



THE PROPHECY OF DANIEL

Lesson Number 33



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

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

THE FUTURE IS UNFOLDED TO DANIEL, #2

“ 11:7 But out of a branch of her roots shall one stand up in his estate, which shall come with an army, and shall enter into the fortress of the king of the north, and shall deal against them, and shall prevail: ⁸ And shall also carry captives into Egypt their gods, with their princes, and with their precious vessels of silver and of gold; and he shall continue more years than the king of the north. ⁹ So the king of the south shall come into his kingdom, and shall return into his own land. ¹⁰ But his sons shall be stirred up, and shall assemble a multitude of great forces: and one shall certainly come, and overflow, and pass through: then shall he return, and be stirred up, even to his fortress. ¹¹ And the king of the south shall be moved with choler, and shall come forth and fight with him, even with the king of the north: and he shall set forth a great multitude; but the multitude shall be given into his hand. ¹² And when he hath taken away the multitude, his heart shall be lifted up; and he shall cast down many ten thousands: but he shall not be strengthened by it, ¹³ For the king of the north shall return, and shall set forth a multitude greater than the former, and shall certainly come after certain years with a great army and with much riches.” ^{KJV} (Daniel 11:7-13)

INTRODUCTION

We are dealing with matters that some might view as “secular” – things pertaining to the heathen nations of the world. They might also be perceived as unrelated to the great salvation that is in Christ Jesus, and therefore to be passed over. Consequently, they may be considered unworthy of our attention – at least if we do not consider the following.

- ▶ That these are matters written in the “*Scriptures of Truth*,” kept in heaven.
- ▶ That God Himself has made these determinations, removing and raising

up kings to fulfill His own will.

- ▶ That God has sent an angel to Daniel to make these things known.
- ▶ That the Holy Spirit moved Daniel to write this record.
- ▶ That these events have to do with the children of Israel, from whom the Savior of the world came.

These considerations, and more, make the text relevant to us. Nothing that God has determined can be viewed as optional information, or unrelated to “*the*

salvation that is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory” (2 Tim 2:10).

OBSERVATIONS CONCERNING GENTILE NATIONS AND KINGS

Although this is not always taught explicitly, there is often an underlying assumption that God had nothing to do with the Gentile nations. Because He did not have a covenant with them, it is reasoned, He had no dealings with them. But this is not true. The very fact that He is the “*Lord of kings*” (Dan 2:47) should confirm that to us. How could He be the Lord of someone with whom He had no dealings? To be sure, God had no

OUTLINE

- ▶ A BRANCH OF HER ROOTS (11:7)
- ▶ CAPTIVES CARRIED INTO BABYLON (11:8)
- ▶ HE SHALL RETURN TO HIS OWN LAND (11:9)
- ▶ PERPETUAL WAR (11:10)
- ▶ THE MULTITUDE GIVEN INTO HIS HAND (11:11)
- ▶ HEART LIFTED AND MULTITUDES CAST DOWN (11:12)
- ▶ THE KING OF THE NORTH WILL RETURN (11:13)

covenantal dealings with the kings of the earth, as He did with Israel. However, they were exposed to Him, and were accountable to Him. It will be of value to make a few remarks about this circumstance before proceeding further.

Exposed to the Lord

The kings and nations of the earth have been exposed to God numerous times. They have not been totally ignorant of His Person and manners.

- ▶ The nations were originally formed from the sons of Noah, who lived through the flood and knew of the Lord (Gen 10:1-32).
- ▶ The scattering of the peoples throughout the whole earth was the result of a curse from God at the tower of Babel (Gen 11:1-9).
- ▶ The king of Sodom heard of the God of heaven from Abraham (Gen 14:21-22).
- ▶ The Philistine king Abimelech personally heard from God, and was exposed to His servant Abraham. In fact, he was healed after Abraham prayed for him (Gen 20:2-18).
- ▶ Isaac, known for his association with

the God of heaven, flourished in the land of the Philistines, and they were envious of him (Gen 26:1-16).

- ▶ The king of Egypt, and all the nation, were exposed to God through Joseph. During a fourteen-year period, he displayed unparalleled wisdom, and in the time of famine *"all countries came into Egypt to Joseph to buy corn"* (Gen 41:46-57).
- ▶ The nation of Egypt, a world-dominating power, was exposed to the God of the Hebrews for 430 years (Ex 3:18).
- ▶ The Amorites were exposed to the power of the Lord when they were overthrown by the Israelites en route to Canaan (Num 21:21-33).
- ▶ The Moabites, both the people and their king, knew of the God of the Hebrews, of their deliverance, and of their blessing (Num 22-24).
- ▶ People in Jericho heard how God had delivered Israel from Egypt (Josh 2:10).
- ▶ During the times of the Judges, several nations became painfully acquainted with the God of the Hebrews. These included Chushanrishathaim king of Mesopotamia and his people (3:10), the Moabites (3:28), the Philistines (3:31), Sisera and the people from Harosheth with Jabon the king of Canaan (4:14-23), the Midianites (7:23-25; 8:22), and others.
- ▶ During the reign of David, the Lord *"brought the fear of him upon all nations"* (1 Chron 14:17).
- ▶ The nations of the world were exposed to the wisdom of Solomon, who surpassed them all in riches and

wisdom (1 Kgs 10:23-24).

- ▶ Nebuchadnezzar issued a proclamation to *"all people, nations, and languages,"* declaring God, His greatness, His signs and wonders, His kingdom, and His dominion (Dan 4).
- ▶ Darius issued a proclamation to *"all people, nations, and languages,"* declaring *"the God of Daniel."* He proclaimed He was living, steadfast, His kingdom could not be destroyed, and that His dominion was to the end. He announced He delivered and rescued, and worked signs and wonders in both heaven and earth (Dan 6:25-27).
- ▶ Cyrus announced throughout the Persian kingdom that *"the Lord God of heaven"* had charged him to build Him a house in Jerusalem (2 Chron 36:22-23).

In all of these cases, the heathen were exposed to God through His people, whether individuals prior to the First Covenant, or the nation of Israel.

The nations of the world, therefore, were not ignorant of God. They had been repeatedly and extensively exposed to His Person and His ways. Furthermore, they were accountable for properly responding to that knowledge.

Nations Are Accountable to God

No earthly dignitary or nation is free from accountability to God. This has been abundantly confirmed in Scripture. The following is only representative of judgments brought against those who had no official association or covenant with the God of heaven.

- ▶ The world of Noah's day, which had no written Law from Him, nor covenant with Him, was destroyed because violence covered the face of

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the earth (Gen 6).

- ▶ Judgment of the people at Babel for striving to make a name for themselves (Gen 11:6-8).
- ▶ The cities of Sodom of Gomorrah, whose conduct had become reprehensible to Him (Gen 19:23-25).
- ▶ The heathen king Abimelech held accountable for desiring Sarai, Abram's wife (Gen 20:3).
- ▶ The Egyptians, who had oppressed His people (Ex 7:4).
- ▶ The Hittites, Girgashites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites, immoral nations occupying Canaan, which He expelled from that country (Lev 18:25; Deut 7:1).

- ▶ Herod for marrying his brother's wife (Mark 6:18).
- ▶ Herod for accepting undue glory (Acts 12:22-23).

Thus we see that God has dealt with uncovenanted individuals, cities, kings, nations, and even the entire world, for iniquity. All of this confirms that God is *"the Governor among the nations"* (Psa 22:28). Accounts such as the one before us are to be treated with the utmost sobriety. It is revealing Divine manners that we are obliged to know and respect.

WHY IS THE FUTURE IMPORTANT?

There is a considerable amount of Christian teaching and emphasis that leaves one with the impression the future is not important. A "whatever-will-be-

24:15-20).

- ▶ **Men** are to live in view of their coming death and judgment (Heb 9:27-28).
- ▶ **The life of faith** is lived while looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of the Lord Jesus Christ (1 Thess 1:10; Tit 2:12).
- ▶ **Believers** were told to live carefully in view of *"perilous times"* that were coming (2 Tim 3:1-5).
- ▶ **Ministers of the Word** were admonished to preach in view of a coming time when men would not endure sound doctrine (2 Tim 4:2).

Any religious thrust that throws fog upon the future, or accents the here and now, is dangerous, to say the least. I am persuaded that a good percentage of present day Christianity will wither when men seriously consider the universal appointments of death, the end of the world, the judgment day, and the return of Jesus.

From yet another perspective, the revelations given to Daniel would awaken hope within the hearts of faithful Israelites. Difficult days would, indeed, be experienced. Yet, the people would not be removed. God would ultimate bring down their oppressors, and would not make a full end of them.

In our time, after we have considered prophesied apostasies, wars and rumors of wars, tribulation, and natural and political disturbances, there is yet more to consider. **Our minds must not come short of ultimate future things!** Trials will end. The devil and his hosts will be cast into the lake of fire. The righteous will shine as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. The Kingdom will be given to the saints of the most high God. Jesus will soon come, punishing the wicked and rewarding the righteous. Then we will sit with Him in His throne.

That is the kind of future that must occupy our minds. Daniel received a revelation of the future. It was not intended to crush him, but to bring hope. The future is in the hands of the Lord, and it is comforting to ponder it.

