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# Current Eschatology: Militarism Superimposed Upon Daniel?

Janet Lorraine Sedgley

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CURRENT ESCHATOLOGY:  
MILITARISM SUPERIMPOSED  
UPON DANIEL?

by  
Janet Lorraine Sedgley

A paper  
submitted in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree of  
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## Chapter 1

### INTRODUCTION

The objective of this study is to look at current eschatological literature in an attempt to determine if it reads militarism back into the book of Daniel.

"Current" is defined to mean books dating from 1960 to the present, 1983. Eschatological is interpreted to mean the doctrine of Christ's second coming. It does not, for the purposes of this project, include the doctrines of death, resurrection or immortality. Militarism is defined as "predominance of the military class or prevalence of their ideals; the spirit which exalts military virtues or ideals; the policy of aggressive military preparedness."<sup>1</sup> Both the ideals and spirit of militarism appear to be summarized in the last statement, the policy of aggressive military preparedness. Thus the criterion for militarism will be any mention of aggressiveness (disposed to attack or encroach; self-assertive; pushing; enterprising) or military accoutrements (soldiers, weapons, armies or war activities).

### Research Methodology

The methodology will involve, in the order discussed, a survey of books relating to biblical interpretation and biblical or theological dictionaries and encyclopedias.

This will provide background information on prophecy, apocalyptic literature, and the interpretation of both genres.

The book of Daniel will then be analyzed, pertinent exegetical information noted, references to the New Testament noted, messianic prophecies and eschatological prophecies listed and Old Testament introductions and commentaries surveyed for useful information and opinions. All biblical references in this paper will be from the New International Version. This analysis will survey the elements, concepts and verses in the book of Daniel, include scholars' comments as to their interpretation and indicate which interpretation is chosen as a standard for this paper.

Current eschatological works will be examined for their justification and their major comments noted. Research will be concerned with the concepts such works attach to particular verses and/or conclusions they ascribe to the book of Daniel as a whole. If a pattern emerges, the concepts will be grouped into categories. These categories will be compared/contrasted with the specified verses in Daniel or with the appropriate categorical concepts of the book. Those concepts and/or categories which do not find equivalents in the book of Daniel will then be evaluated as to their militaristic nature.

Finally, conclusions will be drawn from the study, including implications of the completed study and questions which require further research.

### Justification

In current Christian circles few people are well versed in the Old Testament. As a whole, Christians know the ten commandments, remember some Bible stories from childhood and have the general impression that the God of the Old Testament was largely vindictive and angry but the God of the New Testament is merciful and gracious. Modern Christians rest their concepts of God on the New Testament and have little exposure to the Old Testament except through devotional readings in the Psalms, Sunday School Bible classes and the eschatological literature written about the Old Testament.

The "End Times" are becoming a very popular topic of discussion and the resultant impressions this discussion throws on the Old Testament can be crucial. If our concepts of the Old Testament are formed mainly by the three ways mentioned above, and if the Old Testament remains confusing and thus out-of-bounds for most people in the church today, serious attention needs to be given to what is being said in these "End Times" works.

Another Christian concern, pacifism, a topic since Christians encountered persecution in the first century, is also gaining new attention. This is particularly true in the context of nuclear war and turbulent times. Pacifism is often seen as belonging to the New Testament but not the Old Testament. Because the Old Testament is confusing and complex to most Christians, the two testaments are increasingly

seen, by most laypeople in the church, as separate and even opposing.

As awareness mounts concerning the "End Times" and its attendant upheaval, so discussion increases over the question, "Are Christians called to be peace-makers in a world of war?"

It is the intent of this paper to investigate this "eschatological avenue" into the Old Testament and examine its representation in one portion, i.e. the book of Daniel. If it is not a true representation of God's message to today's Christians, serious attention needs to be given to what is being taught to the people within the church.

### Literary Genre

The book of Daniel is an example of apocalyptic literature. Apocalyptic literature is similar to prophetic literature, which is the former's predecessor.<sup>2</sup> Despite this relationship, the two literature types have their differences. Whereas prophetic literature may include collections of proclaimed sayings, autobiographical accounts and narrative series<sup>3</sup>, apocalyptic literature is almost entirely lacking the "saying" genre. Apocalyptic authors did not write about divine utterances received in a state of ecstatic possession, nor could any of their sayings be collected.<sup>4</sup> Usually apocalyptic literature is composed entirely of biographical and autobiographical material. In the book of Daniel, c. 1-6 are biographical, while c. 7-12 are auto-

biographical.<sup>5</sup> Apocalyptic literature is most often written during times of intense persecution and suffering.<sup>6</sup>

Included within the main differences between prophetic and apocalyptic literature is the fact that the former talks about the immediate present, within which is implicated an imminent end-time. In addition, prophetic books are modest and discreet.

Old Testament writings are marked with restraint, and, as far as depictions of time and details are concerned, emphasis falls on God's judgment of Israel and the hope for renewal.

But, towards the end of the Old Testament, these hopes find expression in the imagery of apocalypticism. Apocalyptic literature thus includes promises which are intended for the writer's contemporaries, but these are preceded by long historical accounts which are intended as prophecies.

Apocalyptic authors, instead of being modest,

no doubt under the influence of much which has come into Judaism from outside, really delight in the elaboration of the visions, the "translations", and heavenly journeys, and deck them out with a wealth of cosmological, astronomical and calendar material."<sup>9</sup>

The book of Daniel contains several theological concepts. The primary witness of the book is theocentric with faith being presented as intertwined with hope. These two ingredients are seen as causing an obedient response from the participants. Finally, the book of Daniel was intended to be a guide for people of God in a crisis, especially a crisis of faith.<sup>10</sup>

### Overview of Daniel

The book of Daniel is a unique book within the Old Testament canon in that here prophetic movement interacts with apocalyptic and wisdom thought.

The book is written in two languages, a fact which raises many questions. Hebrew is the language of 1:1 thru 2:4a and 8:1 thru 12:13, while 2:4b thru 7:28 is written in Aramaic.<sup>11</sup> Because of this fact, and the differences between the two sections of the book, the unity of the book has been questioned.

The first half of the book of Daniel, c. 1-6, is clear and simple, while the last six chapters are complicated and obscure in their interpretation. The first half focuses on history and on human interest, while the second half speaks through visions and apocalyptic language. Daniel refers to himself in the third person, biographical style, at first and then switches to a first person autobiographical style.<sup>12</sup>

Although most interpreters agree on the historical focus of c. 1-6, it is the interpretation of c. 6-12 that causes division. The various interpretations are seen below:

<u>Chapter(s)</u>	<u>Time Period</u>	<u>Person or Event</u>
1-4	604-561	Reign of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon
5	556-539	Reign of Belshazar, king of Babylonia
6	522-486	Reign of Darius, king of Persia

7-12	323	Second focal point in
(liberal view)	175-164	chapter is 323 B.C.
		(period of Ptolemies
		and Seleucids)
		Primary interest in
		175-164 B.C. <sup>13</sup>

7-12	550-535 <sup>14</sup>
(traditional	
view)	

There are also those interpreters who believe that all twelve chapters were written during the second century period of Antiochus Epiphanes, 175-164 B.C.

Those who accept the liberal view criticize the traditional-conservative view, that the book was completely written in the sixth century B.C., for a number of reasons. They refute a traditional-conservative view because of the historical inaccuracies and allusions, the peculiarities of linguistic and literary usages, the theological ideas that reflect a later development (later than the sixth century), and the correspondence of some passages to Maccabean history.

In defense of their view the conservative scholars claim that historical inaccuracies have been exaggerated and misinterpreted. Modern scholarship, they claim, is reducing the number of these so-called inaccuracies. In reference to linguistic peculiarities, conservative scholars acknowledge that a few Greek words are used in the book but see this as an extremely minimal usage if the book were indeed written in the second century. Since the Greek words in the book of Daniel are those used to describe musical instruments, it is further asserted that these words could have been circulated

by traders even as early as 600 B.C. A similar argument is used to counter the challenge that the book of Daniel contains theological ideas of a later development than the sixth century B.C. Such an accusation is based on an acceptance of a unilinear evolutionary development of theological thought. If theological thought did develop in a unilinear fashion and the book of Daniel was indeed written during the Maccabean period, it is surprising that this book also contains ideas corresponding with earlier theological thought. Finally, although some passages do correspond with Maccabean history this is precisely because the book of Daniel is prophecy, not a historical writing.<sup>15</sup>

Conservative scholarship adds further credence to its claims by noting the many reflections on Babylonian and Persian culture of the sixth century.<sup>16</sup> The traditional-conservative camp believes that

As archaeology unearths additional background on the life and culture of the Near East, the tendency increases to recognize that the material of the book of Daniel does not fit the period of the Maccabees.<sup>17</sup>

The view of the book's date affects or interacts with beliefs concerning the identity of the author. Conservative scholars acknowledge the claims of the writer of Daniel, and of another canonical book, Matthew (10:23, 16:27, 19:28, 24:30, 24:31, 26:64), that Daniel was a historical person who lived during the time of the Exile (the sixth century).<sup>18</sup> Liberal scholars disagree and see this author as living in the time of Antiochus Epiphanes. Such a



man would have been connected with the Daniel of antiquity (Ezekiah 14:42, 20) whose life and character are overlaid with much legendary and fictional matter.<sup>19</sup> Some scholars have questioned whether the book was not written in two sections; the first being an Aramaic collection of legends from the third century and the second referring unmistakably to the time of Antiochus Epiphanes, in the second century.<sup>20</sup> Such views are not widely accepted.

Another consequence of our choice of dating is seen in our interpretation of the four empires presented in c. 2 and 7. The traditional-conservative viewpoint of a historical Daniel leads an interpreter to accept the visions as genuine prophecy that may be viewed eschatologically. According to this view the four empires are Babylon, Persia, Greece and Rome. A liberal viewpoint sees the four empires as Babylon, the Median Empire, Persia and Greece. Inherent in the latter view is the assumption that the only genuine prophecy was that which spoke of an imminent end.<sup>21</sup>

### Interpretation Criteria

Although other interpretations will be presented in c. 2 and 3 of this paper, the preferred interpretation will be that of the traditional-conservative camp. The author of Daniel will be understood to be a person of the sixth century B.C. and the book of Daniel will be viewed as having its complete origin in the same century.

## FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup>Webster's Collegiate Dictionary (5th ed.; Springfield; G. and C Merriam Co., 1947), p. 633.

<sup>2</sup>Otto Eissfeldt, The Old Testament: an Introduction including the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha and also the works of similar type from Qumran, trans. Peter R. Ackroyd (Great Britain: Harper and Row, 1965), p. 150.

<sup>3</sup>Eissfeldt, p. 147.

<sup>4</sup>Eissfeldt, p. 150.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid.

<sup>6</sup>Van A. Harvey, A Handbook of Theological Terms (2nd ed.; New York: The Macmillan Company, 1967), p. 25.

<sup>7</sup>Eissfeldt, p. 56.

<sup>8</sup>Harvey, p. 81.

<sup>9</sup>Eissfeldt, p. 56.

<sup>10</sup>Bernard S. Childs, Introduction to the Old Testament as Scripture (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1979), p. 621-622.

<sup>11</sup>Eissfeldt, p. 576.

<sup>12</sup>John Joseph Owner, Jeremiah Daniel, ed. Clifton J. Allen, The Broadman Bible Commentary, Vol. 6 (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1971), p. 375.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid.

<sup>14</sup>Bert H. Hall, Isaiah through Malachi, ed. Charles W. Carter, The Wesleyan Bible Commentary, Vol. 3 (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1969), p. 503.

<sup>15</sup>Hall, pp. 504-5.

<sup>16</sup>Hall, p. 503.

<sup>17</sup>Hall, p. 504.

<sup>18</sup>Hall, p. 503.

<sup>19</sup>Eissfeldt, p. 523.

<sup>20</sup>Eissfeldt, p. 517-8.

<sup>21</sup>Eissfeldt, p. 520.

## Chapter 2

### DANIEL: CHAPTERS ONE TO SIX

Each of the six chapters in the first section of Daniel has a double purpose. By recording historical events, names and dates, spiritual principles are revealed to the reader.<sup>1</sup> The first chapter demonstrates how steadfast a person can be to his/her principles even during persecution.

#### Daniel: Chapter One

The "curtain" opens upon a recently victorious Nebuchadnezzar. He had just defeated Pharaoh Neco II (of Egypt), and the Assyrian-Egyptian coalition, at Carchemish. Thus, he took control of Judah in 605 B.C.<sup>2</sup> There are problems of specific chronology, as pertains to the history revealed in these verses, and to the dates assigned to certain kings. These difficulties can be accepted as resulting from a general presentation of history (versus a specific one) and from different dating methods (of the Hebrews versus the Babylonians).<sup>3</sup>

Thus v. 2 jumps to a time eight years after the setting of v. 1. At this time a revolt is ended by Nebuchadnezzar, 597 B.C. Shinar is an ancient name for the territory that came to be known as Babylon.<sup>4</sup>

As the story progresses we see Nebuchadnezzar choos-

ing men out of the ranks of the captives to be trained for places in government and administration. His training was a rigid system that required physical perfection and mental ability. Evidently Daniel and his three friends fit the qualifications.

Soon after they were chosen their names were changed. There are many possible reasons for this, including recognition of a change in status, commemoration of a specific event, honoring a person's king or God or a demonstration of the king's superiority over conquered enemies.<sup>5</sup> The last two reasons could very easily apply to the situation in Daniel especially since each of the names given the Hebrews were ones that honored the Babylonian gods. For example, Daniel became Belteshazzar or "Bel, protect his life."<sup>6</sup>

Daniel stepped into this new situation as the leader. He asked that he and his friends be allowed to eat a simple diet rather than the dainties of the king's table. This would indicate food of high quality rather than rich food. The problem with this food was that it had most likely been consecrated to the Babylonian gods as a sacrifice.<sup>7</sup> In addition, the food probably would not have been prepared according to priestly rules.<sup>8</sup>

Daniel followed his resolve by presenting a very practical plan. Although it is difficult to determine whether he talked with just the chief eunuch or also with a steward, it is obvious that the person addressed was concerned for his own life. Daniel's request was respected but

the eunuch (or steward) was concerned that Daniel and his friends would end up "in poorer condition" than the other trainees, and thus would make him look bad. This phrase is used here with the sense of a mental condition (Gen. 40:6, Proverbs 19:3, 2 Chron. 26:19) that would reveal itself in external appearances.<sup>9</sup>

When the end of their training was over the youth had been given learning (literature and understanding of a variety of books) and wisdom, or systematized information. In addition, God had given Daniel understanding of visions and dreams, which are especially related to divine things.

