24).*

Wealth inequality is one of the characteristics of our current economic system. The Anti-Christ will do what others have not done before him. Instead of hoarding wealth, he will distribute among his supporters and followers.

## Global Conflict and Manoeuvring

***With a large army he will stir up his strength and courage against the king of the South. The king of the South will wage war with a large and very powerful army, but he will not be able to stand because of the plots devised against him. Those who eat from the king's provisions will try to destroy him; his army will be swept away, and many will fall in battle.***

***The two kings, with their hearts bent on evil, will sit at the same table and lie to each other, but to no avail, because an end will still come at the appointed time (Daniel 11:25-27).***

We read of two principal powers, the King of the North and the King of the South, 'whose hearts are bent on evil, will sit at the same table and lie to each other' (vs 27).

Who is the King of the South? The King of the South is the principal opposition to the King of the North. We see them coming against each other in battle at least three times in this chapter in verses 25, 29 and 40. Who can stand against the Anti-Christ?

We turn to the Book of Revelation to see the great power of the last days, the rich, powerful and materialistic Babylon described by John in chapters 17 and 18. We know from these chapters that there is a great final confrontation between the Anti-Christ and Babylon. It would be a mistake to see the last days as a battle of good against evil, with the 'good' power Babylon fighting against the evil Anti-Christ power. We have read that *both* powers 'are bent on evil' (Daniel 11:27).

In response to the pride and spiritual adulteries of Babylon, God puts it in the heart of the Antichrist and his ten kings to confront and destroy her.

*The beast (the Anti-Christ) and the ten horns you saw will hate the prostitute (Babylon). They will bring her to ruin and leave her naked; they will eat her flesh and burn her with fire. For God has put it into their hearts to accomplish His purpose (Revelation 17:16-18).*

Babylon is therefore the most likely candidate for the King of the South. Discerning her identity calls for 'a mind with wisdom' (Revelation 17:9).

Our challenge is to discern **both** the wickedness of the Anti-Christ and the equally deceitful materialistic wickedness of Babylon.

In Chapter 11, we see this rivalry between the two forces resulting in three military confrontations (vs 25,29,40). We shall recognize these when they come to pass.

### **The Holy Covenant and the Abomination of Desolation**

*Then he will turn back and vent his fury against the holy covenant. He will return and show favour to those who forsake the holy covenant.*

*His armed forces will rise up to desecrate the temple fortress and will abolish the daily sacrifice.*

*Then they will set up the abomination that causes desolation (Daniel 11:30,31).*

We see a confirmation here of the narrative of Daniel 9.

*He will put an end to sacrifice and offering. And at the temple he will set up an abomination that causes desolation (Daniel 9:28).*

The King of the North, the Anti-Christ, having confirmed the covenant, now turns against it. His forces abolish the daily sacrifice and set up the abomination of desolation.

### **Christians Are Active till the Appointed Time of the End**

***But the people who know their God will firmly resist him (will be strong and do exploits KJV) Those who are wise will instruct many, though for a time they will fall by the sword or be burned or captured or plundered.***

*When they fall, they will receive a little help, and many who are not sincere will join them. **Some of the wise will stumble, so that they may be refined, purified and made spotless until the time of the end,** for it will still come at the appointed time (Daniel 11:32-35).*

We receive encouragement here that God's people will have an active role resisting the Anti-Christ, doing God's work and teaching scripture. It will be a testing, purifying time for people of faith, the 'World Cup Final' for Christians, the ultimate challenge and test.

### **A God of Fortresses**

***The king will do as he pleases. He will exalt and magnify himself above every god and will say unheard-of things against the God of gods. He will be successful until the time of wrath is completed, for what has been determined must take place.***

*He will show no regard for the gods of his ancestors or for the one desired by women, nor will he regard any god, but will exalt himself above them all. **Instead of them, he will honour a god of fortresses; a god unknown to his ancestors he will honour with gold and silver, with precious stones and costly gifts.***

***He will attack the mightiest fortresses with the help of a foreign god and will greatly honour those who acknowledge him. He will make them rulers over many people and will distribute the land at a price.***

Here we see the defining characteristic of the Anti-Christ. He will exalt and magnify himself above every God, mirroring the truth of 2 Thessalonians 2.

*He will oppose and will exalt himself over everything that is called God or is worshipped, so that he sets himself up in God's temple, proclaiming himself to be God (2 Thessalonians 2:4).*

What or who is the '**god of fortresses**', '**a god unknown to his ancestors**', '**foreign god**'? Who will the Anti-Christ honour with gold and silver?

Here are three possibilities.

Could it be nuclear power and weapons, whose expense is matched by their destructive power?

Could it refer to technology or the internet? Google, Facebook, Twitter and Amazon are worth more than many countries. Could the scripture be referring to the power and wonders of the internet, through which it is possible to monitor and ultimately control society as a whole?

Could it refer to the science itself? We are seeing billions of pounds funnelled into scientific research to save us from COVID 19.

**To teach the Word of God, however, we do not need to understand everything and interpret everything!** We simply need to know what the Word says and pass it on! As the last days unfold, we will be able to identify more and more of these puzzle pieces.

## Israel

*He will invade many countries and sweep through them like a flood. **He will also invade the Beautiful Land.***

***He will pitch his royal tents between the seas at the beautiful holy mountain.***

***Yet he will come to his end, and no one will help him** (Daniel 11:41, 45)*

Israel is the geographical focus of these last events and is the chosen location for the Anti-Christ's demonic image at the Temple in Jerusalem. He will invade Israel and set up his headquarters, '*his royal tents*' there.

Once again, we read of the Anti-Christ's end. Though seemingly all-powerful, his end is sure and his time is short!

## Take Back the Power

*But the people that know their God **shall be strong and shall do great things**. Those with spiritual understanding will have a **wide teaching ministry** in those days (Daniel 11:32 LB).*

We read for the first time about Christian activism in the last days. Surprisingly considering all we have heard about the Anti-Christ, we will be strong and do great things! How is this possible?

I recently heard the song *Take Back the Power* and I felt my spirit respond to its challenge.

What's your plan for tomorrow?  
Are you a leader or will you follow?

Are you a fighter or will you cower?  
It's our time to take back the power!

Take Back the Power: The Interrupters  
Full Lyrics in the Appendix

Of all people, we as Christians have a power to take back!