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- ▶ Sennacherib king of Assyria, for oppressing His people (2 Kgs 19:35-37).
- ▶ The city of Nineveh, warned of impending judgment because of its wickedness, then later destroyed because of its return to the same (Jonah 1:2; Zeph 2:13).
- ▶ Edom, the descendants of Esau for their wickedness (Ezek 25:13-14).
- ▶ Tyre and Sidon, Phoenician cities, who were destroyed for their pride and insolence (Isa 28).
- ▶ Nebuchadnezzar for taking the credit for the glory of his kingdom (Dan 4:30-32).
- ▶ Belshazzar for defiling the vessels of the house of the Lord (Dan 5:23-30).

will-be" attitude is developed that rivets one to the present, with little regard for what is ahead. This is not good.

Throughout Scripture, people have been admonished to shape their lives in view of what was coming. This is a kingdom manner that permeates nearly all of the Spirit's teaching.

- ▶ Following the revelation of God, **Noah** shaped his life in view of what was coming (Heb 11:7).
- ▶ **Joseph** gave commandment concerning his bones in view of what was coming (Heb 11:22).
- ▶ **Faithful Israelites** lived in view of the coming Messiah (Luke 2:38).
- ▶ **Jesus** gave instruction to His disciples concerning preparation for the destruction of Jerusalem (Matt

CONCLUDING INTRODUCTORY THOUGHTS

The message of the angel, therefore, is especially pertinent for at least three reasons.

▣ This relates to certain Divine

preparations for the coming of the Messiah.

▣ In the account the interest of God in His people and His land is revealed.

▣ The intolerance of God for pride and

iniquity are confirmed.

For these reasons, we must exercise ourselves not to take a strictly historical view of the text. While that view exists, it is not the primary one. We must aim at seeing God more clearly in the text.

A BRANCH OF HER ROOTS

“11:7 But out of a branch of her roots shall one stand up in his estate, which shall come with an army, and shall enter into the fortress of the king of the north, and shall deal against them, and shall prevail.”

The angel continues to unveil matters relating to the northern kingdom of Syria and the southern kingdom of Egypt. These were divisions of the Grecian empire, once headed up by Alexander the Great, who was suddenly “broken off” at the zenith of his power. The unseen hand of God is involved in all of these events, controlling, raising up, and casting down.

Satan Was Plotting

From the perspective of the powers of darkness, Satan is plotting against the Jewish people, because he knows the Messiah will come through them. His effort is to thwart the entrance of the Seed of the women, whom, God announced would mortally bruise his head (Gen 3:15).

The devil had sought to raise the Persians against the Jews in the days of Darius and Cyrus. However, his efforts were cast down to the ground through the intervention of holy angels. One of them stood up to strengthen Darius, so that he favored the Jews. Cyrus also did the same in the first year of his reign, being used of God to rebuild the Temple.

Still seeking to overturn the purpose of God, Satan sought to consolidate the Syrian and Egyptian kingdoms by means of a marriage contract between Berenice, daughter of the king of the South, and the king of the North. The plan fell to the ground,

Berenice was murdered, and the king of the North returned to his former wife.

It Was In the Scriptures of Truth

This is how it all worked out upon the earth, and historians have duly noted and recorded those events. However, the angel has told Daniel these things were written in “the Scriptures of Truth,” the book of Divine intent. They were not simply the outworking of human machinations. Nor, indeed, were they only

descendants of her line,”^{NASB} “One from her family line.”^{NIV}

Some Background Thoughts

The additional versions that are quoted (NASB and NIV) are interpretations of the text, and not strict translations. The words employed in the text are “branch” and “roots.” This is heaven’s manner of speaking about generations. The “root” is the progenitor of a generation, and a “branch” are

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the working of the wicked one.

Satan, who also works by design, had plotted a strategy in which he thought to stop the entrance of the One through whom God had announced his demise would come. But God had frustrated his purpose, bringing it to nought. This revelation was intended to comfort Daniel, assuring him that the people for whom he had been praying would not be forgotten by their God. That protection would involve significant activity among heathen nations, and the expressions of heathen kings as well.

BRANCH OF HER ROOTS

“But out of a branch of her roots . . .” Other versions read, “But one of the

offsprings of that generation. From the standpoint of nature, these are bloodlines. In the Spirit they represent sources of both good and evil.

Scriptures speak of the “root of Jesse” (Isa 11:10; Rom 15:12), and “the root of David” (Rev 5:5). Both of these texts refer to the Lord Jesus, who was the Source of both Jesse and David, as well as their Offspring. Thus He is called “the Root and the Offspring of David” (Rev 22:16). In this language Divine purpose is emphasized, not mere fleshly genealogy.

In describing the determined destruction of the wicked, Malachi speaks of the day of judgment as a day “that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea,

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and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the LORD of hosts, that **it shall leave them neither root nor branch**" (Mal 4:1). That is, there will no longer be any generation of ungodly people.

There is such a thing as an ungodly generation – a body of people that are corrupt before God. Such a generation lived in the time of Noah. That is why God said He had seen Noah as "righteous

In the verse before us, Berenice, like a rotten tree, had been cut down. It appeared as though that was the end of any involvement of the southern kingdom of Egypt with the northern kingdom of Syria. However, that was not the case at all. Syria had not thwarted Egypt.

Although "the king's daughter of the south" was cut down, a branch shot up in her place – a branch to take up her cause. Remember what was said of her:

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before Me in **this generation**" (Gen 7:1). Jesus spoke of such a generation in His day, referring to it as "this generation," and having nothing good to say about it (Matt 11:16; 12:41,42; 23:46; Mk 8:12; Lk 11:50-51; 17:25). God also referred to a "generation of His wrath" (Jer 7:29).

There is also a "the generation of the upright" (Psa 112:2), "the generation of the righteous" (Psa 14:5), "the generation of them that seek Him" (Psa 24:6), and "the generation of Thy children" (Psa 73:15).

Jesus referred these two generations as "wheat" and "tares," further identifying them as "children of the Kingdom," and "children of the wicked one" (Matt 13:38). John called them "the children of God" and "the children of the devil" (1 John 3:10). God spoke of these two generations in yet another way in His revelation to John on the Isle of Patmos. He spoke of the generation of the ungodly as "the vine of the earth" (Rev 14:18-19), and the righteous as "the harvest of the earth" (Rev 14:15-16).

Why Bring This Up?

A proper view of this text requires some understanding of this way of viewing people. While, in a sense, all are individuals, in yet another sense, they are part of something larger than themselves.

"but she shall be given up, and they that brought her, and he that begat her, and he that strengthened her in these times" (11:6). Everyone associated with the plan to unite the two kingdoms through the marriage of Berenice and Antiochus Theos perished as the plan was thrown down to the ground.

There must have been a fierce struggle taking place, involving "the prince of Grecia," who no doubt sought to extend the influence of the Grecian empire. It was now (around 246 B.C.) in its waning state, and would eventually be overthrown by Rome toward the end of the fourth millennium. What was taking place upon the earth, in my judgment, reflected a fierce struggle for dominancy that was occurring in "high places." From the devil's point of view, it was all an effort to bring down the Jews, and thus thwart the entrance of the Messiah, who would crush his head.

The phrase "a branch of her roots" refers to some one from the same family – not someone who sprang from Berenice, or the daughter of the king of the South. This refers to another member of the family tree from which she herself came. Thus the NIV reads, "One from her family line will arise."

HIS ESTATE

" . . . shall one stand up in his estate . . ." Other versions read, "shall arise in his place,"^{NKJV} and "will arise to take her place."^{NIV}

The meaning of the text is that one would arise from her family who would take up her cause – one who would avenge her. This proved to be none other than her own brother, Ptolemy Euergetes. History refers to him as Ptolemy III Euergetes, son of Ptolemy II (Berenice's father), who was also known as Ptolemaeus Philadelphus. It is said of his son Ptolemy III Euergetes (Berenice's brother), "Shortly after his accession and marriage, Ptolemy invaded Coele Syria, to avenge the murder of his sister, the widow of the Seleucid king Antiochus II." BRITANNICA 2003

COME WITH AN ARMY

" . . . which shall come with an army, and shall enter into the fortress of the king of the north, and shall deal against them, and shall prevail . . . "

The kingdoms of this world are forceful, as depicted by the four beasts that rose from the sea. Babylon was overthrown by force. Persia was overthrown by force. Eventually, Greece will be overthrown by force. This is the manner in which the kingdoms of the world function.

Now, in our text two divisions of the Grecian empire engage in war, the southern kingdom of Egypt coming against the northern kingdom of Syria. Ptolemy III, Berenice's brother marched with a great army into the citadels of Syria and took it by storm.

Of this conquest, history records the following. "When Ptolemy II Philadelphus died in 246 BC, he left a prosperous kingdom to his successor, Ptolemy III Euergetes (246–222 BC). His reign saw a very successful campaign against the Seleucids in Syria, occasioned by the murder of Euergetes' sister, Berenice, who had been married to the Seleucid Antiochus II. To avenge Berenice, Euergetes marched into Syria, where he won a great victory." BRITANNICA 2003

Grollier's Encyclopedia says of him, "and his wars against the Seleucid kings of Syria extended Egyptian territories in the Near East." GROLLIERS 2002

The fulfillment of this prophecy by

Ptolemy Euergetes is acknowledged by established students of Scripture, confirming that it is not merely an imaginative idea of concocted by men.

