



THE PROPHECY OF DANIEL

Lesson Number 38



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 (1995), 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 -----

MICHAEL STANDS UP FOR THE PEOPLE

“ 12:1 And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book. ² And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. ³ And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever. ⁴ But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased.” ^{KJV} (Daniel 12:1-4)

INTRODUCTION

The twelfth chapter of Daniel is the epilogue of the book. That is, **it is a concluding section that rounds out the design of this blessed volume.** There are things in this section upon which the Christian community does not agree – matters upon which there is a sharp disagree among respected theologians. However, these circumstances must not keep us from subjecting our hearts and minds to the text, or from pondering it and meditating upon it.

It seems to me that it is not on the part of wisdom for any individual professing to know the Lord to purposely ignore something God has revealed and

recorded in Scripture. As Scripture, it falls into the category of things that are *“profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works”* (2 Tim 3:16-17). We are not, then, dealing with theological novelties!

GETTING OUR BEARINGS

Because the book of Daniel has been subjected to extensive analyses by theologians disposed to promoting strange doctrines, it is essential that we get our bearings concerning its direction. I will show that it chiefly regards the Jewish people prior to the coming of the Lord

Jesus, with additional references to His reign at the right hand of God, and other matters related to His government of the kingdom of God.

Daniel's Prayer

In this book, we find a man of God purposefully praying for the Lord to be mindful of His city, His Temple, and His people. His prayer is focused, and totally lacking of any ambiguity.

▣ *“O Lord, according to all thy righteousness, I beseech thee, let thine anger and thy fury be turned away from thy city Jerusalem, thy holy mountain”* (9:16).

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OUTLINE

- ▶ MICHAEL WILL STAND UP (12:1a)
- ▶ A TIME OF TROUBLE (12:1b)
- ▶ THE PEOPLE DELIVERED (12:1c)
- ▶ AN AWAKENING (12:2)
- ▶ THE WISE WILL SHINE (12:3a)
- ▶ THOSE WHO TURN MANY TO RIGHTEOUSNESS (12:3b)
- ▶ SHUT UP THE WORDS (12:4a)
- ▶ RUNNING TO AND FRO, AND KNOWLEDGE INCREASED (12:4b)

- ▶ *“O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive; O Lord, hearken and do; defer not, for thine own sake, O my God: for thy city and thy people are called by thy name” (9:19).*

This is a pivotal prayer that provokes an extensive answer from heaven. It involves angelic activity, and a personally commissioned explanation from the mighty angel Gabriel. **This confirms that Daniel’s prayer was in full accord with the determinations that had been made in heaven.**

REFERENCES TO THE JEWS, THE TEMPLE, AND THE LAND

In the revelations given to Daniel, there have also been numerous references to the land of the Jews, the Temple of God and its service, the covenant, and the people of God.

- ▶ *“... the pleasant land” (8:9).*
- ▶ *“... the daily sacrifice” (:8:11,13; 11:31).*
- ▶ *“... His sanctuary” (8:11,13,14).*
- ▶ *“... the holy people” (8:24).*
- ▶ *“Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city” (9:24).*

- ▶ *“Now I am come to make thee understand what shall befall thy people in the latter days” (10:14).*
- ▶ *“... robbers of thy people” (11:14).*
- ▶ *“... the glorious land” (11:16,41).*
- ▶ *“... the holy covenant” (11:28).*
- ▶ *“... sanctuary of strength” (11:31).*
- ▶ *“... such as do wickedly against the covenant” (11:32).*
- ▶ *“... the people that do know their God” (11:32).*
- ▶ *“... they that understand among the people” (11:33).*

Add to these references the following elaborations concerning the Jews, their land, and the Temple.

- ▶ The book itself begins with the Babylonian captivity of the children of Judah (1:12).
- ▶ The focus is upon Daniel, a Jewish prophet, who is mentioned by name numerous times (1:6-11; 17,19,21; 2:13-20,24, 25-27; 46-49; 4:8,19; 5:12-13,17,29; 6:2-5,10-11,13-14,16,17,20-24,26-28; 7:1-2,15,28; 8:1,15,27; 9:2,22; 10:1,2, 7,11,12; 12:4,5,9).
- ▶ The revelations given to Daniel followed his time of prayer and fasting, which was prompted by his understanding that the captivity was about to conclude (9:2).
- ▶ The focus of Daniel’s prayer was the Jews, the Temple, and the land of Israel (9:4-19).
- ▶ The revelations vouchsafed to Daniel were in answer to that prayer (9:21-22).

- ▶ Daniel is specifically told these revelations regarded what would befall his people (10:14).
- ▶ The political activities that are highlighted regard the kings of the North and the South, between which the *“glorious land”* was situated (11:5-9,11,13-15,25,29,40,44).
- ▶ There would be aggressions against the land of the Jews (8:9; 10:3; 11:16, 38,41,45).

THE CONTEXT OF THE MESSIAH

All of this is set within the context of the coming Messiah, to whom the Kingdom would be given.

- ▶ In the days of these kings (Babylon, Medes and Persians, Grecia, and Rome), God would set up a kingdom that would never be destroyed (2:45).
- ▶ The *“Son of man”* comes near *“the Ancient of days”* (God the Father), and is given *“dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve Him: His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom that which shall not be destroyed”* (7:13-14).
- ▶ Times were specified that would terminate with the coming of the Messiah (9:25).
- ▶ The Messiah’s life would be *“cut off”* vicariously, or *“not for Himself”* (9:26).

WE MUST BEGIN WITH PROPER PERSPECTIVES

The understanding of Scripture requires that we begin with proper outlooks. The following perspectives are found in all Scriptural texts. They represent a frame of spiritual and intellectual reference that must be

THIS IS A PIVOTAL PRAYER THAT PROVOKES AN EXTENSIVE ANSWER FROM HEAVEN. IT INVOLVES ANGELIC ACTIVITY, AND A PERSONALLY COMMISSIONED EXPLANATION FROM THE MIGHTY ANGEL GABRIEL. THIS CONFIRMS THAT DANIEL’S PRAYER WAS IN FULL ACCORD WITH THE DETERMINATIONS THAT HAD BEEN MADE IN HEAVEN.

maintained.

- ▣ The Person of God the Father,
- ▣ The purpose of God.
- ▣ The Son of God, the Lord Jesus.
- ▣ The salvation of God as implemented by the Lord Jesus.
- ▣ The end of all things and the day of judgment.

Any view of Scripture that relegates these considerations to the background cannot be right. If, for example, a spiritual despot becomes the

they will contaminate the understanding. When Jesus came, He declared the Father, expounding Him and His eternal purpose (Matt 11:27; John 1:18; 8:28). When the Holy Spirit came, He declared Jesus, testifying of Him (John 15:26). When the Apostles spoke and wrote, they delineated God and His purpose, and Christ and His salvation (Acts 5:42; Eph 1:9-11; 3:3-5; 1 John 1:5).

Every Apostolic doctrine, whether dealing with morality, interpersonal relationships, or events like death and the judgment, are set within the context of God, His purpose, Christ, and salvation. If we choose to develop some other

A SUMMATION

Daniel is being shown events that largely took place in the inter-testamental period – the time between Malachi and John the Baptist. As time progressed to the appointed entrance of the Messiah into the world, Satan picked up his initiative to thwart the purpose of God. During this period, this was largely done through political powers. Their initiatives were against the people through whom the Messiah would come. They would also be against their revealed religion, which served to provide a moral and spiritual context into which the Savior would come.

These oppositions were just, though grievous, for the people of God had departed from Him. He therefore threshed them like wheat to remove hindering manners and thoughts, thereby preparing the way for the Savior. Because they were carried out through the provocation of the devil, and in great hatred for the people of God and their ways, they were also wicked. Thus, in these activities, both the nature of God and the nature of Satan were made known. **God is intolerant of sin and rebellion, and Satan is intolerant of any place or people that have been blessed by God.**

In all of this we will find two things confirmed to our hearts. **First, God's purpose cannot be overthrown. Second, Satan's will cannot be fully implemented.** Satan will do his worst, but will not be able to thwart the entrance of the conquering Seed, who would bruise his head.

Now we will behold the Lord's care for His people. He will not allow Satan to make an end of them, but will see to it they are preserved.

EVERY APOSTOLIC DOCTRINE, WHETHER DEALING WITH MORALITY, INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS, OR EVENTS LIKE DEATH AND THE JUDGMENT, ARE SET WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF GOD, HIS PURPOSE, CHRIST, AND SALVATION.

focus of our attention, we are immediately pointed in the wrong direction. At what time the earth and its affairs are vaulted to the place of prominence, we on an intellectual road that will lead us to erroneous conclusions.

While eschatology – the study of last things – is of itself intriguing, it is not a suitable point of emphasis. **Unless God, His purpose, His Son, and His great salvation are clearly seen and emphasized in such considerations,**

preconceived context, stuffing the Word of God into it, we will lose our way, being enamored of things and events rather than the Lord Himself and the hope of His calling.

It is necessary to say these things because of what many have taught concerning the passage before us. They have been pulled aside by considerations that actually diminish the God of heaven and His *“great salvation.”*

MICHAEL WILL STAND UP

“^{12:1a} And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people . . . ”

The very sound of this passage emits tones of Divine mercy and profound

consideration. God's love can be seen. Intervention is made known. How wonderfully the New Covenant experience is portrayed: *“cast down, but not destroyed”* (2 Cor 4:9), and *“chastened and not killed”* (2 Cor 6:9). And again, *“But when we are judged, we are*

chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world” (1 Cor 11:32).

AT THAT TIME

*“And at that time . . . ”*The time of reference is the one declared in the final

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verses of the previous chapter: “. . . therefore he shall go forth with great fury to destroy, and utterly to make away many. And he shall plant the tabernacles of his palace between the seas in the glorious holy mountain” (Dan 11:44-45).

This is the final initiative of Antiochus Epiphanes against the city and people of God. It is one in which he is determined to once and for all rid the earth of this people. During the initiative his life will come to an abrupt end: he will die of a disease, and none will be able to help him (11:45b).

This verse will tell us WHY the attack of Antiochus’ military forces was thwarted, and why he himself died. These were not occurrences of happenstance. One version accents this: *“BUT at that time . . .”*^{DOUAY} **That is, even though the forces of Antiochus camped close to the holy mount, and were prepared to obliterate the people of God, there was an influence present upon which he did not reckon!**

MICHAEL SHALL STAND UP

“. . . shall Michael stand up . . .” Other versions say of Michael, he *“will arise,”*^{NASB,NIV} *“will take up his place,”*^{BBE} and *“will appear.”*^{TNK}

The idea is not simply that he will assume a standing position. **Rather he will take his stand, stand forth, take his position, and maintain a cause.** He will not allow things to proceed according to the plan of God’s enemies. He will assert himself, injecting himself into the affairs of men. **He will stand up to do something – to see to it that the will of man is crushed and the will of God advanced.** Thus the scales will be tipped, giving the advantage to the people of God.

