

*The Sure Word
of Prophecy . .*

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By
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The Sure Word of Prophecy,

In Relation to Past and Future Events.

THE gravity of the moment in which we live raises questions of vital importance, so that many are led to make the enquiry

What has God said about the War?

On all hands it is acknowledged that the world is now entering upon the fiercest struggle in its history. No one dare conjecture its far-reaching effects, but we may with safety and profit turn to the Word of God for light and guidance amidst the horrors of the strife around us and the enveloping gloom.

Our Lord warned His people that after His departure they would hear of wars and rumours of wars, but that the end of the age would not then be reached (Matt. xxiv. 6). He further announced that nation should rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and following the destruction and suffering there would be pestilence, famine, and earthquakes. All these, He declared, would only be the "beginning of sorrows." While an upheaval of this character is now observable on the earth, and the statement has become common that "*Armageddon*" has arrived (Rev. xvi. 16), we are compelled to point out that we are not yet at the

“Armageddon” of the Book of Revelation, because the necessary conditions are not yet present. The Jew is not in possession of his own land, and the Antichrist is not yet in power. As these two great events precede Armageddon, we can only see in the present war among the nations of the earth a struggle for the mastery and the re-arrangement of the map of Europe preliminary to the final conflict mentioned in the prophetic Scriptures.

The great scourge of the moment, Germany, does not appear directly in the Word of God. She must be divided and destroyed before the end comes. While the moral features of the age are summed up in the 2nd Epistle to Timothy, where we read that they are “Lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God, having a form of godliness, but denying the power” of it, the historical side is characterised by God abandoning the potsherds of the earth to strive among themselves, and so punish one another for their apostasy. His glory is paramount, and He is overruling all to fulfil His own purposes. Except in general statements, we do not find the present cataclysm of the nations mentioned, but we do find many warnings and injunctions for our comfort and support. When they shall say, “Peace and safety, then sudden destruction shall fall upon them as travail upon a woman with child, and they shall not escape, but ye, brethren, are not in darkness that that day should overtake you as a thief, for ye are all children of the light and the day; we are not of the night nor of the darkness.” Let us, therefore, maintain our character as light-bearers, and seek in the power of Divine life to throw some gleam of sunshine upon the moral and political ruin. Our Lord, in the 24th of Matthew, directs

His disciples to the prophecies of Daniel, and gives as an epoch-marking sign the setting up of the *Abomination of Desolation* in the holy place at Jerusalem prophesied by Daniel, and which was future when our Lord spoke. He further enjoins him that reads to understand, thus pressing the great necessity of prophetic study. The word *Abomination* in Scripture always means idolatry, so that this passage teaches that Idolatry shall yet be established in Jerusalem.

Daniel's Prophecies.

We now turn to the Book of Daniel, the prophet, as affording light for the present hour. The book is unique in respect that it deals with the period known as "*the Times of the Gentiles*" (Luke xxi. 24), and the four kingdoms which rule the world during that period. The first six chapters are chiefly occupied with the Babylonian and the Medo-Persian Empires, and Daniel's personal connection with them, while the remaining portion contains his prophetic visions concerning all the four great monarchies and the revived fourth, or Roman power, which will dominate in the future day. These kingdoms are viewed in their relation to Israel, for God has ever His ancient city and beloved people before Him in the unfolding of His purposes concerning the earth, as we read in Deut. xxxii. 8 and 9:

"When the Most High divided to the nations
"their inheritance, when He separated the sons
"of Adam, He set the bounds of the people
"according to the number of the children of
"Israel. For the Lord's portion is His people,
"and Jacob is the lot of His inheritance."

Upon the personal history of Daniel we need not dwell, beyond pointing out that his faithfulness to his God, and his devotion to his duties brought him the Divine blessing, so that, like Abraham, when God was going to deal in judgment with the cities of the plain, He communicated to His servant His purposes, as He said, "Shall I hide from Abraham the thing which I do" (Gen. xviii. 17). In wondrous grace He has communicated to us now His own purposes concerning the present moment. Let us avail ourselves of the blessings of His confidence.

The Great Image.

Nebuchadnezzar's remarkable dream and its interpretation give character to the whole book. Under the figure of a Great Image is unfolded the four powerful Gentile Empires, which were to sway the world, and how these monarchies—the Babylonian, Medo-Persian, Macedonian, or Grecian and Roman deteriorate in the hands of man and crumble to pieces under the later rule, until, as illustrated by the want of adherence between iron and clay, monarchy and democracy, would fail to be welded together and be crushed by the stone cut out without hands—Christ, the Stone of Judgment.

Gentile rule, like that of Israel, is thus seen in increasing corruption. Idolatry is established in chapter III., where all are commanded to worship the golden image. In chapter IV., when Nebuchadnezzar eats grass, he descends to the level of the animal creation. In chapter V. infidel boldness asserts itself against the God of Heaven in Belshazzar, while in the last portion of the first part of the book, chapter VI., we have the result of the

apostacy in the self-exaltation of Darius by his princes, or satraps, when the monarch is practically deified by them.

We are then introduced to Daniel's visions in the following chapters, and God's verdict upon Gentile apostacy and failure to abide in the goodness of God (Rom. xi. 22).

The Four Beasts.

Daniel now sees these kingdoms in his first vision as God would have us to observe them. In chapter VII. the Babylonian or Chaldean monarchy is represented as a *lion* with eagle's wings, the Medo-Persian as a *bear*, the Macedonian or Grecian as a *leopard*, and the Roman as a great mongrel monster partaking of no special likeness, but developing ten horns, figures of the Ten Kingdoms, which are to dominate the western Latin world in the future day. Thus Daniel's anointed eyes can only see in these kingdoms instruments of wickedness, violence, and cruelty. In chapter VIII., Daniel's second vision portrays the second or Medo-Persian, and the third or Grecian monarchies in their struggle for mastery. In the ram with two horns, we find the former dual monarchy pushing west, north, and south (verse 4), none able to control it, but at last the rough goat, Greece or Macedonia, with a notable horn between its eyes (verse 5), representing Alexander the Great, its first king (verse 21), destroys the Medo-Persian Kingdom. The Grecian monarchy itself then breaks into four parts (verse 22), for the short-lived empire of Alexander the Great was divided among four of his generals.

These great revelations had a withering effect on Daniel. His physical endurance was tested to the

utmost, so that he fainted and became sick for certain days (verse 27). The king of "fierce countenance," who arose out of one of these kingdoms (verse 23), is Antiochus Epiphanes, who overran the pleasant land (Palestine), and persecuted the Jews. He is typical of a greater Roman potentate, who shall yet grasp that land and crush the Jew of the latter days—the first Beast of the Book of Revelation (chapter IX.).

The Seventy Weeks.

We shall now briefly comment on chapter IX., which is one of the most important passages in the Word of God. Daniel turns to "*books*" to ascertain how long the captivity of the Jews should continue, and having learned from Jeremiah xxv. II-14, and xxix. 10, that the period would extend to seventy years, he once more pours out his soul in confession to God concerning their state, and in supplication for their speedy restoration to their land. While he is making his supplication, the angel Gabriel, is deputed to instruct him in the truth, and give him skill and understanding in the apprehension of the purposes of God, concerning His people and their latter end.

Seventy weeks were determined upon Daniel's people, and upon the holy city, Jerusalem,

"to finish transgression, make an end of sin,
"make an atonement for iniquity, bring in
"everlasting righteousness, seal up the vision
"and the prophet, and anoint the most holy."

Thus we have before us the problem to solve, how was it possible in seventy weeks from a certain date for all these events to take place? Manifestly they were not literal weeks of seven days.