▶ “He entered Syria, and caused so great a terror that many fortified cities surrendered themselves to him. During this war he drew to himself many cities which seemed impregnable; whence it is not surprising to find the angel stating his arrival at the fortifications. Some translate it “dwelling place,”but without reason, and thus injure the Prophet’s meaning. He shall come unto the very fortification, meaning, he shall arrive in Syria, and shall posses many fortified cities.” CALVIN

▶ “As Ptolemy Euergetes did. See above. He came out of Egypt as soon as he heard of these calamities, to defend her. And shall enter into the fortress of the king of the north His strongholds. In fact, he overran Syria and Cilicia, and extended his ravages to the Euphrates and the Tigris. Polybius (Hist. l. 5) says that he entered into the fortified cities of Syria, and took them. In the passage before us, the singular – “fortress” – is put for the plural. And shall deal against them Shall “act” against them. Literally, “shall do against them.” And shall prevail Shall overcome, or subdue them. As seen above, he took possession of no small part of the kingdom of Syria. He was recalled home by a sedition in Egypt; and had it not been for this (Justin says), he would have made himself master of the whole kingdom of Seleucus.” BARNES

▶ “Certainly Euergetes, brother of the murdered Berenice, advanced into Syria, and overran the whole country, captured Seleucia, the port of Antioch, then mastered Antioch itself, and advanced even beyond the Tigris, while Seleucus retired behind the Taurus Mountains.” PULPIT COMMENTARY

The Reason for the Record

The invasion of Syria by this king took place around 240 B.C., around 297 years after Daniel receives this word (approximately 537 B.C.). There would be no prophet to provide a Divine perspective of what was happening at that time. Therefore, God makes Daniel the custodian of this knowledge concerning things written “in the Scriptures of Truth.”

All of this concerns the Jews, for the angel said, “Now I am come to make thee understand **what shall befall thy**

people in the latter days: for yet the vision is for many days”(10:14). Daniel is not being provided a mere overview of coming events. These are matters that directly bear upon God’s care, chastening, and protection of His own people. This is a revelation of what was taking place behind the scenes – the struggles in high places that were designed to crush the Jews and inhibit the entrance of the

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

▶ “And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, **shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, whose kingdom is an**

THIS IS A REVELATION OF WHAT WAS TAKING PLACE BEHIND THE SCENES – THE STRUGGLES IN HIGH PLACES THAT WERE DESIGNED TO CRUSH THE JEWS AND INHIBIT THE ENTRANCE OF THE PROMISED SAVIOR INTO THE WORLD.

promised Savior into the world. **This is not a statement of history, but an interpretation of it.** It is revealing how the Lord is sustaining His people, and how the purposes of the devil are being utterly frustrated.

everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him.” (Dan 7:27).

▶ “Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, **Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.”** (Mat 25:34)

▶ “Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father’s good pleasure to **give you the kingdom.”** (Luke 12:32)

Thus, while the kings of the earth battle for supremacy through wars and rumors of wars, the saints patiently wait for the time when they will “**inherit all things**” (Rev 21:7). God has already announced His intentions, and confirmed that they are sure and will be realized. That is why the saints can wait patiently, living by faith. They will ultimately “**judge the world**” and “**angels,**” sitting with Jesus in His throne, and reigning with Him (1 Cor 6:2-3; Rev 3:21; 2 Tim 2:12). Satan will be bruised under their feet (Rom 16:20), and they will “**reign for ever and ever**” (Rev 10:5). All of this is done without drawing an earthly sword or doing battle in the flesh.

The Patience of the Saints

Thus the word is fulfilled, “*He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity: he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword. **Here is the patience and the faith of the saints***” (Rev 13:10).

The latter phrase, “*the patience and the faith of the saints,*” contrasts the people of God with the kings and governments of this world. **Whereas the rulers of this world engage in violence to maintain and extend their dominion, the saints will be GIVEN, or inherit, the kingdom.** Even now, we have “*received*” the kingdom in a preliminary and first fruits sense (Heb 12:28). But the fulness of that kingdom will yet be possessed according to God’s own purpose. Thus it is written:

▶ “*Until the Ancient of days came, and*

THE WHOLE EARTH IF FULL OF HIS GLORY BECAUSE GOD IS WORKING THROUGHOUT THE WORLD.

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CAPTIVES CARRIED INTO EGYPT

“⁸ And shall also carry captives into Egypt their gods, with their princes, and with their precious vessels of silver and of gold; and he shall continue more years than the king of the north.”

The angel continues to elaborate on the exploits of the king who will touch the purpose of God over two hundred years in the future – Ptolemy III Euergetes. There are some very precise things said about this king in order that the working of God may be clearly perceived by believers living at that time.

THEIR GODS CAPTURED

“And shall also carry captives into Egypt their gods, with their princes, and with their precious vessels of silver and of gold . . .” Other versions read, *“He will also seize their gods,”*^{NIV} and *“He shall also carry off to Egypt their gods.”*^{RSV}

The word *“princes”* does not refer

such slaughter, or anything remotely like it, attended this event – when the king of the South carried the gods of the Syrians into Egypt.

History records this is precisely what Berenice’s brother, Ptolemy III Euergetes, did.

“He gained popularity at home by recapturing statues of Egyptian gods originally taken by the Persians. The decree promulgated at Canopus in the Delta on March 4, 238 BC, attests both this event and the many great benefactions conferred on Egyptian temples throughout the land. It was during Euergetes’ reign, for instance, that the rebuilding of the great Temple of Horus at Idf” (Apollinopolis Magna) was begun.”^{BRITANNICA 2003}

Jerome, a scholarly Christian from the fourth century, wrote: “Ptolemy took with him, on his return, forty thousand talents of silver, a vast number of precious vessels of gold, and images to the number of two thousand four hundred, among which were many of the Egyptian idols, which Cambyses, on

and F.W. Farrar.

The precision of the prophecy is most arresting to consider. Not only is the swift and decisive manner in which Ptolemy Euergetes invaded Syria detailed, but also the kind of booty he took from Syria back to Egypt. Not only is this a testimony to the inspiration of the book of Daniel, it also confirms the futility of gods that have been originated by man.

MORE YEARS THAN THE KING OF THE NORTH

“ . . . and he shall continue more years than the king of the north.” Some versions place a different light on the passage. *“He on his part will refrain from attacking the king of the North for some years,”*^{NASB} and *“For some years he will leave the king of the North alone.”*^{NIV}

In actuality, Ptolemy outlived Seleucus, king of Syria, by four or five years.^{Prideaux, iii. 122} Historically speaking, both views are correct: ¹ the king of the South did outlive the king of the North. ² He also refrained from further attacks against Syria.

RETURNING TO HIS OWN LAND

“⁹ So the king of the south shall come into his kingdom, and shall return into his own land.”

Here, there is a significant difference in the various translations. The Authorized version says the king of the South will come into his kingdom, then return to his own land. Other versions read, *“Also the king of the North shall come to the kingdom of the king of the South, but shall return to his own land,”*^{NKJV} *“Also the king of the North shall come to the kingdom of the king of the South, but shall return to his own land,”*^{NASB} *“Then the king of the North will invade the realm of the king of the South but will retreat to his own country,”*^{NIV} and *“Later the king of the north will invade the realm of the king of the south but will soon return to his own land.”*^{NLT}

There is considerable dispute about this text among the translators. However, I do not believe the message of the prophecy justifies the notion that the

THERE ARE SOME VERY PRECISE THINGS SAID ABOUT THIS KING IN ORDER THAT THE WORKING OF GOD MAY BE CLEARLY PERCEIVED BY BELIEVERS LIVING AT THAT TIME.

to political rulers, but to the images that represented the gods. Thus other versions translate the word *“molten images,”*^{ASV} *“metal images,”*^{NASB} *“idols.”*^{NRSV} and *“their statutes.”*^{NJB} The meaning is that the main idols, and all other images were taken away.

This is something no heathen nation could do to the Israelites – carry away their God. Once the Philistines captured the ark of the covenant. When the men of Bethshemesh looked into the ark of the Lord, *“He smote of the people fifty thousand and threescore and ten men: and the people lamented, because the LORD had smitten many of the people with a great slaughter”* (1 Sam 6:19). No

his conquering Egypt, had carried into Persia. These Ptolemy restored to the temple to which they belonged, and by this much endeared himself to his people. It was on account of the service which he thus rendered to his country that he was called Euergetes, that is, the Benefactor.” —^{Prideaux, iii. 121.}

That this is general knowledge is confirmed by the following quotation from the Pulpit Commentary. “Ptolemy Euergetes conquered all Syria and Mesopotamia to beyond the Tigris. From this we learn he carried off immense booty, and among the articles taken were images of their gods. And not only the gods of Syria, but the images of the Egyptian gods, which had been carried into Syria from Egypt by Cambyses, nearly three centuries before.” To this agree such notables as Matthew Henry, John Gill, John Calvin, Barnes,

king of the North attempted to invade the kingdom of the South. History does record that Seleucus made such an attempt. Justin says that Seleucus “fitted out a great fleet, which was destroyed by a violent storm; and after this he raised a great army to recover his dominion, but was defeated by Ptolemy, and fled in great terror and trembling to Antioch.” Ut supra, (Justin, l. 27.) c. 2

Further, the verses that follow do not, in my judgment, blend well with the view that the king of the North entered the kingdom of the South, then returned to his own land frustrated. I see this verse as saying the king of the South moved about at will, without any significant resistance being encountered – either in into the kingdom of the North, and returning to his own kingdom. This is, then, a summation of what Ptolemy III Euergetes did. He entered the kingdom of the North, then returned without incident to his own land. Other translations also reflect this meaning. “*And the king of the south shall enter into the kingdom, and shall return to his own land,*” DOUAY “*So the King of ye South shall come into his kingdome, and shall returne into his owne land,*” GENEVA “*So the king of the south shall come into {his} kingdom, and shall return into his own land,*” WEBSTER and “*And the king of the south hath come into the kingdom, and turned back unto his own land.*” YLT

A BRIEF REVIEW

It will be profitable to once again state the remarkable details of this prophecy. In this, I emphasize that the point of the angel’s message is not to cause us to reel to and fro in wonderment. Rather, it was to assure the people of God living at that time that all was well, and the eye of the Lord was still upon His people. Succeeding generations would also be assured that God does not abandon His own people, nor do the governments of this world operate without Divine restraints or compulsions. God IS imminent in the affairs of men, else He could not fully protect the saints.