This is not Messiah. There are a considerable number of notable commentators who take the position that Michael is the Lord Jesus in His pre-incarnate form (Matthew Henry, John Gill, etc.). However, Scripture never represents the *“Word”* as being in angelic form. In fact, we are told He did not take upon Himself *“the nature of angels”* (Heb 2:16). As I have already dealt extensively with this subject in previous lessons, I will make no further comment on the matter

here. It will detract from the exposition of the text.

THAT GREAT PRINCE

“. . . the great prince . . .” Other versions read, *“the great angel,”*^{BBE} *“the archangel.”*^{NLT} and *“the great head.”*^{YLT}

All angels are not of equal rank, just as all saints are not equal in their roles. The government of God includes both high and low rankings. Michael is not only a *“prince,”* ruler, or captain, he is a leading and distinguished one.

Antiochus Epiphanes was “great” among men. But he will not fare well when confronted with one who is great in heaven! Earth is always inferior to heaven. Flesh is always subordinate to spirit. The world is always of lower-ranking to the heavens. It is still true, *“the heavens do rule”* (Dan 4:26).

THE CHILDREN OF THY PEOPLE

“. . . which standeth for the children of thy people . . .” Other versions read, *“who stands watch over the sons of your people,”*^{NKJV} *“who stands guard over*

HERE IS ANOTHER FACET OF DIVINE GOVERNMENT THAT COULD NOT POSSIBLY BE KNOWN IF IT WAS NOT REVEALED. THE MINISTRY OF MICHAEL THE PRINCE WOULD HAVE REMAINED HIDDEN IF GOD HAD NOT MADE IT KNOWN.

Some imagine there is a sort of leveling of the masses in the Divine government – that everyone is of equal value and rank, whether among angels or men. But this is not the case. The heavenly realms, for example, whether of wicked or holy forces, have *“principalities and powers”* – personalities of high ranking (Eph 3:10; 6:12; Col 2:15). In fact, in the creation itself these stations were established. They are not the result of the achievements of created personalities. As it is written, *“For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him”* (Col 1:16). If we regard the church of the Lord Jesus Christ, there are even ranks within it: *“And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues”* (1 Cor 12:28).

But when it came to the care of the Jews, the Lord established Michael, *“the great prince”* to guard over and defend them. **That action itself speaks of God’s special care for offspring of Abraham.**

the sons of your people,”^{NASB} *“who protects your people,”*^{NIV} *“the protector of your people,”*^{NRSV} *“the supporter of the children of your people,”*^{BBE} *“who has charge of your people,”*^{ESV} *“defender of your people,”*^{NJB} *“stands guard over your nation.”*^{NLT}

Here is another facet of Divine government that could not possibly be known if it was not revealed. The ministry of Michael the prince would have remained hidden if God had not made it known. The well of human wisdom is not deep enough to even draw a conclusion like this. However astute men may prove to be in their capabilities of reason, they could never arrive at the conclusion that Michael had charge over the Israelites, or that he was commissioned to defend and protect them.

When, therefore, Michael stands up, he does so to protect and defend the people of God. That is his responsibility, and he rises to the occasion at precisely the right time.

This accounts for the miraculous survival of Israel throughout the years, from their exodus from Egypt until this very day. There is an appointed steward

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over them, charged with their care. It is Michael the prince.

Those Who Disdain the Jews

Those who have a disregard for the Jews have not duly considered this mighty angel. His appointment came from the God of heaven, for all of the holy angels do His bidding alone (Psa 103:20).

How will those who oppose this people fare if Michael stands up against them? Or, is there one who is foolish

- ▣ The calling and involvement of Abraham.
- ▣ The exodus of Israel from Egypt.
- ▣ The wilderness wanderings.
- ▣ The warfare involved in obtaining the promised land.
- ▣ The involvement of the holy prophets.
- ▣ The involvement of David, from

That is confirmed in this text.

The implementation of the will of God is never accomplished independently of His own activity. He Himself is always participative in His will, whether it is being wrought out in you, or toward you. Thus, after admonishing believers to “*work out*” their own salvation “*with fear and trembling*,” the Spirit adds, “*For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure*” (Phil 2:13).

More Is Needed

Human wisdom and strength are not sufficient to sustain the people of God in trials. This is an exceedingly difficult lesson for many to learn. Although Israel was a chosen people, and had received extensive revelation from God, they could not resolve their own dilemmas. Both their wisdom and their strength were inadequate for the challenges they faced. Although the history books record how they stood valiantly against the armies of Antiochus, yet our text traces their success back to the involvement of Michael the prince.

It is the business of believers to develop a keen sense of heaven’s involvement in their affairs. All glory must go to the Lord for the triumphs, protection, and sustaining that are realized. As it is written, “*Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ*” (2 Cor 2:14).

There is such a thing as Divine intervention. There is a view of the kingdom of God that imagines Divine interventions no longer take place. Such things, it is conjectured, belong to the past. However plausible such a notion may seem, it was birthed by man, not revealed by God. **At no time has the Lord ever suggested that He has withdrawn from this world, ceased to be the King of kings, or the Governor among the nations.** If the government has been placed upon Christ’s shoulder (Isa 9:6-7), then He is governing among the affairs of men.

Interventions

Divine interventions are times when the Lord injects Himself into the affairs of men in a more apparent way. He can cause the counsels of the wicked to

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enough to imagine Michael has been put out of a job, or had his stewardship of Israel revoked? How would one hope to support such a postulate?

SOME OBSERVATIONS

Divine determinations are not carried out automatically. The decisions of the Almighty are not carried out by inexorable impersonal laws or forces. The hand of God is imminent in all of the affairs of this world. In the text before us we have an example of this principle. It is not that Antiochus Epiphanes was merely assigned a time during which he could do his own will. Nor, indeed, did that time simply run out, and he automatically failed. **His demise is not only traceable to his time running out, but to the rising of Michael the appointed defender of Israel as well.**

The Ultimate Example

The ultimate example of this is the coming of Jesus into the world. He did not simply appear by means of some impersonal law or edict. **There were all manner of involvements between heaven and earth that brought it to pass. Ponder a few of them.**

whom the heavenly king would come.

- ▣ The ministry of John the Baptist.
- ▣ The involvement of the birth of Jesus, and the revealed procedures to protect the child.
- ▣ Jesus increasing in wisdom and stature, and favor with God and man.
- ▣ The baptism of Jesus.
- ▣ The wilderness temptation of Jesus.
- ▣ The earthly ministry of Jesus.
- ▣ The Gethsemane testing of Jesus.
- ▣ The agonizing death of Jesus.
- ▣ The resurrection of Jesus and His post-resurrection ministry to His disciples.
- ▣ The ascension of Jesus.

In all of these things there was extensive heavenly involvement. The kingdom of God is not driven by some fatalistic principle or automatic pilot.

fail, and the strength of the righteous to increase. He can cause trials to both begin and cease, and to serve His purpose. **Some measurable awareness of these things is essential if the child of God is to realize triumph and joy.**

The people of God do not have to crawl to glory! They can run the race set before them with both strength and confidence, going through both fire and water. But it will be necessary for them to know *“If God be for us, who can be against us”* (Rom 8:31). It is possible to have such a grasp of this situation that we can *“boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me”* (Heb 13:6).

A Brief Summation

Briefly, our text is saying that when everything appears to be against the people of God, the tide will shift as Michael, the prince charged with defending Israel, stands up in their behalf. When he does, the advantage will be given to the people of God, and the tide of power will transfer to them. Even though they have experienced unspeakable harm and setbacks, they will not be utterly destroyed. Their past may be marked by frequent defeats and seeming inferiority, but when Michael stands up, things will begin to change. **He is superior to all of their foes, and his commission is superior to that of Antiochus Epiphanes.**

When the angel says Michael will stand up, it means he is about to work. He

does not stand up to observe, but to intervene on the behalf of God’s people.

Marvel Not

Let no one marvel at the commission and activity of the mighty angel Michael in the behalf of the Israelites. In Christ Jesus, an even greater thing has occurred, involving **all** of the vast angelic multitude. *“But to which of the angels said He at any time, Sit on My right hand, until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool? Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?”* (Heb 1:14). By faith, associate that with your own circumstance. There is much angelic activity being exercised in **your** behalf, and it is all effective.

A TIME OF TROUBLE

*“**It . . . and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time . . .**”*

What follows is a description of the time during which Michael stands up. It explains the **need** for his intervention. It also confirms that the people of God are not the helpless victims of circumstance. **This does not mean they will not suffer grievous things. It rather means they will not be overcome by them.**

The saints must cast down the imagination that their lives can be trouble-free in this world. They must rather think in terms of surviving Satan’s assaults, overcoming the world, and finishing the race set before them.

A TIME OF TROUBLE

“ . . . and there shall be a time of trouble . . . ” Other versions read, *“And there shall be a time of distress,”* ^{NKJV} *“There shall be a time of anguish,”* ^{NRSV} *“There shall be a time of tribulation,”* ^{Septuagint} and *“a time unsurpassed in distress.”* ^{NIB}

This troublous time is not what resulted from Michael

standing up, but what necessitated his intervention.

This is not *“trouble”* in the ordinary sense of the word. It is rather

the purpose of that wicked man to exterminate the Jews. In principle, the text also applies to the destruction of Jerusalem by Rome (Matt 24:15-22), and a last-days persecution of the Jews toward

IT ALSO CONFIRMS THAT THE PEOPLE OF GOD ARE NOT THE HELPLESS VICTIMS OF CIRCUMSTANCE. THIS DOES NOT MEAN THEY WILL NOT SUFFER GRIEVOUS THINGS. IT RATHER MEANS THEY WILL NOT BE OVERCOME BY THEM.

unusual adversity, affliction, anguish, distress, and tribulation that comes from a focused and personal assault upon the people. This is not like a storm, or a flood, or hail stones falling from heaven. **It is an intelligent attack, allowed by God because of transgression, fomented by the wicked one in an effort to stop the entrance of the Messiah, and carried out by wicked men.**

I understand this time of trouble to apply immediately to the persecution of Antiochus Epiphanes. At that time, it was

the close of this age (Ezek 39:1-7).

Antiochus was the first purposeful and focused subverter of the Jew’s religion.

☐ **Egypt** did not attack the Jew’s religion. They made no concerted effort to make them worship Egyptian gods. The Jews maintained their faith in God during that 430 year bondage. The opposition they received was not because of their religion, but because of their number.

