

Touchstones of God's Economy

Dreams and Visions in the Book of Daniel

The dreams and visions in the book of Daniel are truly remarkable. They give us a clear outline of human history, from the beginning of human government to its end at the close of this age. They foretell the destiny of Israel, from the proclamation of the rebuilding of Jerusalem to the end of the great tribulation. They reveal the coming of the Messiah in His first and second comings, His death, and His resurrection and ascension to receive an eternal kingdom. Moreover, they portray the coming of Antichrist and his kingdom in detail so that God's chosen people may know what will take place at the end of this age and how the kingdom age will be ushered in. When these matters were revealed to Daniel, they were prophecies. Daniel lived to see the beginning of their fulfillment (Ezra 1:1; Dan. 6:28; 10:1). Two and a half millennia later, as we look back on history, we can affirm that most of the prophecies in this book have been fulfilled. Now we are close to the end of this age, at the very feet of the great image in chapter 2. Ahead of us is the kingdom of Antichrist and the coming of Christ with His saints to terminate all human government and establish His divine, eternal kingdom. The apprehension of these prophecies by God's people in the time of Daniel enlightened them and strengthened them in the face of the great distress that was to come to them (10:1; 11:32). As God's people today, it behooves us to not pass over the prophecies in this book but to thoroughly acquaint ourselves with their details. In this way we will be able to give heed to this prophetic word, as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and Christ, the morning star, rises in our hearts (2 Pet. 1:19).

The Dream of the Great Human Image in Daniel 2

Concerning the dreams and visions of this book, two dreams were given to King Nebuchadnezzar, and four visions were given to Daniel (Dan. 2:1-49; 4:1-37; 7:1—12:13). Nebuchadnezzar's first dream concerns the totality of human government throughout human history (2:1-49). The king saw a single image—a great human image, bright and frightful in appearance. Its head was of fine gold, its breast and arms were of silver, its abdomen and thighs were of bronze, its legs were of iron, and its feet were partly of iron and partly of clay. As Nebuchadnezzar watched, a stone was cut without hands, and it struck the image at its feet, crushing

them. Then the entire image was crushed. The iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, and the gold became like chaff and were carried away by the wind so that no trace of these was found. Following this, the stone that struck the image became a great mountain that filled the whole earth.

Daniel's interpretation of the image was that it represented four kingdoms. These four kingdoms are the aggregate of human government throughout history, from its beginning at Babel (Babylon) in the land of Shinar, as signified by the head of the image, to its termination in the Roman Empire, with its ten kings, signified by the ten toes (Gen. 10:8-10; 11:1-9; Dan. 2:40-44). Babel reveals that the nature of human government, from the beginning, has always been to rebel against God, exalt man, and worship idols (Gen. 11:4).¹

The head of gold signifies Nebuchadnezzar, the founder and king of Babylon (Dan. 2:37-38). His kingdom of Babylon was conquered by the Medo-Persian Empire—the breast and arms of silver (v. 39). Medo-Persia was conquered by the empire of Greece—the abdomen and thighs of bronze (v. 39). Greece in turn was conquered by the Roman Empire—the legs of iron and the feet partly of iron and partly of clay (v. 33). In the sight of God, all human government throughout history is composed of these four empires. It began with Babel, built by Nimrod, and it will end with the revived Roman Empire under Antichrist. Although the form and appearance of the Roman Empire have vanished, the culture, spirit, and essence of the Roman Empire continue to exist today. At the beginning of the great tribulation, the form and appearance of the Roman Empire will be restored under Antichrist, who will be its last Caesar (Rev. 13:1-10). The aggregate of human empires that began with Nimrod at Babel will consummate with Antichrist.