1. A relative of Berenice would rise to avenge her.
2. He would come with a great army.
3. He would enter the fortress, or citadel of power, of the king of the North.

4. He would prevail against that kingdom.
5. He would carry the gods and their idols back to Egypt.
6. He would carry back a large cache of silver and gold.
7. He would outlive the king of the North.
8. He would return peacefully to his own land.

All of this was meticulously fulfilled in the exploits of Ptolemy III Euergetes, king of the South (Egypt),

▣ Once again, “*Tell ye, and bring them near; yea, let them take counsel together: who hath declared this from ancient time? who hath told it from that time? have not I the LORD? and there is no God else beside me; a just God and a Savior; there is none beside Me*” (Isa 45:21).

No other god speaks in such a manner. If fact, the Lord challenges all false gods: “*Let them bring them forth, and show us what shall happen: let them show the former things, what they be, that we may consider them, and know the latter end of them; or declare us things for to come. Show the things that are to come*

THROUGH THE PROPHETS, GOD SPEAKS OF HIS HOLY PREDICTIONS, CHALLENGING ANY OTHER GODS TO SPEAK IN SUCH A PRECISE AND EFFECTIVE MANNER.

against Seleucus Callinicus, king of the North (Syria).

Through the Prophets, God speaks of His holy predictions, challenging any other gods to speak in such a precise and effective manner.

- ▣ “*I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like Me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure: calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executeth my counsel from a far country: yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it*” (Isa 46:9-11).
- ▣ And again He says, “*And who, as I, shall call, and shall declare it, and set it in order for Me, since I appointed the ancient people? and the things that are coming, and shall come, let them show unto them*” (Isa 44:7).

hereafter, that we may know that ye are gods: yea, do good, or do evil, that we may be dismayed, and behold it together” (Isa 41:22-23).

When we keep these things in mind, certain Divine commitments obtain great strength. For example, “*And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose*” NASB (Rom 8:28).

We know the things that have been recounted in this passage involve the working of God, for they were written in “*the Scripture of Truth*” (10:21). The word “*Scripture*” comes from a word that means writing, record, register, or book. These are not historical writings, or writings of history, but a record of “*truth.*” That does not simply mean these things would really happen, but that God was involved in them, for in Scripture, **nothing is ever called “truth” that is unrelated to the Living God.** God does not occupy our minds with incidentals.

PERPETUAL WAR

“¹⁰ But his sons shall be stirred up, and shall assemble a multitude of great forces: and one shall certainly come, and overflow, and pass through: then shall he return, and be stirred up, even to his fortress.”

The angel now reveals a third war. The previous two were as follows.

- ▣ The expedition of Xerxes against the kingdom of Greece, which began the final demise of Persia (11:3-4).
- ▣ The initiative of Ptolemy Euergetes, the third king of Egypt, who carried on a war of revenge against Seleucus Callinicus (11:7-9)

There are at least two things to

the historic fulfillment of this text. Daniel has prayed for the people of God, and the angel has informed him the events he is revealing bear directly upon those people.

STIRRED UP

“¹⁰ But his sons shall be stirred up . . .” Other versions read *“However his sons shall stir up strife,”* ^{NKJV} *“His sons will prepare for war,”* ^{NIV} *“His sons shall wage war,”* ^{NRSV} *“his sons shall be provoked.”* ^{DOUAY}

These are the sons of the king of the North, Seleucus Callinicus, over whom the king of the South had triumphed. We know this is the case because of verse eleven, that speaks of the king of South rising up against one of these sons. The two sons in question were Seleucus Ceraunus and Antiochus the

in pieces and bruise” (2:40).

- ▣ The first beast of Daniel’s vision was *“like a lion”* (7:4).
- ▣ The second beast was *“like to a bear, and it raised up itself on one side, and it had three ribs in the mouth of it between the teeth of it: and they said thus unto it, Arise, devour much flesh”* (7:5).
- ▣ The fourth beast was *“dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth: it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it: and it was diverse from all the beasts that were before it; and it had ten horns”* (7:7). It would *“devour the whole earth, tread it down, and break it in pieces”* (7:23).
- ▣ The *“little horn”* sprouting from the ten-horned head of the fourth beast, *“made war with the saints, and prevailed against them”* (7:21).
- ▣ The *“he goat”* (Grecia) with a *“notable horn”* was moved with *“choler,”* or rage, against the ram (Persia, 8:7).
- ▣ Another horn, coming from among the four divisions of Greece, would become great, throwing down the people of God, causing the daily sacrifice to cease, and plundering the sanctuary of God (8:10-13).

LIKE IT OR NOT, THE GOVERNMENTS OF THIS WORLD ARE LIKE A SEETHING POT, ABOUT TO BOIL OVER AT ANY MOMENT. WERE IT NOT FOR “THE GREAT KING OVER ALL THE EARTH” (PSA 47:2), GOD’S PEOPLE WOULD HAVE LONG AGO BEEN ERADICATED FROM THE FACE OF THE EARTH.

keep in mind at this point.

- ▣ **First**, these are the outworking of conflicts in high places. There were principalities and powers, operating under Satan, the *“prince of the power of the air,”* who were seeking to overthrow the people and purpose of God.
- ▣ **Second**, the purpose of God was being meticulously carried out in what appeared to be a chaotic political arena.

If we do not keep these things in mind, we will lose our way in navigating through this passage. Effort must be expended not to be unduly distracted by

Great, who continued the war between Syria and Egypt. They attempted to recover Syria, which had previously been miserably defeated.

First

By saying they were *“stirred up,”* at least four things are intended. **First**, they were moved by anger. Frequently a point is made of this in Daniel – that anger and ferocity play significant roles in the activity of nations.

- ▣ The fourth kingdom of Nebuchadnezzar’s image is described in these words. *“And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron: forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things: and as iron that breaketh all these, shall it break*

Thus there have been numerous incidents of stirring up – provocations, and angry initiatives waged in the name of governments. Like it or not, the governments of this world are like a seething pot, about to boil over at any moment. Were it not for *“the great King over all the earth”* (Psa 47:2), God’s people would have long ago been eradicated from the face of the earth. They are peaceable like lambs and doves, and the kingdoms of this world are like devouring lions and charging he goats.

Second

That brings us to the **second** thing that is intended in these account.

God was in all of these matters. Ultimately, “no weapon that is formed” against the people of God will “prosper” (Isa 54:17). It may appear at times as though the purposes of God are being dashed to the ground, and the saints of the most High God put at a decided disadvantage. Yet, God is still ruling “in the midst” of His enemies (Psa 110:2).

Ultimately, it is God who “stirs up” these nations. The Lord “stirred up” adversaries against Solomon (1 Kgs 11:14). He also “stirred up another adversary” against Solomon (1 Kgs 11:23). He “stirred up” the spirit of the Philistines against Jehoram (2 Chron 21:16).

Take the text before us as an example. The kingdoms of the North and the South are identified by Israel. One is to the North of that small piece of Divine realty, and the other to the South. It is as though Israel was sandwiched between two warring parties – and neither of the parties have any regard for Israel. Yet, God regards the people, and that effectively offsets any evil intentions against them. The Divine affirmation is ever true: “The angel of the LORD encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them” (Psa 34:7).

Third

To confirm His care to His people. All Scripture has been written with the people of God in mind, whether Daniel, those in the Intertestamental period, or you. The events that had to do with the ancient people of Israel “happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come” (1 Cor 10:11). They reveal how God rules in the behalf of His people, chastening, delivering, and protecting them.

Fourth

More particularly, the Seed of the woman, and the Seed of Abraham will enter into the world in “the fulness of the time,” even though the hosts of darkness are creating an environment that appears to forbid such an entrance (Gal 4:4). The hostile surroundings created by wars and rumors of war will not postpone or set back the appointed entry of the Son of God – not even for one fleeting moment!

A GREAT ARMY ASSEMBLED

“ . . . and shall assemble a multitude of great forces . . . ” Other versions read, “assemble a great army,”^{NIV} “get together an army of great forces,”^{NIV} and “mustered a host of powerful forces.”^{NJB}

The two sons assembled a great army to go against Egypt, continuing the conflict initiated when their father reigned. Ptolemy III Euergetes had avenged his sister against their father. Now they would attempt to execute revenge on Egypt for what they had done.

While both sons assembled a

precisely what was revealed in Nebuchadnezzar’s dream of the great statute. That dream dealt with the inferiority of earthly kingdoms. The principles revealed there apply to all kingdoms of the world. As it is written, “And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever” (Dan 2:44).