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- ▣ **The Babylonians** did not seek to stamp out the Jew's religion. There was no requirement for the children of Judah to become worshipers of Babylonian gods. Nebuchadnezzar plundered the Temple, but did not defile it with his gods. He even published a world-wide edict demanding respect for the God of the Jews (Dan 4:34-37).
- ▣ **The Medes and Persians** did not seek to eliminate the Jew's religion. They neither plundered nor defiled the Temple. In fact, Cyrus the Persian was raised up to rebuild the Temple. They did not engage in an effort to force the worship of Median and Persian gods. Darius also published a global decree concerning the God of the Jews (Dan 6:25-27).
- ▣ **Under Alexander the Great**, there was no effort to exterminate the Jews or force them to change their religion.

concerning the atrocities of Antiochus toward the Jews, the following quotations will suffice to confirm their uniqueness. Any standard encyclopedia will provide some extensive information on this.

" . . . he indulged in the harshest manner of proceedings in Jerusalem, on occasion of the above shameful quarrel among the priests, *SEE MENELAUS*, which had been carried on by open force of arms (comp. Joseph. *Ant.* 12, 5, 1), and vented his rage especially on the temple, which he plundered and desecrated with great bloodshed (1 Maccabees 1:20-42; 2 Maccabees 5:1-23). Being checked by the Romans in his fourth campaign against Egypt, and compelled in a very peremptory manner to retire (Liv. 45:12; Polyb. 29:11; Appian, *Syr.* 66; Diod. Sic. *Exc. Vatic.* 31:2; Daniel 11:29 sq.), he detached (B.C. 167) a body of troops to Jerusalem, who took the city by assault, slaughtered a large part of the inhabitants, and gave up the city to a general sack (1 Maccabees 1:30 sq.; 2 Maccabees 5:24 sq.; comp. Daniel 11:31 sq.). The Jewish worship in the Temple was utterly broken up and abolished (1 Maccabees 1:43 sq.). At this time he availed himself of the assistance of the ancestral enemies of the Jews (1

Maccabees also records the following.

"Now when this that was done came to the king's ear, he [Antiochus Epiphanese] thought that Judea had revolted: whereupon removing out of Egypt in a furious mind, he took the city by force of arms, and commanded his men of war not to spare such as they met, and to slay such as went up upon the houses. Thus there was killing of young and old, making away of men, women, and children, slaying of virgins and infants. And there were destroyed within the space of three whole days fourscore thousand, whereof forty thousand were slain in the conflict; and no fewer sold than slain. Yet was he not content with this, but presumed to go into the most holy temple of all the world; Menelaus, that traitor to the laws, and to his own country, being his guide: And taking the holy vessels with polluted hands, and with profane hands pulling down the things that were dedicated by other kings to the augmentation and glory and honour of the place, he gave them away. And so haughty was Antiochus in mind, that he considered not that the Lord was angry for a while for the sins of them that dwelt in the city, and therefore his eye was not upon the place. For had they not been formerly wrapped in many sins, this man, as soon as he had come, had forthwith been scourged, and put back from his presumption, as Heliodorus was, whom Seleucus the king sent to view the treasury. Nevertheless God did not choose the people for the place's sake, but the place for the people's sake. And therefore the place itself, that was partaker with them of the adversity that happened to the nation, did afterward communicate in the benefits sent from the Lord: and as it was forsaken in the wrath of the Almighty, so again, the great Lord being reconciled, it was set up with all glory. So when Antiochus had carried out of the temple a thousand and eight hundred talents, he departed in all haste unto Antiochia, weening in his pride to make the land navigable, and the sea passable by foot: such was the haughtiness of his mind. And he left governors to vex the nation: at Jerusalem, Philip, for his country a Phrygian, and for manners more barbarous than he that set him there; And at Garizim, Andronicus; and besides, Menelaus, who worse than all the rest bare an heavy hand over the citizens, having a malicious mind against his countrymen the Jews. He [Antiochus Epiphanes] also sent also that detestable ringleader Apollonius with an army of two and twenty thousand, commanding him to slay all those that were in their best age, and to sell the women and the younger sort: Who coming to Jerusalem, and pretending peace, did forbear till the holy day of the sabbath, when taking the Jews keeping holy day, he commanded his men to arm themselves. And so he slew all them that were gone to the celebrating of the sabbath, and running through the city with weapons slew great multitudes. But Judas Maccabeus with nine others, or thereabout, withdrew himself into the wilderness, and lived in the mountains after the manner of beasts, with his company, who fed on herbs continually, lest they should be artakers of the

UNDER THE GUISE OF THE HELLENIZATION OF THE WORLD, HE ALSO SOUGHT TO ELIMINATE THE JEWS BECAUSE THEY DID NOT YIELD TO HIS DEMAND TO WORSHIP AND SERVE OTHER GODS.

He did not plunder or defile the Temple.

- ▣ **Even in the destruction of Jerusalem** by the Romans, the aim was not to eliminate the Jews or force them to change their religion. From the Roman point of view, the intention was to make them political subordinates. They did, however, plunder and defile the Temple.

But with Antiochus Epiphanes it was different. **Under the guise of the hellenization of the world, he also sought to eliminate the Jews because they did not yield to his demand to worship and serve other gods.**

Because I have already included numerous historical references

Maccabees 4:61; 5:3 Daniel 11:41). The decrees then followed which have rendered his name infamous. The Greek religion was forcibly imposed upon the Jews, and there was set up, for the purpose of desecrating (Diod. Sic. *Ecllog.* 34, 1) and defiling the Temple, on the 15th of Kislev, the "abomination of desolation" (Daniel 11:31; 12:11; 1 Maccabees 1:57), i.e. probably a little idolatrous shrine (Joseph. *Ant.* 12, 5, 4) on the altar of burnt-offerings; the first victim was sacrificed to Jupiter Olympius, on the 25th of the same month. Many timidly submitted to the royal mandate (1 Maccabees 1:43), being already inclined to Gentilism (1 Maccabees 1:12), and sacrificed to the pagan gods (1 Maccabees 1:45); but a band of bold patriots united (comp. Daniel 11:34) under the Asmonnean Mattathias (q.v.), and, after his death, which occurred shortly afterward, under his heroic son, Judas Maccabeus (q.v.), and, after acting for a long time on the defensive, at length took the open field (1 Maccabees 4), and gained their freedom." McClintok and Strong's Cyclopedia

The historical book of Second

pollution." ² Macc 5:11-27

The Nature of the Trouble

Let me emphasize that it was the **nature** of this "trouble" that was unparalleled, not its intensity or external traits. By intelligent and shrewd strategy, there was an attempt to change the religion of the Jews. When that failed, there was an effort to exterminate them.

Trouble, But Not Extinction

All of this is described by the angel as "a time of trouble." When Jeremiah prophesied of the Babylonian captivity, he used terminology that applies to the text before us. He spoke of the invasion of Nebuchadnezzar in these words, "Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of Jacob's trouble; but he shall be saved out of it." (Jer 30:7). The language equally applies to the ravages of Antiochus, and the devastation wreaked by Rome in 70 A.D. Although these were all times of chastening, their severity was unparalleled. In them, all hope was dashed to the ground, and the people of God appeared to have been abandoned by the Lord. Yet that was not the case. In Jeremiah's text he added, "but he [Jacob] shall be saved out of it." Later Jeremiah continued, "yet will I not make a full end of thee: but I will correct thee in measure, and will not leave thee altogether unpunished" (Jer 30:11).

In our text, Michael will stand up for the people, ensuring they are not utterly destroyed.

Concerning the Roman sacking of Jerusalem, Jesus said, "And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled" (Luke 21:24).

A Principle to be Seen

In these texts we have a shadow of the glorious truth brought to its fullness in the New Covenant. "But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world" (1 Cor 11:32). And again it is written of the excommunication of a fornicator from the church, "To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh,

that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus." (1 Cor 5:5).

3 I understand these texts can be abused and distorted. However, they ought not be eliminated from our vocabulary. They introduce an aspect of the Divine nature that offers hope to those of tender heart. **Notwithstanding the tendency of men to corrupt such marvelous announcements, they must be preserved and proclaimed in the church**, which is "the pillar and ground of the truth" (1 Tim 3:15).

ten plagues and the overthrow of Pharaoh's armies was no doubt of greater magnitude. While Moses and Aaron were involved in announcing them, and using "the rod of God" (Ex 4:20), yet there were not executed by men.

This "trouble," carried out by men, was unparalleled among "nations." In every standard version of Scripture, the words "nation" and "nations" are not used prior to Noah. The first use of "nations" is found in the tenth chapter of Genesis. There, the origin of nations is

WHAT OCCURRED TO THE ISRAELITES THROUGH ANTIOCHUS EPHIPHANES WAS UNLIKE THAT EXPERIENCED BY ANY OTHER NATION. FIRST, THERE WAS A CONCERTED EFFORT TO CHANGE THE RELIGION OF THE PEOPLE. SECOND, A FORCEFUL INITIATIVE WAS INSTIGATED TO EXTERMINATE THEM.

SINCE THERE WAS A NATION

"... such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time . . ." Other versions read, "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,"^{NIV} "such tribulation as has not been from the time that there was a nation on the earth until that time,"^{Septuagint} and "There will be a time of distress such as has not happened from the beginning of nations until then."^{NJB}

A Nation

The language used by the angel is very precise. The "trouble," distress, or tribulation will not be the greatest ever realized among men, but the greatest since there were "nations." The judgments wrought in the flood, and the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, were of even greater magnitude, with total destruction being realized. In both of these judgments, men were not involved in carrying them out. **They were Divine interventions without the involvement of men.** Also, the judgment poured out upon Egypt in the

traced through the sons of Noah. As it is written, "These are the families of the sons of Noah, after their generations, in their nations: and by these were the nations divided in the earth after the flood" (verse 32): Ham (verse 20), Shem (verse 31), and Japheth (verse 5). The first use of the word "nation" is found in the twelfth chapter of Genesis, where God made promise to Abraham. "And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing" (Gen 12:2).

Generally speaking, a "nation" is a body politic. That is, it is a body of people organized in a certain manner, with laws and some form of government, and occupying a specific region.

What occurred to the Israelites through Antiochus Ephiphanes was unlike that experienced by any other nation. First, there was a concerted effort to change the religion of the people. Second, a forceful initiative was instigated to exterminate them.

To the Same Time

Michael the archangel stands up for Daniel's people during a time of unparalleled trouble, by Given O. Blakely

There is another limiting factor in this statement. This is not declared to be the worst “trouble” of all time. **A window of time is specified: from the beginning of nations until that present time.** Therefore, this is not a declaration of the worst distress of all time.