The last great empire is signified by the legs and the feet. The two legs of iron signify the eastern and western Roman Empire. Of all the four empires, Rome was the least in its glory but strongest in its autocracy. The feet and the toes of the image, partly of iron and partly of clay, signify the nations in the period after the fall of Rome and before Christ's second coming. These nations are partly autocratic (iron) and partly democratic (clay). The ten toes of

the image signify the ten kings of the revived and restored Roman Empire under Antichrist (Dan. 2:41-42; 7:7, 24; Rev. 17:10-12). Hence, the periods of history signified by the head, the breast and arms, the abdomen and thighs, and the two legs have been fulfilled, but the period signified by the ten toes is yet to be fulfilled. It will be fulfilled at the end of the present age.

The great image's destiny is to be crushed by a stone cut out without human hands. The stone is Christ, who, through His crucifixion and resurrection, was cut out by God to be a stone. To the church He is the foundation stone and the cornerstone for her building up (Isa. 28:16; Matt. 21:42). To the unbelieving Jews He is the stumbling stone (Isa. 8:14; Matt. 21:44; Rom. 9:33). To human government He is the crushing stone that will destroy it in its entirety (Matt. 21:44).

When Christ comes as the crushing stone, He will not come alone (Rev. 17:14; 19:11, 14). During the church age, the age of mystery, Christ is building up the church to be His bride as His increase and His army (Matt. 16:18; Eph. 5:25-29; John 3:29-30; Rev. 19:7-8, 11, 14). When He descends to earth in His second coming, He will come with His bridal army, the overcomers, who have been fighting the battle against God's enemy for years and who have already overcome the evil one (12:11). Antichrist will fight against God directly, and Christ will destroy him (17:14; 19:19-21).

Christ as the stone will thus crush the great human image from its toes to its head. This will be Christ's universal judgment on the aggregate of human government, from Antichrist back to Nimrod. It will end the age of human government and initiate the age of God's dominion over the entire earth in the millennium and in the new heaven and the new earth. The great mountain that the stone became signifies the eternal kingdom of God. The stone, the corporate Christ, that is, Christ with His overcoming saints, will become the great mountain that fills the whole earth, making the whole earth God's kingdom.

The increase of the stone into a great mountain also signifies the increase of Christ (John 3:29-30). The church is Christ's increase in life, but the eternal kingdom of God is Christ's increase in administration (Mark 4:26-29). Hence, "the Christ" is not only the church but also the kingdom of God (1 Cor. 12:12; Luke 17:21). As the stone, Christ is the centrality of God's move, and as the mountain, He is its universality. Hence, He is all-inclusive, the One who fills all in all (Eph. 1:23).

Nebuchadnezzar's dream of the great human image is the

controlling vision in the book of Daniel. The remaining dreams and visions of this book are governed by this image in its four parts. In chapter 4 Nebuchadnezzar had a second dream that related specifically to him, as the head of the great image. In chapter 7 Daniel had a vision of four beasts that correspond exactly to the four parts of this image, depicting the devouring nature of the Babylonian, Medo-Persian, Greek, and Roman Empires. In chapter 8 the vision of the ram and the male goat with its successors is a prophecy of the history of the second and third parts of the great image, that is, the Medo-Persian Empire and the Greek Empire. In chapter 9 Daniel received the vision of the seventy weeks, which concerns Israel during the period of the second, third, and fourth parts of the great image. In chapters 10 through 12 Daniel's vision concerns the destiny of Israel during the empire of Greece, the third part of the great image.

The Dream of the Great Tree in Daniel 4

In Daniel 4 Nebuchadnezzar dreamed of a great and strong tree, the height of which reached to heaven, the foliage of which was beautiful, and the fruit of which was abundant, but it was cut down and destroyed, leaving only a stump of roots (vv. 4-18). The stump was encircled with an iron and bronze band and left in the field to be made wet with the dew and to remain there among the beasts. This dream concerned King Nebuchadnezzar himself, and it was fulfilled when, due to his pride, he lost his kingdom in an instant. He was driven out from among men and became like a beast dwelling in the field under the dew for a period of time (vv. 29-33). When he lifted up his eyes to heaven, his reason returned, and he blessed the Most High and honored and praised the ever-living One (v. 34). By this, God taught Nebuchadnezzar to know that he was nothing and that the mighty God, who gives the kingdom of men to whomever He wills, is everything.