I started to pray into the power that God has put in our hands that we can exercise in the last days.  
Here is a selection of verses:

*In the last days, God says, **I will pour out my Spirit on all people.** Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams.*

*Even on my servants, both men and women, will I pour out my Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy. **I will show wonders in the heavens above and signs on the earth below** (Acts 2:17,18).*

***You shall receive power** after the Holy Spirit will come upon you and you shall be witnesses unto me (Acts 1:8).*

***For the kingdom does not consist in words but in power** (1 Corinthians 4:20).*

***I have given you authority** to trample on snakes and scorpions and **to overcome all the power of the enemy** (Luke 10:19).*

***The weapons we fight with** are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they **have divine power to demolish strongholds** (2 Corinthians 10:4).*

*They will hand you over to synagogues and put you in prison, and you will be brought before kings and governors, and all on account of my name. And so you will bear testimony to me.*

*But make up your mind not to worry beforehand how you will defend yourselves.*

***For I will give you words and wisdom that none of your adversaries will be able to resist or contradict** (Luke 21:12-15).*

***Be strong in the Lord and in His mighty power** (Ephesians 6:10).*

*For God does not give us a cowardly spirit but **a spirit of power and love and sound judgement** (2 Timothy 1:7).*

*My grace is sufficient for you for **my power is made perfect in weakness.** For when I am weak I am **strong** (2 Corinthians 12:9).*

***I pray that out of His glorious riches He may strengthen you with power through His spirit in your inner being** (Ephesians 3:16).*

***His power will make you patient and strong enough to endure anything and you will be truly happy** (Colossians 1:11).*

As we accept and live out our supernatural identity as citizens of the Kingdom of Heaven, great power is promised to us to stand in opposition to the forces of evil. However, it is up to us to live in the power, that God has put within us, the spiritual power and grace of the Kingdom of God. We can start today.

## **Chapter 14**

### **Glorious Deliverance**

**Daniel 12:1-13**



## St Crispin's Day

*There will be a time of distress such as has not happened from the beginning of nations until then.*

Daniel 12:1

At the battle of Agincourt in 1415 a tired and bedraggled English army were confronted by the massed cavalry of the French nobility. In William Shakespeare's dramatization *Henry V*, one of King Henry's generals wishes that they had more men to fight against the massed French forces.

King Henry responds, describing the glory that will rest on every man who comes through the battle. He predicts that others will call themselves cursed for not participating in it! Below is the last stanza.

Henry V:

We few; we happy few; we band of brothers!  
The man who sheds his blood with me  
Shall be my brother; however humble he may be,  
This day will elevate his status.  
And gentlemen in England, still lying in their beds,  
Will think themselves accursed because they were not here,  
And be in awe while anyone speaks  
Who fought with us upon Saint Crispin's day.

The speech speaks to us of the honour and glory that will belong to those who go through the time of tribulation.

*These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.*

*Therefore they are before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His temple. And He who sits on the throne will dwell among them (Revelation 7:14,15).*

## Daniel Chapter 12

In Daniel 12, the heavenly visitor's explanation of last days events continues:

**1. "At that time Michael, the great prince who protects your people, will arise. There will be a time of distress such as has not happened from the beginning of nations until then. But at that time your people—everyone whose name is found written in the book—will be delivered.**

**2.3. Multitudes who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake: some to everlasting life, others to shame and everlasting contempt. Those who are wise will shine like the brightness of the heavens, and those who lead many to righteousness, like the stars for ever and ever.**

**4. But you, Daniel, roll up and seal the words of the scroll until the time of the end. Many will go here and there to increase knowledge."**

5,6. Then I, Daniel, looked, and there before me stood two others, one on this bank of the river and one on the opposite bank. One of them said to the man clothed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, "How long will it be before these astonishing things are fulfilled?"

7. *The man clothed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, lifted his right hand and his left hand toward heaven, and I heard him swear by him who lives forever, saying, “**It will be for a time, times and half a time. When the power of the holy people has been finally broken, all these things will be completed.**”*

8. *I heard, but I did not understand. So, I asked, “My lord, what will the outcome of all this be?”*

9,10. *He replied, “Go your way, Daniel, **because the words are rolled up and sealed until the time of the end.** Many will be purified, made spotless and refined, but the wicked will continue to be wicked. None of the wicked will understand, but those who are wise will understand.*

11. *“From the time that the daily sacrifice is abolished and the abomination that causes desolation is set up, there will be 1,290 days.*

12. *Blessed is the one who waits for and reaches the end of the 1,335 days.*

13. *“As for you, go your way till the end. You will rest, and then at the end of the days you will rise to receive your allotted inheritance.”*

## **The Time of Tribulation or Distress**

*There will be a time of distress such as has not happened from the beginning of nations until then (Daniel 12:1).*

The Anti-Christ’s reign will lead to the time of great distress, the time of tribulation, spoken of by Jesus in Matthew 24.

*For then there will be great distress, unequalled from the beginning of the world until now—and never to be equalled again (Matthew 24:15,21).*

## **The Rapture**

*But at that time your people—everyone whose name is found written in the book—will be delivered.*

*Multitudes who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake (Daniel 12,2,3).*

This is the event called the Rapture, vividly described in both 1 Thessalonians 4 and Matthew 24.

*For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God,*

*And the dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air (1 Thessalonians 4:15-17).*

*And He will send his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of the heavens to the other (Matthew 24:31).*

At the appearance of Jesus in the sky, the dead in Christ will rise first followed by those who have lived through till the end of the tribulation.

## **Glory and Shame**

*Some (will rise) to everlasting life, others to shame and everlasting contempt.*

*Those who are wise will shine like the brightness of the heavens, and those who lead many to righteousness, like the stars for ever and ever (Daniel 12:2,3)*

All the saints past and present will be resurrected to be with Jesus in the air. We will receive our rewards as we enter the joy of the Lord. All the difficulties and suffering will have passed and we will finally be home! The glory we experience will greatly outweigh the pain and problems of the tribulation!

*For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us (Romans 8:18).*

However, some are raised to 'everlasting contempt'. We read in Matthew 24 that not for the first time in church history, the last days will cause great division.

*And then many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another (Matthew 24:10).*

Jesus tells us that Christians will be divided and turn on each other. We will see the results of this in the resurrection, as the faithful are eternally glorified to the shame of those who hated and betrayed them.

## Times and Seasons

*But you, Daniel, roll up and seal the words of the scroll until the time of the end. Many will go here and there to increase knowledge.*

*Then I, Daniel, looked, and there before me stood two others, one on this bank of the river and one on the opposite bank. One of them said to the man clothed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, "How long will it be before these astonishing things are fulfilled?"*

*The man clothed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, lifted his right hand and his left hand toward heaven, and I heard him swear by him who lives forever, saying, **"It will be for a time, times and half a time. When the power of the holy people has been finally broken, all these things will be completed"** (Daniel 12:4-7).*

We once again are told that the time of distress or tribulation will last for 'a time and times and half a time' or three and a half years. Though the physical power of the church, its wealth and institutions are broken, faithful Christians will continue to overcome Satan 'through the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony' (Revelation 12:11).

## The Purposes of the Tribulation

*I heard, but I did not understand. So I asked, "My lord, what will the outcome of all this be?"*

*He replied, "Go your way, Daniel, because the words are rolled up and sealed until the time of the end. Many will be purified, made spotless and refined, but the wicked will continue to be wicked. None of the wicked will understand, but those who are wise will understand" (Daniel 12:8-11).*

We see here the purposes of the time of tribulation. The righteous will be tested, purified and refined, made ready for the arrival of Jesus. Because the righteous know the Word of God, they will understand.

The wicked will not understand and will carry on in their wickedness. Last days events will lead to a separation of the righteous from the wicked, reminding us of the final parable of Matthew 25.