This is most relevant, for the kingdom we are now considering is Greece prior to its demise. The kingdoms of Syria

THE KINGDOMS OF SYRIA AND EGYPT, NOW SET AGAINST ONE ANOTHER, ARE DIVISIONS OF GREECE THAT FOLLOWED THE DEATH OF ALEXANDER THE GREAT. WHAT, THEREFORE, WE ARE WITNESSING, IS THE DETERMINED MEANS BY WHICH THE KINGDOM WOULD DETERIORATE AND ULTIMATELY FALL TO ROME – DIVISION.

multitude of forces, it was the youngest, Antiochus the Great, that actually initiated the war. He is the one that is mentioned in the following verses. Of this, history records the following.

“The fact was, that the war was prosecuted by Antiochus the Great alone. Seleucus died in the third year of his reign, in Phrygia; being slain, according to one report (Jerome), through the treachery of Nicanor and Apaturius, or, according to another, was poisoned.”^{See Prideaux, iii. 137}

Again, I am careful to draw your attention to the nature of these rulers, and how radically they differ from the manner in which the kingdom of God is governed. The significance of this is found in the superiority of the heavenly kingdom. **At each and every point it conflicts with the kingdoms of this world, they are, without exception, decimated.**

We may expect, therefore, that each of these powerful kingdoms will fall to the ground, for eventually, they will come against God and His people. This is

and Egypt, now set against one another, are divisions of Greece that followed the death of Alexander the Great. **What, therefore, we are witnessing, is the determined means by which the kingdom would deteriorate and ultimately fall to Rome – division.** “Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand” (Mat 12:25) – even if it is mighty Greece!

OVERWHELMING

“ . . . and one shall certainly come, and overflow, and pass through . . . ” Other versions read, “and one of them will keep on coming and overflow and pass through,”^{NASB} and “which will sweep on like an irresistible flood.”^{NIV}

The picture is of a flash flood, that sweeps with devastating force across the land. The land through which he swept was not Egypt, but throughout every part of Syria. **It was at this time that he also invaded Palestine (as referenced in the Britannica**

quotation that follows). This is, therefore, part of what was to “befall” Daniel’s people. This is precisely how Antiochus the Great is described.

“The son of Seleucus II, Antiochus succeeded his brother Seleucus III as king. He retained from the previous administration Hermias as chief minister, Achaeus as governor of Asia Minor, and Molon and his brother Alexander as governors of the eastern provinces, Media and Persis. In the following year, when Molon rebelled and assumed the title of king, Antiochus abandoned a campaign against Egypt for the conquest of southern Syria, on the advice of Hermias, and marched against Molon, defeating him in 220 BC on the far bank of the Tigris and also conquering Atropatene, the northwestern part of Media.” BRITANNICA 2003

Now, the angel informs Daniel

battle, Antiochus was defeated, and returned to Antioch.” Prideaux, Con. iii. 151-153

From heaven’s point of view, the time was not yet right. Now, however, he is stirred to again go up against the fortress of Egypt. This is the working of the Lord. History records the following that fulfilled this word.

Antiochus was now free to conduct what has been called the Fourth Syrian War (219–216), during which he gained control of the important eastern Mediterranean sea ports of Seleucia-in-Pieria, Tyre, and Ptolemais. In 218 he held Coele Syria (Lebanon), PALESTINE, and Phoenicia. In 217 he engaged an army (numbering 75,000) of Ptolemy IV Philopator, a pharaoh of the Hellenistic dynasty ruling Egypt, at Raphia, the southernmost city in Syria. His own troops numbered

Returning westward via the Iranian provinces of Arachosia, Drangiana, and Carmania, he arrived in Persis in 205 and received tribute of 500 talents of silver from the citizens of Gerrha, a mercantile state on the east coast of the Persian Gulf. Having established a magnificent system of vassal states in the East, Antiochus now adopted the ancient Achaemenid title of “great king,” and the Greeks, comparing him to Alexander the Great, surnamed him also “the Great.”

After the death of Ptolemy IV, Antiochus concluded a secret treaty with Philip V, ruler of the Hellenistic kingdom of Macedonia, in which the two plotted the division of the Ptolemaic empire outside Egypt. Antiochus’ share was to be southern Syria, Lycia, Cilicia, and Cyprus; Philip was to have western Asia Minor and the Cyclades. Antiochus invaded Coele Syria, defeated the Ptolemaic general Scopas at Panion near the source of the Jordan River in the year 200, **GAINED CONTROL OF PALESTINE AND GRANTED SPECIAL RIGHTS TO THE JEWISH TEMPLE STATE.** But Philip, marching along the Dardanelles, became involved in a war with Rhodes and Pergamum, both of whom appealed to Rome for help against Macedonia, informing Rome of the alliance between the two Hellenistic kings. Rome intervened decisively in the system of Hellenistic states. Philip was defeated by the Romans in the Second Macedonian War (200–196), and Antiochus refused to help him. Instead, taking advantage of the Romans’ involvement with Philip, Antiochus marched against Egypt. Though the Romans had sent ambassadors to Ptolemy V, they could not lend him any serious assistance. When peace was concluded in 195, Antiochus came permanently into possession of southern Syria—which had been fought over for 100 years by the Ptolemies and Seleucids—and of the Egyptian territories in Asia Minor. He also gave his daughter Cleopatra in marriage to Ptolemy V. Egypt practically became a Seleucid protectorate.

In his insatiable expansionist drive, Antiochus occupied parts of the kingdom of Pergamum in 198 and in 197 Greek cities in Asia Minor. In 196 BC he crossed the Hellespont into Thrace, where he claimed sovereignty over territory that had been won by Seleucus I in the year 281 BC.

If these two warring kingdoms would have united, conditions would have become intolerable for the tiny nation of Israel that was between them. However, Daniel is being assured that even though trying circumstances “befall thy people in the latter days” (10:14), yet the will of the Lord will not be overturned. It is still true, “the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men” (4:17,25,32).

GOD HAS NOT GIVEN US THE

IF THESE TWO WARRING KINGDOMS WOULD HAVE UNITED, CONDITIONS WOULD HAVE BECOME INTOLERABLE FOR THE TINY NATION OF ISRAEL THAT WAS BETWEEN THEM. HOWEVER, DANIEL IS BEING ASSURED THAT EVEN THOUGH TRYING CIRCUMSTANCES “BEFALL THY PEOPLE IN THE LATTER DAYS” (10:14), YET THE WILL OF THE LORD WILL NOT BE OVERTURNED.

that the mind of this king will again be turned toward Egypt, taking up the battle he temporarily abandoned in order to more thoroughly bring Syria under his full dominion.

STIRRED UP AGAIN

“ . . . then shall he return, and be stirred up, even to his fortress.” Other versions read, “that he may again wage war up to his very fortress,” NASB “and again shall carry the war as far as his fortress,” NRSV “and he will again take the war even to his strong place,” BBE and “and march on the southern stronghold once again.” NJB

In the beginning, this king had abandoned his initiative against Egypt, having met with significant resistance, and also desiring to further subjugate Syria. History says of that defeat, “Antiochus with an army of sixty-two thousand foot, six thousand horse, and one hundred and two elephants. In a great

68,000. Though he succeeded in routing the left wing of the Egyptian army, his phalanx (heavily armed infantry in close ranks) in the centre was defeated by a newly formed Egyptian phalanx. In the subsequent peace settlement, Antiochus gave up all his conquests except the city of Seleucia-in-Pieria.

After the Syrian war, he proceeded against the rebel Achaeus. In alliance with Attalus I of Pergamum, Antiochus captured Achaeus in 213 in his capital, Sardis, and had him executed in a barbaric manner. After the pacification of Asia Minor he entered upon his later to be famous eastward campaign (212–205), pressing forward as far as India. In 212 he gave his sister Antiochis in marriage to King Xerxes of Armenia, who acknowledged his suzerainty and paid him tribute. He occupied Hecatompylos (southeast of the Caspian Sea), the capital of the Parthian king Arsaces III, and forced him to enter into an alliance in 209 and the following year defeated Euthydemus of Bactria, though he allowed him to continue to rule and retain his royal title. In 206 he marched across the Hindu Kush into the K(bul Valley and renewed a friendship with the Indian king Sophagasesos.

SPIRIT OF FEAR

It is essential that we emphasize these texts are not intended to generate fear in the people of God. That includes you as well as Daniel in his old age. In Christ we are told, *“For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind”* (2 Tim 1:7). God does not work in contradiction of this declaration by revealing things

designed to cause fear. Yet, much of what is being taught about the book of Daniel in these days is conducive to fear. **The specific purpose of this revelation to Daniel is to confirm that whatever befalls the Jews, the purpose of God will not be overturned. Nor, indeed, will His promises be voided, or His people forgotten.** God is faithful, and His gifts and calling are without

repentance (1 Cor 1:9; Rom 11:29).

It is imperative that this point register on our hearts – for if this was true of those under the Old Covenant, much more is it true of those who are under the New Covenant, which is a *“better covenant, which was established upon better promises”* (Heb 8:6). No child of God can afford to allow events on the earth to unsettle their spirits.

THE MULTITUDE GIVEN INTO HIS HAND

“¹¹ And the king of the south shall be moved with choler, and shall come forth and fight with him, even with the king of the north: and he shall set forth a great multitude; but the multitude shall be given into his hand.”