This dream emphasizes God's heavenly rule, one of the crucial matters in the book of Daniel. In his interpretation Daniel said to Nebuchadnezzar, "In that it was commanded that the stump of roots of the tree be left, your kingdom will be assured to you after you have come to know that the heavens do rule" (v. 26). In His economy God administrates the universe, including all the kings and the kingdoms on the earth, in order to fulfill His purpose, which is that Christ should be preeminent in all things (Col. 1:18). For Christ to be preeminent, God needs a chosen people to coordinate and cooperate with Him, as Daniel did in Daniel 10 through 12. Under the rule of the heavens, everything is working together for the good of God's elect for the purpose of making Christ preeminent (Rom. 8:28-29).

The Vision of the Four Beasts in Daniel 7

In Daniel's vision in Daniel 7, "four great beasts came up from the sea, each different from the other" (v. 3). The sea is the Mediterranean Sea, signifying the Gentile nations. The first beast was like a lion and had the wings of an eagle. It signifies Babylon, the head of the great image in chapter 2, and was the most fierce and cruel among the beasts as well as being swift. The second beast resembled a bear and signifies Medo-Persia, the breast and arms of the great image. As a bear, although it was not as strong and swift as the lion, it was still fierce and cruel. It had three ribs in its mouth between its teeth, signifying that it would devour the kingdoms of Babylon, Asia Minor, and Egypt. The third beast was like a leopard and had four wings and four heads. It corresponds to the abdomen and thighs of the great image, signifying Greece with its king, Alexander the Great. The four wings are his four generals, who divided his empire after his death into four kingdoms, signified by the four heads. The fourth beast was dreadful, frightful, and exceedingly strong. It devoured and crushed and trampled with its feet, and it had ten horns. It corresponds to the great image's legs of iron and its feet partly of iron and partly of clay, that is, the Roman Empire. Specifically, this beast signifies Antichrist, the last Caesar, who is revealed in Revelation 13:1-2.

The ten horns of this beast signify that the kingdom of Antichrist will have ten kings under him, who are signified by the ten toes of the great image (Dan. 7:24; Rev. 17:12-13).

In his vision in Daniel 7, Daniel saw two more things. First, he saw God in His universal dominion as the Ancient of Days on His throne, sitting in the court of judgment (vv. 9-10). Second, he saw the Son of Man, who is Christ: "One like a Son of Man... / And He came to the Ancient of Days... / And to Him was given dominion, glory, and a kingdom... / His dominion is an eternal dominion, which will not pass away; / And His kingdom is one that will not be destroyed" (vv. 13-14). Here Christ came in His ascension, after He had accomplished His work of redemption. In ascension Christ is now before the throne of God to receive dominion and a kingdom. After He receives this from God, He will come back to rule over the entire world (Luke 19:12, 15). In His second coming, Christ will terminate the entire human government on earth and will bring in the eternal kingdom of God (Dan. 2:34-35, 44).

In this vision Daniel, like Abraham, David, and other Old Testament prophets, did not see the mystery of the church, which had been hidden from the ages and from the generations but was revealed to the apostles and prophets in the New Testament (Col. 1:26; Eph. 3:3-11). Daniel did not realize that between Christ's first and second appearing there would be a period of time during which God would do a marvelous and mysterious work based on Christ's redemption. This work is to regenerate His redeemed people, sanctify them, renew them, transform them, and conform them to the glorious image of Christ (1 Pet. 1:3; 1 Thes. 5:23; 2 Cor. 4:16; 3:18; Rom. 8:29).