*He (the Son of Man) will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left (Matthew 25:32,33).*

### **After The Rapture: The Wrath of God and the Battle of Armageddon**

***“From the time that the daily sacrifice is abolished and the abomination that causes desolation is set up, there will be 1,290 days.***

***Blessed is the one who waits for and reaches the end of the 1,335 days.***

*As for you, go your way till the end. You will rest, and then at the end of the days you will rise to receive your allotted inheritance” (Daniel 12:11-13).*

We see some new timeframes here.

Let’s review where we are. At the Rapture, when Jesus returns, the angels are sent to gather His children to Him. Having endured the time of tribulation, God’s children are ready for the marriage supper of the Lamb, with the bridegroom Jesus.

*Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready (Revelation 19:9).*

We understand from scripture that, while we are in heaven with Jesus, God pours out His judgements on the Anti-Christ and his followers—*‘the end that is poured on Him’* (Daniel 9:27).

We read in Revelation 15,16 of seven bowls of God’s wrath that are poured out on the earth.

***I saw in heaven another great and marvellous sign: seven angels with the seven last plagues—last, because with them God’s wrath is completed. Then I heard a loud voice from the temple saying to the seven angels, ‘Go, pour out the seven bowls of God’s wrath on the earth’ (Revelation 15:1, 16:1).***

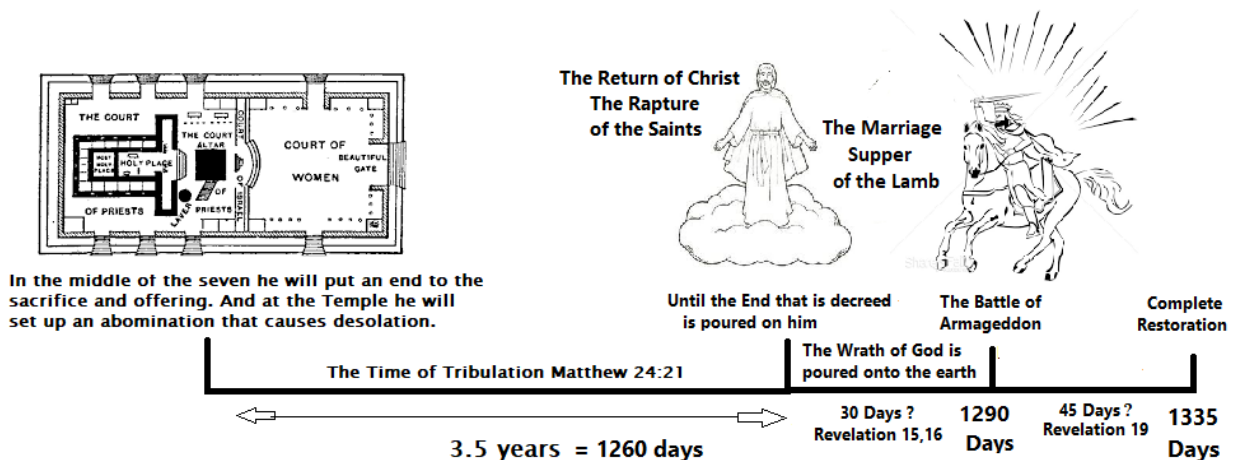
These are plagues like the plagues of Egypt at the time of Pharaoh. There are plagues of boils (Revelation 16:2), of water turned to blood first in the seas and then the springs of water (16:2,3). The sun will burn the people with an intense heat (16:8,9) and then there will be a plague of darkness (16:10).

The sixth bowl of wrath will dry up the River Euphrates. The kings of the earth then gather their armies at Armageddon for the *‘battle on the great day of God Almighty’* (16:12-16). This is where they will face the armies of God when Jesus reappears this time on a horse, accompanied by the armies of God. The Anti-Christ is destroyed, and the reign of Christ and the saints begins (Revelation 19:11-21).

These events, the marriage supper of the Lamb, the wrath of God and the battle of Armageddon provide a *possible* explanation for the time periods of 1290 and 1335 days that Daniel receives at the end of this vision, in addition to the three and a half year period of tribulation.

Is it possible that, after 30 days of the wrath of God, the Battle for Armageddon will begin, culminating in complete restoration after another 45 days?

We can hold this interpretation lightly. These events will occur after we are reunited with Jesus at the Rapture. They are therefore not vitally necessary for us to understand now.



## Recognizing the Anti-Christ

The figure of the Anti-Christ has taken centre stage in this final prophetic vision. Just as multiple messianic prophecies foretold the birth, life, death and resurrection of Jesus, so God once again gives us due warning of the rise, rule and end of this final world leader. Below we see the wealth of information given to us throughout the Book of Daniel. To be forewarned is to be forearmed.

Many Christians believe he will be easy to recognize, that it will be 'obvious' when he appears. However, as I mentioned at the beginning of the book, there is a surprising lack of knowledge of last days scripture in the church.

Looking back, we remember that the scribes and Pharisees believed the coming of the Messiah would be similarly 'obvious' to them due their religious learning, but in the end, they rejected and executed the One whom they claimed to worship.

Likewise, it is entirely possible that some Christian leaders in the world today will embrace and follow the coming Anti-Christ due to a similar surprising lack of discernment.

## The Anti-Christ

Daniel 7:20,23

He will subdue or  
'uproot' three of the  
ten kings

He will speak against  
the Most High.

He will oppress the  
Holy people

He will try to change  
the laws and customs

God's people will be  
delivered into his  
hands for a time and  
times and half a time  
(3.5 years)

Daniel 8:23-25

He will rise in a time  
of great wickedness

He will be a master of  
deceit and intrigue

He will destroy those  
who are mighty  
the Holy people

He will give the people  
a false sense of security

He will stand against Jesus  
and will be destroyed  
by divine power



Daniel 9:27

He will confirm a covenant for 7 years  
After 3.5 years, He will set up  
the abomination of desolation  
The end is poured on Him  
at the end of the seven year period

Daniel 11:21-45

He shall rise through deceit and intrigue with only a few people  
He will redistribute wealth  
He goes to war against the King of the South three times  
He invades Israel  
He will set up the abomination of desolation at the Temple  
He will honor a new and strange God of 'fortresses'  
He will come to His end.

# **Chapter 15**

## **Preparations**

## Is It Time to Wake Up?

*The hour has already come for you to wake up from your slumber, because our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed.*

*The night is nearly over; the day is almost here. So let us put aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armour of light (Romans 13:11,12).*

We all love to sleep under some warm covers, some more than others. Of our children, little Suki was normally awake before us and would be dressed and ready by the time we came to wake her up for school. She once went to bed in her school clothes just to be ready *really* early! She liked being properly prepared!

Most of them needed a simple knock and opening of the door and a calling of their name to get them going in the morning. However, our oldest, Sam, generally needed the full treatment of all the above plus opening the curtains to let the morning sun in, and numerous shakes of the shoulder. We are all different and respond differently to the beginning of a new day.

We are told in Matthew 25 that *'while the bridegroom was delayed, they (the ten virgins) all slumbered and slept* (Matthew 25:5). They all slept.