But that Daniel and his friends learned only the Chaldean wisdom without adopting the heathen element which was mingled with it, is evidenced from the steadfastness in the faith with which at later periods, . . . they stood aloof from all participation in idolatry. . .<sup>10</sup>

Daniel and his friends were greatly superior to the other trainees. The phrase "ten times better" (v. 20) is an idiom of extreme contrast which demonstrates this superiority.<sup>11</sup>

It is stated that Daniel continued even unto the first year of Cyrus. This may not be a declaration of the date of Daniel's death but rather may point to the year of the proclamation permitting the Jews to return to Jerusalem. This would have been approximately seventy years after Daniel was taken to Babylon.<sup>12</sup>

### Daniel: Chapter Two

Chapter two appears to witness to the superior wis-

dom of the Jews as gained from their dependence on one God. Nebuchadnezzar had a dream that greatly concerned him. The phrase "dreamed dreams" may reveal a Hebrew intensity that represents one dream with various parts.<sup>13</sup> This interpretation is unlikely.

Nebuchadnezzar called all of his wise men to him to interpret this dream. Sorcerers were omen seekers who cut and prepared herbs or who were "reciters of incantation"<sup>14</sup>. Enchanters were conjurers who practised incantations and astrologers foretold events by viewing the entrails of sacrificial animals.<sup>15</sup>

Nebuchadnezzar concealed his dream from his "counselors" because of his desire to test them<sup>16</sup>, not because he had forgotten it.<sup>17</sup>

Without some idea of the content of the dream the king's magicians were not able to interpret it. Nebuchadnezzar ordered that all the wise men be killed. Daniel and his friends were within the group that were to be punished by death. Upon hearing this indictment, Daniel consulted the captain of the king's guard (literally the chief of the slaughters) as to the reason for this edict. When Daniel heard of the king's problem, he first asked the captain to set up an appointment for him with the king and then he went to pray for understanding of the vision and an interpretation of the same.

Daniel's first prayer with his friends was an expression of his desire. He then prayed again after receiv-

ing the interpretation of the vision. This latter prayer is written in free liturgical style and contains two sections: one of praise (vv. 20-22), and one of thanksgiving (v. 23). God is praised for two attributes, His wisdom and His might.<sup>18</sup>

The dialogue between the king and Daniel was one of contrasts. The emphasis of the king's first comment to Daniel can be seen in the context of the wise men's remark, "What the king asks is too difficult. No one can reveal it to the king except the gods, and they do not live among men," (v. 11). "The king asked Daniel (also called Belteshazzar), 'Are you able to tell me what I saw in my dream and interpret it?'" (v. 26, emphasis mine). Daniel presented the contrasts between the Babylonian gods and the God of the Hebrews, and between God and humanity, when he replied that what no magicians can reveal, God Himself had revealed to King Nebuchadnezzar. Further contrast is seen between the mighty king who was unable to understand his own dream and the lowly captive who brought understanding.<sup>19</sup>

It is on this "stage" of contrasts that Daniel brought forth God's message to Nebuchadnezzar. Daniel told Nebuchadnezzar that God had made known to him what will be "in the latter days". This phrase occurs only fourteen times in the Old Testament with variations such as "the time of the end" (12:4) or "the end" (7:26).<sup>20</sup> The following comments then must refer to predictive prophecy.<sup>21</sup>

Daniel told Nebuchadnezzar what his dream was. The



image's appearance is terrible both because of its immensity and splendor and because "it represented the world-power of fearful import to the people of God."<sup>22</sup>

Several observations can be made concerning this image. The metals become inferior, but also harder, moving from head to foot. There is also both a diversity and a unity to this image.<sup>23</sup> The clay within the feet may mean several things. It may only be common earthly material<sup>24</sup> or pottery objects<sup>25</sup>. It is possible that the image here is of a highly decorated object whose strength (iron) is only an external allusion because of the clay interior.<sup>26</sup>

There is a contrast between this image, assumedly made of human hands, and the stone which smites it. "A rock was cut out, but not by human hands" (v. 34). The emphasis here is upon the directives of a higher providence.<sup>27</sup>

Before Daniel interprets this vision for the king, he addressed him in such a manner as to remind him of his derived authority. Verses 37 and 38 focus on the fact that Nebuchadnezzar's rule has been granted him by God and can be removed.<sup>28</sup> Nebuchadnezzar's reign is also equated to the image's head of gold.

The second and third kingdoms are dealt with quickly. The second empire, or the breast and arms of silver, are described as inferior to the other four. This is probably because it lacked inner unity. The Medo-Persian monarchy is most likely represented by this second kingdom.<sup>29</sup> The third kingdom is seen to rule over the entire earth.

This was accomplished in Alexander the Great's expansion of the Greek empire.<sup>30</sup> These kingdoms will be discussed further in Daniel c. 8 and 10.

The fourth empire is characterized in four basic ways:

1. it is as strong as iron (v. 40);
2. it will break into pieces (v. 40);
3. it shall be divided (v. 41-42);
4. it is a mixed realm (v. 43).

The dividedness of this kingdom is due, not to a division into several parts<sup>31</sup> but because of its internal nature of division.<sup>32</sup> Similarly the mixing of this fourth kingdom does not refer to the intermarriages of rulers but to a "combining of the different nationalities within the realm."<sup>33</sup> "The figure of mixing by seed is derived from the sowing of the field with mingled seed, and denotes all the means employed by the rulers to combine the different nationalities."<sup>34</sup>

Verse 44, and its phrase "in the days of those kings", holds the key to the interpretation of this passage. Liberal interpretations would see this phrase as referring to the Seleucid and Ptolemaic rulers (as seen in Daniel 11:5-6, 14-15).<sup>35</sup> Dispensationalists identify these kings as the ten toes of the image. The traditional-conservative view, as the view of this writer, is that these kings are the kings of the four empires presented in the image.<sup>36</sup> The stone does not crush the toes or the feet alone, but the whole image.

Following this interpretation, "the stone" of the

next verse (v. 45) can only refer to Christ's coming in the reign of Augustus Caesar.<sup>37</sup> The kingdom that is established will last forever and thus could not refer to a thousand year millenium. Instead it appears to refer to the "entire sphere of God's sovereignty over men," having its beginning in Christ's first coming and its conclusion in His second.<sup>38</sup> The earthly and the divine are seen in contrast here.

Nebuchadnezzar rejoiced that Daniel had been able to reveal to him the meaning of his dream. He rewarded Daniel and acknowledged Daniel's god as supreme, "God of gods" (v. 47). The triumphant note with which this chapter ends is a common characteristic of the first half of Daniel. "A record such as this would encourage an oppressed people to look hopefully for God to change the oppressor."<sup>39</sup>

The liberal camp would understand this passage to be "history with a prophetic flavor."<sup>40</sup> The kingdoms would be Babylon, Media, Persia, Greece and Syria-Egypt and the stone would be the hopes of Jews who looked for a messianic return and reign to defeat Antiochus Epiphanes. Dispensationalists interpret the kingdoms to be Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece and Rome, the toes to be a revived Roman Empire, and the stone to be the second coming of Christ. The traditional-conservative view accepts the four kingdoms of the dispensationalists but sees the stone as Christ's first coming.<sup>41</sup>

### Daniel: Chapter Three

Chapter three again speaks of spiritual heroism and

danger, this time focusing on Daniel's three friends. Chapter three might be called a chapter of despotism, defiance and deliverance.<sup>42</sup> King Nebuchadnezzar, perhaps in reaction to being symbolized as a head of pure gold (2:37-38), had a large statue erected. It was ninety feet high and nine feet wide and thus resembled immensity and grandeur.<sup>43</sup> Such statues were by no means commonplace. An ancient historian relates information of only two other such statues in Babylon. One was a statue of Zeus and the other a statue of a man.<sup>44</sup> The liberal interpreters observe that Antiochus Epiphanes was later to erect a huge statue at Paphre and contend that this reference to Nebuchadnezzar's statue represented the statue of Antiochus, to the second century Jews.<sup>45</sup>

Many officers of Nebuchadnezzar's realm were gathered in front of the statue to worship. This gathering included a wide variety of nationalities and languages. Music may have thus been chosen as a universally understood symbol.<sup>46</sup> Even within the instruments, an international flavor is noted: the horn and pipe are Semitic, the lyre and harp are Greek, and the trigon is of Oriental origin.<sup>47</sup> Liberal interpreters make a further connection with Antiochus by noting that the word translated as bagpipe (sumponyah) has a Greek "sister" word, symphony. Symphony was not used to relate to a musical instrument until the late Greek period (approximately the second century B.C.). At that time it was used by Polybius in reference to the

favorite instrument of Antiochus Epiphanes.<sup>48</sup> "If this passage were used to urge the fidelity of believers during the threats of Antiochus the use of the name symphony would have a direct application."<sup>49</sup>

Traditional-conservative interpreters understand that if this passage does refer to Antiochus Epiphanes, it does so only in the general context of reaction to persecution or with the awareness of Antiochus Epiphanes as a type of the antichrist. One commentary observes that Nebuchadnezzar's command

had no reference at all to the oppression of those who worshipped the God of the Jews, nor to a persecution of the Jews on account of their God. It only demanded the recognition of the national god. . . . The conduct of Nebuchadnezzar toward the Jews . . . is fundamentally different from the relation sustained by Antiochus Epiphanes toward Judaism; for he wished entirely to put an end to the Jewish form of worship.<sup>50</sup>

Because the three Hebrews would not bow to the image but stood instead when the music was played, the king's supporters came quickly before him with an accusation. Their accusation covers three points. These men were "ingrates, they serve not thy gods; and they were rebellious, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up."<sup>51</sup>

Within the account of the Hebrews' inquest and their subsequent punishment, many characteristics of a martyr legend style are found. It is customary, in such legends, for the offenders to be offered a chance to correct their error. Just so, the three men were offered a chance to make a confession, to bow to the image (vv. 14-15). Their re-

sponse to this offer is also a characteristic lack of a need to answer, and a comparison of their God to another god.<sup>52</sup> Verse 22 reveals another characteristic of martyr legends in that the accusers are often exposed to the same fate as the accused. In this instance, the king's men were killed by the flames intended for the Hebrews.<sup>53</sup> These elements, and others, build up an image of intensity which culminates in miraculous deliverance. This story, as other martyr legends, upholds the concept of courage and the promise of deliverance.

When Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego stood before Nebuchadnezzar, it is possible that he had already witnessed their devotion to a god for he asked, "What god will be able to rescue you from my hand?" (v. 15). The three Hebrew men express their faith by submitting themselves to the consequences stated in the edict.

Nebuchadnezzar reacted to such confidence with extreme anger and ordered that their punishment be as terrible as possible. This type of punishment was well known in the Near East (Gen. 38:24, Lev. 21:9, Joshua 7:15, 25, Jer. 29:22).<sup>54</sup> The number seven is often used as a picture of completeness and, in this instance, may indicate that the furnace was heated more than necessary.<sup>55</sup>

The next section of chapter three (3:24-27) emphasized the unusual. The stress of v. 24 is upon the king's astonishment in beholding the sight of three men walking around in freedom within the furnace.<sup>56</sup> What held the

king's attention, though, is the fourth person in the furnace. The king appears to have recognized this fourth person as a supernatural being.

A strong and ironic statement is made of the men's condition as they exited from the raging fire. Their deliverance was complete in that they suffered no losses due to the fire, except for the cords that held them captive.

Nebuchadnezzar was moved by this episode to do several things. He offered praise, in a form of repentance, to a god whom he had come to recognize and respect. Nebuchadnezzar was absolutely positive that this God was able to deliver those who believe in Him, but he was still unable to acknowledge Him as the sole deity. Nevertheless, Nebuchadnezzar decreed that the God of these three men be respected throughout the kingdom and he honors the men by promotions.<sup>57</sup>

Christians' reading this section of Scripture, in any age or day, would be encouraged by God's faithfulness and by the courage and devotion of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego.

#### Daniel: Chapter Four

##### 4:1-18

Chapter four is set late in Nebuchadnezzar's reign. The chapter opens with an "edict" of the king expressing his awareness of Daniel's god. Several phrases within this edict implicate Daniel as an assistant in the composition. "May you prosper greatly" (v. 1) is a traditional Jewish

statement, while v. 3 is very similar to salm 145:13.<sup>58</sup>

Some commentators, of a liberal stance, view these verses as the final verses of chapter three. As evidence, they cite the Septuagint's omission of these verses. Liberal interpreters also look to the contrast between Nebuchadnezzar, portrayed as responsive toward God in the last verses of chapter three and 4:1-3, but seen as prideful in the major part of chapter four.<sup>59</sup>

The king related an event by using the first person mode in vv. 1-18 and the third person in vv. 28-33. This story occurred during a time when peace prevailed, after Nebuchadnezzar's conquest<sup>60</sup>, in approximately 587 B.C.<sup>61</sup> Nebuchadnezzar was "flourishing" or prospering. The Aramaic word used here literally means luxuriant or fresh and is used of a flourishing tree.<sup>62</sup> This imagery fits well with the context of the chapter.

Despite this prosperity the king had a dream which troubled him. He asked all the wise men of Babylon to interpret the dream for him but none were able. Daniel was noted as having "a spirit of the holy gods" (v. 8). He was the only man present who was able to interpret the dream for the king.

The king's dream (v. 10-17) had two parts, the description of a tree and the decree of a watcher, of which the former was central. In the Old Testament and in secular writing the tree was often used as a symbol of an important person.<sup>63</sup> The image of a lofty tree which becomes prideful



is found also in Ezekiel (Ezek. 31:3-14).<sup>64</sup> The tree in Nebuchadnezzar's dream appears to have grown rapidly and become formidable.<sup>65</sup> Babylonian kings were often thought of as the father and protector of all their subjects, as the imagery of v. 12 portrays.<sup>66</sup> "Under it the beasts of the field found shelter, and the birds of the air lived in its branches; from it every creature was fed" (v. 12).