The Vision of the Ram and the Male Goat in Daniel 8

In the vision in Daniel 8, the ram corresponds to the second beast and the breast and arms of the great image. The male goat corresponds to the third beast and the abdomen and thighs of the great image. This vision foresaw that the male goat, signifying Alexander the Great, would conquer Medo-Persia and destroy it (v. 7). However, as soon as he became strong in power, he died suddenly ("the great horn was broken"), and in his place his four generals ("four conspicuous ones came up") established four kingdoms (v. 8). The vision goes on to describe how out of one of these kingdoms a little horn would come

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forth. In verse 9 this horn refers to a king who would grow great toward the south (Egypt), toward the east (Syria), and toward "that which is beautiful" (Israel). This king was fulfilled in history by Antiochus Epiphanes, who persecuted the saints, signified by the host of heaven and the stars (v. 10). He stopped the daily sacrifices in the temple and threw down, that is, defiled, God's sanctuary (v. 11). In all that is mentioned concerning this king in verses 10 to 11 and 23 through 25, he typifies the coming Antichrist (Rev. 13:5-7; 2 Thes. 2:3-4).

The Vision of the Seventy Weeks in Daniel 9

The third vision of Daniel concerns Israel (Dan. 9:1-27). According to this vision, seventy weeks are apportioned for Israel and for Jerusalem, the purpose of which is "to close the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make propitiation for iniquity, and to bring in the righteousness of the ages, and to seal up vision and prophet, and to anoint the Holy of Holies" (v. 24). Under human government in the old creation, transgressions, sins, and iniquities are prevailing. However, when Christ comes as the stone to crush

human government, these will all be ended. Moreover, there will be no more unrighteousness on the earth. All evil persons and things on earth will be swept into the lake of fire, and Satan will be bound and cast into the abyss (Matt. 13:30; 25:32-33, 41; Rev. 19:19-20; 20:1-3).

The eternal kingdom of Christ with His righteousness will begin with the one-thousand-year kingdom. During that millennium, Christ, the righteous One, will rule in righteousness (Jer. 23:5; Isa. 11:4-5). Ultimately, in the age of the ages, righteousness will dwell in the new heaven and new earth for eternity (2 Pet. 3:13).

According to Daniel 9:24, vision and prophet will be sealed up, meaning that the age of mystery will be brought to a close. This will happen at the sounding of the seventh trumpet (Rev. 10:7). Since all the mysteries of God will have been fulfilled, there will be no further need of visions or prophets. Thus, in the kingdom age there will be kings and priests but no prophets (20:6). Furthermore, the Holy of Holies will be anointed. At Daniel's time it was contaminated, defiled, and devastated (Dan. 11:31). But when the apportioned time comes, the Holy of Holies will be properly anointed, and the service to God will be recovered (12:11-12).

The seventy weeks are divided into three parts, the first two of which are set forth in 9:25: "Know therefore and comprehend: From the issuing of the decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until the time of Messiah the Prince will be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks." In this vision each week represents seven years. The first part of seven weeks, that is, forty-nine years, was apportioned from the issuing of the decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem to the completion of the rebuilding. The second part, sixty-two weeks, that is, four hundred thirty-four years, was apportioned from then to the cutting off of Messiah. Verse 26 says, "And after the sixty-two weeks Messiah will be cut off and will have nothing." This refers to the crucifixion of Christ. Verse 26 continues, "And the people of the prince who will come will destroy the city and the sanctuary." *The prince* here refers to Titus, the prince of the Roman Empire, who came with his army in A.D. 70 to destroy the city of Jerusalem and the temple, as the Lord Jesus prophesied in Matthew 24:2. The third part is the seventieth week spoken of in Daniel 9:27: "And he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week." This "one week" refers to the last seven years of the present age, when Antichrist, who is typified by Titus, will make a firm covenant of peace with Israel. Verse 27 continues, "And in the middle of the week he will cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease and will replace the sacrifice and the oblation with abominations of the desolator, even until the complete destruction that has been determined is poured out upon the desolator." In the middle of the week, Antichrist will break his covenant with Israel and cause the daily

sacrifice and oblation to cease. This will be the beginning of the great tribulation, which will last for three and a half years, the second half of the last week, during which Antichrist will persecute both the faithful Jews and the Christians still on earth (Matt. 24:21; Dan. 7:25; 12:7; Rev. 11:2-3; 12:6, 14; 13:5). He will set up his idols in the temple, the abominations of the desolator, and they will remain there until Christ comes and pours out upon him the complete destruction that has been determined for him (Dan. 12:11; Matt. 24:15; Rev. 13:14-15; 2 Thes. 2:4; Dan. 2:34-35; 2 Thes. 2:8; Rev. 17:14; 19:20).