In *Let's Look Forwards*, scripture politely knocked on the door and called our name. In *Daniel Looks Forward* the curtains have been pulled back and we have been given a few firm shakes of the shoulder. It is time to rouse ourselves, metaphorically splash some water on our faces, put on *'the armour of light'* and prepare ourselves!

## Advice from Corrie ten Boom about Preparing for Tribulation

Corrie ten Boom experienced times of great evil when the Nazis invaded Holland and imprisoned her and her sister in a deadly concentration camp. By God's grace she came through victoriously. Her words of advice to us about the coming time of tribulation carry the weight of personal experience.

*The world is deathly ill. It is dying. The Great Physician has already signed the death certificate. **Yet there is still a great work for Christians to do. They are to be streams of living water, channels of mercy to those who are still in the world.** It is possible for them to do this because they are overcomers. Christians are ambassadors for Christ. They are representatives from Heaven to this dying world. And because of our presence here, things will change.*

*Sometimes I get frightened as I read the Bible, and as I look in this world and see all of the tribulation and persecution promised by the Bible coming true. Now I can tell you, though, if you too are afraid, that I have just read the last pages. I can now come to shouting "Hallelujah! Hallelujah!" for I have found where it is written that Jesus said, "He that overcometh shall inherit all things: and I will be His God, and he shall be My son." This is the future and hope of this world. Not that the world will survive – but that we shall be overcomers in the midst of a dying world.*

*How can we get ready for the persecution?*



*First we need to feed on the Word of God, digest it, make it a part of our being. This will mean disciplined Bible study each day as we not only memorize long passages of scripture, but put the principles to work in our lives.*

*Next we need to develop a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. Not just the Jesus of yesterday, the Jesus of History, but the life-changing Jesus of today who is still alive and sitting at the right hand of God.*

*We must be filled with the Holy Spirit. This is no optional command of the Bible, it is absolutely necessary. Those earthly disciples could never have stood up under the persecution of the Jews and Romans had they not waited for Pentecost. **Each of us needs our own personal Pentecost, the baptism of the Holy Spirit.** We will never be able to stand in the tribulation without it.*

*When I am weak, then I shall be strong, the Bible says. Betsy and I were prisoners for the Lord, we were so weak, but we got power because the Holy Spirit was on us. That mighty inner strengthening of the Holy Spirit helped us through.*

*You will not be strong in yourself when the tribulation comes. Rather, you will be strong in the power of Him who will not forsake you. For seventy-six years I have known the Lord Jesus and not once has He ever left me or let me down.*

*"Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him" (Job 13:15)  
for I know that to all who overcome,  
He shall give the crown of life. (James 1:12, Revelation 2:10)  
Hallelujah!*

*- Corrie ten Boom – 1974*

Corrie ten Boom's admonitions align with the advice of Jesus through Matthew 24,25, which we summarised in *Let's Look Forwards*.

1. Be ready for these times (Matthew 24:44).
2. Know and share the Word of God about these times (Matthew 24: 4, 45).
3. Be filled with the Spirit, surrendered to the Spirit, and learn how to be led by the Spirit (Matthew 25: 1-13).
4. Stay busy in Gospel living and work (Matthew 25:14-30).

We see that spiritual preparations are of the utmost importance. We trust that when we put Him, His Word and His work first, everything else will fall into place (Matthew 6:33).

## **Chapter 16**

### **Conclusion**

## Time Traveller

Christopher Nolan loves to make movies about time! My favourite is his space epic *Interstellar* about a widowed astronaut who leaves his son and daughter behind to look for a new planet for mankind. At the end of a fruitless search, he ends up seemingly hopeless in a black hole.

But then from inside the black hole, he finds he can go back in time to his home, *before he left earth*, and relay important scientific gravitational solutions to his ten-year-old daughter. She believed at the time that this communication came from her 'ghost' when it was actually from her father in the future. When she is older and now part of the NASA team she goes back to retrieve the information and the world is saved.

As far as the last days goes, I feel we are now also like the astronaut; we are time travellers. We have seen the future in the Book of Daniel and are now returning to the present with the ability to speak truth, wisdom and hope to the world: truth, because His Word is truth, wisdom because we can see the end from the beginning, and hope because the end of the story is so good.

## Hike Overview

We have finished the hike through the prophetic peaks. We are now back at the mountain lodge, a cup of hot chocolate in our hands, warming ourselves in front of the log fire.

As we relax, we can think back on how far we have come.

From the simplicity of the King's Dream in Daniel 2, to the Beasts and Horns of Daniel 7 and 8, the 490-year decree of the Angel Gabriel, through to the detailed analysis of the Anti-Christ's rise, rule and end in Daniel 11 and 12, we have seen the character and fate of man's empires and the final manifestation of evil in the Anti-Christ.

In the narrative chapters we have learnt about ancient Babylon; its luxury that Daniel renounces in Daniel 2, its image in Daniel 3, its pride in Daniel 4, its judgement in Daniel 5 and its prayer lockdown in Daniel 6. In these things, ancient Babylon is a prototype of the last days Babylon the Great found in Revelation 17,18.

At the peak or end of every prophetic chapter we have seen the coming of God's Kingdom. Jesus reminds us,

*The kingdom of God is within you* (Luke 17:21).

We do not have to wait for Christ's return to experience and live in His Kingdom. We are citizens of the Kingdom today. We are not half-citizens of this world and half-citizens of heaven. We are new creatures, completely fitted for heaven. (2 Corinthians 5:17)

Therefore, as we come to the end of our journey, we hunger afresh for the Kingdom of God: to learn about the nature and qualities of God's Kingdom as revealed in His Word and discover the detail of our citizens' rights and responsibilities. As we become more knowledgeable of His Word<sup>1</sup>, we will grow in our faith and our ability to live out and demonstrate the reality of our Kingdom citizenship. Praise God!

May He grant us the faith to step into the reality of His Kingdom today and every day until Jesus returns!

*Nor will people say, 'Here it is,' or 'There it is,' because the Kingdom of God is in your midst.*

<sup>1</sup>Though I am sure there are many books that might be helpful in this, I recommend *The Kingdom of Power* by Guillermo Maldonado.

## Closing Prayer

*Father,*

*We thank you that You have given us the privilege of reading your prophetic word, 'a lamp for our feet and a light for our path.' We pray for your Holy Spirit gift of discernment to rightly apply your word and discern good and evil in the world today as events unfold.*

*We thank you that our Kingdom is not of this world, but is eternal and will never pass away. We pray that we can respond in all things as citizens of Your Kingdom, in faith and trust and not fear. We pray that we can fasten our eyes on your Son, Jesus, who is the same 'yesterday today and forever' and that we may run the race you have for us one day at a time in Your grace, strength and power. Today the journey begins!*

*In Jesus' Name, Amen.*

## Summary of Prophetic Chapters

### 1. Daniel 2: The King's Dream

- A multi-level statue represents a panoramic view of world empires, from Daniel's time to the establishment of the Kingdom of God.
- The fourth level of the statue, representing the empire of Rome, endures to the coming of Christ, symbolising the power structure, financial and otherwise, of Europe and, to a degree, America.
- The toes of the statue represent ten final kings.
- Jesus is the stone 'cut out without hands' that 'strikes the image, turning it to dust.'
- At His return, the eternal Kingdom of God is established.