As Nebuchadnezzar related the second half of his vision, he used the pagan term "watcher" to indicate a heavenly being.<sup>67</sup> Although this term is not used elsewhere in the Old Testament, it is found in pseudepigraphical books.<sup>68</sup> The "watcher" reflected the Babylonian concept of celestial beings who mediated between the divine and human.<sup>69</sup> The watcher commanded the tree's destruction. Yet this devastation was not complete, for the stump was left "in the new grass of the field" (v. 15). A contrast was developed here between the futility of the stump and the lush growth of the grass.<sup>70</sup> The representation of man as a tree now comes to light in the equating of the stump with "him." This person is to share with the beasts both in the grass (v. 15) and in a like mind (v. 16). The term for mind is literally heart, with the implication that his intelligence will be dehumanized and the distinctions of humanity taken from him.<sup>71</sup>

This dream is to be relevant for seven times v. 16). It is not clear whether this reference is to weeks, months, or years. Most commentators agree that the period

of time is a year<sup>72</sup>, but "it should be noted that the modern obsession with time and accuracy was unknown to the Hebrew way of life and thought."<sup>73</sup>

#### 4:19-27 .

Daniel was asked to interpret the vision but initially remained silent, in his awareness of the dream's meaning. He then lamented that the dream did not apply to the king's enemies instead. Daniel identified the tree with Nebuchadnezzar in that they both become great, grew strong, had greatness, reached to the sky and had a dominion that reached to the earth's edges. Although Daniel used the pagan term "watcher," he did so to accomodate the king.<sup>74</sup> The presence of the watcher symbolized a power above the king, which Daniel identified in v. 24 and called "the Most High."<sup>75</sup>

The final statement of the king's dream (v. 17) contained the key to Daniel's interpretation: "so that the living may know that the Most High is sovereign over the kingdoms of men and gives them to anyone he wishes . . . ." (emphasis mine, v. 17). The judgment was that the king, who sought an exalted position, would be forced to a level lower than humanity. Some sort of mental aberration was implicated<sup>77</sup>, but the judgment was conditional and Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom was guaranteed to endure.<sup>78</sup> The judgment would be lifted when Nebuchadnezzar acknowledged God as ruler. Nebuchadnezzar was urged to do righteousness and show mercy, not so that judgment might be removed, but that

it might be postponed. He was not urged to do good works in order to earn salvation.<sup>79</sup>

#### 4:28-37

Verse 28 tells us that all this did happen as it was predicted. Nebuchadnezzar had not been a king concerned primarily with conquests but with building and restoring. He had renovated seventeen temples and two great walls and had built a palace with hanging gardens, one of the wonders of the world.<sup>80</sup> Nearly all of the bricks recovered in the site of Babylon have the inscription, "I am Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon."<sup>81</sup> A year after the dream found Nebuchadnezzar walking on the flat roof of the palace. Nebuchadnezzar was made prideful by surveying his kingdom, and thus God afflicted him, as He had warned.

The king's affliction is known as lycanthropy, a mental deviance in which the individual considers himself or herself an animal.<sup>82</sup>

Symbolically, man in separation from God, and relying on his own thought and strength and resources, is as a beast . . . The natural tendency of the beast is "downward" (Ecc. 3:21). As man was made in the image of God, he is only manly when he is godly.<sup>83</sup>

The appearance of this malady in Nebuchadnezzar's life causes some translation and historical problems. Those in the traditional camp feel that there is sufficient evidence for understanding such an event as having taken place in Nebuchadnezzar's life. As evidence they speak of a mention, in Eusebius, of Nebuchadnezzar's disappearance after a mo-

ment of ecstasy on his housetop and "uttering a prediction concerning a Persian mule."<sup>84</sup> The liberal camp feels that there is insufficient evidence of Nebuchadnezzar's illness. The Zumran Scrolls record Nabonidus' lycanthropy, but not Nebuchadnezzar's. One solution to this inconsistency is to realize that the central figure in history is the one that is remembered, and will often have attributed to him events that occurred to someone else. In this vein, Nabonidus is noted as the last king of Babylon, reigning from 556-539 B.C. Between his reign, and that of Nebuchadnezzar, there were five years and three unimportant kings. It is possible then, according to liberal translators, for Nabonidus' historically accurate illness to be attributed to Nebuchadnezzar.

The chapter ends on the happy note of the king's restoration and his acknowledgment of God's sovereignty. Conservative scholars assert that chapter four teaches that "God is always upon the throne and controls the mind of man as well as the reigns of history. Both health and holiness are in his hands."<sup>85</sup>

#### Daniel: Chapter Five

Chapter five opens in 539 B.C., twenty years or more after the events of chapter four.<sup>86</sup> Whereas chapter four tells us of extreme pride, chapter five looks deeper into the subject at the result of such "bold disrespect."<sup>87</sup>

Again we encounter a debate over the historicity of

this account. In the secular records Belshazzar is never addressed as king. Only Nabonidus is crowned king. Belshazzar, Nabonidus' son, was never technically granted kingship but did assume such a position. Liberal commentators do not find argument with interpreting this reference as putting emphasis on Belshazzar's arrogant self-exaltation, rather than his actual possession of a kingly crown.<sup>88</sup>

Traditional-conservative commentators, on the other hand, understand the book of Daniel to be an actual historical record in its references to persons, in its depiction of Babylonian life and in its presentation of the last days of the Babylonian Empire (with the accession of Darius). Belshazzar's kingship is explained in his ruling as vice-regent during the time when Nabonidus fought wars. The title king here could be used in a common sense.<sup>89</sup> This latter position is in concord with the writer of this paper.

#### 5:1-16

The account portrayed a banquet on the last evening before the attack of Cyrus the Persian. Cyrus' general, Gobyras, captured the city the next day by diverting the Babylonian river.<sup>90</sup> "While Belshazzar was drinking his wine" (v. 4) is a technical term for banquet but it may also infer that the wine flowed freely or that the king was intoxicated.<sup>91</sup> One commentator identifies three sins that occurred at this banquet: drunkenness, sacrilege and blasphemy.<sup>92</sup> Not only were vessels consecrated to Yahweh's worship desecrated by common use, but libations to pagan

gods were poured from them.<sup>93</sup>

In the middle of the reverie, a supernatural phenomenon appeared. A hand, literally the palm of a hand,<sup>94</sup> was seen writing a message on the wall. The text does not tell us whether this hand was disembodied or not, but its effect on Belshazzar was significant. He was terrified even without knowing the content of the words. There is an implication here that his "alarm was heightened by a bad conscience, which roused itself and filled him with dark foreboding."<sup>95</sup>

The genuineness of v. 7 is seen both in the differences between this list of "wise men" and the lists in other parts of Daniel (2:2, 4:7, 5:11), and in the fact that Belshazzar promised rewards rather than threatening punishment.<sup>96</sup>

The promises that Belshazzar made demonstrate his power. The gold chain is a symbol of distinction<sup>97</sup> and the purple is representative of royal prerogative.<sup>98</sup> Seen in the general context of this chapter an undercurrent theme may be that Belshazzar represents a self-exalted egotist who promises much but is not around long enough to carry through on his promises.<sup>99</sup>

The wise men are unable to interpret this incident but the queen mother entered to offer a suggestion. She was highly respected as is indicated by her ability to enter the king's presence without being summoned.<sup>100</sup> This queen is most likely Nebuchadnezzar's widow.<sup>101</sup> One commentator

interprets the queen as having listed three needed skills which Daniel possessed: interpreting dreams, explaining riddles and solving difficult problems (v. 12).<sup>102</sup> Another sees her offering a tribute which speaks of his person, nature, mind, position and ability.<sup>103</sup>

On the queen's recommendation, Daniel was called into the king's presence. Within this scenario we see a recurrent theme--confrontation between a heathen king and his Jewish subject.<sup>104</sup>

#### 5:17-29

Daniel's response to Belshazzar was very negative. He was reported as refusing Belshazzar's gift, although history records him as one of the three presidents during the time of Darius (See Daniel, c. 6). He also reproved Belshazzar very clearly by contrasting him with Nebuchadnezzar (vv. 18-24). His first statement explained the source of Nebuchadnezzar's power: "the Most High God gave your father Nebuchadnezzar sovereignty and greatness and glory and splendor" (v. 18). In contrast, Daniel's last statement spoke of Belshazzar's neglect of God: "But you did not honor the God who holds in his hand your life" (v. 23). Indeed, Belshazzar was less respectful and humble than one who had much more reason to boast.<sup>105</sup> Belshazzar was especially guilty because he knew the history of Nebuchadnezzar and what happened to him because of his boasting.<sup>106</sup>

The hand, then, was bringing God's judgment on this king. It was not a warning, but a sentence.<sup>107</sup> There is

some debate over the actual message concerning whether MENE was written twice. Jerome records only one but the Septuagint, Theodotion, the Vulgate and Josephus use it twice.<sup>109</sup> Literally the phrase means, "numbered, numbered, weighed and divided." MENE is repeated twice for emphasis and can also mean a mina, a monetary unit.<sup>110</sup> TEKEL represents justice, an important quality in God's accounting. PERES refers to the destruction of the Babylonian Empire rather than to any actual division.<sup>111</sup> Some commentators equate the different measures to the various successors of Nebuchadnezzar. Thus, the first MENE would represent Evil-merodach, the second Meriglissar, TEKEL would be Labashi-Marduk (valued as a shekel) and PARSIN (the dual form of PERES) represents Nabonidus and Belshazzar (valued as a half-mina each).<sup>112</sup>

The complicated writing, with its simple interpretation, supports the idea of a well-known proverb that confused the wise men in its applicability to their current situation.<sup>113</sup>

#### 5:30-31

After this translation, Daniel received his rewards and then it is recorded that Belshazzar was slain (v. 30) and the kingdom taken over by Darius (v. 31). Again, these verses have caused a historical debate, in matters of the timing and the identity of Darius.

The identity of Darius is debated because of the existence of three Persian men called Darius. There are several explanations for this confusion. One scholar,



H. H. Rowley, has attempted to refute all attempts "to identify Darius the Mede (5:3) with various figures whose name and existence are substantiated in secular records."<sup>114</sup> Other scholars understand the author of Daniel to be reviewing this historical material while removed from it by several centuries. Thus the fall of Babylon in 539 B.C. to Cyrus (a Persian king) would not stand out as separate from its fall in 520 B.C. to Darius I Hystapes.<sup>115</sup>

An attempt is also made, to reduce the confusion, by observing that in the Aramaic original verse 5:31 is actually the first verse of chapter six. Thus there would possibly be implicated a break in time between the fall of the kingdom (v. 30) and the reign of Darius (vv. 5:31-6:28).

A traditional-conservative view would maintain that there was a historical person, Darius. Interpreters accepting this view believe that there are other reasons for this discrepancy. One view is that the Median Darius was a "Gubaru whose name was discovered in the cuneiform records. This Gubaru is called 'Governor of Babylon and the District Beyond the River.'<sup>116</sup>

Chapter five can be seen to speak of God's judgment on those who commit sacrilege or of His judgment on men and nations when they are ripe with social sins, irresponsibility, "carousing and price."<sup>117</sup> Again, such a theme would be appropriate for the end times.

### Daniel: Chapter Six

In this chapter we read of the famous story of Daniel in the lions' den. We also discover, within the historical setting, a continuation of the conflict over historicity and authenticity. The controversy remains over the personage of Darius. Liberal translators continue the argument discussed above - that Darius became king in a time of revolts but that Cyrus was the original king who received the kingdom.<sup>118</sup> John C. Whitcomb defends the conservative, historical view by equating Darius with Gabaru, as is stated above. This Gabaru is not the same as Ugbaru, the general who captured Babylon. Thus, this second view sees Cyrus as the ruler of the Medo-Persian Empire and Darius the Mede as governor over the province of Babylon.<sup>119</sup>

#### 6:1-15

The government structure, of which Daniel was a part, had presidents or administrators on a second level of authority to the king. Satraps, usually understood as handling the finances, were underneath the administrators. Satrap is an Old Persian term meaning "protector of the realm." Perfects, v. 7, were entourage members of either of the first two groups.<sup>120</sup>

Daniel's excellence in performance of his duties aroused jealousy among the other two administrators. They could find no fault with his political actions and had to use his religion to accuse him. Although most likely only

two presidents came before Darius,<sup>121</sup> they deceived him by asserting that all the government officials agreed on an edict. Due to the nature of the edict it is obvious that Daniel would not have agreed to it, and thus it can be assumed that he was not consulted.

Commentators are divided in their understanding of the edict's nature. Some contend that such laws were common and that both Babylonia and Persian kings often regarded themselves as divine or at least on the same level as the deities.<sup>122</sup> Others feel that the idea of the king being the only representative of deity was not usual in Persian customs.<sup>123</sup> Whatever the king's motive, if this were a time of revolts and upheaval,<sup>124</sup> such an edict would provide for unity within the government. And, of course, it would appeal to the king's pride.

When Darius gave his approval for this edict, it became unchangeable. The irrevocability of Medo-Persian law is emphasized twice in this chapter (vv. 8 and 12) and is attested to in other parts of the Old Testament (Esther 1:19).<sup>125</sup>

Despite the edict, Daniel continued with his regular habit of prayer. He prayed in the upper chambers, which was often the place prepared for prayer, and toward Jerusalem, as was the Jewish custom at the time of the exile.<sup>126</sup> This passage is one of the several places in Daniel where his prayer habits are mentioned (2:17, 6:10, 9:3, 10:2-3, 10:12).

His enemies were watching and were quick to tell the king of his "rebellion." In their accusation they referred to Daniel as one of the exiles, rather than as an administrator. This may have been their way of stressing Daniel's disloyalty<sup>127</sup> and implicating a rupture in his relationship with Darius.<sup>128</sup> The strategy of these men may have included their awareness that if Daniel were to be killed by the lions, they would not be legally responsible for his death.<sup>129</sup>

Darius was very distressed by this turn of events but was powerless to change the edict. Although he appeared to stall, while looking for a solution, the officials were consistent in reminding him of his responsibility.

#### 6:16-28

Consequently, Daniel was thrown into the lions' den. This den was a cistern-like pit with a sash or cord drawn around the stone placed at the entrance and the king's seal set into the soft clay sealer.<sup>130</sup> Some commentators see the usage of the term "pit" here as related to its usage in Psalms where a cistern is a picture of the underworld. With this view, Daniel is pictured as being thrust into the realm of death.<sup>131</sup> While this is a possibility, little emphasis can be placed upon this symbolism.

With the stone in place and sealed, Daniel's friends were unable to rescue him or to drop food down to distract the lions.<sup>132</sup>

The night was long for Darius. He was unable to

sleep and he did not eat nor enjoy any diversions. He may not have actually refrained from eating food but may have spent the night in an attitude of "foodlessness" or hungrily. There are many interpretations as to which "diversions" he refrained from, including music, food, pleasure or his concubines.<sup>133</sup> However, in the morning, when Darius hurried to see how Daniel fared, he discovered that Daniel spent the night pleasantly and safely.

The men who had been the devisors of Daniel's martyrdom encountered death in the lions' den in his place. The fact that these men, and their families, were killed before they reached the bottom of the pit, shows that the lions had not ignored Daniel because of their satiation. Daniel had been delivered because he trusted God.<sup>134</sup>

Darius ordered his kingdom to revere the God of Daniel "along with the others whom they worship."<sup>135</sup>

### Summary

The first half of the book of Daniel is replete with object lessons about enduring persecution. Each of the chapters add their unique contributions but all speak of God's judgment, is faithfulness and the need for faithfulness on the part of believers. These are very appropriate themes for a book that describes for us some of the events and nature of the end times.

## FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup>John Joseph Owens, Jeremiah - Daniel, ed. Clifton J. Allen, The Broadman Bible Commentary, Vol. 6 (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1971), p. 386.