The strict meaning of the word "week" is "something divided into," or seven parts—a septad, a heptad, or heptomad, thus pointing to 70 periods of years, or weeks of years, so that when Daniel prayed about years he had a reply in period of years, or seventy times seven, or 490 years. The Hebrew mind ever referred to sevens, the sabbaths, the jubilees, etc. The verses following tell us that from the going forth of the commandment to restore or rebuild Jerusalem, until Messiah was cut off, shall be seven weeks and three score and two weeks, or in all 69 weeks, or 483 years, leaving one week still to be accounted for. We find the commandment to rebuild Jerusalem was according to Ezra i. 2, given by Cyrus in the first year of his reign, so that we count the 483 years from that event. Not only did God put it into the heart of this heathen king to rebuild the city, but the king himself was strengthened in his work by having Isaiah's prophecy before him, "Cyrus . . . shall build our city" (Isa. xlv. 13). As our Lord was crucified A.D.* 29, we deduct these 29 years from the 483 years, and fix B.C. 454 as the date of Cyrus commandment. In dealing with chapter xi., we shall be able to record the events that occurred during these 483 years, but in the meantime we shall complete our survey of this chapter. The 26th verse tells us that "Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself." His death was to be vicarious for others as a sacrifice. Then it proceeds and informs us that

"the people of the Prince that shall come, shall
"destroy the city and the sanctuary, and the

*It is well known to students of Scripture, that our Lord was born B.C. 4. In other words, the Christian Era as reckoned, did not begin till He was 4 years old.

“end shall be with a flood, and unto the end of
“the war desolations are determined.”

The Coming Prince.

The people that destroyed Jerusalem were the Romans, but “the Prince that shall come” points us forward to a coming Roman Prince, who shall appear in a future day, and during the unaccounted for week, or seven years of Israel’s history, enter into a covenant with them for that period. The break which has occurred shews that God halts in connection with the history of his ancient people and that from the death of our Lord Jesus Christ until the period of this verse, there is a gap, during which other things are being transacted. This leads us to explain that the gap covers the present period, or *Times of the Gentiles*, during which God is dealing in grace with the nations, and proclaiming the Gospel of that grace to outcast, lost sinners, and in loving entreaties offering them salvation from coming judgment, through faith in the work and person of the Lord Jesus Christ. We cannot pass on, dear reader, without appealing to you, if still a stranger to His grace, to come within the shadow of the Cross, to cast yourself as a lost sinner at His feet, and trust Him and His blood alone for salvation. The day of grace still runs its course. The longsuffering of God is working salvation to many. But this interlude or gap must come to an end, when the last week of Israel’s history shall once more be taken up. Do not delay, but come while mercy’s door still stands open, for judgment looms in the near future.

We read in verse 27 that he, the coming potentate, or Emperor, who makes the covenant with Israel for

one week, breaks it in the midst of the week or at the end of $3\frac{1}{2}$ years, stops Jewish worship in the Temple, and the offering up of the daily oblation or sacrifice.

This covenant assumes that the Jew has been restored to his land under the protection of the great Roman power, his Temple rebuilt, his worship established, an autonomous state formed with Antichrist, a Jew at its head as King and Priest, the false prophet or second beast of Rev. xiii.

The latter part of the verse has caused much trouble to translators, but should read "because, or on account of, the wing of the abomination (idolatry), there shall be a desolator, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate:" in other words, because of the overspreading of idolatry there shall come a desolator (the Assyrian, or King of the North), the overflowing scourge (Isa. xxviii. 18), who shall desolate Jerusalem. The Jews are the desolated (Isa. lxii. 4). That is to say, while the great Roman power makes a covenant with the Jews to support them in their land and then breaks it, a northern power attempts to desolate that land. Thus we are directed to the future oppression of Israel by a new or revived Roman power, and a northern Russian confederacy (Ezek. xxxviii. and xxxix).

We now come to the 10th chapter, and to Daniel's third or last vision as contained in the 11th and 12th chapters.

Daniel is once more plunged into distress. For three weeks he fasts, and pours out his soul in confession and supplication to God. He is beside the great river, Hiddekel, which carries us back in thought to the Paradise of God (Gen. ii. 14), and

there comes to him not now an angel, but One we can recognise as the Son of God, in His resplendent glory, the same who in later days appeared to John in Patmos, and thus from the Son of God Himself he receives a revelation of deepest interest, telling him of all that was to befall his "people in the latter days, for the vision is for many days," until their complete deliverance and blessing are accomplished. In chapter x. 1, we have the date of all these visions given as the third year of Cyrus, King of Persia (B.C. 451). Following the proclamation of Cyrus, to rebuild Jerusalem, Ezra i. 1-3, we have his gift to Sheshbazzar (Zerubbabel), of the vessels of the Lord's House, which Nebuchadnezzar had removed from Jerusalem (Ezra i. 7-14). The captives, to the number of 42,360, having returned to the land under Zerubbabel and others (Ezra ch. ii.), the work was started by the building of the altar (ch. iii. 2), the keeping of the feast of tabernacles (v. 4), and the gathering together of the material (v. 7). In the second year of his reign (B.C. 453), the work was begun (v. 8), and the builders started to lay the foundations of the Lord's House (v. 10). But the Samaritan adversaries then arose (Ezra iv. 4 and 5), complained to Cambyses (Ahasuerus), the successor of Cyrus (Ezra iv. 6), and continued their opposition until the 24th day of the second year of Darius Hystaspes (Ezra v. 2, Haggai i. 15, B.C. 438), when the foundations were laid by Zerubbabel, who was also destined by the Lord to finish it (Zech. iv. 9 and 10).

In the meantime, Daniel's prophecy given in the third year of Cyrus (451 B.C.), was being literally fulfilled, so that while all in this chapter XI. was future when Daniel uttered the prophecy, we can

now trace its fulfilment up to the 35th verse, with remarkable precision in profane history. Further, it is worthy of note, that while no King is mentioned by name, yet by reference to other Scriptures and to the labours of historians, we can trace every person and act recorded, finding that the points which the Spirit of God has presented prophetically, were brought out actually in their circumstances, lives, and reigns. The record, though continuous and chronological, is not complete, but only takes up the history of the nations in their relation to the Lord's chosen earthly people, the Jews.

Dry, indeed, may be the details, but these very details are potential in proving not only the verbal inspiration of Scripture, but that we have before us a revelation from God, recording with minute detail the events that afterwards occurred.

Prophecy Fulfilled.

Verse 2:

“Behold there shall stand up yet (*i.e.* after the “issue of the decree to build Jerusalem) three “kings in Persia, and the fourth shall be far “richer than they all.”

The three kings were: Cambyses, or the Ahasuerus, of Ezra iv. 6, who began to reign B.C. 447. (2) Pseudo Smerdis, the Artaxerxes of Ezra iv. 7-13, a usurper who seized the throne while Cambyses was in Egypt (B.C. 440). He reigned only seven months, and was succeeded by (3) Darius Hystaspes, the Darius of Ezra iv. 5-14, v. 5 and 6, vi. 1, 12, 14, 15, the Artaxerxes of Ezra vi. 14, vii. 1-26; Neh. ii. 1, v. 14, xiii. 6, and the Ahasuerus of the Book of Esther. He began to reign B.C. 439.