### 2. Daniel 7: The Four Beasts and the Little Horn

- Man's empires are depicted as devouring beasts.
- The fourth beast, representing Rome and its descendants, is the worst.
- Ten horns that arise out of the beast represent ten final kings.
- A final horn, representing the Anti-Christ, will speak against God and persecute His people for three-and-a-half years.
- He is destroyed when the Son of Man, Jesus, returns in the clouds of heaven.

3. Daniel 8: The Ram, the Goat and the Big Horn
  - The Medo-Persian and Greek empires, represented by the ram and the goat, are named by the Angel Gabriel in advance of their rise to dominance.
  - In the 'times of the end' a Big Horn, the Anti-Christ, will rise to power through intrigue, deceiving people with a false sense of security.
  - He will stand against Jesus and will be destroyed.
4. Daniel 9: The Seventy-Sevens
  - The Angel Gabriel prophesies the exact year of Jesus' death on the cross and foretelling the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD.
  - There will be a final seven-year period, beginning when a final ruler, the Anti-Christ, confirms a covenant.
  - In the middle of this seven-year period he sets up 'the abomination of desolation' in the Temple at Jerusalem.
  - At the end of the seven-year period, the Anti-Christ will come to his end.
5. Daniel 10,11,12,
  - A Heavenly Visitor tells of a confrontation between two rulers, the Kings of the North and South, whose hearts are both 'set on evil'.
  - The King of the North, the Anti-Christ, is deceitful, honouring a 'strange god of fortresses'.
  - He fights three wars and is ultimately victorious over the King of the South, who, we assume, rules over Babylon the Great.
  - He invades Israel and sets up the 'abomination of desolation'.
  - There is a time of great trouble for three-and-a-half years.
  - At the end of this period the remainder of God's people are delivered by God to receive their heavenly rewards, along with the saints who have already passed on.

## Summary of Last Days Landmarks

- |                                     |   |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| 1) Ten Last Kings                   | Daniel 2:44, Daniel 7:24, Revelation 17:12                |
| 2) The Rise of the Anti-Christ      | 2 Thessalonians 2:3-11, Daniel 7:23, 8:23, 9:27, 11:21-24 |
| 3) The Confirmation of the Covenant | Daniel 9:27   |
| 4) The Abomination of Desolation    | Matthew 24:15-20, Daniel 9:27, 11:31                      |
| 5) The Time of Tribulation          | Matthew 24:21-28, Daniel 7:23, 8:24, 9:27, 12:1           |
| 6) The Return of Christ             | Matthew 24:29-31, Daniel 2:44, 7:13, 9:27, 12:1,2         |

## Summary of Verses on Babylon the Great

Revelation 17

- Come, I will show you the punishment of the great prostitute, who sits by many waters. With her, the kings of the earth committed adultery, and the inhabitants of the earth were intoxicated with the wine of her adulteries (Revelation 17:1,2).
- The woman was dressed in purple and scarlet, and was glittering with gold, precious stones and pearls. She held a golden cup in her hand, filled with abominable things and the filth of her adulteries (Revelation 17:4).
- The name written on her forehead was a mystery:  
BABYLON THE GREAT  
THE MOTHER OF PROSTITUTES  
AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH (Revelation 17:5).
- This calls for a mind with wisdom. The seven heads are seven hills on which the woman sits (Revelation 17:9).
- The beast and the ten horns you saw will hate the prostitute. They will bring her to ruin and leave her naked; they will eat her flesh and burn her with fire. For God has put it into their hearts to accomplish His purpose by agreeing to hand over to the beast their royal authority, until God's words are fulfilled (Revelation 17:16,17).
- The woman you saw is the great city that rules over the kings of the earth (Revelation 17:18).

## Revelation 18

- With a mighty voice he shouted: "Fallen! Fallen is Babylon the Great! She has become a dwelling for demons and a haunt for every impure spirit" (Revelation 18:2).
- For all the nations have drunk the maddening wine of her adulteries. The kings of the earth committed adultery with her, and the merchants of the earth grew rich from her excessive luxuries" (Revelation 18:3).
- 'Come out of her, my people,' so that you will not share in her sins, so that you will not receive any of her plagues; for her sins are piled up to heaven, and God has remembered her crimes (Revelation 18:4,5).
- Give back to her as she has given; pay her back double for what she has done. Pour her a double portion from her own cup.  
Give her as much torment and grief as the glory and luxury she gave herself. In her heart she boasts, 'I sit enthroned as queen. I am not a widow; I will never mourn' (Revelation 18:4,7).
- Therefore, in one day her plagues will overtake her: death, mourning and famine. She will be consumed by fire, for mighty is the Lord God who judges her' (Revelation 18:8).
- Your merchants were the world's important people.  
By your magic spell (sorceries (pharmakeia KJV) all the nations were led astray (Revelation 18: 23).

# **Appendix**

**Matthew 24**

**Troubled?**

**2 Thessalonians 2:3-12**

**Revelation 17**

**Revelation 18**

**Verses on Discernment**

**Verses on Deceit in the Last Days**

**Transforming our world:**

**The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**

**Take Back the Power Lyrics**

## Matthew 24

Jesus left the temple and was walking away when his disciples came up to him to call his attention to its buildings. <sup>2</sup> “Do you see all these things?” he asked. “Truly I tell you, not one stone here will be left on another; every one will be thrown down.”

<sup>3</sup> As Jesus was sitting on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to him privately. “Tell us,” they said, “when will this happen, and what will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age?”

<sup>4</sup> Jesus answered: “Watch out that no one deceives you. <sup>5</sup> For many will come in my name, claiming, ‘I am the Messiah,’ and will deceive many. <sup>6</sup> You will hear of wars and rumours of wars, but see to it that you are not alarmed. Such things must happen, but the end is still to come. <sup>7</sup> Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be famines and earthquakes in various places. <sup>8</sup> All these are the beginning of birth pains.

<sup>9</sup> “Then you will be handed over to be persecuted and put to death, and you will be hated by all nations because of me. <sup>10</sup> At that time many will turn away from the faith and will betray and hate each other, <sup>11</sup> and many false prophets will appear and deceive many people. <sup>12</sup> Because of the increase of wickedness, the love of most will grow cold, <sup>13</sup> but the one who stands firm to the end will be saved. <sup>14</sup> And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.

<sup>15</sup> “So when you see standing in the holy place ‘the abomination that causes desolation,’ spoken of through the prophet Daniel—let the reader understand— <sup>16</sup> then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. <sup>17</sup> Let no one on the housetop go down to take anything out of the house. <sup>18</sup> Let no one in the field go back to get their cloak. <sup>19</sup> How dreadful it will be in those days for pregnant women and nursing mothers! <sup>20</sup> Pray that your flight will not take place in winter or on the Sabbath. <sup>21</sup> For then there will be great distress, unequalled from the beginning of the world until now—and never to be equalled again.