<sup>2</sup>Bert H. Hall, Isaiah through Malachi, ed. Charles W. Carter, The Wesleyan Bible Commentary, Vol. 3 (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1969), p. 587; Owens, p. 381.

<sup>3</sup>Owens, p. 507.

<sup>4</sup>Owens, p. 381.

<sup>5</sup>Owens, p. 382.

<sup>6</sup>Hall, p. 508.

<sup>7</sup>Hall, p. 509.

<sup>8</sup>Owens, p. 383.

<sup>9</sup>Owens, p. 384.

<sup>10</sup>C. F. Kiel, Biblical Commentary on the Book of Daniel, trans. M. G. Easton (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company), p. 82.

<sup>11</sup>Hall, p. 509.

<sup>12</sup>Owens, p. 383.

<sup>13</sup>Hall, p. 510.

<sup>14</sup>Owens, p. 386.

<sup>15</sup>Hall, p. 510.

<sup>16</sup>Owens, p. 387.

<sup>17</sup>Hall, p. 510.

<sup>18</sup>Hall, p. 512-3.

<sup>19</sup>Owens, p. 389.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid.

<sup>21</sup>Hall, p. 513.

<sup>22</sup>Kiel, p. 102.

<sup>23</sup>Kiel, p. 103; Hall, p. 514.

- <sup>24</sup>Kiel, p. 103.
- <sup>25</sup>Owens, p. 390.
- <sup>26</sup>Ibid.
- <sup>27</sup>Kiel, p. 103.
- <sup>28</sup>Kiel, p. 105; Owens, p. 391.
- <sup>29</sup>Kiel, p. 106; Hall, p. 515.
- <sup>30</sup>Hall, p. 515.
- <sup>31</sup>Kiel, p. 108.
- <sup>32</sup>Hall, p. 516.
- <sup>33</sup>Ibid.
- <sup>34</sup>Kiel, p. 109.
- <sup>35</sup>Hall, p. 516; Owens, p. 392.
- <sup>36</sup>Hall, p. 516; Owens, p. 392; Kiel, p. 110.
- <sup>37</sup>Hall, p. 516; Kiel, p. 111.
- <sup>38</sup>Hall, p. 516.
- <sup>39</sup>Owens, p. 392.
- <sup>40</sup>Hall, p. 515.
- <sup>41</sup>Ibid.
- <sup>42</sup>Hall, p. 517.
- <sup>43</sup>Owens, p. 393.
- <sup>44</sup>Ibid.
- <sup>45</sup>Ibid.
- <sup>46</sup>Hall, p. 517.
- <sup>47</sup>Owens, p. 394.
- <sup>48</sup>Ibid.
- <sup>49</sup>Ibid.
- <sup>50</sup>Kiel, p. 115-116.

- <sup>51</sup>Hall, p. 518.
- <sup>52</sup>Owens, p. 394-5.
- <sup>53</sup>Owens, p. 395.
- <sup>54</sup>Owens, p. 394.
- <sup>55</sup>Owens, p. 395.
- <sup>56</sup>Owens, p. 396; Hall, p. 520.
- <sup>57</sup>Hall, p. 520.
- <sup>58</sup>Hall, p. 521.
- <sup>59</sup>Owens, p. 397.
- <sup>60</sup>Hall, p. 522.
- <sup>61</sup>Owens, p. 397.
- <sup>62</sup>Ibid.
- <sup>63</sup>Hall, p. 522
- <sup>64</sup>Owens, p. 399.
- <sup>65</sup>Hall, p. 522.
- <sup>66</sup>Hall, p. 523.
- <sup>67</sup>Ibid.
- <sup>68</sup>Owens, p. 399.
- <sup>69</sup>Owens, p. 400.
- <sup>70</sup>Owens, p. 399.
- <sup>71</sup>Ibid.
- <sup>72</sup>Hall, p. 523.
- <sup>73</sup>Owens, p. 399
- <sup>74</sup>Hall, p. 524.
- <sup>75</sup>Owens, p. 401.
- <sup>76</sup>Ibid.
- <sup>77</sup>Hall, p. 524.



<sup>78</sup>Hall, p. 524; Owens, p. 401.

<sup>79</sup>Hall, p. 524.

<sup>80</sup>Owens, p. 462.

<sup>81</sup>Hall, p. 525.

<sup>82</sup>Ibid.

<sup>83</sup>W. E. Vine, Expository Dictionary of the Old Testament Words, ed. F. F. Bruce (New Jersey: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1978), p. 33.

<sup>84</sup>Hall, p. 525.

<sup>85</sup>Hall, p. 526.

<sup>86</sup>Ibid.

<sup>87</sup>Owens, p. 404.

<sup>88</sup>Ibid.

<sup>89</sup>Hall, p. 526.

<sup>90</sup>Ibid.

<sup>91</sup>Owens, p. 405.

<sup>92</sup>Hall, p. 526.

<sup>93</sup>Owens, p. 405.

<sup>94</sup>Ibid.

<sup>95</sup>Kiel, p. 182.

<sup>96</sup>Hall, p. 527.

<sup>97</sup>Hall, p. 528.

<sup>98</sup>Owens, p. 406.

<sup>99</sup>Ibid.

<sup>100</sup>Ibid.

<sup>101</sup>Hall, p. 527.

<sup>102</sup>Owens, p. 407.

<sup>103</sup>Hall, p. 527.

<sup>104</sup>Owens, p. 407

<sup>105</sup>Hall, p. 528.

<sup>106</sup>Ibid.

<sup>107</sup>Owens, p. 408.

<sup>108</sup>Owens, p. 409.

<sup>109</sup>Ibid.

<sup>110</sup>The Holy Bible: New International Version (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Bible Publishers, 1978), p. 954.

<sup>111</sup>Hall, p. 529.

<sup>112</sup>Owens, p. 409.

<sup>113</sup>Ibid.

<sup>114</sup>Owens, p. 411.

<sup>115</sup>Ibid.

<sup>116</sup>Roy E. Swim, Daniel, ed. A. F. Harper, Beacon Bible Commentary Vol. II, The Major Prophets (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press, 1966), p. 648.

<sup>117</sup>Hall, p. 530.

<sup>118</sup>Owens, p. 412; Hall, p. 530.

<sup>119</sup>Hall, p. 530.

<sup>120</sup>Owens, p. 413.

<sup>121</sup>Ibid.

<sup>122</sup>Hall, p. 531.

<sup>123</sup>Owens, p. 414.

<sup>124</sup>Owens, p. 413.

<sup>125</sup>Owens, p. 415.

<sup>126</sup>Ibid.

<sup>127</sup>Ibid.

<sup>128</sup>Hall, p. 532.

<sup>129</sup>Owens, p. 416.

<sup>130</sup>Hall, p. 532.

<sup>131</sup>Owens, p. 416.

<sup>132</sup>Ibid.

<sup>133</sup>Ibid.

<sup>134</sup>Ibid.

<sup>135</sup>Hall, p. 533.

## Chapter 3

### DANIEL: CHAPTERS SEVEN TO TWELVE

The second part of the book of Daniel is focused on the understanding of the visions presented. Daniel seven concludes the portion of the book that was written in Aramaic and chapter eight reverts back to the use of Hebrew. This change in language can be seen to represent a general switch from a Gentile section, concerned with bringing God's word to the emperors and empires of the Gentiles, to a focus on God's kingdom. "Thus this seventh chapter converges both perspectives, the earthly and the heavenly."<sup>1</sup> When interpreting the visions found in this section of the book of Daniel this focus, on God's kingdom (rather than on a Gentile kingdom), needs to be kept central.

#### Daniel: Chapter Seven

There are also with chapter seven strong parallels with chapter two.<sup>2</sup> Both chapters depict historical reality as pertaining to the representation of the world-power in its principal forms. Nebuchadnezzar in chapter two had just founded a world monarchy and tended to see the world powers in their grandeur. Daniel wrote the seventh chapter at a later date when the monarch was declining and opposition to God was stronger.<sup>3</sup> Thus he viewed the world powers as ravenging beasts. The use of animal symbols was not un-

common.

In patristic theology the animal kingdom was a collection of symbols of religious dogmas, which were to be held up to the religious man as models for imitation. . . No doubt this belief was further strengthened by symbolisms such as those in the Book of Daniel, where the successive Empires which dominated the Eastern world from the sixth to the second century are represented by the forms of animals.<sup>4</sup>

### 7:1-14

The general consensus is that the phrase "the four winds of heaven churning up the great sea" is to be taken symbolically. It does not refer to the Mediterranean Sea but rather to a "vast expanse of water in turmoil"<sup>5</sup> or that out of which the world power arise, i.e. the whole heathen world.<sup>6</sup> The commotion of the sea represents the "tumults of the people" of the world's nations.<sup>7</sup> The four winds are seen in two diverse ways: as heavenly powers and forces (standing in relation to the four quarters of heaven)<sup>8</sup> and as a literary type used in post Exilic literature.<sup>9</sup>

It is obvious that the four beasts represent world powers and, due to their diversity, cannot be seen as different kings of one kingdom but as different kingdoms.<sup>10</sup>

The first beast had the significance of being represented by the king of the beasts and the king of the birds, the lion and eagle respectively.<sup>11</sup> On another level, these animals give us the image of regal power and grandeur.

"Wings have always been the symbol of mind, of spirit, or of air. No more fitting symbol could be found for a rapid and

resistless element than birds of their wings."<sup>12</sup> The lion further represents strength and ferocity, the eagle, grace, swiftness and rapidity.<sup>13</sup> Not only is degradation experienced in the loss of wings<sup>14</sup> but also the loss of the power of conquering flight.<sup>15</sup> "Lifting off the ground" can be interpreted as a prideful raising up, when being prostrate on the ground is the correct human attitude.<sup>16</sup> The human mind is seen in contrast to that of a beast's nature<sup>17</sup> and is seen to represent an act of restoration.<sup>18</sup>

"Nebuchadnezzar's madness was for his kingdom the plucking off of its wings;" and as when he gave glory to the Most High his reason returned to him, then for the first time he attained to the true dignity of man, so also was his world-kingdom ennobled in him.<sup>19</sup>

The second beast is commonly assumed to represent the Medo-Persian empire. The bear is a predatory animal and second only to the lion in its strength. There is much speculation as to the meaning of the phrase "it was raised up on one of its sides" (v. 5). The image could represent preparation for attack, a sense of being unbalanced, parallelism with the ram's horn in chapter eight<sup>20</sup>, or the "doublesidedness" of this "bear" kingdom.<sup>21</sup> An interpretation of these issues affects the understanding of the kingdom represented by the bear<sup>22</sup> and this in turn affects our interpretation of the meaning of the three ribs.<sup>23</sup> Most commentaries lean toward a Medo-Persian interpretation of this bear and thus consider that most probably the ribs represent Babylon, Lydia and Egypt.<sup>24</sup> The ribs also indicate that the beast is in the act of conquering.<sup>25</sup>

The third beast, a leopard, is not as strong or kingly as the first two but shares their rapidity and is superior to them in its "springing agility."<sup>26</sup> The wings stress the concept of rapid motion<sup>27</sup>, swiftness and ability.<sup>28</sup> The use of four heads, rather than two, represents their independence from the wings and symbolizes a spreading out into the four corners of the earth. (This image is maintained in the four wings also.) If the heads represent kings, we must observe that they are contemporaneous.<sup>29</sup> If the leopard represents Persia, the four heads are four kings of this empire. If it instead symbolizes the Greek empire, the four wings are four directions and the four heads, four generals.<sup>30</sup> The traditional-conservative view supports the latter interpretation.

The fourth beast is the one that receives the most emphasis. Its differences are seen mostly in its strength and terrible destructiveness but also perhaps in its occidental nature as differing from the three preceding oriental monarchies.<sup>31</sup> Its distinctive characteristic is the terror it evokes.<sup>32</sup> Parallelism with the feet in chapter two is seen in the iron that breaks all things to pieces (c. 2) and the large iron teeth of chapter seven.

The ten horns represent ten successive kings,<sup>33</sup> present an image of unity in diversity,<sup>34</sup> echo the Old Testament image of horns as denoting armed strength, and incorporate the symbol of the number ten as comprehensive and definite totality.<sup>35</sup> A horn, as an instrument of an

animal's strength, is used as an emblem of power.<sup>36</sup>

The little horn has the eyes of a man which symbolize insight, prudence and its apposition to celestial beings.<sup>37</sup> We must be cautious with this symbol,

that the horn, verse 8, unmistakeably denotes a person, is only so far right, as things are said of the horn which are in abstracto not suitable to a kingdom, but . . . only . . . to the bearer of royal power.<sup>38</sup>

Keeping this in mind we can consider that if the fourth beast is the Seleucid Empire, the ten horns are identifiable in history and the little horn probably represents Antiochus Epiphanes.<sup>39</sup> If instead the beast is Rome, the ten horns must be symbolic and the little horn could be many people, Julius Caesar, Nero, Vespasian, Trajan, the Papacy, or the Khalifate, but it is most likely an anti-christ.<sup>40</sup> The latter view is the traditional-conservative view.

God is represented, but not described, in the symbols of v. 9 and 10. He is not an old God, but is seen as an old man, a majestic man to whom veneration is due. The elements, the seat, white clothes and hair like pure wool, can either be taken as simply heightening this composite impression<sup>41</sup> or we can view each element as a separate symbol. Individually the seat would represent an exalted position as judge and the white hair would indicate purity and venerableness.<sup>42</sup>

The fire is a common manifestation of divinity and God and is normally associated with judgment. Fire was used



as a divine symbol of nearly all nations of antiquity.<sup>43</sup> It also represents the "burning zeal" of a God who purifies.<sup>44</sup> The fiery wheels of the throne bring to mind a judgment that moves over all the earth.<sup>45</sup>

The horn, as a consummation of all that is evil in the fourth beast, is shown in contrast. His self-exalting words are belittled in his complete destruction by fire.<sup>46</sup> Fire can represent here not only destruction by God's power but also the fiery torment of those who died in sin.<sup>47</sup>

There are conflicting views of the phrase "other beasts." These are either the first three beasts that arose out of the sea or the beasts that remain after the death of the fourth beast. It is possible that each beast had its power taken away when it succumbed to the succeeding beast. The death of the fourth beast would intrinsically involve the death of the three preceding beasts and would represent the fact that "the whole world-power is brought to an end by the last judgment."<sup>48</sup>

The major confusion in vv. 13 and 14 is the identification of the "one like a son of man." One interpretation focuses on the representation of humanity as opposed to divinity and sees this "one" as a human who was "the embodiment of the principle of corporate personality." Thus this vision could have two applications, to saints as a whole and to one saint in particular.<sup>49</sup> A step closer to a Messianic understanding is seen in the interpretation that this may be a foundation for Christ's future coming. Although the "he

who appears" is a personal entity, this being is seen in the context of a coming kingdom. Nevertheless, Daniel would understand that a Messianic kingdom must necessarily include a head.<sup>50</sup> In concurrence with the traditional-conservative view, a complete Messianic interpretation identifies this "one" as Christ. "Jesus' own choice of the title 'Son of man' inevitably identifies the new king. And Jesus' proclamation of the Kingdom identifies the new dominion."<sup>51</sup>

The vision displays the "presence, power, and purity of the 'Ancient of Days'"<sup>52</sup> as seen in contrast to the beastliness and destructiveness of world powers. The stress is upon the ultimate triumph of God over such powers and the hope for Christians that is resident in God's majesty and judgment.