In the third year of the reign of Darius Hystaspes (Ahasuerus) B.C. 437, he made a great feast and deposed Vashti, his Queen (Esther i. 1-5). In his fourth year (B.C. 436), there was an inquiry made by the prophet Zechariah (Zech. vii. 1) concerning fasting, and the nation was exhorted to seek Jehovah and assured that their fasts would be turned into feasts (Zech. viii. 19). In his fifth year (B.C. 435), through his great conquests he became known as the Artaxerxes of Ezra vi. 14 and 15), when through the prophecies of Haggai and Zechariah the people prospered, and the building of the Lord's House was finished in the sixth year of his reign. In his seventh year (B.C. 433), Esther is made queen, and her great feast is held, followed by the events recorded from Ezra vii. 8 to the end of that historical book.

In the first month of the 12th year of Darius' reign (B.C. 428), Haman cast lots for a day to massacre the Jews, as stated in Esther iii. 6, 7. On the 18th of the month the call went forth (v. 12 and 13). On the 15th of the same month, Esther touched the golden sceptre (Esther v. 1-8). At night the king could not sleep (Esther vi. 1). On the 16th Esther's banquet was held, Haman was hanged, and Mordecai made chief in his place (Esther v. 8, vii. 2-10). On the 23rd of the third month, the scribes were summoned, and the letters were issued giving the Jews permission to attack their enemies (Esther viii. 9-14). On the 13th of the 12th month, the day when the massacre was to have taken place, the Jews slew 500 of their enemies in Shushan, and 75,000 in the provinces (ix. 1-6, 16). On the following day the Jews slew 300 in Shushan (ix. 17-27).

In the 20th year of Darius reign (420 B.C.), Hanani

reported to the king that the wall of Jerusalem was broken down, and the gates burnt with fire (Neh. i. 1), whereupon Nehemiah is sent to rebuild it (Neh. ii. 1-6). Nehemiah is appointed governor of Judah to the 32nd year of Darius' reign (Neh. v. 14), during which period the events recorded from that time to the end of the book were transacted. In the 32nd year of the reign of Darius (408 B.C.), Nehemiah returned to Babylon.

Up to this point we have sought to abide by the Scriptural chronology, based on the fact that the proclamation of Cyrus began the period of 483 years to the death of Messiah, and that profane history and chronology must follow Scripture. But at this stage the historical and prophetic books of Scripture cease to mark time, and, with the exception of Daniel xi., we have nothing of an historical and chronological record. The only chronology now available for the subsequent period is that of Ptolemy, and what we may learn from the monuments and excavations. Ptolemy's chronology has hitherto been accepted almost without question. His work was compiled many years after the events occurred, and was based chiefly on astronomical calculations gathered from eclipses. If his deductions are found to be incorrect, his whole fabric falls, and we are left to find other sources from which to draw our knowledge of the subsequent chronology. His calculations are certainly 82 years too long for the Scriptural record, so that we must fit in the events into the shorter period. His astronomy has long ago been superseded by the Copernican or Pythagorean system, which proved that the sun was the centre of the Solar system, so that we may now with safety question and reject

Ptolemy's dates, at least for the period to Xerxes' death, leaving Scripture to speak for itself regarding the subsequent events.

We have pursued to a large extent the historical outline adopted by many prophetic writers, but we have obtained much further help and light from a very able and carefully written Work, just published by Rev. Martin Anstey,* on the chronology of Scripture, in which he proves that the simple statements of Scripture are chronologically correct.

The fourth king mentioned in the verse was Xerxes, the son of Darius Hystaspes, who was immensely wealthy and powerful, so that the verse proceeds

“By his strength, through his riches, he shall
“stir up all against the realm of Grecia.”

This shews that by his accumulated wealth, and the great war which he had waged on Greece, he stirred up that nation—the third in Daniel's vision—to rise under Alexander the Great, and with great fury destroyed the Persian kingdom in the time of Darius Codomanus.

While in this verse (2), we have the fall of the Persian kingdom prophesied, the next verse records the rise of Alexander the Great.

Verse 3:

“A mighty king shall stand up, that shall rule
“with great dominion, and do according to
“his will.”

Alexander the Great, after defeating Darius Codomanus, and conquering Persia, died shortly after

**The Romance of Chronology.*

in a drunken brawl, aged only 33 years, having reigned 12 years and 8 months.

So verse 4, goes on to say that,

“when he shall stand up, his kingdom shall be broken, and shall be divided towards the four winds of heaven, and not to *his posterity* nor according to his dominions which he ruled.”

The words “stand up,” indicate the brevity of his reign.

His kingdom was divided into at least four parts, and to none of these parts did his sons succeed, for his two sons, Hercules and Alexander, were both slain. The former was murdered with his mother, Barsine, by Polysperchon, and the latter and his mother, Roxana, by the treachery of Cassander. Alexander's wife, Statira, the daughter of Darius, his mother Olympias, and her sister Cleopatra the Queen of Epirus, were all put to death within fifteen years after the death of Alexander, so that his family became extinct, and the Scriptures fulfilled. God says, “His kingdom shall be divided towards the four winds of heaven.” And so it was, for after the battle of Issus (B.C. 301), his kingdom was divided among his Generals, as we have already learned (Daniel viii. 21, 22). Further, the divisions were not ruled in the manner that he ruled his empire, for the rulers were governors, satraps, and kings. The verse therefore proceeds to say, “not according to his dominion which he ruled.” There were portions of his empire which were not controlled by his chief generals, so that the verse concludes by stating, “his kingdom shall be plucked up even for others beside those.”

From verse 5, we have the two chief divisions of

Alexander's empire dealt with, the other portions fall into obscurity so far as the Jewish nation is concerned, for these two kingdoms have only to do with that nation. These divisions were the kingdom of the north, Assyria, secured by Seleucus, and the kingdom of the south, Egypt and Syria, which fell to Ptolemy. Thereafter, the land of Palestine, which was wedged in between these kingdoms, formed their chief battlefield.

Verse 5.

“The King of the South shall be strong, and
“one of his princes.”

This refers to Ptolemy I., the son of Lagus, first satrap of Egypt, afterwards made king, and deified as Ptolemy Soter (Saviour), who was one of Alexander's Generals or “princes.” The verse, however, goes on to say,

“and he (another) shall be strong above him,
“and have dominion, his dominion shall be a
“great dominion.”

This refers to Seleucus I. Nicator, who had been appointed satrap of Babylon. Antigonus having called him to account for some act of administration, he fled for refuge in 316 B.C. to Egypt to Ptolemy “the strong.” From 315 to 312 B.C. he was a subordinate in command of Ptolemy's fleet: B.C. 312, known as the “year of the Greeks,” found Seleucus jointly leading with Ptolemy a great army against Antigonus, whom they defeated under his General Demetrius, at Gaza. Following upon this, Seleucus the “stronger,” regained his position at Babylon, and then ruled independently over the country he himself had annexed, and

which covered Babylon, Media, and the whole tract of land from the borders of Phrygia to the banks of the Indus. We then find history recording a great deal of intrigue and conflict at this period, ending in Seleucus being declared king about 305 B.C. Ptolemy, an aged man, first conjoined in the kingdom his second son, known afterwards as Ptolemy Philadelphus, while his eldest son, Ptolemy Keraunus, fled for refuge to Seleucus. Next, Magas, son of Berenike, Ptolemy's wife by a former marriage, and half-brother to Ptolemy Philadelphus, married Apame, the daughter of Antiochus (Sotor), and then sought not only to make himself king of Cyrene, of which he was only governor B.C. 308, but to obtain the throne of Egypt by joining with Antiochus Sotor, his father-in-law, whom he induced to wage war against Egypt. Ptolemy finally abdicated in favour of his second son, Ptolemy Philadelphus, in 285 B.C.