<sup>22</sup> “If those days had not been cut short, no one would survive, but for the sake of the elect those days will be shortened. <sup>23</sup> At that time if anyone says to you, ‘Look, here is the Messiah!’ or, ‘There he is!’ do not believe it. <sup>24</sup> For false messiahs and false prophets will appear and perform great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect. <sup>25</sup> See, I have told you ahead of time.

<sup>26</sup> “So if anyone tells you, ‘There he is, out in the wilderness,’ do not go out; or, ‘Here he is, in the inner rooms,’ do not believe it. <sup>27</sup> For as lightning that comes from the east is visible even in the west, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. <sup>28</sup> Wherever there is a carcass, there the vultures will gather.

<sup>29</sup> “Immediately after the distress of those days

“‘the sun will be darkened,  
and the moon will not give its light;  
the stars will fall from the sky,  
and the heavenly bodies will be shaken.’

<sup>30</sup> “Then will appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven. And then all the peoples of the earth will mourn when they see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven, with power and great



glory.<sup>31</sup> And he will send his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of the heavens to the other.

<sup>32</sup> “Now learn this lesson from the fig tree: As soon as its twigs get tender and its leaves come out, you know that summer is near. <sup>33</sup> Even so, when you see all these things, you know that it is near, right at the door. <sup>34</sup> Truly I tell you, this generation will certainly not pass away until all these things have happened. <sup>35</sup> Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.

### **The Day and Hour Unknown**

<sup>36</sup> “But about that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. <sup>37</sup> As it was in the days of Noah, so it will be at the coming of the Son of Man. <sup>38</sup> For in the days before the flood, people were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, up to the day Noah entered the ark; <sup>39</sup> and they knew nothing about what would happen until the flood came and took them all away. **That is how it will be at the coming of the Son of Man.** <sup>40</sup> **Two men will be in the field; one will be taken and the other left.** <sup>41</sup> **Two women will be grinding with a hand mill; one will be taken and the other left.**

<sup>42</sup> **“Therefore keep watch,** because you do not know on what day your Lord will come. <sup>43</sup> But understand this: If the owner of the house had known at what time of night the thief was coming, he would have kept watch and would not have let his house be broken into. <sup>44</sup> **So you also must be ready,** because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him.

<sup>45</sup> **“Who then is the faithful and wise servant, whom the master has put in charge of the servants in his household to give them their food at the proper time?** <sup>46</sup> It will be good for that servant whose master finds him doing so when he returns. <sup>47</sup> Truly I tell you, he will put him in charge of all his possessions. <sup>48</sup> But suppose that servant is wicked and says to himself, ‘My master is staying away a long time,’ <sup>49</sup> and he then begins to beat his fellow servants and to eat and drink with drunkards. <sup>50</sup> The master of that servant will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour he is not aware of. <sup>51</sup> He will cut him to pieces and assign him a place with the hypocrites, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”

## **2 Thessalonians 2:3-12**

<sup>3</sup> **“Don’t let anyone deceive you in any way, for that day will not come until the rebellion occurs and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the man doomed to destruction.** <sup>4</sup> **He will oppose and will exalt himself over everything that is called God or is worshiped, so that he sets himself up in God’s temple, proclaiming himself to be God.**

<sup>5</sup> **“Don’t you remember that when I was with you I used to tell you these things?** <sup>6</sup> **And now you know what is holding him back, so that he may be revealed at the proper time.** <sup>7</sup> **For the secret power of lawlessness is already at work; but the one who now holds it back will continue to do so till he is taken out of the way.** <sup>8</sup> **And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will overthrow with the breath of his mouth and destroy by the splendour of his coming.**

<sup>9</sup> **“The coming of the lawless one will be in accordance with how Satan works. He will use all sorts of displays of power through signs and wonders that serve the lie,** <sup>10</sup> **and all the ways that wickedness**

deceives those who are perishing. They perish because they refused to love the truth and so be saved. <sup>11</sup> For this reason God sends them a powerful delusion so that they will believe the lie <sup>12</sup> and so that all will be condemned who have not believed the truth but have delighted in wickedness.”

## **From Troubled? *Let's Look Forwards* Chapter 5**

Don't be Troubled

### **See that you are not troubled – Matthew 24:6**

Jesus does not want us to be afraid or anxious. He recognises that the possibility of living during difficult times is daunting for all of us. How will we manage? How will we respond? Will we have enough faith? Will we be strong enough? As we examine our own ability and 'faith level', we often feel inadequate to face any difficult time, and that troubles us! Does it have to be that way? Is there encouragement to be found in God's Word?

The following principles have encouraged me when I have felt troubled in these studies.

### **God will meet me at the level of my faith**

*Truly I tell you, if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you (Matthew 17:20).*

Probably my first reaction to difficult times is, "I don't think I have the faith for this." I look inward to my own faith, and doubt that it's sufficient. I start to fear and fret looking at some other outward help aside from what I feel is my small faith.

However, in Matthew 17:20, Jesus tells me I can move a mountain with faith as small as a mustard seed. His Word encourages me not to look at my own faith, but to keep my heart and eyes on the One in whom my faith lies. My faith isn't about what I can do, but what I can trust God to do.

My faith isn't the problem. The problem is that I am so ready to give away my faith and grasp onto my unbelief. Like the man who said, I believe, I just have a problem with my unbelief! (Mark 9:24), I have the tendency to believe my doubts and doubt my beliefs.

I should trust that the faith God has given me is sufficient. I must believe that the faith that helped me find a parking place this morning, is the same faith that will guide me in the days to come. The faith that brought me into my present position of employment is the same faith that will take care of me and supply my needs in the future. I don't need greater faith. I just need to apply the measure of faith God has given me to a bigger problem and not cast it away. God will meet me at the level of my faith.

*So do not throw away your confidence (faith); it will be richly rewarded (Hebrews 10:35-36).*

### **God will meet me at the level of my ability**

*My power is made perfect in weakness (2 Corinthians 12:9).*

Looking through the Bible at men and women of God who went through times of trouble, I discover that God met them at the level of their ability.

After fleeing from Egypt, Moses was a shepherd in the Midian desert for 40 years. He learnt all about the patience required to lead a flock of sheep in the wilderness. It was just about all he did know. When the Exodus kicked off and the journey through the wilderness began, it was familiar territory for Moses. It was a time he had already been well prepared for over the preceding forty years. He was ready and equipped with wilderness experience. God met him at the level of his ability.

What did David do when he faced Goliath in the valley of Elah? He slung a stone. You might say, "I couldn't do that!" But David had been doing little else for years. He had spent his days watching his father's sheep, protecting them from wild animals. He had practised and practised with his sling-shot hundreds of times a day, for days on end. By the time God's opportunity arrived, he didn't need to do anything else other than what he had already been doing. God met him right there at the level of his ability.

What did Daniel do when he heard Darius's decree? He prayed as he had prayed all his life. From his youth, he had exercised his faith and spiritual disciplines no matter what circumstances he was in. When he heard the fateful decree from King Darius that would result in a trip to the lion's den, he opened his window and prayed the same as he had always done. Daniel stayed faithful to what he had always been doing. He prayed and God met him right there at the level of his ability.