The king of the South is Ptolemy Philopator, who succeeded Ptolemy Euergetes in Egypt. This king was noted for being weak and vacillating, not easily moved to engage in military exploits. However, in spite of his natural temperament, he was provoked by the military initiatives of Antiochus the Great, and was moved to fight against him. History records the following fulfillment of the events now revealed.

“Macedonian king of Egypt (reigned 221–205 BC), under whose feeble rule, heavily influenced by favourites, much of Ptolemaic Syria was lost and native uprisings began to disturb the internal stability of Egypt.

Classical writers depict Ptolemy as a drunken, debauched reveller, completely under the influence of his disreputable associates, among whom Sosibius was the most prominent. At their instigation, Ptolemy arranged the murder of his mother, uncle, and brother.

Following the defection of one of Ptolemy's best commanders, Egypt's Syro-Palestinian territory, Coele Syria, was seriously threatened by Antiochus III, the Syrian Seleucid ruler. In 219, when the Seleucid ruler captured some of the coastal cities, Sosibius and the Ptolemaic court entered into delaying negotiations with the enemy, while the Ptolemaic army was reorganized and intensively drilled. So grave was the threat that **for the first time under the Ptolemaic regime native Egyptians were enrolled into the infantry and cavalry and trained in phalanx tactics.** In 218 the negotiations collapsed, and Antiochus renewed his advance, overrunning Ptolemy's forward defenses. In the spring of 217, **however, Ptolemy's new army met the**

Seleucid forces near Raphia in southern Palestine, and with the help of the Egyptian phalanx Ptolemy was victorious. Although holding the initiative, the Egyptian king, on Sosibius' advice, negotiated a peace, and the Seleucid army withdrew from Coele Syria.”
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That is how history records what took place. Now we will hear what was

it were, caught in the middle of these warring remnants of the Grecian empire. Here again we see the Lord raising up and putting down kings and kingdoms.

HE WILL FIGHT WITH THE KING OF THE NORTH

“ . . . and shall come forth and fight with him, even with the king of the

EGYPT AND SYRIA, ONCE PART OF A SINGLE EMPIRE, ARE NOW, FOR THE FOURTH TIME, ENGAGED IN A FIERCE CONFLICT WITH ONE ANOTHER . LET IT BE CLEAR, THESE INNER CONFLICTS ARE EVIDENCES THAT THE END OF THE GRECIAN EMPIRE IS FAST APPROACHING.

written in *“the Scripture of Truth”* concerning those events.

MOVED WITH CHOLER

“¹¹ And the king of the south shall be moved with choler . . . ” Other versions read, *“And the king of the South shall be moved with rage,”* NKJV *“will be enraged,”* NASB *“will march our in rage,”* NIV *“Moved with rage,”* NRSV *“being provoked,”* DOUAY and *“doth become embittered.”* YLT

I want to emphasize how this response went against the very nature of the *“king of the South.”* This was not his manner. Both parts of Syria and Palestine had previously been under the control of the South. Now Ptolemy Philopator seeks to take them back. Again, the Jews are, as

north . . . ” Other versions read, *“do battle against the king of the North,”* NRSV *“will come out and make war on him, on this same king of the north,”* BBE *“set out to give battle to the king of the north,”* NJB and *“will rally against the vast forces assembled by the king of the north.”* NLT

From a military point of view, this did not appear to be a wise course of action. However, this is an exhibition of the government of God, not the governments of men.

Egypt and Syria, once part of a single empire, are now, for the fourth time, engaged in a fierce conflict with one another . Let it be clear, these inner conflicts are evidences that the end of the Grecian empire is fast

Daniel is told more of the political struggles that will take place in the intertestamental period, by Given O. Blakely

approaching. In the beginning, when this empire came into prominence, Daniel saw it depicted as a four-headed winged leopard. Of that beastly empire it was said, “*dominion was GIVEN unto it*” (7:6). When inner turmoil began to fester within this empire, Daniel was told it was “*in the latter time of their kingdom.*” Other versions read, “*latter period of their rule,*”^{NASB} and “*at the end of their rule*”^{NRSV} (8:21).

An Application
As arresting as it is to

Polybius (who wrote an extensive history of Rome covering 220-168 B.C.) Wrote the following: “This army of Ptolemy [king of the South] . . . was led through Arabia Petraea, and consisted of seventy thousand infantry, and five thousand cavalry, and seventy-three elephants. The army of Antiochus [king of the North] consisted of sixty two thousand foot, six thousand horse, and a hundred and two elephants.”
— Polybius, chapter 86, Prideaux, Con. iii. 151

This battle, however, will not be decided by military strategy. Remember, this is a commentary on Divine rule, not the manipulations and initiatives of the

assembled by the king of the north and will defeat them.”^{NLT}

An Erroneous Representation

These translations are supposedly based upon varied original texts and, in my judgment, are wholly unjustified.

- ☐ First, if they are correct, they have an angel from heaven representing military superiority as being recorded in “*the Scripture of Truth.*”
- ☐ Second, they conveniently ignore the very point that is repeatedly affirmed in the book of Daniel, namely that the Lord God is governing the nations (2:21; 4:17,25,32,35; 5:21).
- ☐ Third, there is a spirit in Scripture as well as words, “*For the kingdom of God does not consist in words, but in power.*”^{NASB} (1 Cor 4:20).
- ☐ Fourth, it would contribute to the imagination that what befalls those upon whom Divine favor has rested, is determined and controlled by men, not by God. This is in flagrant contradiction of revealed truth (1 Cor 10:13).

God Gave Them Into His Hand

History says of this event, “Ten thousand of the army of Antiochus were slain, four thousand taken prisoners, and with the remainder of his forces Antiochus entreated to Antioch.”^{Prideaux, iii. 152, 153}

Again secular history records, “In the spring of 217, however, Ptolemy’s new army met the Seleucid forces near Raphia in southern Palestine, and with the help of the Egyptian phalanx Ptolemy was victorious.”^{BRITANNICA 2003}

The angel who is speaking with Daniel is not giving a mere report of what will take place, but is announcing what has been determined by God, or is recorded in “*the Scripture of Truth.*” God has already established to Daniel by means of signs and wonders, as well as affirmation, that He, and He alone, rules in the kingdoms of men., It is **His will** that is being done among the inhabitants of earth as well as the armies of heaven (Dan 4:35).

There are many Scriptural expressions that confirm this is a precise reflection of the truth.

AS ARRESTING AS IT IS TO CONSIDER, THE ENTRANCE OF DIVISION AND WARRING FACTIONS IS GENERALLY THE PRELUDE TO DEMISE. THAT IS PRECISELY WHY NO RELIGIOUS REFORMATION MOVEMENT HAS EVER BEEN TRULY SUCCESSFUL.

consider, the entrance of division and warring factions is generally the prelude to demise. That is precisely why no religious reformation movement has ever been truly successful. It is no wonder that believers are solemnly admonished, “*Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment*” (1 Cor 1:10). **There is no hope of surviving division!** It must be brought to an end, or it will bring an end to the people.

THE MULTITUDE GIVEN TO THEIR ENEMY

“ . . . and he shall set forth a great multitude . . . ” Other versions read, “*the king of the North, who shall muster a great multitude,*”^{NKJV} “*the king of the North, who will raise a large army,*”^{NIV} “*this same king of the north . . . will get together a great army,*”^{BBE} and “*the king of the north, who will have an immense army on his side.*”^{NJB}

Actually, the armies were fairly evenly matched. Of the two groups

kings of the earth. The telling explanation of the battle’s outcome is revealed to Daniel over two hundred years before it takes place.

“ . . . but the multitude shall be given into his hand.” Other versions read, “*but the multitude shall be given into the hand of his* (the king of the North’s) *enemy* (the king of the South)”^{NKJV} “*but that multitude will be given into the hand of the former,*”^{NASB} “*but the army will be given into his hand,*”^{BBE} “*but the multitude shall be delivered into his hand,*”^{Septuagint} “*but the multitude will be delivered into his foe’s power,*”^{TNK} and “*and the multitude hath been given into his hand.*”^{YLT}

Different Translations

Some versions of the Scripture omit this perspective, speaking of defeat as though it was the result of military strategy and the superiority of armed forces. “*who will raise a large army, but it will be defeated,*”^{NIV} “*who shall muster a great multitude, which shall, however, be defeated by his enemy,*”^{NRSV} “*who will have an immense army on his side, but this army will be defeated by him,*”^{NJB} and “*will rally against the vast force*

- ▶ “When thou goest forth to war against thine enemies, and the LORD thy GOD HATH DELIVERED THEM into thine hands, and thou hast taken them captive” (Deu 21:10)
- ▶ “And the LORD said unto Joshua, Fear them not: for I HAVE DELIVERED THEM INTO THY HAND; there shall not a man of them stand before thee.” (Josh 10:8)
- ▶ “And the anger of the LORD was hot against Israel, and HE DELIVERED THEM INTO THE HANDS of spoilers that spoiled them, and HE SOLD THEM INTO THE HANDS OF THEIR ENEMIES round about, so that they could not any longer stand before their enemies.” (Judg 2:14)
- ▶ “And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD: and THE LORD DELIVERED THEM INTO the hand of Midian seven years.” (Judg 6:1)
- ▶ “So Jephthah passed over unto the children of Ammon to fight against them; and THE LORD DELIVERED THEN INTO his hands” (Judg 11:32)
- ▶ “And the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel, and HE DELIVERED THEM INTO THE HAND of Hazael king of Syria, and into the hand of Benhadad the son of Hazael, all their days.” (2 Kgs 13:3)
- ▶ “After this I beheld, and lo another, like a leopard, which had upon the back of it four wings of a fowl; the beast had also four heads; and DOMINION WAS GIVEN TO IT.” (Dan 7:6)
- ▶ “Until the Ancient of days came, and JUDGMENT WAS GIVEN to the