Compared with the Words of Jesus

Compare these words with the words of the Lord Jesus when speaking of a period of “great tribulation” – a period with a dual fulfillment in the destruction of Jerusalem, and the closing period of

people have been exposed to more truth, there is a greater penalty to be paid for rejecting or departing from it. This is seen in Israel.

- ▣ When Israel murmured in the wilderness, they were grievously chastened, and caused to wander in the “great and terrible wilderness” for **forty years**.
- ▣ After extensive involvement with God, when Israel refused to honor the land Sabbath’s, they were chastened by a **seventy-year** captivity in

5:11). The message of the church has been greatly corrupted with the philosophies and wisdom of men. As a result, there has been a searing of the conscience, and a loss of perception of matters critical to the maintenance of faith, and the successful finishing of the race set before us.

EPOCH'S OF ISRAEL'S TROUBLE

The magnitude of the “trouble” realized in the initiatives of Antiochus Epiphanes may be seen in the following comparisons.

- ▣ **Egyptian bondage** (did not invade the land, slaughter was not common, religion was not corrupted).
- ▣ **Babylonian captivity** (invaded the land, some slaughter, carried them away captive, religion not corrupted).
- ▣ **Destruction of Jerusalem** (invasion, slaughter, Temple defiled, religion not corrupted).
- ▣ **The slaughter instigated by Hitler** (land not invaded, religion not corrupted).

THE MESSAGE OF THE CHURCH HAS BEEN GREATLY CORRUPTED WITH THE PHILOSOPHIES AND WISDOM OF MEN. AS A RESULT, THERE HAS BEEN A SEARING OF THE CONSCIENCE, AND A LOSS OF PERCEPTION OF MATTERS CRITICAL TO THE MAINTENANCE OF FAITH, AND THE SUCCESSFUL FINISHING OF THE RACE SET BEFORE US.

These are to be compared with the Inter-testamental oppression, during which Antiochus Epiphanes entered and assaulted “the glorious land.”

time. “For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since **the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be**” (Mat 24:21). Jesus speaks of the “beginning of the world,” and the times afterward: “nor ever shall be.” Mark records Jesus’s words in this way: “For in those days shall be affliction, such as was not from **the beginning of the creation which God created unto this time, neither shall be**” (Mark 13:19).

Babylon.

- ▣ When Israel rejected “the Lord’s Christ,” they were chastened through the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D., and have remained blind toward God and oppressed by men **until this day**.

An Application

It is always most serious to do things “against the truth” (2 Cor 13:8; James 3:14). However, when the heart has been exposed to an “abundance of peace and truth” (Jer 33:6), a “greater sin” (John 19:11) has occurred. Consequently, “greater damnation,” or judgment, will be realized (Matt 23:14). There are sins of such magnitude that it will be “more tolerable for the land of Sodom,” than for those who commit such sins (Matt 11:24).

- ▣ Invasion of the land.
- ▣ Slaughter of the people.
- ▣ Attempt to change the religion of the people, and enforce the worship of Jupiter.
- ▣ Defilement of the Temple with the “abomination of desolation.”
- ▣ Attempt to blot out the Scriptures.

Not the Ultimate Distress

Thus we see this “trouble” was not the worst of all trouble experienced in this world. **Rather, it was the most monstrous assault from the beginning of nations until that time.**

With these things in mind, allow me to state the text once again. “And there will be a time of distress such as never occurred since there was a nation until that time.”^{NASB}

All of this may appear quite inconsequential. However, there is something to be seen here that is most sobering. **As the amount of revelation increases, the magnitude of chastening is also increased.** When

We live in a generation that needs to hear such words, even though they may be “hard to be uttered” (Heb

These are the circumstances during which Michael would stand up in the behalf of Daniel’s people. His intervention would change the events, frustrating the enemies of the Jews.

THE PEOPLE DELIVERED

“^{1c} . . . and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book.”

The impact of Michael standing up is wonderfully stated. **When heaven moves into action, earth is immediately affected!** This is a message of hope for the prophet Daniel, and for us as well. The Lord does not hide from Daniel the fact of coming retribution upon the people. It will be fierce, and were the people left to themselves, they would be wiped from the face of the earth. However, they are **not** left to themselves, nor has God forgotten His promise to Abraham, as confirmed in Isaac and Jacob. **Hard circumstances bring an end to human ingenuity and resources, but they do not close the door of heaven.** This is why believers *“look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal”* (2 Cor 4:18). Those *“temporal”* things include trials and distresses as well as the things upon which the *“lust of the flesh”* and the *“lust of the eyes”* are fastened.

THY PEOPLE SHALL BE DELIVERED

“ . . . and at that time thy people shall be delivered . . . ” Other versions read, *“and at that time your people . . . will be rescued.”*^{NASB} *“and at that time your people will be kept safe,”*^{BBE} *“And at that time shall thy people be saved,”*^{DOUAY} *“At that time your people shall escape,”*^{NAB} and *“When that time comes, your own people will be spared.”*^{NJB}

This is what will happen **because** Michael the prince stands up for the people, thereby being faithful in his stewardship. The intentions of Antiochus will **not** be realized. His initiative will **not** be brought to its intended completion. The nation through whom the Messiah will come **will** survive, escaping the aggression launched by Satan, and carried out by the armies of the *“king of the North.”* The promise of God to Abraham **will** remain intact, and without interruption. The purpose of the earthly

king **will** be brought *“to nought”* (Psa 33:10). The *“counsel”* of the Lord, on the other hand, **will** *“stand,”* and He **will** do all His pleasure (Isa 46:10).

This will happen at the height of the oppression, when, according to appearance, everything seems hopeless. How marvelously this illustrates the truth of the affirmation, *“For His anger endureth but a moment; in His favor is life: weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning”* (Psa 30:5).

All of this is traced to the protection and defense of Michael the archangel, into whose charge Israel had been committed. Michael is, then, superior to every worldly power

Apollonius, governor of Samaria, the general leading the opposing army. But he was also a man of faith in the God of his fathers. He saw himself as a charismatic, divinely appointed leader, like Gideon of old. He would pause in his guerrilla tactics to assemble his men to “watch and pray” and to read the Torah (the divinely revealed Law of Moses) together. Judas saw his task as that of the successor of Moses and Joshua. “Remember how our fathers were saved at the Red Sea,” he told his men, “when Pharaoh with his forces pursued them” (1 Maccabees 4:9). Then they would blow their trumpets, as in the days of Joshua, and engage the enemy with renewed vigour . . . When Antiochus Epiphanes died in 164 BCE, others administered the kingdom because his son, Antiochus Eupator, was still a minor. Lysias, the Syrian general, was now the real power. A peace of a sort was agreed between Judas and the Syrian general, who was having trouble elsewhere, and the Jews secured liberty of conscience and worship.”^{BRITANNICA 2003}

HARD CIRCUMSTANCES BRING AN END TO HUMAN INGENUITY AND RESOURCES, BUT THEY DO NOT CLOSE THE DOOR OF HEAVEN.

– and he is **for** Daniel’s people. Who, then, can be effectively against them?

According to Appearance

In the oppression instigated by Antiochus, the deliverance appeared to come through the hand of the Maccabees. Although a relatively small band of Jews, they waxed valiant and *“turned to flight the armies of aliens”* (Heb 11:34).

One historical account of the activities of the Maccabees reads as follows. “Hanukkah: reconsecration of the sanctuary. In December 164 BCE, three years after Antiochus had defiled it, Judas recaptured Jerusalem, all except the Acra. Judas then had “blameless priests” cleanse the Holy Place and erect a new altar of unhewn stones. They then reconsecrated the sanctuary. The Hebrew word for this act, Sanukka (“Dedication”), is the name still used for the Jewish eight-day Festival of Lights that commemorates the event . . . Judas Maccabeus, the third son, became the leader of the resistance movement. In his first battle he seized the sword of

Another historical account reads, “Assisted by the Hasideans and an army of 6,000, Judas won several victories over Syrian armies and, in 164 ©, occupied the Temple in Jerusalem, building a new altar and fortifying the area. This remarkable event continues to be celebrated as the Festival of Chanukah or Rededication (sometimes also called the Festival of Lights) . . . The Maccabees, whose determination saved Judaism from extinction, ruled Judea for a century. Their story is told in the books of 1 and 2 Maccabees.”^{GROLLIERS ENCYCLOPEDIA 2003}

That is the earthly perspective of things, and universally regarded as a most phenomenal accomplishment. **However, Daniel is given the background information – what really brought about the survival of Judaism.** *“And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be*

Michael the archangel stands up for Daniel’s people during a time of unparalleled trouble, by Given O. Blakely

delivered.”

Do Not Despair!

It is as though Daniel is being told, “Do not despair at the news of coming oppression! Your people will be preserved in spite of seemingly superior foes.”

The people of God should be able to take such texts and derive much comfort and encouragement from them. These are the type of texts of which it is written, “For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, **that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope**” (Rom 15:4).

WRITTEN IN THE BOOK

“... every one that shall be found

32:32-33).

- ▣ **David wrote of it.** “Thou tellest my wanderings: put thou my tears into thy bottle: are they not in **THY BOOK?**” (Psa 56:8).
- ▣ **Prayer against persecutors.** “Let them be blotted out of **THE BOOK OF THE LIVING**, and not be written with the righteous” (Psa 69:28).
- ▣ **The living of Jerusalem.** “And it shall come to pass, that he that is left in Zion, and he that remaineth in Jerusalem, shall be called holy, even every one that is **WRITTEN AMONG THE LIVING IN JERUSALEM**” (Isa 4:3).

▣ **The book of the Revelation speaks of this book.** “He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of **THE BOOK OF LIFE**, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels . . . And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in **THE BOOK OF LIFE** of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world . . . And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is **THE BOOK OF LIFE**: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works . . . And whosoever was not found written in **THE BOOK OF LIFE** was cast into the lake of fire” (Rev 3:5,8; 20:12,15).

Whatever a person may think of these expressions of the Holy Spirit, we must conclude that **special attention is given to those who are so known in heaven.** In our text, deliverance from the ravages of a despot depended upon whether or not the individuals were recorded in this book. There is no need to cloud people’s understanding by saying there is no such thing as a real book in heaven. That is religious chatter that yields no benefit, but only induces confusion and neutralizes the text. There is some sense in which there is such a book, and in which specific names are recorded. That is the point of the text, and it is to be joyfully received.

Daniel is told there would be no exceptions in the deliverance. “**EVERY ONE**” found written in “**THE book**,” would be delivered, rescued, and saved from the intentions of the wicked one.

Earthly Experiences Determined

The book, therefore, not only determines one’s eternal destiny (Rev 20:15), but what occurs on earth as well. **There are temporal deliverances that also depend upon whether or not one’s name is written in this book!** It is no wonder Paul shouted, “godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come” (1 Tim 4:8). How blessed to ponder these realities!