None of these Biblical heroes did a double somersault or a triple salko. None of them were asked to do anything particularly new or foreign to them. God absolutely met them at their own level of ability, and that is where He will meet you and me.

God will come through as I rest in the level of my own ability. Rather than being afraid of and covering up my weakness and inability, I need to be honest about these shortcomings with Him and others. This will enable Christ's strength in me to come through. God will meet me at the level of my ability.

*Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest upon me . . . For when I am weak, then I am strong (2 Corinthians 12:9-10).*

### **It's Your Job Lord, Not Mine!**

Psalm 138:8 (KJV)

The ultimate encouragement is to know that it isn't my responsibility to see myself through difficult times. It is God's. I belong to Him. He is the author and the finisher of our faith (Hebrews 12:2) and will complete the work He has begun in me (Philippians 1:6). I am not my own, but have been bought with a price (1 Corinthians 6:20).

My job description is to trust Him, listen to Him and receive His guidance. Everything else is God's department and His concern, not mine! Moses was a junior partner in the business of the Exodus. All the hard work and heavy lifting was done by God. Similarly, I will be a junior partner in God's plan for me in a time of trouble.

Recognising this spiritual truth is vital. We've understood that we can't contribute to the work of redemption that Jesus did on the cross for our salvation. We must also recognise that apart from trusting, listening to Him and obeying Him, we cannot contribute to His work of keeping us through times of trouble! It will be His responsibility and His job, not ours! Keeping our eyes and minds on this principle will bring us peace.

*You will keep him in perfect peace, Whose mind is stayed on You, Because he trusts in You.*

Isaiah 26:3 9 (NKJV)

*Trust in the Lord with all your heart; and lean not to your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him and He shall direct your paths.*

Proverbs 3:5-6 (NKJV)

## **Revelation 17**

### **Babylon, the Prostitute on the Beast**

**One of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and said to me, "Come, I will show you the punishment of the great prostitute, who sits by many waters. <sup>2</sup>With her the kings of the earth committed adultery, and the inhabitants of the earth were intoxicated with the wine of her adulteries."**

**<sup>3</sup>Then the angel carried me away in the Spirit into a wilderness. There I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast that was covered with blasphemous names and had seven heads and ten horns. <sup>4</sup>The woman was dressed in purple and scarlet, and was glittering with gold, precious stones and pearls. She held a golden cup in her hand, filled with abominable things and the filth of her adulteries. <sup>5</sup>The name written on her forehead was a mystery:**

**BABYLON THE GREAT**

**THE MOTHER OF PROSTITUTES**

**AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.**

**<sup>6</sup>I saw that the woman was drunk with the blood of God's holy people, the blood of those who bore testimony to Jesus.**

**When I saw her, I was greatly astonished. <sup>7</sup>Then the angel said to me: "Why are you astonished? I will explain to you the mystery of the woman and of the beast she rides, which has the seven heads and ten**

horns. <sup>8</sup> The beast, which you saw, once was, now is not, and yet will come up out of the Abyss and go to its destruction. The inhabitants of the earth whose names have not been written in the book of life from the creation of the world will be astonished when they see the beast, because it once was, now is not, and yet will come.

<sup>9</sup> **“This calls for a mind with wisdom. The seven heads are seven hills on which the woman sits.** <sup>10</sup> They are also seven kings. Five have fallen, one is, the other has not yet come; but when he does come, he must remain for only a little while. <sup>11</sup> The beast who once was, and now is not, is an eighth king. He belongs to the seven and is going to his destruction.

<sup>12</sup> **“The ten horns you saw are ten kings who have not yet received a kingdom, but who for one hour will receive authority as kings along with the beast.** <sup>13</sup> **They have one purpose and will give their power and authority to the beast.** <sup>14</sup> They will wage war against the Lamb, but the Lamb will triumph over them because he is Lord of lords and King of kings—and with him will be his called, chosen and faithful followers.”

<sup>15</sup> Then the angel said to me, “The waters you saw, where the prostitute sits, are peoples, multitudes, nations and languages. <sup>16</sup> **The beast and the ten horns you saw will hate the prostitute. They will bring her to ruin and leave her naked; they will eat her flesh and burn her with fire.** <sup>17</sup> **For God has put it into their hearts to accomplish his purpose by agreeing to hand over to the beast their royal authority, until God’s words are fulfilled.** <sup>18</sup> **The woman you saw is the great city that rules over the kings of the earth.”**

## Revelation 18

### Lament Over Fallen Babylon

After this I saw another angel coming down from heaven. He had great authority, and the earth was illuminated by his splendour. <sup>2</sup> With a mighty voice he shouted:

**“‘Fallen! Fallen is Babylon the Great!’  
She has become a dwelling for demons  
and a haunt for every impure spirit,  
a haunt for every unclean bird,  
a haunt for every unclean and detestable animal.  
<sup>3</sup> For all the nations have drunk  
the maddening wine of her adulteries.  
The kings of the earth committed adultery with her,  
and the merchants of the earth grew rich from her excessive luxuries.”**

### Warning to Escape Babylon’s Judgment

<sup>4</sup> Then I heard another voice from heaven say:

**“‘Come out of her, my people,’  
so that you will not share in her sins,  
so that you will not receive any of her plagues;**

<sup>5</sup> for her sins are piled up to heaven,  
and God has remembered her crimes.  
<sup>6</sup> Give back to her as she has given;  
pay her back double for what she has done.  
Pour her a double portion from her own cup.  
<sup>7</sup> Give her as much torment and grief  
as the glory and luxury she gave herself.  
In her heart she boasts,  
‘I sit enthroned as queen.  
I am not a widow;  
I will never mourn.’  
<sup>8</sup> Therefore in one day her plagues will overtake her:  
death, mourning and famine.  
She will be consumed by fire,  
for mighty is the Lord God who judges her.

### Threefold Woe over Babylon's Fall

<sup>9</sup> “When the kings of the earth who committed adultery with her and shared her luxury see the smoke of her burning, they will weep and mourn over her. <sup>10</sup> Terrified at her torment, they will stand far off and cry:

“‘Woe! Woe to you, great city,  
you mighty city of Babylon!  
In one hour your doom has come!’

<sup>11</sup> “The merchants of the earth will weep and mourn over her because no one buys their cargoes anymore— <sup>12</sup> cargoes of gold, silver, precious stones and pearls; fine linen, purple, silk and scarlet cloth; every sort of citron wood, and articles of every kind made of ivory, costly wood, bronze, iron and marble; <sup>13</sup> cargoes of cinnamon and spice, of incense, myrrh and frankincense, of wine and olive oil, of fine flour and wheat; cattle and sheep; horses and carriages; and human beings sold as slaves.

<sup>14</sup> “They will say, ‘The fruit you longed for is gone from you. All your luxury and splendour have vanished, never to be recovered.’ <sup>15</sup> The merchants who sold these things and gained their wealth from her will stand far off, terrified at her torment. They will weep and mourn <sup>16</sup> and cry out:

“‘Woe! Woe to you, great city,  
dressed in fine linen, purple and scarlet,  
and glittering with gold, precious stones and pearls!  
<sup>17</sup> In one hour such great wealth has been brought to ruin!’