#### 7:15-28

Verses 17-28 disclose the interpretation Daniel receives from an angel. This messenger discusses all four beasts briefly but moves rapidly to a discussion of the fourth beast and its horns. Such attention to the fourth beast may indicate the author's desire to focus on the hope that is coming.<sup>53</sup> He intersperses descriptions about the beast's characteristics (v. 19, 20, 23, 2, 11) and actions (v. 19, 21, 25) with talk of the future and judgment against the beast (v. 22, 26-27). Several themes arise in this explanation and I will deal with these verses thematically rather than chronologically.

First, additional details are given about the

beast's appearance. It has claws of bronze and is described as a comparative large horn with eyes and a mouth. There is a play on words evident when v. 20 is seen in contrast to earlier descriptions of v. 8. "Another horn, a little one. . ." (v. 8) "that horn which had eyes and a mouth uttering great boasts, and which was larger in appearance" (v. 20). The first reference may have indicated a sarcastic mention of the personal smallness of the beast. In another contrast, the little horn of c. 8 (vv. 9-12) is not seen as equivalent to this "little horn" of c. 7.<sup>54</sup>

The discussion of the actions of the "little horn" also includes new information. His verbal boasting is enlarged to include waging war against the saints, overpowering them (v. 21), devouring the whole earth (v. 23), speaking out against the Most High and wearing down His saints, and making alterations in times and in law (v. 25). "Speaking out" against the Most High is a phrase couched in an Aramaic word that means "at the side of, against" or setting God aside.<sup>55</sup> The implication is that the beast is using evil words or blasphemy to dethrone God and set himself up as God.<sup>56</sup> The result of this "speaking out" is a "wearing down" of the saints. There is a kindred Arabic root meaning to afflict or put to a test which stimulates one commentator to think of Antiochus Epiphanes as fitting this description.<sup>57</sup> Making alterations in times and laws can be interpreted in two ways. More generally, it can be seen that the times and laws represent the foundations of

human existence that flow from God. In changing these, the horn would remove the divine order which has structured the laws of human life and would restructure them around his pleasure.<sup>58</sup> Other commentators believe this refers to Antiochus Epiphanes' orders to change many Jewish practices. He thus effected the "times" and "law" (Torah) of the Jewish faith. "He commanded them" (Jews themselves and/or their religious practices) "to become abominable by everything unclean and profane."<sup>59</sup> This latter view is not acceptable to traditional-conservative translators.

"He will . . . try to change the set times and the laws. The saints will be handed over to him for a time, times and half a time" (v. 25). The apparent theme, which reoccurs in other parts of Daniel, is that the time designation. Some commentators agree that this designation is not intended to be chronologically accurate but rather carries the meaning of time as duration in a symbolic manner.<sup>60</sup>

But whether we accept one theory or another, a study of ancient Oriental Literatures is bound to lead us to the conclusion that there are some numbers at least which occur very frequently and were never intended to be taken in their literal sense by those who made use of them<sup>61</sup>

The Hebrew word used here for "time" is not the same one as is used earlier in the verse but conveys the idea of an appointed or definite time.<sup>62</sup> It is not used in contrast to the number seven (4:13) as distinguishing a shortened time (of oppression) nor as representative of the time of God's work (as symbolized by the number seven), but rather desig-

nates a testing period.<sup>63</sup> It is also probably that "time" is used to represent a year. Thus 3-1/2 years would be indicated.

The progression of time, two times and half a time is seen by Kliefoth to represent the horn's rapid rise to power and its equally sudden end. Elerand relates that "it appears as if his [the horn's] tyranny would extend itself always the longer and longer: First a time, then the doubled time, then the fourfold. . . ." However, his plans get changed abruptly.<sup>64</sup>

Before looking at the "kingdom theme" it must be determined who is represented as the saints of the Highest One (v. 18, 22, 25) and the people of the Most High (v. 27). Hebrew parallelism is apparent here with the use of various figures to represent the same thought. The expressions "saints of the Highest One" was one used among the religious Jews of the Maccabean Period. Nevertheless, most commentators interpret the saints to be heavenly host, a righteous remnant of the Israelite community<sup>65</sup> or members of the covenant nation, the New Testament Israel."<sup>66</sup> These are not Jews of the converted Israel of the millennium.<sup>67</sup>

The kingdom theme of this chapter can be interpreted in several ways. One view does not recognize a superhuman Messiah but relates the fourth kingdom to Greece and the little horn to Antiochus Epiphanes. A common Catholic and Neo-orthodox view is that judgment is being accomplished now by "continuous encounter of men and nations with the righ-

eous Judge."<sup>68</sup> There is then no need for a focus on a final judgment. Dispensationalists and fundamentalists agree on a "parenthesis view" which counts the present age as an undefined period, a time of waiting until Christ comes again. This coming will involve a literal Israel in the land of Palestine, a political kingdom, and requires a revised Roman Empire headed by ten kings and then the anti-christ. A final view combines the kingdom as God's rule instituted by Jews and has its culmination in tribulation and judgment. Exponents of this view see Daniel c. 2 and 7 as presenting an eternal Messianic kingdom--not one of a millennium.<sup>69</sup>

Young, in defense of this last position, asserts that God is to set up His kingdom "in the days of these kings. . .indeed chapter two requires, and chapter seven allows, that these kingdoms in some sense endure until the final consummation."<sup>70</sup> Neither human existence nor social structures have vanished during this time (Daniel 7:12, Rev. 11:15, 21:24).<sup>71</sup> Such views require an interpretation of the ten horns which moves beyond the concept of a unit of only ten contemporaneous principalities to that of a symbolic round number of completeness and sufficiency.<sup>72</sup> The horns may perhaps still "designate countries [but an undetermined number] formed out of the old Roman Empire."<sup>73</sup>

### Daniel: Chapter 8

As we turn to view chapter eight we discover that it differs from the preceding chapter in many ways. Chapter

seven is written in Aramaic, focuses on cultural influences and tends to be more poetic, with an imaginative apocalyptic nature.<sup>74</sup> Conversely, chapter eight, written in Hebrew, is concrete, technically more specific and focuses on historical and political themes. "The change in the language directs the reader to the specific Jewish application of the succeeding prophecies."<sup>75</sup> The time element is presented as three and one-half years in chapter seven and as two thousand three hundred days in chapter eight. And, although the image of the "little horn" appears in both sections, the first presentation (in c. 7) views him as rising out of the fourth kingdom and making himself like a God. In c. 8 the "little horn" comes out of the third kingdom and occupies himself primarily with attacking God's people. Because of these distinctions some commentators see the little horn as representing both the antichrist and Antiochus respectively in c. 7 and c. 8.<sup>76</sup> Although such interpreters allow for Antiochus to be seen as a type of the antichrist, others go further and see the two aspects of evil as coming together in only one manifestation--the antichrist.<sup>77</sup>

#### 8:1-14

In its use of images, c. 8 uses domesticated animals, rather than wild ones. Commentators say much less about the figures of the animals themselves although they mention that a ram may be seen as a figure of power and dominion.<sup>78</sup> It is interesting to note that ancient zodiacal symbolism reveals Persia to have been represented by Aries

the ram and Greece and Syria to have been symbolized by Capricorn, which is represented by the figure of a goat.<sup>79</sup> The two horns of the ram are interpreted as symbolizing the Medo-Persian empire<sup>80</sup> with the last part of the kingdom being the most powerful.<sup>81</sup> The four horns of the goat represent four kings.<sup>82</sup> It can also be noted that the use of Hebrew in v. 8 does not proscribe the timing of the "birth" of the four horns in relation to the time of the breaking of the larger horn."<sup>83</sup> Nevertheless, it is most likely that these four horns represent the fourfold division of Alexander's empire.<sup>84</sup>

Several words deserve attention. Although both the ram and the goat magnify themselves (v. 4 and 8) or "become great," Roy E. Swim equates the first usage of this term with the concept of doing great things and the latter usage with describing a growth in evil.<sup>85</sup> The same commentator interprets the "prince of host" of v. 11 as representing Christ,<sup>86</sup> whereas other commentators see this as the only Old Testament reference to God as a prince.<sup>87</sup> In a similar way the host of heavens and stars can be seen to be the people of Israel. The "prince of princes" of v. 25 most likely refers to God.<sup>88</sup>

Much of the interpretation of the chapter relates to historical and geographical points of reference. The thrusts of the ram, v. 4, assuming the ram to represent the Medo-Persian empire, can be seen as pinpointing Babylon (westward), and Armenia and Lydia (northward).<sup>89</sup> Later



reference to Palestine is included in the "Beautiful Land."

The historical focus of the chapter is seen as the sweep of Hellenism through a center of world power (in the biblical world) that previously had been occidental in focus.<sup>90</sup> In this context, the large horn of v. 8 represents Alexander the Great who died of a fever at 32 or 33, "but at the height of his power his large horn was broken off" (v. 8).<sup>91</sup> The "little horn" is Antiochus Epiphanes who wars against, "grew in power to," Egypt, "the south", and Persia, "the east" (v. 9). The prospering of the little horn (v. 12) represents the fact that "the hellenization attempt was so successful that a man could neither keep the sabbath, nor observe the feasts of his fathers, nor so much as confess himself to be a Jew (2 Macc. 6:6)."<sup>92</sup>

Dispensationalists understand the little horn to represent the future antichrist but "careful analysis of the passage would seem to show no need to bypass Antiochus Epiphanes and apply the little horn to the person of the antichrist. . .".<sup>93</sup> The two characteristics of the little horn, that he comes out of the four horns (v. 9) and that he is the king of "fierce countenance" in the "latter time of their kingdom" (i.e. the kingdom of the four horns, v. 23), are found in Antiochus Epiphanes.<sup>94</sup>

#### 8:15-27

In the second part of c. 8, the historical resemblance continues. Indignation (v. 19) in the Old Testament is often used to refer to God's wrath or, as The Broadman

Bible Commentary interprets it, to Antiochus' end. A broad overview of vv. 20-27 can be seen to represent Cyaxeres the Mede who was a powerful leader allied with the Chaldean Nabopolassar and his son, Nebuchadnezzar. They overturned the Assyrian empire with the overthrow of Ninevah in 612 B.C. But Cyrus, a gifted Mede, quickly rose to the top of the Medo-Persian alliance. Previously Persia had been small and unnoticed but the allied Cyrus and Darius went on to destroy the Babylonian empire.<sup>95</sup>

Another view of v. 19 is to understand it as referring to the fulfillment of the vision and the verses following as continuing a reference to Antiochus.<sup>96</sup> According to this interpretation the transgressors (v. 23a) are Hellenizing Jews, while vv. 24-25 describe Antiochus' actions. After he had attached Egypt a second time (in 168 B.C.) he was commanded by Rome to abandon this offensive. He took out his anger on the Jews of Jerusalem.

The final theme we will look at is that of time. References containing a time element fall into three categories: numerical "naming" of a period (v. 14), a symbolic title, in this case, "time of the end" (vv. 17 and 19) and a relational comment of this time revealed in the vision as occurring in the "distant future" (v. 26).

When considering the former we observe Gabriel proclaiming "the vision concerning the daily sacrifice . . . It will take 2,300 evenings and mornings; then the sanctuary will be reconsecrated" (v. 13 and 14). This time segment

does not correspond with the 3-1/2 years of chapter seven. The term "evenings and mornings" may add further confusion but becomes clearer when contrasted to the previous designation of "regular sacrifice." Such a regular sacrifice would be offered both in the morning and in the evening.<sup>97</sup> Some commentators believe that although the period indicated is probably 2,300 days, "since Daniel is still describing the vision, it seems best to give the figure a symbolical interpretation."<sup>98</sup>

Some interpreters see this passage as fulfilled historically when Antiochus entered Jerusalem and laid it waste. Then, in the third year he returned and established a statue of Jupiter in the temple, which stayed there for three years until Judas Maccabeaus started to rebel. The total number of days involved was 2,300 days plus three months.<sup>99</sup>

There are two other explanations of this 2,300 figure. The first notes that the accounts in c. 7 and 8 have different starting points and would arrive at different figures. Secondly, "the Jewish language often resorts to round figures to indicate a short, moderate, or lengthy period. Verse fourteen may indicate a relative period without attempting a specific number of 24-hour periods."<sup>100</sup>

#### Daniel: Chapter 9

Daniel attempted to give substance to the previously expressed hope. He was living with the future perspective

of an imminent change in government and the awareness of a past prophecy. Jeremiah had declared

This is what the Lord says: "When 70 years are completed for Babylon, I will come to you and fulfill my gracious promise, to bring you back to this place . . . and will bring you back from captivity. I will gather you from all the nations and places where I have vanished you," declares the Lord. (Jeremiah 29:10, 14)

Similarly, the first year of Darius' reign brought to mind the fall of Babylon.

Those seventy years of Jeremiah's prophecy present interpretation problems. Nebuchadnezzar's destructions occurred in 605, 597, 587 and 582 B.C. None of the dates, seventy years from these destructions, mark the end of the Israelite enslavement. The Broadman Bible Commentary concludes:

Seventy years is a round figure for the length of one man's life or one generation. The references of Jeremiah, Chronicles, Zechariah, and Daniel concerning captivity may come under this meaning."<sup>101</sup>

Possible interpretations will be looked at a little later.

### 9:1-19

Daniel's conviction of an imminent change causes him to turn toward God. Verses 3-19 contain a liturgical prayer which expresses a two-part confession, acknowledges the contrast between God and humanity and expresses Daniel's acceptance of punishment as just.

Daniel identified himself with those for whom he intercedes,<sup>102</sup> and he specified the sins they had committed. Each of the Hebrew terms used in v. 5 have different shades

of meaning.<sup>103</sup> According to Daniel's perspective, "at this day" the people of Judah were not representative of God's light but were instead a reproach.<sup>104</sup> Because of this Daniel acknowledges the great "calamity" that had come on them. The language here may be an exaggeration due to the stress of an intense disaster. The reference in v. 12 probably points to the destruction of Jerusalem in 587 B.C.

As Daniel turned to plea for God's compassion, he acknowledged again the status of his people, "we have sinned, we have done wrong." Similarly he contrasted God's characteristics against those of humanity by basing his supplications of God's compassion and stating that God should react for His own sake. Just as God made a name for Himself in Egypt (v. 15), so Daniel calls Him to move quickly "because your city and your people bear your Name" (v. 19).