IT IS LANGUAGE THAT DENOTES THOSE WHO ARE STANDING IN DIVINE FAVOR, AND FOR WHOM HE IS WORKING ALL THINGS TOGETHER FOR GOOD. THE EYES OF THE LORD ARE UPON THOSE WRITTEN IN THIS BOOK, AND HIS EARS ARE OPEN TO THEIR CRIES.

written in the book.” Other versions read, “everyone who is found written in the book, will be rescued,” ^{NASB} “everyone whose name is found written in the book--will be delivered,” ^{NIV} “every one who is recorded in the book,” ^{BBE} and “everyone whose name shall be found written in the book.” ^{ESV}

This is a book that is often mentioned in Scripture. **It is language that denotes those who are standing in Divine favor, and for whom He is working all things together for good.** The eyes of the Lord are upon those written in this book, and His ears are open to their cries. Ponder its mentioning in Scripture.

▣ **Moses spoke of it.** “Yet now, if Thou wilt forgive their sin--; and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of **THY BOOK which Thou hast written.** And the LORD said unto Moses, Whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of **My book**” (Exo

- ▣ **The writing of the house of Israel.** “And mine hand shall be upon the prophets that see vanity, and that divine lies: they shall not be in the assembly of my people, neither shall they be written in **THE WRITING OF THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL**, neither shall they enter into the land of Israel; and ye shall know that I am the Lord **GOD**” (Ezek 13:9).
- ▣ **Jesus speaks of the book.** “Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are **WRITTEN IN HEAVEN**” (Luke 10:20).
- ▣ **Paul speaks of the book.** “And I entreat thee also, true yokefellow, help those women which laboured with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and with other my fellowlabourers, whose names are in **THE BOOK OF LIFE**” (Phil 4:3).

When, therefore, Jesus promises, *“He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life”* (Rev 3:5), needed intervention in the affairs of this life is also intended.

According to this word of the Lord Jesus, **overcoming the world has a direct bearing upon our names remaining in this book.** That may contradict the theology of men, but it does not violate the truth of God, and thus has the power to edify. Let it be clear in your understanding, surviving the assaults of the wicked one is undeniable evidence that your name **is** written in God’s book, and has **not** been blotted out.

There is a sense in which temporal deliverances and Divine protection are directly proportionate to how God regards the individual. If it is countered that He really loves everyone, and that in Christ we are accepted regardless of our choices, preferences, and manner of life, then the following must be seriously considered. Such a contention is not valid.

- ▣ *“I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk **worthy** of the vocation wherewith ye are called.”* (Eph 4:1).
- ▣ *“That ye might walk **worthy** of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful*

in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God” (Col 1:10).

- ▣ *“That ye would walk **worthy** of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory”* (1 Th 2:12).
- ▣ *“And whatsoever we ask, we receive of Him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are **pleasing in His sight**”* (1 John 3:22).
- ▣ *“Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; **and I will receive you**”* (2 Cor 6:17).

AN AWAKENING

“² And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.”

We now come to language of a most lofty order. It is language that is both typical and substantive, spiritual and bodily. It can be used to portray an awakening of the unseen part of man, and one in the outer man as well. There is an immediate meaning that bears directly upon what will *“befall”* Daniel’s people in this world. There is also a meaning that transports our minds to the end of time. Our purpose is to capture both senses, having the final events, which are substance, clarified by those that are temporal, which are types.

Here is what the angel is doing. **He takes us to the conclusion of time, and lifts up the substance to cast light upon the events of this world, thereby creating the shadow.** There is a reason why he does this. What is going to occur upon earth cannot be satisfactorily explained by language alone, for it depicts Divine working which has no **precise** parallel upon the earth. Likewise, there are no adequate parallels in history, or human experience in general. Thus, in order to describe what will occur, the angel employs the language

of the resurrection of the dead in order that we might understand what is going to happen in worldly history.

SLEEPING IN THE DUST

“And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake . . .”

close of time within the context of temporal judgments.

- ▣ When Daniel was first told about the rise of Antiochus Epiphanes, he was also told of the day of judgment. *“I beheld till the thrones were cast*

HERE IS WHAT THE ANGEL IS DOING. HE TAKES US TO THE CONCLUSION OF TIME, AND LIFTS UP THE SUBSTANCE TO CAST LIGHT UPON THE EVENTS OF THIS WORLD, THEREBY CREATING THE SHADOW.

This is the language of resurrection. Referring to the raising of the dead, Jesus employed the very same language, except he said “all” would be raised. *“Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which **all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation**”* (John 5:28-29).

A Divine Manner

This is not the first time Daniel has been shown things at the

down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened” (Dan 7:9-10).

- ▣ When Daniel was being told of the rise and fall of worldly empires, his

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thoughts were wafted into the eternal realms, where He saw the glorified Christ receiving the kingdom. *“I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed”* (Dan 7:14).

▣ After being told that Antiochus

Second, it is only *“many”* that will awake, and not everyone. Whatever one thinks about those expressions, they should constrain us to move with caution in attempting to decipher this text.

Differing Views

▣ Some conclude this is a reference to those who rose from the dead when Jesus died. However, this cannot be so, for it is stated they were *“many bodies of the saints”* (Matt 27:52), and thus none of them could be included in those who rose *“to shame and everlasting contempt.”*

▣ Others feel it to be a description of

that the wicked would *“be punished with everlasting destruction”* when Jesus comes to be *“glorified in His saints, and admired in all them that believe”* (2 Thess 1:10). **One event will reveal both the godly and the ungodly.**

Thus the time of *“trouble”* that has been revealed to Daniel will be an occasion when some will side with the Lord, while others side with Antiochus – which division did take place in history. At that time, the Maccabees came from the rocks in which they had been hidden, and fought with unparalleled zeal – like an awakening from the dead.

However, those decisions will ripple forward to the final resurrection when all things will be disclosed. The following language, as I understand it, is intended to reflect that fact, thereby bringing comfort to those who believe. Those who sided with the Lord, yet suffered, will be duly requited in the last day. Those who refused to side with the Lord will also realize the fruit of their doing. Men will reap what they sow, and let none be deceived about that (Gal 6:7-9).

AWAKING TO EVERLASTING LIFE

“ . . . some to everlasting life . . . ”

This, as I have said, is the language of resurrection – but it is linked to things occurring on the earth.

In all of the Old Testament writings, this is the only place *“everlasting life”* is mentioned. There are allusions to everlasting life in Moses, the Prophets, and the Psalms – but they are very few.

▣ *“Length of days for ever and ever”* (Psa 21:4).

▣ *“I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever”* (Psa 23:6).

▣ *“Preserve thy going out . . . even for evermore”* (Psa 121:8).

▣ *“Life for evermore”* (Psa 133:3).

▣ *“He will swallow up death in victory”* (Isa 25:8).

There are a few other such references (Psa 37:18,27; 49:9,15; 102:28), each of which is quite vague when

IT IS THE PECULIAR PREROGATIVE OF TRUTH TO SPEAK CONCERNING THINGS ETERNAL AND THINGS TEMPORAL IN THE SAME BREATH. THE SPIRIT CAN MOVE US FORWARD TO THE END OF TIME, GATHER SOME RELEVANT REALITY, AND COME BACK TO DWELL UPON THINGS OCCURRING IN TIME.

Epiphanes (the *“little horn”* who came up prior to the rise of the fourth kingdom, which was Rome) would make war with the saints and prevail against them, the attention of Daniel propelled to the end of time, when the kingdom will be given to the saints. *“Until the Ancient of days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom”* (Dan 7:22).

It is the peculiar prerogative of truth to speak concerning things eternal and things temporal in the same breath. **The Spirit can move us forward to the end of time, gather some relevant reality, and come back to dwell upon things occurring in time.**

Modifying Factors

The language itself is borrowed from the final resurrection of the dead. However, the events themselves do not do not deal with that time. First, the people are limited to Daniel’s people, the Jews.

the spiritual awakening of the Jews, when God will *“turn away ungodliness from Jacob”* (Rom 11:26). Again, this does not fit well with the reference to some awakening to *“shame and everlasting contempt.”*

What Is Being Said

It seems to me that what is being said here is this. **During this time of great trouble, decisions will be made among the people that will have eternal ramifications.** A single circumstance will serve to make known both the righteous and the wicked, just as will take place in the resurrection of the dead.

At the resurrection, the righteous and the wicked will be revealed simultaneously. Jesus affirmed **an hour** was coming when *“all that are in the graves would come forth,”* some to life, and some to condemnation (John 5:28-29). Paul affirmed *“there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust”* (Acts 24:15). He declared

compared with the greater illumination that has come with the Gospel. If is said of this greater illumination, *“Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, but is now made manifest by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel”* (2 Tim 1:9-10).

An Unusual Revelation

All of this confirms that a most unusual revelation was given to Daniel. It is apparent that it was intended more for us than for him. Notwithstanding, the great heart of God revealed, in those spiritually primitive times, things in the distant future, thereby casting some light upon the disconcerting experiences through which Daniel’s people would pass.

Here We Do Not Have The Whole

In Christ Jesus, we do *“have”* eternal life in this world – while we are yet in the body (John 3:36; 5:24; 6:47,54; 1 John 5:11,13). However, we do not have the whole of it, for we are admonished, *“Lay hold on eternal life”* (1 Tim 6:12,19). Keeping ourselves in the love of God, we are to look *“for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ UNTO eternal life”* (Jude 1:21). Eternal life is also affirmed to be *“the end,”* or result ^{NIV} of *“holiness”* (Rom 6:22). It is the *“firstfruits of the Spirit”* that is possessed by faith, and not the full harvest (Rom 8:23).

How marvelous, therefore, that this nugget of truth was vouchsafed to Daniel. It reveals what is involved in being *“greatly beloved”* of God (Dan 9:23; 10:11,19).

AWAKING TO SHAME AND EVERLASTING CONTEMPT

“ . . . and some to shame and everlasting contempt.” Other versions read, *“disgrace and everlasting contempt,”* ^{NASB} *“eternal shame,”* ^{BBE} *“Everlasting horror and disgrace,”* ^{NAB} *“shame and everlasting disgrace,”* ^{NJB} and *“everlasting abhorrence.”* ^{TNK}

Jesus referred to this as *“the resurrection of damnation”* (John 5:29).

The everlasting aspect of it is illuminated by these somber words from the Savior. *“And if thy hand offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched: where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched”* (Mark 9:43-44). Paul spoke of it as being *“Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction*

trouble to bring wickedness out of them.

Having said all of that, and keenly aware of the fact that my words have been attended by certain generalities, **I confess that I am persuaded the power of this text is found in its generality.** That condition provides a context in which the Spirit can work profitably with each individual.