There is a gap of unknown duration between the sixtieth week and the seventieth week. This gap is the age of mystery, the existence of which, as we have seen, was not revealed to Daniel or the other Old Testament saints and prophets. It is the age of grace, the age of the church, during which Christ is doing the secret and mysterious work of building up the church in the new creation to be His Body and His bride (Eph. 3:3-11; 5:25-32; Col. 1:27; 1 Cor. 2:6-10). Once His work with the new creation is complete, the final week of seven years will begin in order to bring this age to a close. At the end of that week, after Christ has married His bride, He will come with His bridal army to destroy the kingdom of Antichrist.

The fact that the temple will be devastated and contaminated by Antichrist in the middle of the seventieth week strongly indicates that the temple, which has not been rebuilt since it was destroyed by Titus, will be rebuilt by the Jews before the completion of the seventy weeks. This will be one of the final signs that will take place before Christ's return.

The Vision of the Destiny of Israel in Daniel 10—12

In chapter 10 there is the scene in the universe, that is, the scene of the spiritual world behind the physical world, before the release of the fourth vision given to Daniel. The vision commences in 11:2, when the angelic messenger who had been sent to Daniel says, "Now I will tell you the truth." Its contents concern the destiny of Israel related first, in chapter 11, to the king of the south (Egypt) and the king of the north (Syria), spanning the period from the last part of the kingdom of Greece to the last three and a half years of the present age, and second, in chapter 12, to the last three and a half years of the present age, the kingdom age, and eternity.

The subject of this vision is the two great distresses for Israel (10:1; 12:1). The first distress came upon Israel because the king of Egypt and the king of Syria waged war against each other on Israel's land, using it as a thoroughfare to invade each other. The distress was especially acute in the war waged by Antiochus Epiphanes, the king of Syria and a descendant of one of Alexander the Great's successors. As we have seen, he is a type of Antichrist. God sent this

trial to His chosen people because they had become corrupt after their return from captivity. The second distress will come upon Israel at the consummation of the age, the last three and a half years of the present age (Matt. 28:20; Dan. 12:7; 7:25). It will be the time of the great tribulation, during which the shattering of the power of the holy people will be completed (12:7). At the end of this trial, God's "people, every one found written in the book, will be delivered," that is, saved from the hand of Antichrist (v. 1). This refers to the remnant of Israel, those who will be saved at Christ's coming and will enter the thousand-year kingdom as priests in its earthly section (Zech. 12:10-14; 14:4-5; Matt. 24:30; Rev. 1:7; Isa. 2:2-3; Zech. 8:20-23). The dead overcoming saints will be resurrected unto life and enter into the heavenly part of the kingdom as shining stars (Dan. 12:2-3), and after the millennium the dead unbelievers will be resurrected, judged, and sent into eternal punishment (v. 2). With this vision the book of Daniel concludes.

The Preeminence of Christ in the Dreams and Visions in Daniel

The dreams and visions of this book direct us to Christ, who is the centrality and universality of God's economy and move. In chapter 2 Christ is the stone cut without hands that will crush all human government represented by the great human image. In chapter 7 He is the Son of Man in ascension, who came to the Ancient of Days where He was given dominion, glory, and the eternal kingdom of God. In chapter 9 Christ is the Messiah, who is cut off at the end of the sixty-ninth week. Here Messiah being "cut off" refers to Christ's crucifixion (v. 26). On the cross He terminated the old creation, including human government in the old creation. Through His resurrection He germinated God's new creation and brought in God's eternal kingdom as the divine administration. Thus, the cutting off of the Messiah, the cross of Christ, is the centrality and universality of God's work.