THE TEXT OF SCRIPTURE, THE SPIRIT OF SCRIPTURE, AND THE THRUST OF SCRIPTURE CONFIRM THAT THE MULTITUDINOUS HOST OF THE NORTHERN KINGDOM OF SYRIA WAS GIVEN BY GOD TO THE SOUTHERN KINGDOM OF EGYPT. THAT IS WHY THEY WON THE BATTLE.

saints of the most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom.” (Dan 7:22)

- ▶ “And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was GIVEN TO ME a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure” (2 Cor 12:7)
- ▶ “And there went out another horse that was red: and POWER WAS GIVEN TO HIM that sat thereon to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another: and there was given unto him a great sword.” (Rev 6:4)
- ▶ “And I looked, and behold a pale horse: and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed with him. And POWER WAS GIVEN UNTO THEM over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth.” (Rev 6:8)
- ▶ “And there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth: and UNTO THEM WAS GIVEN POWER, as the scorpions of the earth have power.” (Rev 9:3)
- ▶ “And to them IT WAS GIVEN that they should not kill them, but that they should be tormented five months: and their torment was as the

torment of a scorpion, when he striketh a man.” (Rev 9:5)

- ▶ “And THERE WAS GIVEN UNTO HIM a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and POWER WAS GIVEN UNTO HIM to continue forty and two months” (Rev 13:5)
- ▶ “And IT WAS GIVEN UNTO HIM to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations.” (Rev 13:7)

This is only representative of a great number of similar affirmations. Our response to these things is not to be one of questioning God, who “giveth not account of any of His matters” (Job 33:13). The purpose of such texts is to assure our hearts that the world is, in fact, being governed from heaven. The “government” is presently on Christ’s shoulder (Isa 9:6-7). In Daniel’s day, and the days of between Malachi and John the Baptist, the heavens were also ruling. The affirmation is “the heavens DO rule” (Dan 4:26). It is not that they ought to rule, but that they do rule! This is not a possibility, but a continual condition.

CONCLUDING THOUGHT

The text of Scripture, the spirit of Scripture, and the thrust of Scripture confirm that the multitudinous host of the Northern kingdom of Syria was given by God to the Southern kingdom of Egypt. That is why they won the battle.

HEART LIFTED AND MULTITUDES CAST DOWN

“¹² And when he hath taken away the multitude, his heart shall be lifted up; and he shall cast down many ten thousands: but he shall not

be strengthened by it.”

Now we will see a certain Divine strategy in the events set before us. There

are those who, when they are granted great things, use their seeming exploits as an occasion for pride. They imagine that their own power accounts for their

Daniel is told more of the political struggles that will take place in the intertestamental period, by Given O. Blakely

triumphs. Thus, Daniel is now told that the very man who triumphed over the king of the North will not profit by the exploit. He too will be brought down.

FILLED WITH PRIDE

¹² *And when he hath taken away the multitude, his heart shall be lifted up . . .* Other versions read, *“When the army is carried off, the king of the South will be filled with pride”*^{NASB} *“When the multitude has been carried off, his heart shall be exalted,”*^{NRSV} and *“he will grow arrogant.”*^{TNK}

Here we are exposed to a dreadful

hand, or to the left: to the end that he may prolong his days in his kingdom, he, and his children, in the midst of Israel” (Deut 17:20).

- ▣ AMAZIAH KING OF JUDAH. *“Thou sayest, Lo, thou hast smitten the Edomites; and **thine heart lifteth thee up to boast**: abide now at home; why shouldst thou meddle to thine hurt, that thou shouldst fall, even thou, and Judah with thee?”* (2 Chr 25:19).
- ▣ OF KING UZZIAH. *“But when he was strong, **his heart was lifted up***

lifted up in his height; I have therefore delivered him into the hand of the mighty one of the” (Ezek 31:10-11)

- ▣ KING NEBUCHADNEZZAR. *“But when **his heart was lifted up, and his mind hardened in pride**, he was deposed from his kingly throne, and they took his glory from him: And he was driven from the sons of men; and his heart was made like the beasts, and his dwelling was with the wild asses: they fed him with grass like oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven; till he knew that the most high God ruled in the kingdom of men, and that he appointeth over it whomsoever he will”* (Dan 5:20-21).

HERE WE ARE EXPOSED TO A DREADFUL HUMAN DISPOSITION – THAT OF TENDING TO BE LIFTED UP, OR TO THINK MORE HIGHLY OF ONESELF THAN HE OUGHT TO THINK (ROM 12:3). ONCE A GREAT TRIUMPH WAS REALIZED BY PTOLEMY, HE BECAME PUFFED UP – LIFTED UP WITH PRIDE LIKE THE DEVIL HIMSELF, WHO HE WAS UNWITTINGLY SERVING.

- ▣ HEROD. *“And upon a set day Herod, arrayed in royal apparel, sat upon his throne, and made an oration unto them. And the people gave a shout, saying, It is the voice of a god, and not of a man. And immediately the angel of the Lord smote him, **because he gave not God the glory**: and he was eaten of worms, and gave up the ghost”* (Acts 12:21-23).

human disposition – that of tending to be lifted up, or to think more highly of oneself than he ought to think (Rom 12:3). Once a great triumph was realized by Ptolemy, he became puffed up – lifted up with pride like the devil himself, who he was unwittingly serving.

to his destruction: for he transgressed against the LORD his God, and went into the temple of the LORD to burn incense upon the altar of incense” (2 Chr 26:16).

The clear implication is that what was given to him was intended to bring out his real nature – one of pride. And, indeed, that is precisely what it did.

This is not something that was readily apparent to the flesh. His *“heart”* was *“lifted up,”* as he began to entertain unwarranted views of himself. This is something that is particularly reprehensible to God. He will not tolerate such conduct, even among the heathen, or those who have no covenantal dealings with Him at all. He has spoken about the matter frequently.

- ▣ OF KING HEZEKIAH. *“But Hezekiah rendered not again according to the benefit done unto him; for **his heart was lifted up**: therefore there was wrath upon him, and upon Judah and Jerusalem”* (2 Chr 32:25).

Faith so purifies the heart that great blessings produce great humility and thanksgiving. But it is not so in those who are anchored to this present evil world.

- ▣ OF ISRAEL. *“Then **thine heart be lifted up, and thou forget the LORD thy God, which brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage.”*** (Deut 8:14)

MANY THOUSANDS SLAUGHTERED

“ . . . and he shall cast down many ten thousand . . . ” Other versions read, *“he will cast down tens of thousands,”*^{NKJV} *“he will cause tens of thousands to fall,”*^{NASB} *“will slaughter many thousands,”*^{NIV} *“he shall overthrow tens of thousands,”*^{NRSV} and *“he will be the cause of the downfall of tens of thousands.”*^{BBE}

- ▣ OF A KING OF ISRAEL. *“That **his heart be not lifted up** above his brethren, and that he turn not aside from the commandment, to the right*

- ▣ KING OF EGYPT. *“Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Because **thou hast lifted up thyself in height, and he hath shot up his top among the thick boughs, and his heart is***

What a dreadful epitaph to have over ones life! Not only did he bring down the army of the king of the North, but he

intimidated the surrounding areas as well. It is not coincidence that history records 10,000 of the troops of Syria were slain in his initiative. "Ten thousand of the army of Antiochus were slain, four thousand taken prisoners, and with the remainder of his forces Antiochus entreated to Antioch." ^{Prideaux, iii. 152, 153}

The true sense of the text can be seen by preceding it with the words "even though." **The idea is that even though he slaughtered so many of the enemy, yet he really did not gain from it.** That, of course, is the precise point made in the next expression.

HE WILL NOT PREVAIL

" . . . but he shall not be strengthened by it." Other translations read, "but he will not prevail," ^{NEJV} "yet he will not remain triumphant," ^{NIV} "but he will not be strong," ^{BBE} "he will have no enduring strength," ^{NJB} and "But his success will be short-lived." ^{NLT}

The law of harvest, or the results that are realized, are strictly in the hands of the Lord. In the text before us, the heart of the conqueror caused him to labor in vain. Justin points out that Antiochus escaped out of his hand, while he rolled himself in luxury, uncleanness, and intemperance. ^{Justin, I. 30. c. 1} He became noted for his idleness and drunkenness, and his caring for nothing but banquets and debaucheries, and the most obscene pleasures. History says of him, "Classical writers depict Ptolemy as a drunken, debauched reveller, completely under the influence of his disreputable associates, among whom Sosibius was the most prominent. At their instigation, Ptolemy arranged the murder of his mother, uncle, and brother." ^{BRITANNICA 2003}

That is history's assessment. The angel, however, reveals the root of the matter. **His heart was lifted up within him. That is what led to his conduct and eventual fall.**

Here is a classic example of putting earnings into a bag with holes. It is a condition that is caused by God, who will not overlook the pride and insolence of his offspring. As it is written, "Ye have sown much, and bring in little; ye eat, but

These days, it appears that not much is being said about laboring in vain, or the fruit of ones labor being consumed by the locust, the cankerworm, the caterpillar, and the palmerworm. God described these devourers as "My great army which I sent among you" (Joel 2:25). These are consumers that visit those who are lifted up with pride, and take too much credit unto themselves.