ONE AWFUL EVENT WAS THE OCCASION OF THE AWAKENING OF CONTEMPTIBLE HEARTS AS WELL AS NOBLE ONES. WHAT IS MORE, THE CONSEQUENCES OF THOSE REVELATIONS ECHOED INTO ETERNITY, AND WILL BE FULLY REVEALED AT THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD.

from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power” (2 Thess 1:9). **It is something from which recovery is not possible.**

While this did not occur when Israel was being oppressed by Antiochus Epiphanes, a type of did take place. **One awful event was the occasion of the awakening of contemptible hearts as well as noble ones.** What is more, the consequences of those revelations echoed into eternity, and will be fully revealed at the resurrection of the dead. **That is, the consequences of decisions men made upon the earth will be faced when the dead are raised from the “dust of the earth.”**

Because truth knows no boundary to the pure in heart, the angel can reach forward, taking hold of the day of the Lord and the resurrection of the dead. He can also take hold of the nearer events that would take place during the inter-testamental period, when there was no known prophet. Then, with the dexterity of one who has trafficked near the throne of God, he can put the two events together, enabling us to see the gravity of the things that would befall Daniel’s people. In so doing, this text becomes a sweet elixir of comfort to the righteous, and a solemn warning to those who allow

THE FACT OF THE RESURRECTION

This is one of the very few pre-New Covenant texts that speaks with clarity concerning the resurrection of the dead. It is, as I have already mentioned, almost identical with a statement made by the Lord Jesus. *“Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation”* (John 5:29).

This is a single resurrection, as confirmed in Acts 24:15: *“And have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust”* (Acts 24:15). While there is a resurrection called *“the first resurrection,”* it is not bodily one (Rev 20:5-6). It is a **different kind** of resurrection, like *“the second death”* is a different kind of death (Rev 2:11; 20:6,14; 21:8). The Word of God never speaks of a “second resurrection” or a “first death” – never. The *“first resurrection”* is a **spiritual** one that **precedes** the resurrection of the dead, and is therefore called *“first.”* The *“second death”* is a **spiritual** one that follows the death to which all men are appointed, and is therefore called *“second.”*

The “*resurrection of the dead*” (Matt 22:31; Acts 17:32; 24:21; 1 Cor 15:21,42; Phil 3:11) is a single event involving both the righteous and the unrighteous, the children of God and the children of the wicked one.

The word “*resurrection*” is never

This is what is occurring in our text. The association of the awakening of many who sleep in the dust of the earth is with “*the books*” that are mentioned in verse one. It is as though the angel was saying, “The books that contain the names of those who are delivered in this world, will be fully revealed in the coming

to appear irrelevant. A perception is thus lost of what is involved in fellowship with Christ (1 Cor 1:9), living by faith (Hen 10:38), walking in the Spirit (Gal 5:16), and working together with God (1 Cor 3:9). This is a most serious condition.

AS APPLIED TO THE TEXT

The relevance of this to our text is simply this: **in a time of great criticality, decisions would be made that rippled into eternity itself.** Some of the Jews chose to side with Antiochus Epiphanes. However, the Maccabees came out of remote places to stand against the wickedness this man sought to impose upon the people of God.

This was the time when 6,000 brave Jews stood against the Grecian armies and prevailed, taking the Temple back and cleansing it for holy use once again. Earlier, when expounding the words, “*the people shall be delivered,*” I provided a quotation that referred to this remarkable achievement.

The Rising and Falling of Many

Both great blessings and great judgments occasion the rise and fall of many. The ultimate blessing was the Lord Jesus Christ, sent to be “*the Savior of the world*” (1 John 4:14). When Simeon dedicated the infant Jesus, he said these words: “*Behold, this Child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel; and for a sign which shall be spoken against*” (Luke 2:34).

So it will be at the resurrection of the dead. At that time, those who have lived by faith will rise to the pinnacle of Divine acceptance, and apparently so. They will be displayed as princes and judges. Others will fall into the pit at that time, from which they will never recover. Think on these things.

THE PRESENT RELIGIOUS TREND OF MAJORING ON EXPERIENCES IN THIS WORLD IS A MOST DANGEROUS ONE. BY ITS VERY NATURE, IT TENDS TO MAKE “EVERLASTING CONSOLATION AND GOOD HOPE” OF LITTLE CONSEQUENCE

used in the plural in Scripture, i.e., “resurrections.” This single resurrection will be accomplished by the voice of the Son of God, who will summon all of the dead from the graves. No one will be excluded. Some will come forth to forever be with the Lord. Others will be raised to be forever damned.

Why Mention It?

Why is such an event mentioned to Daniel? **It is because it sheds light on the things Daniel is receiving.** It serves to clarify the matters being set before him. There are two uses of the truth in Scripture. One deals with the **exposition of the matter**, such as Paul’s expounding of the resurrection in the fifteenth chapter of Revelation. Another provides a context in which other matters can be more clearly comprehended. **It is only when time is set within the context of eternity that events occurring in time can be comprehended.**

resurrection. Then, what is vaguely seen in this world will by clearly seen.”

Troubles Made Smaller

Additionally, as Daniel is brought to consider the resurrection of the dead and the consequences of it, the most horrendous experiences of this world are decidedly reduced in magnitude. It is only as we are granted to think within the context of the eternal that we can respond acceptably to the present.

The present religious trend of majoring on experiences in this world is a most dangerous one. By its very nature, it tends to make “*everlasting consolation and good hope*” of little consequence (2 Thess 2:16). Experiences in the flesh are thus unduly magnified, while spiritual life is minimized.

Further, under such circumstances, spiritual life itself begins

THE WISE WILL SHINE

“^{3a} **And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament . . .**” Other versions read, “*And those who have insight will shine brightly like the brightness of the expanse of heaven,*”^{NASB} “*and those who are wise*

will be shining like the light of the outstretched sky.”^{BBE}

This is a continuation of thoughts regarding the resurrection. Once again, the coming circumstances are to be

considered against the backdrop of eternity – **more particularly, I mean the revelations that will occur when time comes to an end, and death is swallowed up in victory. That is the ultimate time of revelation.**

THE WISE

“And they that be wise . . .” Other versions read, *“those who have insight,”* NASB *“They that are learned,”* DOUAY *“the knowledgeable,”* TNK *“those teaching.”* YLT

These are people “wise” in the eyes of the Lord, and perceptive of His ways and Word. They are prudent, and can “handle” the Word of God (2 Tim 2:15). They are also able to show others the things pertaining to life and godliness. **They have understanding, and they can communicate, or teach, it.** From the New Covenant point of view, this is being “wise unto salvation” (2 Tim 3:15).

This is wisdom to say and do, even as those who made the high priestly garments of Aaron, and various articles related to the tabernacle. *“And thou shalt speak unto all that are wise hearted, whom I have filled with the spirit of wisdom, that they may make Aaron’s garments to consecrate him, that he may minister unto me in the priest’s office”* (Ex 28:3). And again, *“And I, behold, I have given with him Aholiab, the son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan: and in the hearts of all that are wise hearted I have put wisdom, that they may make all that I have commanded thee”* (Ex 31:6).

This is not mere intellectualism, nor is it wisdom after the manner of this world, which wisdom is *“foolishness with God”* (1 Cor 3:19). **There are people who are wise in their own eyes, but God does not recognize their wisdom.** In fact, He pronounces a “woe” upon them. *“Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight!”* (Isa 5:21).

There are people who have an extraordinary amount of factual knowledge. They are experts in language, who can decipher words, and ferret out the various verb tenses and lexical meanings. Others are experts in history, certain kinds of documentation, and the likes. But these are not the “they that be wise” of our text.

A Greater Wisdom

There is a higher plateau of wisdom – one where the ways of God are known, as well as God Himself. There are people to whom God has made known “His ways,” as He did unto Moses (Psa

103:7). These, like the wise men of Esther’s day, are individuals who “know the times” (Esth 1:13). They are like certain of “the children of Issachar, which were men that had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do” (1 Chron 12:32).

In the times being shown to Daniel, those who were “wise” were experts in the Law, who were able to give its “sense,” as certain priests in the day of Nehemiah (Neh 8:8). They could more readily distinguish good from evil, and

advantage of benefit is being sought. But what does God think of such people – “they that are wise?” The next statement tells the story.

THEY SHALL SHINE

“ . . . shall shine as the brightness of the firmament . . .”

The “wise hearted” may be obscure in this world, but they will not be in the world to come. While in this world, there are special times when they rise to the surface as an undeniable

THERE ARE PEOPLE WHO ARE WISE IN THEIR OWN EYES, BUT GOD DOES NOT RECOGNIZE THEIR WISDOM. IN FACT, HE PRONOUNCES A “WOE” UPON THEM. “WOE UNTO THEM THAT ARE WISE IN THEIR OWN EYES, AND PRUDENT IN THEIR OWN SIGHT!”

knew what things ought to be restored and preserved. They knew when unlawful encroachments were being made by the wicked, and when they should rise up and stand for the right.

In our times, “they that are wise” are experts in the Word of God, and particularly in the Gospel of Christ. These are described as “those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil” (Heb 5:14). They can “rightly divide the Word of God,” or handle it properly (2 Tim 2:15).

These can plough in the field of truth with profit. They can clarify the things of God, and decipher the times. Such can break open mysterious texts of Scripture, and comprehend the breadth, length, depth, and height of Divine love. They know the ways of God as well as His Word. His purpose is not strange to them, and they are walking in the light as He is in the light (1 John 1:7).

Such people are not always seen as precious, or even necessary, in this world. There are even churches where such people are viewed as peculiar. Their wisdom is considered valuable only in the hour of crisis, or when some special

testimony – as with Moses, Joseph, Solomon, John the Baptist, and the Apostles. Even then, their brightness soon diminishes in the eyes of their peers. **However, there is a glorious future for those who are wise!** Because they are extraordinary, and partakers of excellent Divine benefits, they will “shine as the brightness of the firmament.”

That is, **they will become prominent** like the diverse and powerful lights of the heavens do in the night. Their wisdom will no longer be hidden from those about them, or unappreciated by those to whom it is exposed. **Because they have obtained wisdom from God, and because that wisdom partakes of the nature of God, it will eventually burst forth like the glowing skies, with its myriad of galaxies.**

Regarding the things that would “befall” the Jews, they would be terrible to the extreme. Those who were wise would not, for a while, appear to be so. Yet, they would come forth as surely as the heavens are lit up when it is dark. While those times would prove to be the undoing of many, they would also provide a confirmation of Solomon’s words. “But

the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day. The way of the wicked is as darkness: they know not at what they stumble" (Prov 4:18-19).