Keraunus sometime after 281 B.C. brought matters into chaos by murdering Seleucus, and grasping the throne of Macedon.* Then set in a long period of conflict, only brought to an end as stated in verse 6,

“And in the end of years, they shall join themselves together, for the King's daughter of the South shall come to the King of the North to make an agreement, but she shall not retain the power of the arm, neither shall he stand nor his arm, but she shall be given up, and they that bought her, and he that begat her, and he that strengtheneth her in these times.”

*The dates from this point are given from Ptolemy's defective *Chronology*, and are subject to correction.

This verse begins by saying, "in the end of years"—that is, after much conflict "they shall join themselves together, for the King's daughter of the South shall come to the King of the North to make an agreement." Prior to Ptolemy's abdication he secured the peace of his dominion by military exploits and defences, by his fleet and by his diplomatic negotiations, for he married three or four of his daughters into the Royal houses of Epirus, Thrace, and Macedon, and finally the agreement referred to in this verse was entered into.

While Seleucus was succeeded by his son Antiochus I. Sotor in 281 B.C., the contract referred to did not occur until the reign of his son Antiochus II. Theos (or God), who did enter into a treaty of peace with Ptolemy Philadelphus 258 B.C., and confirmed it by marrying Ptolemy's daughter Berenike, after having repudiated his wife Laodike, and declared his two sons illegitimate. Thus "the daughter of the King of the South came to the King of the North and made an agreement."

But God overrules, and the prophecy proceeds:—

"but she shall not retain the power of the
"arm, neither shall he stand nor his arm, but
"she shall be given up, and they that brought
"her, and he that begat her (more correctly
"her child'), and he that strengthened her in
"these times."

All this literally took place, for Berenike did not "retain the power," while the divorced wife, Laodike stirred up her relatives and supporters against the king, and Berenike and her retinue were all murdered. Antiochus, after the death of Ptolemy II, Philadelphus, tried to appease his divorced wife

by reinstating her in her former position, but she, still distrusting him, carried out her revenge by, it is believed, poisoning her husband, 246 B.C., and thus she opened up the succession to her son Seleucus II. Kallinikus, who was crowned in his place. Then Berenike was assassinated, as well as her attendants (they that brought her) and "her child," who had been declared heir to the throne.

Verse 7 says, "out of a branch of her roots," that is from the family of Berenike,

"shall one stand up in his estate, which shall
"come with an army, and shall enter into the
"fortress of the King of the North, and shall
"deal against them and shall prevail."

This points to her brother Ptolemy III. Euergetes (the benefactor), who, with a large army, pushed his way from Egypt through the land of Palestine, carrying desolation everywhere, in order to avenge the murder of his sister Berenike, and wipe out the dishonour heaped on Egypt. He obtained a great victory, and defeated Seleucus Kallinikus, carrying away large spoils as verse 8 records :

"and shall also carry captive into Egypt, their
"gods, with their princes, and with their pre-
"cious vessels of silver and gold, and he shall
"continue more years than the King of the
"North."

It is said that a rebellion, or more correctly, a famine in Egypt, caused Ptolemy Euergetes to hasten back with this great spoil, which is said by Jerome to have consisted of 40,000 talents of silver, and 2,500 gold and silver precious vessels and images of the gods, formerly removed from Egypt

by Cambyses. These were replaced in the heathen temples with great pomp and ceremony, and earned for him the title of benefactor. He lived four or five years longer than Seleucus Kallinicus, who was killed through a fall from his horse after going into exile (B.C. 227-226).

Verse 9:

“So the King of the South shall come into his kingdom and shall return into his own land.”

This refers to Ptolemy's return to Egypt. Seleucus then prepared a great fleet, but it was wrecked in a storm. He thereafter marched against Egypt and was defeated, and fled to Antioch, where he was killed as stated before. It is interesting to note as a further proof of the authenticity of Scripture, that after this second defeat the Cities of Smyrna and Magnesia, in Asia Minor, joined in a treaty in his defence, which they caused to be inscribed on a marble column. This column is now standing in Oxford.

Verse 10 tells us:—

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

The two sons of Seleucus Kallinicus, Alexander, known as Seleucus Sotor, nicknamed Keraunus (the Thunderer), and Antiochus the Great, gathered large armies to quell rebellions in various parts of the empire, and inflicted retribution on Egypt. Alexander, the elder, who succeeded his father, died in two years B.C. 223, it is said by poison, and was

succeeded by his brother Antiochus. Antiochus III. then pursued his war against Egypt and the Ptolemies. He took an army against King Ptolemy Philopator, who had succeeded to the throne about 222 B.C., and defeated him several times. Finally, however, Ptolemy succeeded in overthrowing Antiochus at the battle of Raphia, near Gaza, B.C. 217 with great slaughter, and after regaining lost territory put him under tribute, returning to Egypt crowned with military glory.

The latter incident, the defeat of Antiochus, we have recorded in the eleventh verse where we read:—

“the King of the South shall be moved with
 “choler, and shall come forth and fight with
 “him, even with the King of the North, and
 “he shall set forth a great multitude, but the
 “multitude shall be given into his hand.”

Verse 12 states:—

“when he hath taken away the multitude, his
 “heart shall be lifted up, and he shall cast down
 “many ten thousands, but he shall not be
 “strengthened by it.”

“The multitude,” refers to the army of the King of the North against which, Ptolemy Philopator IV. was completely successful, but, like Alexander the Great, he gave himself up to licentiousness, and when a revolt occurred in Egypt, he did not push his success but made peace with Antiochus, and so got no benefit by his victory as recorded in the words

“he shall not be strengthened by it.”

On the death of Ptolemy Philopator in 205 B.C., his infant son, Ptolemy V. Epiphanes came to the throne, at the age of four years.

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

Following his defeat at Raphia, Antiochus waged successful wars in Asia Minor, Parthia, and towards India taking parts of Arabia. Having, therefore strengthened and equipped himself for further warfare, he started afresh some 13 years after, for the recovery of Palestine, Phoenicia, and other portions of the disputed territories, with a greater force than previously.

He made various alliances to accomplish his object, and therefore we read in verse 14:—

"in those times there shall many stand up
 "against the King of the South, also the rob-
 "bers of thy people (children of the violent
 "among thy people), shall exalt themselves to
 "establish the vision (*that is, they shall prophesy*),
 "but they shall fall."

The alliance referred to, was chiefly with Philip V. of Macedonia and certain apostate Jews, who joined him in the campaign which began about 204 B.C., against the infant King Ptolemy Epiphanes.

These Jews, as Josephus remarks, gained nothing by their apostacy and adoption of heathen customs, and whether Antiochus was successful or not, they suffered alike, eventually, or as the Scriptures says "shall stumble."

Verse 15:—

"So the King of the North shall come and cast
 "up a mount, and take the most fenced cities."

This all took place when Antiochus besieged Jerusalem, and put to death the Egyptian garrison. He defeated Scopas, the Egyptian general, at Paneas, who afterwards fled to *Sidon*, a "fenced" city. Sidon was strongly fortified, and stood a long siege, but the reinforcements which were sent to the relief of the Egyptians under three different generals were met and defeated by Antiochus, and Sidon surrendered.

The latter part of the verse says :

"the armies of the South shall not withstand,
 "neither his chosen people, neither shall there
 "be any strength to withstand."

Both the Egyptians and the Jews could not withstand Antiochus. There was neither wisdom in counsel nor success in war. Therefore it is recorded in the 16th verse, "But he (Antiochus) that cometh

"against him (Ptolemy) shall do according to
 "his own will, and none shall stand before
 "him, and he shall stand in the glorious land
 "which by his hand shall be consumed."