#### 9:20-27

Daniel got a response to his prayer in the form of the angel Gabriel. Yet the response which Gabriel brought was not directed toward Daniel's immediate concern but was larger.<sup>105</sup> He talked of six aspects of a future event. The first three aspects are related to the redemption and conquest of sin, while the latter triad speaks of the completion of redemption (v. 24).<sup>106</sup> The final element is stated as "anointing the most holy place" or establishing the holy of the holies.

Before turning to the specific parts of the various

translations applied to vv. 24-27, the prevailing views will be reviewed. The traditional-conservative view sees the fulfillment of the prophecy in Christ's birth, death and resurrection. The liberal view does not view Daniel as containing true prophecy but rather as describing the days of Antiochus Epiphanes. Part of the Christian church, in a third position, sees the use of seven as symbolic and believes that Daniel's prophecies cover all of the time from Cyrus' edict (in 536 B.C.) to the first coming of Christ and past that to the time of the antichrist. The fourth view, the "parenthesis view," includes these same periods of time but argues that there is a large gap, unknown in duration, between Christ's first coming (after the first 69 weeks of years) and the period of antichrist (the seventieth week).<sup>107</sup> This final view is also called dispensationalism,<sup>108</sup> and claims that v. 25 speaks of the first 69 weeks, v. 27 of the seventieth week still in the future and v. 26 talks of the big gap in between.

One commentary focuses on an interpretation that demands historical understanding. Daniel is seen as attempting to reinterpret or correct Jeremiah's prophecy (Jer. 25:12; 29:10). Daniel uses the understanding of the sabbatical year (Lev. 23:15) as his basis for interpretation and he applies this interpretation to the suffering which occurred under Antiochus.<sup>109</sup>

Figure 1 shows us the various dates assigned to this designation of seventy weeks of years. Our first time line

	Year following Jerusalem's destruction	Decree to go to Jerusalem	Fall of Babylon	Cyrus' decree	No known person	20th yr. of Artaxerxes' reign	Events of Christ's life
I.	- - - - -			-536	488		
II.	- - 586		539-537			(152)	
III.	- - 587		537				
IV.	- - - - -			536			] [- 26 (Christ's baptism)
V.	- - - - -				454		] [- 29 (climatic year)
VI.	- - - - -	-547(8)					] [-25-27 (ministry cutoff)

Table 1  
Various Interpretations of Daniel's 70 weeks

shows us a view which would appear to satisfy the requirements of the prophecy. A problem is seen when we look at the date 49 years (7 weeks of years) after Cyrus' decree (537 B.C.). The year 488 B.C. has no known personage or event that would appear to fit the concepts of v. 25.

The second line would give us a major event, the fall of Babylon, after the first 49 years (or 7 weeks of years), but would put the next date (62 weeks of years) at approximately 152 B.C. Under this view Cyrus' control over Babylon and his decree permitting Jews to return to Jerusalem are central issues. The interpretation of the designation "an annointed one" could apply either to a returnee of Davidic lineage, Zerubbabel (who as a governor would have been annointed) or a colleague of his, Joshua, who as a high priest may also have been annointed. Both of these men were involved in rebuilding Jerusalem in the second century B.C.<sup>110</sup>

These two views, presented by the first two lines, are representative of the liberal view. The third line falls into this category also. The Broadman Bible Commentary warns that:

interpreters are very divided in their attempts to show the amount of this material which refers to a time future to the author . . . Before one applies the material, he is obligated to establish the exegetical, historical, and theological meaning of the book of Daniel itself.<sup>111</sup>

The liberal view, following the above stated philosophy, is that the general starting date is 587 B.C. with the seven weeks representing the period of Babyloyian cap-



tivity and the sixty-two weeks representing the period from the return to the completion of the rebuilding of Jerusalem.<sup>112</sup> Along similar lines the phrase, "after the 62 'sevens', the Anointed One will be cut off. . ." (v. 26) does not refer to Christ but to the cutting off of the legitimate priestly line. Onias III, a priest, and thus annointed, died and was replaced by his brother, Joshua who "became high priest in 175 B.C. by corruption."<sup>113</sup> A distinction needs to be made, according to this view, between the annointed one of vv. 25 and 26.

The fourth line, and the fifth, indicate the conservative view. The fourth time-line represents Pusey's view which counts the second half of the seventieth week as Christ's public ministry which was cut off in the middle of the week, after 3-1/2 years. Verse 27, "but in the middle of that 'seven' he will put an end to sacrifice and offering" is interpreted to mean the crucifixion of Christ.<sup>114</sup> Objections to such a view could include its lack of interpretation of the distinction between the seven and sixty-two weeks and the fact that the starting date appears to have been selected to fit desired ends and appears to ignore context.<sup>115</sup> Despite these objections, this writer supports this position over the others.

Another view, represented by the sixth time-line, demonstrates the lack of concern for exact numbers, because of a symbolic understanding. This timeline represents Calvin's beliefs and demonstrates his understanding that the

prophecies of Daniel and Jeremiah are equivalent. Other scholars who accept a symbolic, rather than a chronological view, are Kiel and Young.<sup>116</sup>

### Daniel: Chapter 10

Chapter ten serves as a repetition of Daniel's supplication in chapter nine and as an introduction to the more complete explanation that is given Daniel in chapter eleven.

Historically there is confusion concerning the designation of this event as happening in the third year of Cyrus. Some translators believe that Daniel died in the first year of Cyrus and thus the Septuagint translates this verse as "the first year of Cyrus." Whatever is believed about this confusion, it is obvious that this event is four years after the vision of Gabriel presented in chapter nine.

Daniel had been mourning for three weeks (i.e. fasting), a routine in which he had restrained from eating delicacies. The Hebrew term here is literally translated as "bread of desirableness." A contrast is seen between bread of desirableness and bread of affliction (Deut. 16:3) which adds weight to the event with which Daniel is struggling.<sup>117</sup>

The man who appeared to Daniel is most likely suggestive of Gabriel, due to parallelism with 8:16 and 9:21. Further support for this view comes from the tendency of apocalyptic terminology to use the term man to designate an angelic being.<sup>118</sup> The description of Gabriel here is similar to the vision of Ezekiel 1 and Revelation 4:11.

Daniel's recovery from the awe of being face to face with such a vision was very slow. As in 9:23, he seemed to be encouraged by the comment "man of high esteem", and by the awareness that the general purpose of the vision is to speak of hope for Israel.<sup>119</sup> Part of the basis for hope was demonstrated in the angel's involvement with the kingdom of Persia. God was shown as being involved in human history.<sup>120</sup>

The final verses of chapter ten may be confusing but the difficult time sequence of Semitic writing must be remembered. Gabriel's promise to reveal what is in the writing of truth is fulfilled in chapter eleven. This writing of truth "is by most interpreters compared with the Tablets of Fate which indicate an absolute determinism in the form of prediction."<sup>121</sup>

### Daniel: Chapter 11

In this chapter of Daniel we encounter a complicated description of a conflict. The first verse of c. 11, in our English versions, appears to be actually the ending verse of c. 10. So attention will be focused on c. 11 starting with v. 2. Daniel starts this chapter by relating specific details and then moves on to more general information. This section can be seen as an enlargement of the vision of Daniel chapter eight.<sup>122</sup> He mentions four kings who must be identified from the starting point of Cyrus the king of Persia (10:1). Commentaries appear to agree on the identity

of this fourth king as Xerxes I (486-465 B.C.).

Although it is difficult to determine the meaning of the phrase "he will stir up everyone against the kingdom of Greece," it is possible that this can be interpreted simply "he shall stir up all."<sup>123</sup> The focus on Greece, in v. 2, leads to the conclusion that the mighty king of v. 3 is Alexander.<sup>124</sup> Out of Alexander's three possible heirs, no successor arose. Instead his kingdom was divided under four of his generals: Seleucus, Ptolemy, Lysimachus and Cassander.<sup>125</sup>

#### 11:5-20

The commentaries surveyed appear to agree that vv. 5-35 refer to history of the fourth to the second century B.C. Within this section the focus is directly upon God's people. Verses 5-28 talk of Israel being caught in the middle while vv. 29-35 switch to the idea of the remnant as the point of attack.<sup>126</sup>

One of the characters in this "act" is the king of the south, or Ptolemy Soter, one of Alexander's generals.<sup>127</sup> This general captured Jerusalem in 320 B.C. and established Egyptian control over Palestine until 197 B.C.

The following verses refer to political alliances and strife. Verses 6-8 refer to a marriage agreement between Ptolemy Philadelphus (285-246 B.C.) and Antiochus II (Theos)<sup>128</sup> that represented an attempt at establishing peace. Berenice, the daughter of the king of the south, Ptolemy Philadelphus, was to be married to Antiochus with

the agreement that he would divorce his first wife and disinherit their two sons.<sup>129</sup> But Ptolemy died in 246 B.C.<sup>130</sup> and Antiochus took back his first wife, Laodice. Laodice poisoned Antiochus. After his death, Berenice and her son were killed by one of Laodice's sons.<sup>131</sup>

Verses 7-9 depict the revenge of Berenice's brother, Ptolemy Evergetes.<sup>132</sup> Ptolemy III brought back much booty, statues of Egyptian gods and killed Laodice.<sup>133</sup> He returned to his own country mainly because of a revolt there and thus "for some years he will leave the king of the North alone" (v. 9).

Verses 9-12 focus on the king of the north and his sons. This king, Seleucus Callinicus, went out to war against Ptolemy, but returned defeated. His sons, Seleucus III and Antiochus III, went against Egypt and Ptolemy in a continuation of the conflict. Initially the battle went in favor of the north: v. 10, "Antiochus conquered a great part of the Ptolemy territory. 'As far as his fortress' is either to Gaza or Paphia to which he advanced in 217."<sup>134</sup> But Ptolemy I was the final victor, although he did not pursue his advantage.

Verses 13-19 speak of a third engagement, twelve years later, in which the king of the north, Antiochus, defeated Ptolemy Epiphanes. The comment, in v. 14, "the violent men among your own people will rebel in fulfillment of the vision, but without success," may indicate that "the people who sided with Antiochus against Ptolemy . . .

thought that they were acting in such a way as to bring to pass some prophecy . . . but their efforts were doomed to fail."<sup>135</sup>

Antiochus completely overcame the southern forces (v. 15), who suffered from famine during their campaign ("not have the strength to stand").<sup>136</sup> Palestine thus came under the rule of Syrian rather than Egyptians (v. 16).

Verses 15-17 tell us of another marriage contract whose intentions were unfulfilled. Antiochus married his daughter to the southern king, Ptolemy V, in 198-197 B.C. Instead of helping the conqueror-father gain control over the Egyptians, Cleopatra became loyal to her husband's people.<sup>137</sup>

Encouraged by his previous victories, Antiochus now turns to the islands and coastlands of Asia Minor (v. 18-19), but is defeated by a Roman captain, Lucius Scipio Asiaticus. Antiochus' successor, v. 20, fared no better; he was assassinated and civil war broke out.<sup>138</sup>

#### 11:21-35

Although most commentaries agree on the interpretation of Daniel 11:5-20, as referring to the wars of the Ptolemies and Seleucids, they disagree on the understanding of vv. 11:21-45. Some commentaries believe that vv. 21-35 refer to Antiochus Epiphanes' persecution while 11:36 - 12:4 refer to the coming Antichrist.<sup>139</sup> Others assume that vv. 36-45 have a dual reference, first to Antiochus and second to the antichrist.<sup>140</sup> Still others believe that all the

verses, 21-45, refer only Antiochus Epiphanes. Our focus will be on the first two interpretations. If Daniel c. 11 does refer only to historical events, it would not be necessary, for the purposes of this paper, to review history. However most modern authors who refer to these scriptures in Daniel, assume them to relate, even secondarily, to the end times.

The Wesleyan Bible Commentary says of these verses, "this passage is one of the most difficult in the book of Daniel."<sup>141</sup> The authors choose to agree with the view of Jerome: "The person of Antiochus, he is to be regarded as a type of the Antichrist, and those things which happened to him in a preliminary way are to be completely fulfilled in the case of the Antichrist."<sup>142</sup>

The history of Antiochus Epiphanes' life is seen within the movement of these verses. He rose to power (vv. 21-24), campaigned against Ptolemy VI Philometor in a second Egyptian campaign (vv. 25-28) and in a third Egyptian campaign (vv. 29-30a) and persecuted the Jews (vv. 30b-35).<sup>143</sup>

Antiochus Epiphanes is seen as a "contemptible person" (v. 21) most likely because of his assertion of the title "Theos Epiphanes" (or, God manifest).<sup>144</sup> In his rise to power an army "and a prince of the covenant will be destroyed" (v. 22). The "prince" may have been the high priest, Onias III, who was desposed by Antiochus in 170 B.C.<sup>145</sup> Despite all these terrible events, God's promise stands - it is promised that this contemptible person will

survive "only for a time" (v. 24).<sup>146</sup>

Verses 25-28 describe a successful campaign for Antiochus. Ptolemy Philometor was defeated partially because his forces and nobles did not support him.<sup>147</sup> It is most likely that the two kings of v. 27 who lie to each other are Antiochus and Ptolemy. "Antiochus professed that he was acting only in the interest of his nephew. Philometor professed to believe it."<sup>148</sup> Because Antiochus expectations were not fulfilled in this campaign, "he slaughtered many Jews, plundered the Temple, and joined forces with the hellenizing Jews."<sup>149</sup>

Antiochus' next campaign (vv. 29-30a) is not as successful and, on returning to Antioch, he again vents his anger on Jerusalem.<sup>150</sup> There is some disagreement between commentaries over which incident, of the two persecutions at Jerusalem, (v. 28b or 30) is referred to by I Maccabees 1:21b and II Maccabees 5. This second reference to persecution in Jerusalem is understood to point to the persecution of 170-168 B.C.,<sup>151</sup> described in vv. 31-35. Antiochus abolished the daily sacrifice (v. 31) and his forces "set up a cult of their own on the very sites of previous Yahweh worship - the very sites of previous Yahweh worship - the altar and statue of Zeus Olympius erected alongside were the abominations . . ."<sup>152</sup>

In the midst of this trouble, those who continued to follow God were killed (v. 33). Although there was a revolt against Antiochus, lead by Mattathias and his son Judas, it



was only temporarily and partially successful and thus only "a little help" (v. 34).<sup>153</sup> Consequently the section covering vv. 21-35 ends on a dark note.