What is true of **"they that be wise"** after time is no more, is **inevitably introduced while they remain in this world.** Even here, surrounded by wicked men and harassed

by the devil, they *"shine as lights in the world,"* being *"blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation"* (Phil 2:15).

THOSE WHO TURN MANY TO RIGHTEOUSNESS

³⁶ **and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever.**" Other versions read, *"who lead many to righteousness,"*^{NASB,NIV} and *"those who have instructed many in uprightness."*^{NJB}

"Righteousness" is the area in which these spiritual luminaries had wisdom. Such not only turned people **from** something, but **to** something as well. It is essential to *"turn from idols."* It is also necessary to turn *"to serve the living and true God."* **In the days when Antiochus Epiphanes sought to exterminate the Jews and their religion, it was not only important to refuse to worship Jupiter, but to engage in worshipping and serving the true God** (Matt 4:10).

It is possible for people to no longer be known as fornicators, idolaters, adulterers, effeminate, abusers of themselves with mankind, thieves, covetous, drunkards, revilers, and extortioners. But that is of no value whatsoever unless they are "washed," "sanctified," and "justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God" (1 Cor 6:9-11). **There simply is no such thing as being "dead to sin" without being "alive" and sensitive to "unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord"** (Rom 6:11).

THE IMPORTANCE OF THIS IN OUR TIME

Right here we strike at a particularly weak aspect of contemporary Christianity. **Too often religious men**

of what men were won to than what they were won **from.** **This by no means diminishes men being turned from sin, for righteousness cannot be imputed or embraced unless men turn their backs on sin.** If men continue to sin, it is because they have not laid hold on eternal life (1 Tim 6:12). If the world overcomes them, it is because they have not been living by faith (1 John 5:4-5). If they fall into sin, it is because they have not set their affection on things above, where Christ sits on the right hand of God (Col 3:1-2). If they have carnal minds, it is because they have not been living by every word of God (Lk 4:4).

It Is Time!

It is time for those who wear the name of the Lord to more noted for being *"of God"* than they once were for **not** being of God. **Godly appetites and preferences must surface, as well as an abhorrence of that which is evil.**

Thus the truly wise are noted for what they turn men **to** – *"they that turn many to righteousness."* To be turned *"to righteousness"* is to begin to do righteousness, for *"he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous"* (1 John 3:7).

THE DESTINY OF THOSE WHO TURN MANY TO RIGHTEOUSNESS

And what shall happen to those who *"turn many to righteousness."* How does heaven regard such people? What is their destiny – their inevitable destiny? They will *"shine like the stars for ever and ever!"* **They will no longer be obscure or unappreciated!** Jesus referred to this when He said, *"Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear"* (Mat 13:43).

Jesus was speaking of the time

THERE REALLY IS NO PURPOSE FOR LETTING GO OF UNGODLINESS IF MEN DO NOT TAKE HOLD OF GODLINESS! IF, FOR EXAMPLE, A PERSON CEASES TO BE A DRUNKARD, IT IS OF NO VALUE UNLESS HE IS BEING "FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT"

Thus the angel does not speak of turning many **from** unrighteousness, but of leading them **into** righteousness. The Maccabees not only moved people to refuse to worship Jupiter, but also to publically and heartily worship the Lord.

There really is no purpose for letting go of ungodliness if men do not take hold of godliness! If, for example, a person ceases to be a drunkard, it is of no value unless he is being *"filled with the Spirit"* (Eph 5:18).

entertain the notion that being converted, or saved, only involves a cessation of godless living. However, it also involves the commencement of living *"soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world"* (Titus 2:12).

Invariably, where there is an emphasis on, what institutionalism calls "soul-winning," there is a weakness in being *"turned to righteousness."* When Solomon said, *"he that winneth souls is wise"* (Prov 11:30), he was speaking more

after the harvest, when the tares are “gathered and burned with fire” at the “end of the world” (Matt 13:40). That is when the glorified Christ will “send forth His angels, and they shall gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity,” casting them “into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth” (Mat 13:41-42). Then, and only then, will the truly wise, who have turned many to righteousness “shine forth in the kingdom of their Father.”

So far as heaven was concerned, they were shining while they remained in the world, even though they were often considered the “offscouring of all things” (1 Cor 4:13). After the harvest, all of the things that were against them and obscured them will be forever gone! They will not shine by contrast, as they did in this world, but will shine in and with the brightness of Divine glory. It is one thing to stand out among a wicked generation. It is quite another to stand out in the presence of the Lord Himself. But that will be the state of those who are wise and turn many to righteousness!

CHURCH BUSINESS

It is the business of the church to make much of the future – when the righteous will shine forth. That is where the preachers and teachers are to shine the spotlight, which will also illuminate the temporal order. Knowing what we shall be will shed light upon what we

IT IS ONE THING TO STAND OUT AMONG A WICKED GENERATION. IT IS QUITE ANOTHER TO STAND OUT IN THE PRESENCE OF THE LORD HIMSELF. BUT THAT WILL BE THE STATE OF THOSE WHO ARE WISE AND TURN MANY TO RIGHTEOUSNESS!

are not to be now. It will also provide strength and incentive walk “worthy of God, who hath called you unto His kingdom and glory” (1 Thess 2:12).

If the glorious future of the saved is hidden from the people, they will at once begin to be overcome by this world. My blessed and godly mother, now present with the Lord, taught me when I was young, “If what is above you does not control you, what is around you will.” That is a true saying.

It saddens my heart to behold so many professing Christians who have so little understanding of “the things God hath prepared for them that love Him” (1 Cor 2:9). Much of the moral and spiritual weakness and ignorance of the professing church is directly traceable to this condition. It is as though power is withheld from those whose attention is not set on the goal.

If Daniel and those following him

could derive strength from the proclamation of a somewhat veiled future, what kind of strength will be ministered to those who have embraced the greater clarity of the Gospel proclamation? More has been revealed, and thus more comfort and power can be realized.

Having An Old Covenant View!

Care must be taken not to maintain an Old Covenant view of the future. It was becoming for the time during which it was ministered, but it is inappropriate for this time, when the government is upon the shoulder of the Lord Jesus (Isa 9:6-7). Our view of life and death must be greater than that of Job, and Solomon, who lived in times of lesser revelation. They lived during the time of lesser light. Our views of dwelling in the house of the Lord must be greater than that of David, who saw but the rough outline of glory. Now, the Lord Jesus Christ “hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel” (2 Tim 1:10).

SHUT UP THE WORDS

“^{4a} But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end . . . ”

Now we will see why many things in this book – particularly this passage – lack the clarity men prefer. It is intended only for those who have a heart for it, and even then, there are many mysterious things about it. Yet, it is the truth itself that satisfies the soul, even when it is not thoroughly comprehended. The rough outline of a deliverer is precious, even if every detail of Him is not

seen. The sound of imminent help causes the heart to leap forward with anticipation, even when the particulars of deliverance are not known. That, and more, is involved in the words of this verse.

SHUT UP THE WORDS

“But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words . . . ” Other versions read, “conceal these words,”^{NASB} “close up and seal these words,”^{NIV} “keep these words secret,”^{NRSV} “close the words,”^{DARBY} “Keep the prophecy a secret,”^{NLT} and “hide the

things.”^{YLT}

A similar word was spoken in the eighth chapter, where Daniel was also told of Antiochus Epiphanes: “wherefore shut thou up the vision; for it shall be for many days” (Dan 8:26). In that text, as well as the one before us, Daniel was not given a message that was to be proclaimed far and near, or without discrimination. It was not intended to remain secret, as the angel will confirm. Yet, for the time, it was premature to expound it, or probe further into its

Michael the archangel stands up for Daniel's people during a time of unparalleled trouble, by Given O. Blakely

meaning.

There can also be a secondary meaning of shutting it up like a precious treasure – protecting it and patiently waiting for it to be further unfolded.

Another Point

Another point can be seen here.

Some Mystery Remains

While the angel's words have cleared up some things, they have introduced other mysteries – at least for the moment. Daniel must be content with this circumstance, for *“The secret things belong unto the LORD our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever”* (Deut 29:29).

disinterested and even the novice. **A hearty investigation of them must be preceded by a genuine interest in things pertaining to life and godliness.** The books of Daniel and Revelation are in this category. Both of them deal with visions, where truth is paraded before us in animated form. **When, however, tender and sensitive hearts are exposed to these books, they will surely be blessed.** Your own experience will confirm this to be the case. Perhaps, for a while, you stood back from the books of Revelation and Daniel, perceiving them as confusing, and perhaps even fearful. However, when you began to grow up into Christ in all things, you found some rich morsels in the very volumes you once saw as beyond your grasp.

THE TIME OF THE END

“... even to the time of the end.”

Another version reads, *“even to the time appointed.”*^{DOUAY} The *“time of the end”* is the time during which the things that are written will begin to be fulfilled. At that time, they will be opened, and will become more apparent. When the things the angel has made known begin to happen, then the truth of them will be more clearly seen.

The things that have been spoken by the angel are not intended to be used to formulate an official religious position. They are not mere intellectual dainties, or theological fads to be traded back and forth among religious specialists. **They were to be recorded precisely as they were given. Then, when they came to pass, they would be unfolded to the elect, yielding edification and comfort.**

In this way, the Word of God is seen as *“seed”* (Luke 8:11). When it finds lodging in an *“honest and good heart,”* the time has come for it to be unfolded. All times before that were *“even to the time of the end.”*

The Manner of the Kingdom

This is a kingdom manner, or a way in which God deals with humanity. **When what God has declared occurs in human experience, then light is shed upon it, and the book is unsealed.** At that time, those who are involved in the experience receive the

THE THINGS THAT HAVE BEEN SPOKEN BY THE ANGEL ARE NOT INTENDED TO BE USED TO FORMULATE AN OFFICIAL RELIGIOUS POSITION. THEY ARE NOT MERE INTELLECTUAL DAINTIES, OR THEOLOGICAL FADS TO BE TRADED BACK AND FORTH AMONG RELIGIOUS SPECIALISTS.

The angel is saying that was all he had to say to Daniel about the matter. He should record what he had seen and heard, and leave it there. He should not add his own words to the revelation, write down his impressions, or record any *“private interpretation”* he may have had about the revelation. **The revelation must be protected precisely as it was given, with no embellishments.** This, of course, is a Divine manner revealed through both Moses and John the beloved.

Moses. *“Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you”* (Deut 4:2). That was equivalent to saying, *“shut up the words.”*

John. *“For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book”* (Rev 22:18-19). That also equates to saying, *“shut up the words.”*

Faith demands that we leave matters where God has left them, refusing to indulge in fleshly speculations.

If there are things about the book of Daniel that are difficult for us to see, we must not put the book aside as though it had no value. Let us keep the book in our heart, even when it has been *“shut.”* There will come a time when it is appropriate to open more of it to us – either in this world, or the one to come.