It seems to me that part of the

IT SEEMS TO ME THAT PART OF THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE CHURCH BEING THE "PILLAR AND GROUND OF THE TRUTH," IS PROVIDING A PROPER ASSESSMENT OF THE CONDITIONS AROUND US.

ye have not enough; ye drink, but ye are not filled with drink; ye clothe you, but there is none warm; and he that earneth wages earneth wages to put it into a bag with holes" (Hag 1:6). Zophar put it in these words. Although he misapplied them to Job, they are altogether true. "In the midst of his plenty, distress will overtake him; the full force of misery will come upon him" ^{NIV} (Job 20:22).

In the text before us, Ptolemy achieved no political elevation, enhancement of power, or extension of his kingdom, even though he had realized great military exploits.

An Application

responsibility of the church being the "pillar and ground of the truth" (1 Tim 3:15), is providing a proper assessment of the conditions around us. John the Baptist gave an assessment of Herod's marriage (Matt 14:4). Elijah told Ahab he was the one who was troubling the house of Israel (1 Kgs 18:17). Jesus announced the true character of the Scribes and Pharisees, and the effects of their futile labors (Matt 23:13,27-28; Lk 11:52).

Thus the angel faithfully reports **the reason** for Ptolemy's failure to benefit from his achievements. His heart was lifted up. This was particularly important to Daniel, because this was an enemy of his people.

THE KING OF THE NORTH WILL RETURN

¹³ For the king of the north shall return, and shall set forth a multitude greater than the former, and shall certainly come after certain years with a great army and with much riches."

More wars are made known to the prophet. This is at least the fifth involving the final remnants of the Grecian empire.

We will see the result of Ptolemy not pursuing Antiochus the Great, allowing him to escape. Of course, it is to be remembered that God is in all of this, orchestrating the affairs of this world to the ultimate advantage of His people. It has already been revealed that it is His determination to give the kingdom in all of its greatness to His saints (Dan 7:18,22,27). What we have here is an

abbreviated outline of how He is moving history forward to the appointed time when "the saints of the Most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever" (Dan 7:18).

THE KING OF THE NORTH WILL RETURN

¹³ For the king of the north shall

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return, and shall set forth a multitude greater than the former . . . ” Other versions read, “For the king of the North will return and muster a multitude greater than the former,” ^{NKJV} “For the king of the North will again raise a greater multitude than the former” ^{NASB} and “For the king of the North will muster another army, larger than the first.” ^{NIV}

Without being redundant, I want to again remind you that the angel is revealing “what shall befall thy people in the latter days: for yet the vision is for many days” (10:14). These events are primarily related to Israel, not to Grecia.

The “king of the North” is none

Upon the death of Ptolemy Philopator, Ptolemy Epiphanes,, a minor of five years of age succeeded him. Also known as Ptolemy V, history says of him, “After Sosibius, Ptolemy IV's corrupt minister, had murdered Ptolemy V's mother, the five-year-old king was officially elevated to the throne; Sosibius became his guardian. According to the 2nd-century BC Greek historian Polybius, all prominent officials were banished from Egypt while Sosibius' clique announced the young king's accession and the death of his parents.” ^{BRITANNICA 2003}

AFTER CERTAIN YEARS

“ . . . and shall certainly come after certain years with a great army and with much riches.” Other versions read, “and shall certainly come at the end of some years with a great army and much

considerable confusion broke out in Egypt. Several murders took place, and inner turmoil was found in the government. This circumstance occasioned the initiative of Antiochus the Great. History speaks of this. “During the confusion in Egypt, Antiochus III, the Seleucid king, made serious inroads into Coele Syria. Ptolemy's forces mounted a counteroffensive, **CAPTURING JERUSALEM**; but in 201 the Seleucid king returned, defeating the Ptolemaic army and later **seizing the Ptolemaic lands in Asia Minor.**” (WHICH INCLUDED PALESTINE ^{BRITANNICA 2003}

What the angel said would be “after certain years,” was actually fourteen years later, taking place in 201 B.C. They were “**certain years**” in that they were appointed.

This second invasion resulted in Antiochus gaining possession of all Palestine. ^{PULPIT COMMENTARY} Britannica Encyclopedia reads, “Antiochus invaded Coele Syria, defeated the Ptolemaic general Scopas at Panion near the source of the Jordan River in the year 200, **GAINED CONTROL OF PALESTINE**, and granted special rights to the Jewish temple state.”

As you can see, Israel was right in the middle of all of these wars – and there were a number of them: at least five major ones. It was their involvement that provoked this revelation. We will also see that all of this leads to the ultimate overthrow of Greece, and the coming into prominence of Rome, during whose rule the Messiah would enter into the world. This is all the Lord's doing!

WITHOUT BEING REDUNDANT, I WANT TO AGAIN REMIND YOU THAT THE ANGEL IS REVEALING “WHAT SHALL BEFALL THY PEOPLE IN THE LATTER DAYS: FOR YET THE VISION IS FOR MANY DAYS” (10:14). THESE EVENTS ARE PRIMARILY RELATED TO ISRAEL, NOT TO GRECIA.

other than Antiochus the Great, also known as Antiochus III, king of the Syrian Empire from 223 B.C. to 187 B.C. ^{BRITANNICA 2003} Some say the massive army he organized numbered as high as “300,000 footmen, besides horsemen and elephants.” ^{JOHN GILL}

equipment,” ^{NKJV} “and after an interval of some years he will press on with a great army and much equipment,” ^{NASB} and “and after several years, he will advance with a huge army fully equipped.” ^{NIV}

As a result of the shift in power,

CONCLUSION

There is a certain profitable perspective that can be developed from these texts. First, the manner in which God governs the world is seen more clearly. Working all things together for good, does not suggest God's people are always on the top of things. In fact, a man “*greatly beloved*” of God had been a captive in Babylon for over seventy years. The children of Judah would be grievously oppressed, even after the Babylonian captivity.

In governing this world, the Lord is demonstrating the wickedness of the

wicked, as well as the righteousness of the righteous. His judgment is being made known as well as His mercy. In the end, it will be abundantly apparent that He is “*righteous in all His ways, and holy in all His works*” (Psa 145:17; Dan 9:14). He gives opportunities for the hearts of men to be revealed – both those that are humble and contrite, and those that are lifted up with pride.

A gallery of holy angels are beholding the works of the Lord, and they know “*the whole earth is full of His glory*” (Isa 6:3). That glory, while apparent

among the holy personages that surround the Throne of God, is not so apparent to those who are in the world. The glory that fills the whole earth relates to the working of the Lord. It pertains to Him governing the nations, raising up and removing kings, and giving kingdoms to whomever He wills. It has to do with doing according to His will among the armies of heaven, and the inhabitants of the earth as well. It relates to Him frustrating the devices of wicked people, making fools out of diviners, causing wise men to draw back in confusion, and turning their knowledge into foolishness

(Isa 44:25).

God is at work in this world. It belongs to him – the “*earth and the fulness thereof; the world and they that dwell therein*” (Psa 24:1). He affirms, “*all souls are Mine*” (Ezek 18:4), and that He is “*the God of the spirits of all flesh*” (Num 16:22; 27:16). It is He alone that has “*formed the spirit of man within him*” (Zech 12:1). He can put His “*hook*” in the nose of rebels, “*bridle*” their lips, and “*turn*” people back by the way they came, causing them, to retrace their steps (2 Kgs 19:26; Isa 37:29).

According to appearance, it seems as though the wicked are in control, and are doing whatever they please without

restraint or government of any kind. David once said, “*I have seen the wicked in great power, and spreading himself like a green bay tree*” (Psa 37:35). However, he allowed his consideration to dwell longer on the circumstance, thus concluding, “*Yet he passed away, and, lo, he was not: yea, I sought him, but he could not be found*” (Psa 37:36). He found out what came home to Asaph. When confused by the seeming unhindered prosperity of the wicked, the chief singer “*went into the sanctuary of God.*” Once there, everything looked different. The whole earth really was full of God’s glory. While in that sanctuary, Asaph looked at the very same people of whom he was envious and concluded, “*Surely Thou didst set them in slippery places: Thou*

castedst them down into destruction” (Psa 73:18). They were not prospering at all. They were really being fattened for the day of slaughter (James 5:5).

This is what we have seen in our text. Amidst all of the machinations of wicked and prideful kings, the Lord’s hand was working. It was covering the righteous, upholding the faithful, and directing the wicked to their ultimate demise. God is greatly to be praised that in Christ Jesus we are brought to a place where God is working all things together for our good (Rom 8:28). It was not so for the Ptolemy’s and Antiochus’ of our text, and it is not so for the despots of our day. Fear not, child of God, “*for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth*” (Rev 19:6).

Our next Hungry Saints Meeting will be held on Friday, 4/18/2003. We will continue in our overview of Daniel, reviewing verses 14-19 of the eleventh chapter. The title of our lesson is, “**THE FUTURE IS UNFOLDED TO DANIEL, #3.**” The land of the Jews is penetrated by the enemy, who seeks to destroy. But he will not prosper. Our meeting will begin at 7:00 P.M. You are invited to bring your family and friends for fellowship around the Word of God. Refreshments are served afterward, with a time of extended fellowship for everyone.

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