Neither the finest troops of Egypt, nor any of the great Generals could withstand him, and he did as he pleased in Coele-Syria, Phœnicia, and the glorious land—Palestine.

The closing words of the verse have been rendered "*shall be perfected*," and point to Antiochus, who helped and bestowed favours upon his Jewish soldiers and supporters, for the land enjoyed greater benefits in his reign than it had possessed for many years.

Verse 17:—

"He shall also set his face to enter with the
 "strength of his whole kingdom and upright

“ones with him; thus shall he do, and he shall
“give him the daughter of women, corrupting
“her, but she shall not stand on his side,
“neither shall be for him.”

The Romans who were now a rising power, having been appealed to by the Egyptian Regents, twice remonstrated with Antiochus, who now thought for his own safety that he would make an alliance with Egypt, and therefore we have recorded the marriage of Cleopatra, the daughter of Antiochus, to Ptolemy Epiphanes, which he thus arranged to strengthen his hold on Egypt. The expression, “daughter of women,” refers to the fact that Cleopatra was a very young child at her betrothal, and Ptolemy was only seven years of age. The verse goes on to say,

“but she shall not stand on his side, neither be
“for him.”

It came to pass that she was a faithful wife to Ptolemy V. Epiphanes, and did not support her father, though it is stated he gave the daughter of women “corrupting her,” or, in other words, making the marriage as a snare for her husband. The young king Ptolemy V. died shortly after their marriage in 182 B.C., leaving Cleopatra with several young children. The eldest son, Ptolemy VI. Eupator, reigned as a child so shortly that he is ignored by most historians, and has only recently been recovered by Lepsius deciphering hieroglyphic and demotic texts, corroborated by Greek papyri, published by Mr. Greenfels. This reign is not noticed in Scripture. He was succeeded by his younger or twin brother called Ptolemy VII. Philometer, who was

about seven years old when he began to reign in concert with his mother Cleopatra.

In verse 18 we read:—

“after this, shall he turn his face to the Isles
“and shall take many.”

That is, Antiochus next sought to conquer Greece and the Isles of the Mediterranean. Having fitted out a fleet for that purpose, and thereafter crossing into Greece with a large army, he found himself confronted with a Grecian and Roman alliance.

Then the verse goes on to say,

“but a prince (or captain) for his own behalf
“shall cause the reproach offered by him to
“cease.”

This refers to the Romans who drove Antiochus from Greece by Consul Manius Acilius Glabrio in 191 B.C. destroyed his fleet by Aemilius and Gaius Livius, and finally defeated him at Magnesia by Lucius Scipio Asiaticus, and thus the reproach offered by him “ceased,” and was turned upon himself, as the verse states.

Verse 19 says:—

“Then he shall turn his face toward the *fort (or*
fortress) of his own land, but he shall stumble
“and fall and not be found.”

After Antiochus was defeated at Magnesia, he fled with a few followers to Sardis, and thence to Apanea and Antioch, from which place he sent ambassadors to secure peace. He agreed to pay a heavy indemnity and tribute. While attempting some months after to raise this tribute, he and a band of his soldiers, attempted to plunder the

temple of Elymaic Zeus Bel, in the Elymaean Hills, but were slain by the infuriated tribesmen, who became incensed at his act of sacrilege, (B.C. 188-7). So he "stumbled and fell, and was found no more."

Verse 20 says:—

"Then shall now stand up in his estate a
 "raiser of 'taxes,' or, as the margin puts it—
 "one that causeth an exacter to pass over 'the
 "glory of the Kingdom, but within few days
 "he shall be destroyed—neither in anger nor
 "in battle.'"

This refers to Seleucus Philopator, the eldest son of Antiochus the Great, who found his kingdom in deep financial embarrassment, and sent Heliodorus, his treasurer, to plunder the temple at Jerusalem. Heliodorus returned with his spoil, but got his master treacherously murdered (B.C. 176). So Seleucus Philopator died "neither in anger nor in battle." He only reigned twelve years, from 188 to 176 B.C.

On the death of Seleucus Philopator, Heliodorus proclaimed his youngest and infant son, Antiochus, king, setting aside his elder son, Demetrius, who was a hostage in Rome, thus expecting that he would reign as regent. On the other hand, Antiochus, the brother of Seleucus Philopator and youngest son of Antiochus the Great, who was in Athens at the time, returned to the land and secured the kingdom as hereafter recorded.

This and the following verses, 21 to 24, have been more clearly rendered by Mr. Bevan as follows:—

"And there shall arise in his (Seleucus IV.'s)
 "place a contemptible man, upon whom they

“ have not conferred royal dignity, but he shall
“ come in unawares and shall seize the king-
“ dom by guile, (22) and force shall be utterly
“ overwhelmed before him. Yea, also, the
“ Prince of the Covenant, (23) he shall practice
“ fraud, and shall rise and become strong with
“ but few men. (24) And by stealth he shall
“ assail the mightiest men of (each) province,
“ and he shall do what his fathers have not
“ done, nor the father of his fathers; spoil and
“ plunder and riches shall he scatter among
“ them, and against them and against strong-
“ holds shall he devise his devices.”

We have here from verse 21 to verse 35, the reign of the youngest son of Antiochus the Great, called Antiochus Epiphanes, or “the Splendid” as he was called by his courtiers. He was the great persecutor of the Jews, and fills up the end of the blank we have in Scripture history covering the period from the close of Malachi’s prophecies to the opening of the Gospel of Luke, a period so dark and distressing in the history of the nation of Israel, that the Spirit of God has made no record of it in Holy Scripture, beyond the glimpse our present passage affords. We are compelled to turn to Josephus and profane history to learn in detail what was being transacted. It will be observed how much the Spirit of God has to record about this person, because that which relates to the ancient people of God is ever before the Lord.

The word “vile” or contemptible in the text, truly describes this king. His name is held in execration by every Jew in every land, to this day. His follies and his brutalities are recorded by Josephus and others, who tell us of the insults and barbarities he

heaped upon the Jews and their religion. He is the same person described as the "Little Horn" in chapter VIII. which sprang out of one of the four horns of the Grecian goat. He did not get the honour of the kingdom, because the rightful heir was his elder nephew, Demetrius. The murderer of his father, Heliodorus, usurped the throne for his younger nephew, but Antiochus got it back by "flattery" and "guile."

His history is exactly described in these verses.

In person he was "contemptible," for it is recorded of him that while he loved the glories and splendours of royalty, his tastes were of the lowest character. He would, for instance, leave his palace, and with a few of his associates frequent the lowest parts of the city of Antioch, and join in all the lowest revelry. He was known, flushed with wine, to have tossed money by handfuls at midnight into the streets. In the memoirs of Ptolemy Euergetes are found stories of his eccentric doings.

"Force was therefore utterly overwhelmed before him." The passage goes on to say, "Yea, the prince of the covenant," which probably refers to the deposition of the High Priest, Onias III., called Menelaus, and the disposal of the office by purchase to Alcimus, or Iacimus, who introduced various forms of heathen worship into the Jewish ceremonies. Much of this is recorded in the Book of the Maccabees.

The passage goes on to say "He shall practice

"fraud, and shall rise and become strong with
"but few men."

While he made a league with Eumenes and Attalus "the mightiest men of the provinces," he

broke it, to enter upon an alliance with the Romans.

Verse 24:—

“and by stealth he shall *assail* the mightiest
“men of (each) province.”