SEAL THE BOOK

“... and seal the book...” These words equate to *“keep it closed,”* or *“keep the book sealed.”*^{NJB}

I gather this refers to keeping the book from the profane and disinterested people. The book was not kept from the godly, for Daniel wrote it down, and *“all Scripture is profitable”* (2 Tim 3:16-17). However, he was not to indulge in lengthy explanations of it to those lacking an interest in the people of God. As we will see in the following expression, this was not to be a permanent circumstance. **There was a time when the book could be unsealed and opened.**

An Application

There are some texts of Scripture that are especially unprofitable for the

understanding they did not have before.

Peter on Pentecost

A most excellent example of this facet of the kingdom is seen on the day of Pentecost. At that time God began to fulfill many things that were formerly like Daniel's prophecy – shut up and sealed. The words of these prophecies were known, but their meaning remained veiled.

When the Holy Spirit was “shed forth” by the Lord Jesus, and prophesied events began to take place, Peter at once saw more in certain texts than he had ever seen before. He saw the truth of Joel's prophecy (Acts 2:16-21; Joel 2:28-32). He saw the truth of David's words (Acts 2:25-28; Psa 16:8-11). He saw the truth of God's promise to David concerning One who would sit on his throne (Acts 2:30-30-33; 2 Sam 7:11-16; 1 Chron 17:11-15). He saw the truth of David's Psalmic prophesy (Acts 2:34-36; Psa 110:1-3).

The time of those prophecies had come, and thus they were opened to the hearts of the faithful.

Until the Day Dawn

This principle is also seen in Peter's word concerning the “*more sure word of prophecy*” that those in Christ possess. A “*more sure word*” is one that has already been fulfilled, as compared with one that is yet to be fulfilled. Of this “*More sure word*” Peter writes, “*We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts*” (2 Pet 1:19).

This “*more sure word*” relates to the accomplishments of the Lord Jesus as contained in the Gospel. He has already put away sin (Heb 9:25), reconciled the world to God (2 Cor 5:18-20), destroyed the devil (Heb 2:14), plundered principalities and powers (Col 2:15), and is “*the end of the law for righteousness*”

(Rom 10:4). He has already made peace with God through the “*blood of His cross*” (Col 1:20), and is ever living “*to make intercession for us*” (Heb 7:25).

These things being true, this is the time when they can be understood – when the book can be unsealed, so to speak. **Therefore, as we diligently give heed to them, making them a priority in our thoughts and meditations, they will be opened to us.** What a marvelous truth!

A Common Experience

WHEN THE HOLY SPIRIT WAS “SHED FORTH” BY THE LORD JESUS, AND PROPHESED EVENTS BEGAN TO TAKE PLACE, PETER AT ONCE SAW MORE IN CERTAIN TEXTS THAN HE HAD EVER SEEN BEFORE.

When you experience what God has said, it opens to your understanding. **In this sense, you know no more of God's Word than you have actually experienced.** A person whose heart has actually been circumcised is able to arrive at an understanding of “*the circumcision of Christ*” (Col 2:11). For all others, the matter is “*shut up*” and “*sealed*.” The best they can do is philosophize about it, and **philosophy has no moral or spiritual power.** When the Lord has “*opened*” your heart, the Scripture that declares He opened Lydia's heart comes alive to you (Acts 16:14). Until that time, such expressions are “*shut up*” and “*sealed*.”

The Vaunting of the Intellect

Since the corrupting influence of the “Age of Reason,” the human intellect has been unduly vaunted. The emphasis has thus been turned from experiencing the truth, or “*knowing the truth*” (John 8:32), to the wisdom of men. Thus we hear such prattle as, “Men can only have a grasp of the word of God when they know the Greek and the Hebrew.” Or,

“The secret to understanding the Scripture is found in understanding the context.” Or, “An understanding of history and the culture of Bible times brings a better understanding of the Word of God.” Or, “We must have a proper hermeneutic to really understand the Scriptures.” Another one men have sought to dignify is, “The Bible was inspired only in the original language.”

Such affirmations may have a sound of wisdom, but they are utter foolishness, and there is not a mote of truth in them. God is not required in

any of them, nor is the Lord Jesus, or the Holy Spirit. Illumination and enlightenment (Eph 1:18; Heb 6:4; 10:22) have no place in any of them. They are all of man, through man, and to man. **Nowhere, nor at any time, has God ever suggested such an approach to His Word.**

Although I have been branded as unreasonable in this area, **I will contend that God's Word can only be profitably opened when the heart of man is ready to receive it.** There may very well be an intellectual grasp of the Bible, and that I do not deny. However, such a grasp cannot purge the conscience, increase faith, or stabilize hope.

Part of the reason for the “*perilous times*” in which we live is directly traceable to the conditions I have just described. Men, together with their positions, and human understanding have been given the glory that is due to God alone. The result has been the shutting of the book! A cursory acquaintance with the average church will confirm this.

RUNNING TO AND FRO, AND KNOWLEDGE INCREASED

“*th ... many shall run to and | fro, and knowledge shall be | increased.*” Other versions read, “*Many*

Michael the archangel stands up for Daniel's people during a time of unparalleled trouble, by Given O. Blakely

will go here and there to increase knowledge.”^{NIV} “Many shall be running back and forth, and evil shall increase,”^{NRSV} “numbers will be going out of the way and troubles will be increased,”^{BBE} “many shall fall away and evil shall increase,”^{NAB} and “Many will roam about, this way and that, and wickedness will continue to increase.”^{NJB}

Here again, the various translations cause confusion to awaken. Some suggest there will be much activity, and an increase of knowledge will result. Others propose that the activity is an

not see the text allowing for such a conclusion. The words translated “to and fro” do not suggest wandering or aimlessness, but rather searching something out. They are used in reference to God Himself: “. . . the eyes of the Lord which run to and fro throughout the whole earth” (Zech 4:10). It is also said of the Lord, “For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward Him” (2 Chron 6:9). This was the manner in which the raven Noah released sought for a dry place (Gen 8:7). Satan’s quest to

been exalted to the right hand of God, insightful laborers were raised up who ran to and fro throughout the world. They were “wise,” and turned many to righteousness.

Thus the word was fulfilled, “How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!” (Rom 10:14-15).

THAT IS, NOT ONLY WILL THE OBSCURE PROPHECIES BECOME MORE READILY APPARENT WHEN THEY ARE BEING FULFILLED. GOD WILL ALSO RAISE UP AN ARMY OF INSIGHTFUL PROCLAIMERS WHO WILL BE “WISE,” AND WILL “TURN MANY TO RIGHTEOUSNESS.”

KNOWLEDGE SHALL BE INCREASED

“. . . and knowledge shall be increased.”

This refers to the time when the book will be unsealed, and obscure prophecies made more plain. I do not know that God ever refers to the spread of iniquity as the increase of knowledge. The knowledge of this text is recognized heaven. Other knowledge is not knowledge at all, but mere foolishness (1 Cor 3:19). The increase of knowledge is owing to the activity of the “wise,” not the aimless wanderings of the ignorant.

The New Covenant Perspective

The New Covenant perspective is one of the knowledge of the Lord filling the earth. As it is written, “They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea” (Isa 11:9). And again, “For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea” (Hab 2:14).

Such wonderful knowledge will not be scholastic in nature, but spiritual. Knowledge that does not come from the well of salvation brings no eternal advantages!

This knowledge will flow from the unsealing and opening of “the book,” and deal with a more thorough understanding of the Lord and His purpose. This is in perfect keeping with the Divine manner that has been revealed throughout Scripture.

effort to acquire knowledge. Others indicate that in spite of a lot of intellectual activity, wickedness will continue to advance as though totally unrestrained. What does the angel intend to convey to our hearts with these words?

First, what is here said is a continuation of the angel’s word concerning the words being sealed until the time of the end, or the time of their fulfillment. The “knowledge” of reference, therefore, cannot be general human knowledge – like an explosion of scientific and technical expertise. While that may very well occur, it is not at the heart of the text.

The “knowledge” of reference applies to the understanding of things declared by God – things that are opened, or unsealed to the listener.

RUNNING TO AND FRO

“. . . many shall run to and fro . . . ”

Although some versions leave us thinking this refers to vain pursuits, I do

find someone whom he may devour is also described in the words “to and fro” (Job 1:7, 2:2). **The idea, therefore, is one of deliberate searching, with an aim to find something.**

I take those who are running to and fro to be those who are wise. The activity is intended to “turn many to righteousness.” **That is, not only will the obscure prophecies become more readily apparent when they are being fulfilled. God will also raise up an army of insightful proclaimers who will be “wise,” and will “turn many to righteousness.”**

Initially, this would happen in the insurrection of the Maccabees against the armies of Antiochus. Their true strength would not be in their military strength or strategy, but in their perception of the Word of God.

Seen in the Spread of the Gospel

This principle finds its apex in the proclamation of the Gospel. Once the promised Messiah had put away sin and

CONCLUSION

We have dealt with a passage of Scripture that has been subjected to all manner of human manipulation. Most of the abuses of this passage tend to promote sensationalism, and even fear. They also have a remarkable appeal to those who are living and walking in the flesh. Such a circumstance at once reveals the nature of these doctrines. **God simply is not in the business of promoting intellectual novelties and impressing minds that are alienated from Him.** Wherever we find such activities, they can summarily be

dismissed as spurious, and even injurious.

You must come away from a text like this with an acute awareness of the nature of spiritual understanding. **It involves the opening of Scripture at the time its truth is experienced.** Until that time, the profitable meaning of Scripture is beyond the reach of mortals. Impure hearts may stretch to get the meaning, and employ all manner study techniques to arrive at an understanding of the Bible. But they are all in vain. The book is simply "sealed" to outsiders who

have their home and preferences in "this present evil world" (Gal 1:4).

From one point of view, this was a most difficult text, for it contained things that were hard to connect to history. However, from another point of view, it was unusually edifying, for it confirmed things familiar to everyone who walks in the Spirit and lives by faith. It also assisted us in understanding our Lord, together with His marvelous ways. It is always profitable when the Lord Himself can be seen in the text.

Our next Hungry Saints Meeting will be held on Friday, 6/27/2003. We will continue in our overview of Daniel, reviewing verses 5-13 of the twelfth chapter. The title of our lesson is, "A GLIMPSE OF THE FUTURE AND DIVINE CONCEALMENT." Daniel beholds two messengers standing on either side of the river. One speaks to the other concerning the length of time involved in what has been revealed Daniel. The words are not understood by the prophet. When he asks about their meaning, he is told the words are closed up and sealed until the time of the end. 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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Michael the archangel stands up for Daniel's people during a time of unparalleled trouble, by Given O. Blakely