Furthermore, the book of Daniel demarcates the lines of the ages. First, the crucifixion of Christ in His first appearing is the landmark that terminated the age of the old creation for the germination of the age of the new creation in Christ's resurrection. In His crucifixion Christ, the last Adam, terminated the old creation, and in His resurrection He became the life-giving Spirit who germinated all of God's people to be the new creation (2 Cor. 5:14; 1 Cor. 15:45; 1 Pet. 1:3). This new creation begins with the believers in Christ as God's sons and the members of Christ's Body (Gal. 3:26; 1 Cor. 12:27). This Body will grow and eventually consummate in the New Jerusalem (Rev. 21—22).

Second, the upcoming appearing of Christ with His overcomers as His bride is the landmark that will end the age of man's government on earth in the old creation and initiate the age of God's dominion over the entire earth in the millennium and in the new heaven and new earth for eternity. By Christ's appearing in these two aspects and by the ruling of the heavens over the entire environment on the earth, Christ, who is the centrality and universality of God's economy and move, will become the centrality and universality of God's elect, including Israel and the church.

In Daniel 10:5-6, Daniel saw a further vision of Christ: "I lifted up my eyes and I looked, and there was a certain man, clothed in linen, whose loins were girded with the fine gold of Uphaz. His body also was like beryl, His face like the appearance of lightning, His eyes like torches of fire, His arms and His feet like the gleam of polished bronze, and the sound of His words like the sound of a multitude." Here the excellent Christ appears to Daniel for his appreciation, consolation, encouragement, expectation, and stabilization.

Christ has many wonderful characteristics. The linen robe signifies that He is a Priest in His humanity, caring for His chosen people in their captivity. The girdle of gold signifies His kingship in His divinity for ruling over all the peoples. His body is like beryl, the Hebrew word for which could refer to a bluish-green or yellow precious stone; blue signifies the heavenly nature, green signifies life, and

yellow signifies the divine nature. Thus, beryl signifies His preciousness and dignity and that He is divine, full of life, and heavenly. His face being like the appearance of lightning signifies His appearing in brightness for shining over the people. His eyes being like torches of fire signifies His enlightening for searching and judging. His arms and feet being like the gleam of polished bronze signifies the gleam of His work and move. Finally, the sound of His words being like the sound of a multitude signifies His strong speaking for judging people. As a man, who is the very centrality and universality of God's move on earth for the carrying out of His economy, such a Christ is precious, valuable, complete, and perfect.

The Prophecy of Antichrist in the Visions of Daniel

Antichrist will be the last great ruler of human government, which began with Nimrod and will be destroyed by Christ at His second coming. Human government rebels against God, worships idols, and blasphemes God. Each of Daniel's visions consummates with this evil person, who becomes one with Satan in persecuting God's people and fights directly

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against Christ at His coming. Antichrist is the fourth beast and its small horn, as prophesied in 7:7-8. He is typified by Antiochus Epiphanes, the little horn from the male goat, prophesied in 8:9-12. He is also typified by Titus, the prince of the Roman Empire, after the sixty-ninth week, prophesied in 9:26. Furthermore, he is the prince who makes a covenant with Israel, as prophesied in verse 27. He is again typified by Antiochus Epiphanes, the king of the north, in 11:21-35, and he is the king at the end of the age of mystery, prophesied in 11:36-45.