He took peaceable possession of the upper and richest portions of his kingdom, through the help of Eumenes and Attalus, and the verse goes on to say that,

“he shall do what his fathers have not done,
“nor the father of his fathers, spoil and plunder and riches shall he scatter among them,
“and against strongholds shall he devise his
“devices.”

It seems he exceeded all his predecessors in the extravagance of his gifts, as stated in the First Book of Maccabees, xiv. 30.

The devising of devices against the stronghold, refers to his planning an invasion of Egypt, and the capture of her great fortresses of Alexandria, Memphis, &c.

“Even for a time” in our authorised version indicates that he did not eventually succeed, for after taking these strongholds he failed at Alexandria in 169 B.C., and was finally checked by the Romans.

While he was afraid of provoking the Romans by openly attacking Egypt, he allowed the Egyptians to gather a force against him, and then he proceeded in self-defence to gather a large army with the purpose of proceeding beyond the defensive.

He crossed the desert between Palestine and Egypt, and nearly reached the frontier fortress of Egypt, called Pelusium, where in 170—169 B.C., he

was met by the Egyptian army under Eulaeus and Lenalus, which brings us to verse 25

“He shall stir up his power and his courage
 “against the King of the South with a great
 “army, and the King of the South shall be
 “stirred up to battle with every great and
 “mighty army, but he shall not stand, for
 “they shall forecast devices against him.”

The armies met in battle, and Ptolemy Philomater the King of the South, was twice defeated. The struggle and treachery which followed, ended by Ptolemy being betrayed by his own followers. He was put on board a ship for escape to the island of Samothrace, but he was intercepted by the fleet of Antiochus and taken prisoner.

Then the Egyptians elected as king, in room of Ptolemy Philopator, his younger brother Ptolemy, called Euergetes. This afforded a pretext for Antiochus to espouse the cause of Philopator, and to proceed with his invasion of Egypt. In his first battle near Mount Casius, he put to flight the Egyptian army. He then rode among them as a deliverer holding back his own troops. He thus made an impression upon them, by which many supporters of King Ptolemy deserted him, and so came to pass, verse 26, which says:—

“Yea, they that feed of the portion of his
 “(Ptolemy’s) meat shall destroy him, and his
 “(Antiochus) army shall overflow and many
 “shall fall down slain.”

the following verse 27, says:—

“Both these king’s hearts shall be to do mis-
 “chief, and they shall speak lies at one table,

“but it shall not prosper, for yet the end shall
“be at the time appointed.”

This actually took place, for they made compacts which neither of them intended to keep, so they spoke “lies at *one* table.” The struggle finally ended by Ptolemy Philopator and Ptolemy Euergetes being declared joint Kings of Egypt, and Antiochus was left to his devices.

The Jews thereafter heard a rumour that Antiochus had been slain in Egypt, and had great exultation over it. This reaching his ears, he went against Jerusalem and sacked the city, sparing neither man, woman, or child. See the second Book of Maccabees v. 11-21.

We therefore read in the next verse, 28:

“Then shall he return into his own land with
“great riches, and his heart shall be against
“the holy covenant, and he shall do exploits
“and return to his own land.”

He returned to his own land carrying with him the treasures of the Temple.

The Jews in their desperation appealed to the Romans, who had before interfered on behalf of the Greeks, and sought their assistance in this life and death struggle with Antiochus.

During the year B.C. 168, he again led his troops into Egypt, but was met by the Romans under Caius Popilius Laenas and others, while the Roman fleet was anchored in the bay of Alexandria. Popilius demanded that Antiochus at once cease interfering with the Jews or Egypt, and drew a circle round him, calling upon him to decide before he stepped out of the ring. Whereupon he agreed,

and submitted without any intention of keeping his promise.

So it is said in verse 29, while

“at the time appointed he shall return to come
“toward the South, but it shall not be as the
“former or as the latter.”

Verse 30:—

“For the ships of Chittim shall come against
“him.”

The ships of Chittim, the Roman galleys, kept him at bay, so that he returned to his own country, but by the way he carried out his terrible persecutions of the Jews; thus we read:

“therefore he shall be grieved and return and
“have indignation against the holy covenant,
“so shall he do.”

Certain Jews became apostate and treacherous, and assisted him, so that the verse goes on to say:

“He shall even return and have intelligence
“with them that forsake his holy covenant.”

Verse 31:—

“Arms shall stand on his part, and they shall
“pollute the sanctuary of strength, and shall
“take away the daily sacrifice, and they
“shall place the abomination that maketh
“desolate.”

The first part of the verse refers to the repairing of the citadel of David, and the garrisoning of it by the troops who profaned it.

His army set up a statute of Jupiter Olympus in the Temple of Jerusalem, sacrificed a sow upon the

altar, stopped the Jewish oblation, and ordained that he alone should be the object of worship. Thus was this verse literally fulfilled, and an 'abomination' set up. The details of all this are recorded in the first chapter of the first book of the Maccabees,

Against his sacrilege and abomination, the faithful Jews rose under the leadership of the heroic family of the Maccabees, and were slaughtered in thousands.

This is referred to in verse 32, where we read:—

“And such as do wickedly against the covenant shall be corrupted by flatteries, but the people that know their God shall be strong and do exploits.”

While he corrupted and made heathens of many of the Jews, Mattathiah and others stood for the truth, and did exploits.

Verse 33:—

“and they that understand among the people shall instruct many, but they shall fall by the sword and by flame and by captivity and by spoil many days.”

It may be observed that the character of the testimony now alters, and instead of there being valiant men who did exploits like the Maccabees, there arose a new order of witnesses who understood Scripture, and sought to teach the people the meaning of those prophecies which speak of the coming Messiah and the antecedent sufferings of the people. Reference to such we find in the end of Malachi, and of that class later on there arise those of whom we have a record in the opening of

the Gospel of Luke, where we find Simon and Anna waiting for the Consolation of Israel and redemption in Jerusalem. The bulk of the people were however in apostacy, and whether we view them in the condition described in Malachi, or later on in our Lord's time, they equally bring down judgment upon themselves as recorded in this verse :

“ they shall fall by the sword, by the flame, by
“captivity, and by spoil, many days.”

Our Lord Himself, when describing the destruction of Jerusalem in Luke xxi, actually quotes this verse in the twenty-fourth verse of that chapter, and thus connects it with and brings it down to that period.

It must be kept in view that those understanding persons are strictly Jews, part of that “Holy Seed” which God declared He would ever preserve in Israel (Isaiah vi. 23). Our Lord's disciples would therefore be numbered among this company until they passed out of it at the day of Pentecost, and became members of the body of Christ and were indwelt by the Holy Ghost.

Verse 34 :—

“ now when they shall fall they shall be helpen
“with a little help, but many shall cleave to
“them with flatteries.”

“When they shall fall they shall be helpen with a little help,” probably refers to the present “Times of the Gentiles,” and to the many centuries during which the nation is rejected by God, but a faithful remnant of the Jews are sustained true to their faith, but suffer by association with the general mass of corruption which has overtaken the nation, Christendom, and the heathen world.

But verse 35 continues to speak of the faithful testimony of some, which will go on till "the time of the end," the close of the present Gentile period, so the verse says,

"and some of them of understanding shall fall,
"to try them, and to purge and to make them
"white, even to the time of the end, because it
"is yet for a time appointed."

This verse, therefore, covers the gap between the 69th and 70th week of the ninth chapter of Daniel, till the time when God shall once more begin to deal with His people in view of their future restoration to their land and the bringing in of Millennial glory.

Antiochus died at Taboe, in Persia, in the winter of 165-4.