#### 11:36-45

There are several interpretations of the figure of vv. 36-45. It is seen as referring only to Antiochus, to Antiochus as a type of the antichrist, to both (although primarily Antiochus), and to the antichrist alone. The Wesleyan Bible Commentary offers several reasons for accepting the latter choice. First, these verses are not fulfilled in the history of Antiochus. Secondly, the passage is seemingly "bound" together by the phrase in v. 35, the "time of the end." Finally, there appears to be a break between the thought and persons of vv. 21-35 and those of vv. 36-45.<sup>154</sup>

The antichrist is referred to as a king in v. 36 for reasons listed in the same verse. He will be successful "until the time of wrath is completed." (As Israel is still experiencing God's anger and refinement, this phrase must refer to the end times.) One of his strongest characteristics will be his impiety "nor will he regard any god, but will exalt himself above them all" (v. 37).<sup>155</sup>

Verses 38-39 can be seen as expressing the various components of this "king's" plan. War will be a strong element, wealth a part of his aim (v. 38) and power a reward to his followers (v. 39). However his power will not last forever.

The kings of the north and south are identified by The Wesleyan Bible Commentary only as future enemies of this antichrist. In his conflict with them "he will invade many countries" and overpower them (v. 40). Even Palestine, "the glorious land," will be overcome by him (v. 41). In fact many countries will fall to him (vv. 41-42).

The geographical references of v. 44 will have to be revealed ("the east and the north"), but v. 45 gives us a little more accurate location. The capital of this antichrist will be near Jerusalem. However, his end is sure (v. 45).

### Daniel: Chapter 12

#### 12:1-4

Several commentaries view these verses as a continuation of the preceding section. As such, they speak of resurrection and judgment (v. 2), of protection (in the form of Michael) and deliverance (v. 1), and rewards (v. 3). These rewards are primarily for those who have endured, but also for all Christians.

If one accepts vv. 36-45 as having referred only to Antiochus, this section must be seen to do likewise.<sup>156</sup> Within this context the promise of deliverance is seen to apply only to the Jews who survived Antiochus' persecutions<sup>157</sup> rather than to all of God's saints.<sup>158</sup> The only generalized reference is seen to be to "the principle of the actions of God in reference to the punishment of evil."<sup>159</sup>

In conclusion of this section, v. 4 tells Daniel to close up, guard or protect, and seal, to preserve or hide the words of this prophecy until "the times of the end."<sup>160</sup> It is predicted that many will diligently,<sup>161</sup> or frantically,<sup>162</sup> search for the book<sup>163</sup> or its meaning.<sup>164</sup> Divergent interpretations of the phrase "to increase knowledge" include an increase in knowledge<sup>165</sup> or an intention to increase knowledge to the point of arrival at an explanation.

### 12:5-13

Because of the abundant imagery of this last section, and its shortness, an understanding of these verses is presented in chart form below:<sup>166</sup>

<u>Verse</u>	<u>Image or Phrase</u>	<u>Interpretations</u>
5	two others	angelic beings
6	man clothed in linen	1. God Himself in theophany 2. a somewhat superior angel
	"One of them said"	1. an angel asked (Masoretic Text) 2. Daniel asked (Septuagint)
	"How long will it be . . ."	1. same as 8:13 2. Either how long to end-times or how long will it take for the events to unfold.

The answer to the question of "how long" is "a time, two times and half a time" (v. 7). A further reference is added here: "When the power of the holy people has been finally broken, all these things will be completed" (v. 7). This may refer to the complete scattering of the Jewish people<sup>167</sup> or it may mean "when the power of the shatter of

the holy people will come to an end."<sup>168</sup> Daniel, too, wonders at this pronouncement and asks for further clarification. However, he is told nothing more.

Verses 11-13 break into this scene with a view toward the persecutions of Antiochus.<sup>169</sup> These verses present several new figures. The figure 1290 days is one month more than 3-1/2 years and is also mentioned in Revelation 11:3. Add 45 days to this 1290, and the second figure is seen, 1335.<sup>170</sup>

## FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup>Roy E. Swim, Daniel, ed. A. F. Harper, Beacon Bible Commentary, Vol. III, The Major Prophets (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press, 1966), p. 651.

<sup>2</sup>trans. M. G. Easton, Biblical Commentary on the Book of Daniel, by C. F. Kiel (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company), p. 221.; Swim, p. 652.

<sup>3</sup>Kiel, p. 222.

<sup>4</sup>Maurice H. Farbridge, Studies in Biblical and Semitic Symbolism, (New York: KTAZ Publishing House, Inc., 1970), p. 55.

<sup>5</sup>John Joseph Owens, Jeremiah - Daniel, ed. Clifton J. Allen, The Broadman Bible Commentary, Vol. 6 (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1971), p. 419.

<sup>6</sup>Kiel, p. 222.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid.

<sup>9</sup>Owens, p. 419.

<sup>10</sup>Kiel, p. 223.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid.

<sup>12</sup>Farbridge, p. 59.

<sup>13</sup>Swim, p. 653.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid.

<sup>15</sup>Kiel, p. 223.

<sup>16</sup>Kiel, p. 224.

<sup>17</sup>Owens, p. 419.

<sup>18</sup>Swim, p. 653.

<sup>19</sup>Kiel, p. 225.

<sup>20</sup>Owens, p. 420

<sup>21</sup>Kiel, p. 225.

<sup>22</sup>Owens, p. 420.

<sup>23</sup>Kiel, p. 226.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid.

<sup>25</sup>Bert H. Hall, Isaiah through Malachi, ed. Charles W. Carter, The Wesleyan Bible Commentary, Vol. 3 (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1969), p. 534.

<sup>26</sup>Kiel, p. 226.

<sup>27</sup>Kiel, p. 227.

<sup>28</sup>Owens, p. 420.

<sup>29</sup>Kiel, p. 228.

<sup>30</sup>Owens, p. 420.

<sup>31</sup>Owens, p. 413.; Swim, p. 663.

<sup>32</sup>Swim, p. 653.

<sup>33</sup>Owens, p. 421.

<sup>34</sup>Swim, p. 653.

<sup>35</sup>Kiel, p. 228.

<sup>36</sup>W. E. Vine, Expository Dictionary of the Old Testament Words, ed. F. F. Bruce (New Jersey: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1978), p. 79.

<sup>37</sup>Kiel, p. 229.

<sup>38</sup>Kiel, p. 241.

<sup>39</sup>Owens, p. 421.

<sup>40</sup>Owens, p. 422.

<sup>41</sup>Kiel, p. 230.

<sup>42</sup>Owens, p. 423.

<sup>43</sup>Farbridge, p. 17.

<sup>44</sup>Kiel, p. 230.

<sup>45</sup>Ibid.

<sup>46</sup>Kiel, p. 232.; Owens, p. 424.

<sup>47</sup>Kiel, p. 232.

- <sup>48</sup>Kiel, p. 234.
- <sup>49</sup>Owens, p. 425.
- <sup>50</sup>Kiel, pp. 324 and 236.
- <sup>51</sup>Swim, p. 653.
- <sup>52</sup>Owens, p. 424.
- <sup>53</sup>Owens, p. 426.
- <sup>54</sup>Swim, p. 657.; Hall, p. 537.
- <sup>55</sup>Swim, p. 657.
- <sup>56</sup>Owens, p. 426.; Kiel, p. 241.
- <sup>57</sup>Owens, p. 427.
- <sup>58</sup>Kiel, pp. 241-2.
- <sup>59</sup>Owens, p. 248.
- <sup>60</sup>Owens, p. 428.; Kiel, p. 242.
- <sup>61</sup>Farbridge, p. 88.
- <sup>62</sup>Owens, p. 427.
- <sup>63</sup>Kiel, p. 243.
- <sup>64</sup>Kiel, p. 244.
- <sup>65</sup>Owens, p. 426.
- <sup>66</sup>Kiel, p. 329.
- <sup>67</sup>Kiel, p. 239.
- <sup>68</sup>Swim, p. 658.
- <sup>69</sup>Swim, p. 658-9.
- <sup>70</sup>Kiel, p. 660.
- <sup>71</sup>Ibid.
- <sup>72</sup>Kiel, p. 661.
- <sup>73</sup>Hall, p. 537.
- <sup>74</sup>Owens, p. 431.

- <sup>75</sup>Hall, p. 538.
- <sup>76</sup>Kiel, p. 260.
- <sup>77</sup>Swim, p. 663.
- <sup>78</sup>Owens, p. 430.
- <sup>79</sup>Ibid.
- <sup>80</sup>Swim, p. 663.; Hall, p. 538.
- <sup>81</sup>Owens, p. 430.
- <sup>82</sup>Swim, p. 663.
- <sup>83</sup>Owens, p. 431.
- <sup>84</sup>Hall, p. 539.
- <sup>85</sup>Swim, pp. 663-4.
- <sup>86</sup>Swim, p. 664.
- <sup>87</sup>Owens, p. 432.
- <sup>88</sup>Hall, p. 541.
- <sup>89</sup>Hall, p. 538.
- <sup>90</sup>Swim, p. 663.; ens, p. 431.
- <sup>91</sup>Owens, p. 431.
- <sup>92</sup>Owens, p. 432.
- <sup>93</sup>Hall, p. 539.
- <sup>94</sup>Ibid.
- <sup>95</sup>Swim, pp. 663, 665.
- <sup>96</sup>Hall, p. 541.
- <sup>97</sup>Owens, p. 433.
- <sup>98</sup>Hall, p. 540.
- <sup>99</sup>Swim, pp. 664-5.
- <sup>100</sup>Owens, p. 433.
- <sup>101</sup>Owens, p. 436.



- <sup>102</sup>Swim, p. 669.
- <sup>103</sup>Ibid.
- <sup>104</sup>Owens, p. 437.
- <sup>105</sup>Swim, p. 671.
- <sup>106</sup>Ibid.
- <sup>107</sup>Swim, p. 676.
- <sup>108</sup>Ibid.
- <sup>109</sup>Owens, p. 439.
- <sup>110</sup>Owens, p. 440.
- <sup>111</sup>Owens, p. 443.
- <sup>112</sup>Owens, p. 441.
- <sup>113</sup>Ibid.
- <sup>114</sup>Swim, p. 675.; Owens, p. 441.
- <sup>115</sup>Owens, p. 441.
- <sup>116</sup>Swim, p. 674-5.
- <sup>117</sup>Owens, p. 444.
- <sup>118</sup>Owens, p. 445.
- <sup>119</sup>Ibid.
- <sup>120</sup>Swim, p. 678.
- <sup>121</sup>Owens, p. 446.
- <sup>122</sup>Swim, p. 679.
- <sup>123</sup>Owens, p. 447.
- <sup>124</sup>Owens, p. 447.; Hall, p. 551.
- <sup>125</sup>Ibid.
- <sup>126</sup>Swim, p. 680.
- <sup>127</sup>Hall, p. 551.; Owens, p. 448.
- <sup>128</sup>Hall, p. 552.

- <sup>129</sup>Owens, p. 448.
- <sup>130</sup>Ibid.
- <sup>131</sup>Hall, p. 552.
- <sup>132</sup>Ibid.
- <sup>133</sup>Owens, pp. 448-9.
- <sup>134</sup>Owens, p. 449.
- <sup>135</sup>Ibid.
- <sup>136</sup>Owens, p. 450.
- <sup>137</sup>Owens, p. 450.; Hall, p. 552-3.
- <sup>138</sup>Ibid.
- <sup>139</sup>Hall, pp. 553-555; Swim, pp. 680-681.
- <sup>140</sup>Swim, p. 681.
- <sup>141</sup>Hall, p. 553.
- <sup>142</sup>Ibid.
- <sup>143</sup>Hall, p. 553.; Swim, p. 680.
- <sup>144</sup>Owens, p. 451.
- <sup>145</sup>Owens, p. 452.; Hall, p. 554.
- <sup>146</sup>Owens, p. 452.
- <sup>147</sup>hall, p. 554.
- <sup>148</sup>owens, p. 452.
- <sup>149</sup>Owens, p. 453.
- <sup>150</sup>Hall, p. 554.
- <sup>151</sup>Hall, p. 554.; Owens, p. 453.
- <sup>152</sup>Owens, p. 453.
- <sup>153</sup>Owens, p. 454.; Hall, p. 554.
- <sup>154</sup>Hall, p. 555.
- <sup>155</sup>Hall, p. 556.

- <sup>156</sup>Owens, pp. 457-8.
- <sup>157</sup>Owens, p. 457.
- <sup>158</sup>Hall, p. 556.
- <sup>159</sup>Owens, p. 457.
- <sup>160</sup>Hall, p. 556.; Owens, p. 458.
- <sup>161</sup>Hall, p. 557.
- <sup>162</sup>Owens, p. 458.
- <sup>163</sup>Hall, p. 557.
- <sup>164</sup>Owens, p. 458.
- <sup>165</sup>Hall, p. 557.
- <sup>166</sup>Hall, p. 557.; Owens, p. 459.
- <sup>167</sup>Hall, p. 557.
- <sup>168</sup>Owens, p. 459.
- <sup>169</sup>Owens, p. 459.; Hall, p. 557.
- <sup>170</sup>Owens, p. 459.

## Chapter 4

### CURRENT ESCHATOLOGICAL WORKS

Christians have traditionally believed that Christ has come to the earth and will come again. In conjunction with this second coming, He will establish a kingdom that will involve resurrection and judgment.

In looking at current literature which utilizes the book of Daniel in supporting eschatological theories, the reader may notice that most of these authors hold similar viewpoints. In order to divert questions about this writer's apparent "bias" when choosing authors on which to focus, an overview of eschatological theories is desirable.

#### Various Approaches

There are several basic ways to interpret Biblical eschatology. First, an idealist or symbolic approach tends to strip temporal concerns from apocalyptical events and represents them as "timeless truths."<sup>1</sup> Secondly, a historicist's view believes that these "eschatological events" were future from the view of Biblical times but, from a present viewpoint, have already occurred or are in the process of occurring. In a similar view preterist theories see the fulfillment of apocalyptic scripture occurring in conjunction with its scriptural account.<sup>2</sup>

These three views would have little interest in

looking for the relation of apocalyptic scripture to future events. For them, the issue has already been determined. In contrast, a futuristic viewpoint assigns prophetic and apocalyptic fulfillment to an "end time," most of which is still to come.<sup>3</sup> Thus, it is this last group whose books line the shelves of libraries and bookstores. It is from this group that most of the works quoted in this chapter come.

### The Millennium

A prevalent theme in theories about the "end times" is the millennium, a time of Christ's reign. The interpretation of this concept causes differentiation within the church. Some Christians believe that a millennial reign or "Christ's kingdom" is present. "It is here and now, within history. It is not something that will come catastrophically at some future time."<sup>4</sup>

Even within the group of those believing in a literal reign of Christ, or of His kingdom, there are differences. Figure 2 shows some of these distinctions. Within this chapter there is a prevalence of premillennial authors. Comparison of these views will show us the reason for such a prevalence.