“Every sea captain, and all who travel by ship, the sailors, and all who earn their living from the sea, will stand far off. <sup>18</sup> When they see the smoke of her burning, they will exclaim, ‘Was there ever a city like this great city?’ <sup>19</sup> They will throw dust on their heads, and with weeping and mourning cry out:

“‘Woe! Woe to you, great city,  
where all who had ships on the sea

became rich through her wealth!  
In one hour she has been brought to ruin!’

<sup>20</sup> “Rejoice over her, you heavens!  
Rejoice, you people of God!  
Rejoice, apostles and prophets!  
For God has judged her  
with the judgment she imposed on you.”

### **The Finality of Babylon’s Doom**

<sup>21</sup> Then a mighty angel picked up a boulder the size of a large millstone and threw it into the sea, and said:

“With such violence  
the great city of Babylon will be thrown down,  
never to be found again.

<sup>22</sup> The music of harpists and musicians, pipers and trumpeters,  
will never be heard in you again.

No worker of any trade  
will ever be found in you again.

The sound of a millstone  
will never be heard in you again.

<sup>23</sup> The light of a lamp  
will never shine in you again.

The voice of bridegroom and bride  
will never be heard in you again.

**Your merchants were the world’s important people.**

**By your magic spell (pharmakeia) all the nations were led astray.**

<sup>24</sup> In her was found the blood of prophets and of God’s holy people,  
of all who have been slaughtered on the earth.”

### **Verses on Discernment**

*You know how to **discern** the face of the sky, **but you cannot discern the signs of the times** (Matthew 16:3).*

***But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned** (1 Corinthians 2:14).*

***But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all . . . to another discerning of spirits** (1 Corinthians 12:7, 10).*

***For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart** (Hebrews 4:12).*

***But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil** (Hebrews 5:14).*

*And this I pray, that **your love may abound still more and more in knowledge and all discernment** (Philippians 1:9).*

***Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world** (1 John 4:1).*

***By this you know the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God, and every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not of God. And this is the spirit of the Antichrist, which you have heard was coming, and is now already in the world** (1 John 4:2,3).*

***You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world. They are of the world. Therefore, they speak as of the world, and the world hears them. We are of God. He who knows God hears us; he who is not of God does not hear us. By this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error** (1 John 4:4-6).*

## **Last Days Verses on Deceit**

***For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many.***

***And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many.***

***For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect** (Matthew 24:5,11,24).*

***He will use ... all the ways that wickedness deceives those who are perishing. They perish because they refused to love the truth and so be saved.***

***For this reason God sends them a powerful delusion so that they will believe the lie** (2 Thessalonians 2:10,11).*

***The Spirit clearly says that in later times some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons** (1 Timothy 4:1).*

***Evildoers and impostors will go from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived** (2 Timothy 3:13).*

***A fierce-looking king, a master of intrigue, will arise. He will cause deceit to prosper** (Daniel 8:23,25)*

***He will act deceitfully, and with only a few people he will rise to power** (Daniel 11:23).*

***The great dragon was hurled down—that ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, who leads the whole world astray** (Revelation 12:9).*

***It performed great signs . . . it deceived the inhabitants of the earth** (Revelation 13).*



*For your merchants were the great men of the earth, **for by your sorcery all the nations were deceived***  
(Revelation 18:23 NKJV).

## **The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**

(The extract below is taken from a United Nations website)

The Global Goals have been introduced to the world: a 17-point plan to end poverty, combat climate change and fight injustice and inequality. They are the biggest attempt in the history of the human race to make the world a better place. A plan that 193 governments have agreed, a plan that the world wants and needs, a plan backed by leading business and organisations, a to-do list for the planet that will only be achieved if everyone plays their part.

### **Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**

#### **Preamble**

This Agenda is a plan of action for people, planet and prosperity. It also seeks to strengthen universal peace in larger freedom. We recognise that eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty, is the greatest global challenge and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development. All countries and all stakeholders, acting in collaborative partnership, will implement this plan. We are resolved to free the human race from the tyranny of poverty and want and to heal and secure our planet. We are determined to take the bold and transformative steps which are urgently needed to shift the world onto a sustainable and resilient path. As we embark on this collective journey, we pledge that no one will be left behind. The 17 Sustainable Development Goals and 169 targets which we are announcing today demonstrate the scale and ambition of this new universal Agenda. They seek to build on the Millennium Development Goals and complete what these did not achieve. They seek to realize the human rights of all and to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls. They are integrated and indivisible and balance the three dimensions of sustainable development: the economic, social and environmental.

The Goals and targets will stimulate action over the next fifteen years in areas of critical importance for humanity and the planet:

#### **People**

We are determined to end poverty and hunger, in all their forms and dimensions, and to ensure that all human beings can fulfil their potential in dignity and equality and in a healthy environment.

#### **Planet**

We are determined to protect the planet from degradation, including through sustainable consumption and production, sustainably managing its natural resources and taking urgent action on climate change, so that it can support the needs of the present and future generations.

#### **Prosperity**

We are determined to ensure that all human beings can enjoy prosperous and fulfilling lives and that economic, social and technological progress occurs in harmony with nature.

**Peace** We are determined to foster peaceful, just and inclusive societies which are free from fear and violence. There can be no sustainable development without peace and no peace without sustainable development.

### **Partnership**

We are determined to mobilize the means required to implement this Agenda through a revitalised Global Partnership for Sustainable Development, based on a spirit of strengthened global solidarity, focussed in particular on the needs of the poorest and most vulnerable and with the participation of all countries, all stakeholders and all people. The interlinkages and integrated nature of the Sustainable Development Goals are of crucial importance in ensuring that the purpose of the new Agenda is realised. If we realize our ambitions across the full extent of the Agenda, the lives of all will be profoundly improved and our world will be transformed for the better.

<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/post2015/transformingourworld>

## **Take Back the Power – The Interrupters**

Chorus

What's your plan for tomorrow?  
Are you a leader or will you follow?  
Are you a fighter or will you cower?  
It's our time to take back the power!

[Verse 1]

What you gonna do  
When they show up in black suits  
On your street in army boots  
And they're there to silence you  
What you gonna say  
When they strip your rights away  
And the taxman makes you pay  
For every bead of sweat you bled today

Pre-Chorus]

We don't need to run and hide  
We won't be pushed off to the side

Chorus

What's your plan for tomorrow?  
Are you a leader or will you follow?  
Are you a fighter or will you cower?  
It's our time to take back the power!

[Verse 2]

Who you gonna trust  
When the judge is so unjust  
And the jury must discuss  
Said you don't look like one of us!  
Where you gonna turn  
Now the court has been adjourned  
And the lessons that you learned  
Are not as many as the bridges burned

[Pre-Chorus]

We don't need to run and hide  
We won't be pushed off to the side

Chorus

What's your plan for tomorrow?  
Are you a leader or will you follow?  
Are you a fighter or will you cower?  
It's our time to take back the power.