While Antiochus the Great was succeeded by his son, Antiochus Eupator, the historical narrative suddenly breaks off, and the 36th verse, like the 26th verse of the 9th chapter, marks another interruption in the continuity of events, and abruptly introduces to our notice a mysterious king of a future day. Similar to the 9th chapter there is a hiatus to bridge, which once more points to the "Times of the Gentiles" (Luke xxi. 24), and the proclamation of the Gospel of the grace of God during this period of God's longsuffering mercy.

We learn of this "wilful" king that he shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god, as we have already stated (page 9). He is no stranger to the prophetic student, for his presence is discoverable not only throughout the Old Testament, but the New Testament discloses his Satanic origin and work. Besides being the little horn of Daniel

(vii. 8), he is the Antichrist of the first Epistle of John (ii. 18). The one who shall come in his own name of the Gospels (John iii. 43), the man of sin and son of perdition of the Epistles (2 Thess. ii. 8), and the false prophet (Rev. xix. 20), and second beast of the Apocalypse (Rev. xiii. 11).

Thus under various names and characters has God in warning love drawn our attention to one, who shall appear as king, and priest, and law-giver, controlling all who do not put themselves under the power of the Lord Jesus Christ, but form the great multitude of earth's dwellers upon whom the final judgments shall fall.

Unlike the Roman prince of the 9th chapter, this person shall be of Jewish extraction, for he shall not regard the god of his fathers, nor the desire of women (to be the mother of Messiah), but shall magnify himself above all (v. 37). He is to honour the *god of forces*, the great battalions. He is to be a military as well as an ecclesiastical personage, and to exercise power over many and divide the land (Palestine) among his supporters.

We thus see a great Jewish dignitary in the land of Israel, holding sway there, and in concert with the great Roman power of the closing verses of the 9th chapter, who will harass the Jew from without.

We now come to the 40th verse, which says: "at the time of the end," thus indicating that this king only appears at the time of the end, or the last days. He is pressed by the king of the South (Egypt), and the king of the North (Assyria), both of whom we have already heard of in this chapter, and in the prophets. The latter comes against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, horsemen, and many ships, thus shewing that the northern power

is at least both military and naval. The two kings are not acting in concert, but are only common in their malignity against the wilful king sitting in Jerusalem, and supported by the Roman power. We next read of the exploits of the king of the North, who overruns other countries, including the glorious land (Canaan). Only Edom, Moab, and Ammon, are not dealt with, probably because they have either been neutral, or have assisted him against their habitual foe, Israel.

The Spirit of God, in the closing verses of the chapter, is engaged enlightening us regarding the struggles of the king of the North in the latter day. He stretches forth his hand (v. 42), upon other countries, for he evidently goes South, and Egypt does not escape his attack.

At this stage we shall notice the struggle of the nations, outside the immediate centre of Jerusalem. Every question gravitates towards God's earthly centre, and the turmoil of the nations only brings into relief His counsels concerning the earth.

All eyes at the moment are turned towards *Russia*, and its latent military resources, and we can therefore turn to ascertain what Scripture has said in definite language concerning that great nation.

The 38th chapter of Ezekiel bears the same relation to the present moment that the prophecy of Daniel xi. bore to that period.

Verse 1,

“And the word of the Lord came unto me,
“saying (verse 2), son of man, set thy face
“against Gog (the extension), the land of Magog
“ (the expansion), the prince of Rosh (head or
“chief), Meshech (Muscovy, drawing out), and

“Tubal (Tobolsk, following forth), and prophesy against him, and say, Thus saith the Lord God (*Adonahy-Sovereign-Lord-Jehovah*). Behold, I am against thee, O Gog, prince of Rosh, Meshech and Tubal; and I will turn thee back, and put hooks in thy jaws, and I will bring thee forth, and all thine army, horses and horsemen, all of them clothed with all sorts of armour, even a great company with bucklers and shields, all of them handling swords,” etc.

Thus we have with the help of the Septuagint, the Revised Version, and Newberry's translation, a most distinct statement regarding the

Future of Russia.

God wishes us to make no mistake, so that He names that country just as we have seen that He named Cyrus in another prophesy.

In Meshech and Tubal we find two of the ancient Eastern tribes that inhabited Russia, in Europe and Asia, which gave name to the two Capitals of Moscow and Tobolsk while the third name of Rosh is derived from the Volga or Rha. The king of the North, “The little horn of Daniel” (viii. 9), and the king of the 33rd verse of that chapter, passes through the “glorious land as an overflowing scourge, or desolator;” but this invasion of Russia is later in point of time, and indicates that that nation is behind the king of the North, or Assyria, for the latter derives his power from another (verse 23). This Russian horde is very great, for they bring with them Persia, Ethiopia, and Lybia, and many people. Like as it was in the day of Senna-

cherib, so it will be in that coming day, these hosts will surround Jerusalem. But God Himself comes in, and by pestilence, and overflowing rain, and great hailstones, fire, and brimstone (verse 22), He works havoc among the oppressors, and destroys them at the moment of their expected victory. Thus the enormous hordes of the future day are directly dealt with by the Lord Himself. So great is the destruction that the birds and beasts are invited to devour the carcasses, and the nation is occupied burying the dead for seven months, and even the weapons left will supply firewood for the nation for seven years (chap. xxxviii., verses 9-13). The seven months burying is not sufficient, for at the end of that time a special staff is appointed to proceed with the work. To give one some idea of the numbers, we must turn to Rev. ix. 16, which tells us their number was 200,000,000. Here we truly have the Armageddon of the future day, when 200 millions of men have appeared in battle array in or about the land of Judah. The land has to be cleared of the great multitude of carcasses left, and we find that this shall be, for we read that

“when any seeth a man’s bone they shall set
“up a sign by it till the buriers have buried it
“in the valley of Hamongog (the expanding
“multitude). Thus shall they cleanse the land.”
(Ezek. xxxix. 14-16).

And why? Because God must clear His People’s Land from everything that defiles, before He sets up His glorious Millennial reign of righteousness and peace.

But Jehovah must go further, and the nations shall be purged of the scourge of war. He sends

a fire on Magog (the expanding power), and upon them that dwell carelessly in the Isles, so that "they shall know that I am Jehovah Elohim."

These two chapters are so full not only of historical information concerning the future doings of the Russian power and its combinations, but of Divine appeals and warnings, that we would urge upon our readers not to pass from these Scriptures without a careful and devotional study of them in the presence of the Lord, for it is there, and there only, that we can in any measure, like Daniel, arrive at the truth concerning the present solemn moment, and the dreadful scenes that shall yet throw into a shade even the lurid times in which we live.

In the 44th verse, we are told that tidings from the east and the north trouble him (the King of the North, or Syria), which would probably mean that Russia and some eastern Asiatic power had assailed him. This leads him to retrace his steps northward, and on his way he plants his tabernacle of his palace between the Mediterranean and the Dead Sea, but by some means he suddenly collapses, and none succour him. Thus this great power suddenly falls and is destroyed. It seems clear that while both the King of the North and the King of the South are hostile to the Jew, yet they are not allies, but foes of one another. The King of the North was probably supported by Russia, while the King of the South had the help of the Roman Power, which after having broken its covenant with the Jew, was free to give its support to their enemies. While Syria had the support of Russia, it gave the Roman Power the freedom of supporting Egypt. We are thus once

more faced with a struggle of the character of the early strife between the Seluci and the Ptolemies.

Before turning to the 12th chapter of Daniel we shall refer to what the New Testament says of these last days and the persons who figure at the time.

The Day of the Lord.