Daniel's visions reveal forty-four aspects of Antichrist: he is exceedingly strong (7:7, 19); he is exceedingly dreadful (v. 7); he has teeth of iron and claws of bronze (vv. 7, 19); he devours the whole earth and treads it down (vv. 7, 19, 23); he tramples the remainder with his feet (vv. 7, 19, 23); he has ten horns (vv. 7, 20, 24); he is a small horn coming up among the ten horns (vv. 8, 20, 24-26); he has eyes like the eyes of a man (vv. 8, 20); his mouth speaks great things against the Most High (vv. 8, 20, 25); his appearance is greater than that of his companions (v. 20); he wages war with the saints and prevails against them (v. 21); he wears out the saints for three and a half years (v. 25); he attempts to change the times and the law (v. 25); his dominion will be taken away (v. 26); he will be annihilated and destroyed (v. 26); he comes out of one of the four horns of the goat, Greece (8:8-9, 21-23); he grows very great toward the south, toward the east, and toward the beautiful land (v. 9); he grows as high as the host of heaven (v. 10); he causes some of the host and the stars to fall to the earth and tramples them (v. 10); he grows in greatness to that of the Prince of the host (v. 11); he takes away the daily sacrifice (vv. 11-12); he throws down the place of the sanctuary (v. 11); he casts truth to the ground (v. 12); he takes action and prospers (vv. 12, 24); his countenance is fierce (v. 23); he is skilled in ambiguities (v. 23); his power will be mighty, but not by his own power (v. 24); he will destroy in an extraordinary manner (v. 24); he will destroy mighty men and the holy people (v. 24); he will be crafty and cause deceit to prosper (v. 25); he will destroy many who are complacently secure (v. 25); he will be broken, yet not by human hands (v. 25); he will destroy Jerusalem and the temple, as Titus did (9:26); he will make a covenant with the Jews for one week (v. 27); in the middle of the week he will cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease (v. 27); he will set up the abominations of the desolator in the temple (v. 27); complete destruction will be poured out upon him by God (v. 27); he will exalt himself and magnify himself above every god and will speak extraordinary things against the God of gods (11:36-37); he will honor the god of fortresses (v. 38); he will increase the honor of those who acknowledge him, causing them to rule over many and dividing the land to them as a reward (v. 39); he will enter the countries and overflow and pass through (v. 40); he will enter the beautiful land (v. 41); he will pitch the tents of his palace between the sea and the

beautiful, holy mountain (v. 45); and he will come to his end, and there will be no one to help him (v. 45).²

The Conclusion

The dreams and visions of this book give us a clear understanding of the destiny of Israel apportioned out by God, that is, the contents of the seventy weeks. The final verses of this book reveal the conclusion of this destiny: "From the time that the daily sacrifice is removed and the abomination that desolates is set up, there will be a thousand two hundred and ninety days. Blessed is he who waits and reaches the thousand three hundred and thirty-five days!" (12:11-12). Daniel 9:27; Revelation 11:2-3; 12:6; and 13:5 reveal that the great tribulation will last three and a half years, forty-two months, or one thousand two hundred sixty days, at the end of which Christ will fully destroy Antichrist (2 Thes. 2:8; Rev. 19:20). Therefore, these verses speak of the very first days of the next age, the kingdom age. First, thirty days will be needed to cleanse the contaminated, devastated, and defiled temple, which added to the one thousand two hundred sixty days makes one thousand two hundred ninety days. This will be carried out by the saved Jews, just as the Maccabees cleansed the temple after it had been defiled by Antiochus Epiphanes (Dan. 8:14). After this cleansing of the temple, a further forty-five days will be needed to recover the system of the worship of God with the daily sacrifices, which, when further added, makes one thousand three hundred thirty-five days. Because the restoration of the sacrifices will be a great blessing to the people of Israel (Joel 2:14), those who reach that day will indeed be blessed.

Daniel 12:13 says, "You, go your way until the end, and you will rest and rise again in your lot at the end of the days." Here God promised Daniel that he will rest and be resurrected to enjoy his portion in the kingdom age with the overcomers, who are the shining stars, the purified, cleansed, and refined ones (vv. 3, 10). Together they will continue their enjoyment of the eternal life in eternity forever.

By Jim Batten

Notes

¹This article draws extensively on the outline and footnotes by Witness Lee in the *Recovery Version of the Bible*.

²See Messages 40—43 of Witness Lee's *Life-study of Revelation*, pp. 447-487.

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