In 2 Thessalonians ii. we are introduced to the day of the Lord. The Apostle tells us (v. 3) that that day shall not come unless there is an apostacy first. We have seen evident tokens of this in the passages of the Old Testament we have referred to, but this Scripture distinctly tells us that this apostacy shall be succeeded by the revelation of "the man of sin, the son of Perdition." Strong and solemn words are these. A "man of sin" stands opposed to a "man of God," but a "son of Perdition" can only find its expression in one who is entirely under the power of Satan, so that he is energized by him. He then declares himself who he is (v. 4). He exalts himself above all that is called God, and sits in the Temple of God (at Jerusalem), showing himself to be God. His pretensions and claims are far beyond Rome. He asserts his own Divinity. This reminds us once more of our Lord's own words in John v., where He says, if another come in His own name, him they (the nation) shall receive. Then he tells us (v. 8) that when this wicked person is revealed, that the Lord Himself shall "consume him with the spirit of His mouth and the brightness of His coming." Thus we are brought once more face to face with the same wicked person we found in Daniel, religious and political,

a priest and a king, falsely leading his poor nation to destruction.

The Closing Scene.

We now come to the last chapter of the book in which the vision is further unfolded, to shew Jerusalem under new circumstances, which bring to light the way the Roman power of the 9th chapter, the Kings of the North and the South, and the Jewish King in Jerusalem, or Antichrist, are all brought low.

In the first verse, Michael, the great prince that stands up for the Lord's earthly people, now appears in their interest, and a time of trouble arises such as there never was since there was a nation. Of this period much is found in Scripture, but we find our Lord Himself focussing all these Scriptures in Matt. xxiv., when in graphic language He tells us of the horrors of that future day. After referring to the destruction of Jerusalem, He carries the reader on to this terrible period, and in the 21st verse He says :

*“there shall be great tribulation such as was
“not since the beginning of the world to this
“time, no, nor ever shall be,”*

so that in accepting our Lord's own words we are faced with the great suffering that shall fall upon dwellers on the earth before which atrocities in Belgium or in Bulgaria, the Massacre of St. Bartholomew, and all other horrors the world has known, fall into the shade. Our Lord closes His solemn warning by saying,

*“Heaven and earth shall pass away (v. 35), but
“my words shall not pass away.”*

In Jeremiah xxx. 4-9, we read,

“Alas! for that day is great, so that none is
“like it.”

Again, in Rev. vii., there is found a great company who have been spared, and have passed through *The Great Tribulation*. Condensing all the Scriptures that deal with this great calamity, we offer this explanation, that the Jews having refused the testimony concerning the Lord Jesus Christ, accept idolatry in three forms, the worship of the Beast, or Antichrist, in their Temple, the worship of the Image of the great Roman power, and of the Dragon, or Satan himself (2 Thess. ii. 4, and Rev. xii. 14-15). This is done in conjunction with their great ally and guardian, the Western Roman Power, but he, becoming false to them, breaks his covenant in the midst of the seven or at the end of three and a half years, and all this tribulation falls upon the idolatrous nation, for all these forces of evil come upon her.

This period is preceded by the development of the great forces we have already referred to. Of the King in Jerusalem, or the Antichrist, much is recorded both in the Old and New Testaments. Zechariah contrasts him with our Lord, the Good Shepherd, who laid down His life for the flock, and calls him the idol shepherd that leaveth the flock (Zech. xi. 16-17), and in that passage throws much light upon our chapter. In the 14th chapter of Zechariah's prophecies, He tells us that the day of the Lord cometh when He will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle, when the city shall be taken, the houses rifled, the women ravished, half the city go into captivity, and the residue of the

people preserved. Thus we see that the final struggle between Israel and the nations differs from the previous captivities in respect that when Nebuchadnezzar took them captive, he carried the whole nation into captivity. When Titus took Jerusalem he took prisoners all he did not kill, but now, when only half are dealt with, a sudden halt is called, and the next verses tells us that

“Then the Lord shall go forth and fight against
“those nations as when He fought in the day
“of battle, and His feet shall stand in that day
“upon the Mount of Olives, which is before
“Jerusalem on the East.”

And this remarkable passage goes on to tell us that the Lord my God shall come, and all the holy ones (marg.) with Him. We have now the explanation of the sudden break in Daniel xi. God Himself comes to the rescue of His people, and the forces of the nations are destroyed by Him. The spared remnant of the nation stands out now as the brightness of the firmament and as the stars for ever, having been restored to their national glory. The second verse of our chapter refers to this, and is the fulfilment of the prophecy of Ezekiel (ch. 37) and of his vision of dry bones, which are there said to be the whole House of Israel (v. II).

This enables us to revert to Daniel vii. 9-12, and there we find in Daniel's vision that the dominion is taken out of the hands of the Gentile, who like Israel has failed, and given to the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, for

“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 shall not
“be destroyed” (v. 13 and 14).

What joy this should afford to the responding heart of the saint, whose delight is in the Lord Jesus Christ and His ever abiding love. The Jew and the Gentile have alike failed, but there is One who never fails, and all God’s counsels shall be revealed in Him. Every knee shall bow to Him and acknowledge His Lordship and universal sway. So Nebuchadnezzar’s vision at the opening of the book shall come true, and the stone without hands shall become a great mountain and fill the whole earth (Daniel ii. 35).

Daniel is then told to seal up the vision until the time of the end (verse 4), so that all these things concerning the Jewish nation are hid from them till the latter day, when their literal fulfilment shall take place, and the Lord Himself shall open the seals and bring out all the Divine purposes into full exercise, for He only is able and worthy to do so (Rev. v.). If to that moment the book is sealed to Israel and the nations, from you and me these things are not obscured, for the Book of Revelation closes with the instruction, “seal *not* the sayings of the prophecy of this book for the time is at hand” (Rev. xxii. 11). The Lord in His abundant love and mercy has taken you and me into His confidence, and has called us into the fulness of His grace, told us His marvellous purpose, concerning the earth, and given us a place of unsurpassed glory and blessing with Himself. He

has destined us to occupy the highest place in heavenly scenes in the future day. He has truly taken the beggar from the dunghill, and set him among princes and make him inherit His throne of glory. (1 Samuel ii. 8).

The subject might be pursued further, but on the present occasion we close our remarks by saying that if the reader is enabled by these notes to examine the Word of God for himself, and seek blessing and guidance from the Lord in this increasingly difficult and trying hour, the object of the writer in issuing this paper will have been gained. May the Lord, indeed, make Himself more precious to our souls, and His work, His person, and His coming glory, that in which we ever delight.

While all these prophecies we have been seeking to expound are of the deepest interest to the student of Scripture, it is well to record that they relate to the earth, and to those who will take part in the earthly scenes portrayed. Yet we must remind the reader, if he is a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, and enjoys the blessedness of the man whose sins are forgiven, and to whom the Lord will not impute iniquity, that his portion and place are of a much higher character. Those who are thus consciously born again and sealed with the Holy Ghost, as the proof of the possession of Eternal Life and the earnest of future glory, have a higher and better hope. That blessed hope is to be in daily expectation to be caught up to meet the Lord in the air, and to be saved from these terrible tribulations which shall fall on all earth dwellers, for we read
“the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven
“with a shout, with the voice of the archangel,

“ and with the trump of God: and the dead in
“ Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive
“ and remain shall be caught up together with
“ them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the
“ air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.
“ Wherefore comfort one another with these
“ words ” (I Thess. iv. 16-18).

“ Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the
“ first resurrection, on such the second death
“ hath no power ” (Rev. xx. 6).

KILMARNOCK

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