Postmillennialism is not currently a widely held position and thus is less obvious in popular literature. In addition, this theory supports the concept of a gradual development of the kingdom, and thus is not as crucially concerned with signs of an end time. Amillennialists are

POSTMILLENNIALISM	AMILLENNIALISM	PREMILLENNIALISM
Kingdom of God is a present reality	Kingdom of God is in the future	Kingdom of God is in the future
All nations converted prior to Christ's return	Don't expect worldwide growth of righteousness	Christ's second coming preceded by deterioration
Long period of earthly peace, not necessarily 1000 years	No earthly reign of Christ	Earthly reign of Christ at His second coming
Gradual growth of kingdom		Millennium dramatically inaugurated by Christ's second coming
Premillennial - millennial existence differ only in degree	Premillennial - millennial kingdoms are different in nature	Premillennial - millennial kingdoms are different in nature
At end of millennium, flare-up of evil		Near end of millennium, Satan unbound briefly
Millennium ends with personal, bodily return of Christ	Second coming will inaugurate final age for believers and unbelievers	
	Imminence of Christ's second coming no major events to be fulfilled	Imminence of Christ's second coming no major events to be fulfilled
Lord's return followed immediately by resurrection and judgment	Second coming followed immediately by general resurrection & judgment	
	Two resurrections, differ on basis of their nature	Two resurrections (Rev. 20:4-6) differ on basis of participants
Little preoccupation with details	Little preoccupation with details	Interest in the details and sequence of the end times
		"Great Tribulation" immediately preceding the millennium

Table 2

#### Millennial Interpretations

Source: Millard J. Erickson, Contemporary Options in Eschatology (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1977) p. 56-93

not looking for an earthly 1000 year reign and similarly have less preoccupation with details and sequences of the last times. They are also less curious about the signs of the time.<sup>5</sup> This position views Old Testament prophecies less literally than premillennialists<sup>6</sup> and is thus less pertinent to this paper.

Premillennialists, in contrast, accept a very literal interpretation of scripture and expect an exact fulfillment. They are eagerly looking for the signs that will point to this fulfillment.

### The Tribulation

A final distinction occurs and is found most often within the premillennial camp. All premillennialists expound a dramatic second coming of Christ but debate whether it will occur before or after the seven year tribulation that will precede the millennium. The distinction between these two positions are seen in Figure 3. From this chart, it can be seen that the pretribulationists appear more interested in the timing of Christ's second coming.<sup>7</sup>

### Methodology

In presenting several of these interpretations of Biblical prophecy, specifically Daniel's, this writer will give some general information about each author and then present an overview of their position. In presenting some of the distinctions each author expounds, details may be included, but mostly this chapter will present general

PRETRIBULATIONISM	MIDTRIBULATIONISM	POSTTRIBULATIONISM
Church raptured before Tribulation	Church raptured in the middle of the Tribulation	Church raptured after the Tribulation
Second coming in two phases	Second coming in two phases	Single, unitary second coming
Jews present during Tribulation		No distinction between Jews and Church; Jews present during Tribulation
Seven year Tribulation	Seven year Tribulation	Less literal interpretation of the length of the Tribulation
The millennium is crucial		The millennium is not crucial
Frequently has a more Jewish tone to the millennium, eschatology and the entire theology		
Generally dispensationalists		

\* \* \* \* \*

#### DISPENSATIONALISM - General tenets

1. The church is mentioned nowhere in the Old Testament.  
"It is parenthesis coming, specifically, between the 69th and 70th weeks of Daniel. No prophecy has been fulfilled since the time of Christ. The prophetic clock has not ticked since Pentecost."
2. The Bible is interpreted literally.  
"All prophecy will be fulfilled literally and in detail."
3. There is a definite distinction between Israel and the Church. The term Israel always refers to an ethnic, national and political Israel.
4. There is a distinction between the kingdom of God, which is universal, and the kingdom of heaven, which is Jewish, messianic and Davidic.
5. The purpose of the millennium is to provide a definite plan for Israel's restoration.

Table 3

#### Interpretations of the Rapture and the Tribulation

Source: Millard J. Erickson, Contemporary Options in Eschatology  
(Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1977), p. 116-120.



concepts. In chapter five of this paper the details of how each author supports his general points from interpretation of particular scripture in the book of Daniel will be presented. In conjunction, these views will be contrasted with chapters two and three of this paper, a "commentary" on the book of Daniel.

### J. Dwight Pentecost

Dr. Pentecost believes in an end times sequence that includes, in order, the rapture, a seven-year tribulation (divided into two parts), the second Advent of Christ and an earthly millennial kingdom of 1000 years.<sup>8</sup> A significant part of this plan will be the "coming regathering and restoration of the Jews to Palestine."<sup>9</sup>

Dr. Pentecost's view of the tribulation, based on Daniel 9:26-27 and II Thessalonians 2, is that "this period will begin . . . with a public appearance of the many of sin."<sup>10</sup> Dr. Pentecost identifies this man as the head of a Federated States of Europe who will demonstrate authority by attempting to settle the Arab-Israeli conflict and by providing protection for the Jews so that they may come back to Israel.<sup>11</sup> He draws heavily upon Daniel c. 2 for these concepts believing that Nebuchadnezzar's dream represented God's revelation of those who would reign over Israel from Daniel's time to the Messiah's reign.<sup>12</sup> The four kingdoms represented are, in order, Babylon, the Medo-Persian Empire, Alexander's Greek Empire and the Roman Empire.<sup>13</sup>

Dr. Pentecost believes that the key to c. 7-12 is understanding Daniel as continuing a focus throughout the entire section of this one great ruler and his kingdom.<sup>14</sup>

In Daniel, chapter seven

we find another vision, in which Daniel saw the same course of Gentile world power. But he saw it now . . . from the divine standpoint. Instead of an awesome image, he sees four monstrous beasts . . .".<sup>15</sup>

As Dr. Pentecost relates these visions to the present day, he remembers that the Roman Empire is the fourth beast, and that in both visions there is mentioned a division of ten parts (7:7 with its ten horns and 2:42 with ten toes).

And as you look at Europe today, you find continued division of the Old Roman Empire . . . We are living in the days when we have seen that of which Daniel spoke - the division and the disruption of Rome. . .<sup>16</sup>

However, because Russia will become strong and threatening, these Roman remnants, ten in number, will unite in defense.<sup>17</sup> Although most scriptural evidence for this view of Russia comes from Ezekiel 38-39, Daniel 9:27 is also quoted.<sup>18</sup>

While Russia is gaining strength a leader will rise out of the Federated States of Europe.<sup>19</sup> Daniel 7:8-9 tells us of an eleventh horn. "This man is going to consolidate in his kingdom the territory that had been ruled over by these other ten."<sup>20</sup> World-wide authority will be exercised by this man during the second half of the tribulation.<sup>21</sup> This little horn will establish a covenant with the Jews for seven years, giving them a sense of security, and will be acknowledged by them as God.<sup>22</sup>

Within this setting, at the midpoint of the tribulation, Russia and Egypt will move against Palestine.<sup>23</sup> In the campaign of Armageddon (11:40-45) Russia suggests that Egypt has a right to the land occupied by the Jews (11:40).<sup>24</sup> "Daniel . . . told us that the final conflict in the world's history was going to begin when Egypt . . . sets the spark to this tinder box and starts the campaign of Armageddon."<sup>25</sup> Egypt allies with Russia and "this coalition is going to destroy the city of Jerusalem."<sup>26</sup> The Jews will escape to the plain of Armageddon. The coalition will follow them there and will be destroyed by God (Ezekiel 38-39).

The Federated States, and their ruler, will remain and decide to move against Palestine and Egypt (11:41).<sup>27</sup> At this point an eastern power (11:44, Rev. 9:14-16) will enter the picture by moving against the Federated States.<sup>28</sup> Dr. Pentecost believes this will be a "coalition of the Asiatic nations."<sup>29</sup>

The final chapter of this conflict is described in Revelation 19. As the Federated States of Europe prepares to war with the Asiatic force,

there appears the sign of the coming of the Son of Man in heaven. These warring nations suddenly forget their animosity for each other. . .when the Lord Jesus Christ comes from heaven, He meets the massed forces of 200 million Asiatics, plus unnumbered millions in the Armies of the Federated States of Europe, who are seeking to prevent His return."<sup>30</sup>

However, the winner has been predetermined.

Hal Lindsey

Hal Lindsey, a premillennialist and pretribulationist, uses as a principle of interpretation the concept that Biblical prophesy must be interpreted literally.<sup>31</sup> His basic understanding of the sequence of events is similar to Dr. Pentecost's. He leans most heavily upon Daniel c. 11, but also refers to c. 2, 7 and 8.

Before we look at his treatment of Daniel c. 11, and the final battles, we will focus on his interpretation of the other issues. Lindsey's key to understanding the empires in Daniel c. 2 and 7 is 2:39 where Daniel mentioned the empires which will successively rule over the earth.<sup>32</sup> The fourth kingdom is Rome, which will exist in two phases. In the first phase the kingdom gained world power and then disappeared. It will emerge again just before Christ's return to establish God's kingdom (7:19).<sup>33</sup> The second phase is represented in the next verse, Daniel 7:20, in the form of a ten-nation confederacy.

Lindsey agrees with Pentecost in believing that

after these 10 nations arise out of the cultural inheritance of the Ancient Roman Empire, another king shall rise "diverse from the first" . . . He will not only be a political leader, but a religious leader.<sup>34</sup>

His emphasis is different in that he mentions the subduction of three of the ten nations by this ruler, and thus "translates" this confederation into one of seven nations.<sup>35</sup> He also becomes more specific than Pentecost when he identifies this ten-nation confederation. "We believe

that the Common Market and the trend toward unification of Europe may well be the beginning of the ten-nation confederacy predicted by Daniel and the Book of Revelation."<sup>36</sup>

The leader of this confederation is described in Revelation 13:2 as a beast that is like a leopard, a bear and a lion. Mr. Lindsey goes back to the "predictive ministry of Daniel"<sup>37</sup> to understand the meaning of this symbolism. "Daniel 8 tells us who the first, second and third empires are; thus we can identify the animal figure by the order of the kingdoms."<sup>38</sup> As they represent, in order, Babylon, Media-Persia and the Greek empires, the fourth is Rome and this is the kingdom that the beast will rule.

In Lindsey's interpretation of c. 11 he asserts that it describes events which lead up to Christ's personal return. "The phrase 'at the time of the end'" (v. 11:40) "speaks unmistakeably of the beginning of the last great war of history."<sup>39</sup>

Whereas Pentecost views the Roman and Israeli leader as one, Lindsey believes them to be two separate individuals: "According to Daniel's prophetic chronology, the minute the Israeli leader and the Roman leader sign this pact, God starts His great timepiece which has seven allotted years left on it."<sup>40</sup>

After three and a half years of remarkable progress, the Antichrist will become worshipped . . . Riding upon the crest of public worship the Roman Dictator will go to Jerusalem and in the temple proclaim himself to be God incarnate (2 Thess. 2:4; Mt. 24:15).<sup>41</sup>

Thus begins a time of war and trouble.

Pentecost sees Russia and Egypt working in alliance; Lindsey understands that Egypt will attack Israel separately. (The Israeli leader, the king of the north in Daniel 11:40b, will resist Egypt.)<sup>42</sup> This will in turn cause another invasion of Israel by Russia (who Lindsey also identifies as the king of the north in Daniel 11:40).<sup>43</sup> This second attack will be a warning to Egypt, is prophesied in Daniel 11:42-43<sup>44</sup> and described further in Ezekiel 38. Because of their involvement with Egypt, ". . . the Libyans and Ethiopians shall be at his (the Russian invader's) steps."<sup>45</sup> Lindsey believes that this first invasion will be a fatal mistake in that it will begin the Armageddon campaign (Daniel 11:40a).

Events will continue as

he (the Russians) shall come into countries (of the Middle East) and shall overflow and pass through. He will come into the glorious land (Israel).<sup>46</sup> And tens of thousands shall fall (Daniel 11:40b, 41a).

Daniel 11:42-43 goes on to speak of Russia's double-cross of Egypt, when "he" destroys "her."

The Russian commander, however, will hear alarming news about the Oriental forces (east) and the western Europeans (north). The commander will hastily destroy many of the Jews<sup>47</sup> while his forces are establishing themselves on Mt. Moriah or the temple area in Jerusalem (v. 11:45).<sup>48</sup>

It appears that the Oriental powers, headed by Red China, will be permitted to mobilize its vast army by the Roman Dictator, thinking that they would be loyal to him against Russia. However, the Orientals will eventually double-cross him, and<sup>49</sup> move a 200 million man army against the Antichrist. . .

This view differs slightly from that of Pentecost.

Although Lindsey does not use the book of Daniel as supporting evidence in his understanding of the next events, I will briefly review his position. Russia and many other countries will have fire fall upon them. "The description of torrents of fire and brimstone raining down upon the Red Army . . . could well be describing the use of tactical nuclear weapons against them by the Romans."<sup>50</sup> Ezekiel 39:6, which prophesies the above catastrophe, may include mention of the United States in its reference to "coastlands," a word "used by the ancients in the sense of 'continents' today."<sup>51</sup>

The battle of Armageddon then will be fought by Western forces under the Roman Dictator and "vast hordes of the Orient probably united under the Red Chinese war machine."<sup>52</sup> The fighting will cause great slaughter and destruction<sup>53</sup> and the effects will be felt world-wide.<sup>54</sup> Lindsey focuses more on human initiated destruction than did Pentecost: "all these verses seem to indicate the unleashing of incredible weapons the world over."<sup>55</sup> He also believes in a strong element of supernatural involvement.<sup>56</sup>

It is at the climax of this battle that Christ will return and initiate His kingdom. Thus, "the fifth world kingdom, which according to Daniel will conquer the revived form of the Roman Empire, is the Messianic kingdom (Dan. 7:13-27)."<sup>56</sup> This is the kingdom "in power" during the millennium.

Tim LaHaye

The Beginning of the End is a pre-tribulationist's attempt at comparing the predictions of Daniel, Ezekiel, Paul and John (as revealed in the book of Revelation). Comparison is carried out by the identification of twelve signs of the last times.

My intention is to show that at least eleven other Bible prophecies of the last days have been fulfilled, all of them subsequent to World War I . . . Furthermore, I shall present additional scriptural evidence strongly indicating that the coming of Christ is very near at hand.<sup>57</sup>

In his interpretation of scripture Mr. LaHaye believes in taking every word at its literal meaning unless the immediate context indicates some other method.<sup>58</sup> He also believes that correlation of Biblical teachings is not possible without understanding Christ's coming as a two-stage process separated by a seven year period which is the seventieth week of Daniel.

The twelve signs he presents are as follows:

I. World War I	Mt. 24:1-8
II. Rebirth of Israel	Ezek. 37
III. Russia becomes a major power involved in Middle East	Ezek. 37-38
IV. Capital and labor conflicts	James 5:1-5
V. Skyrocketing travel and	Daniel 12:4
VI. knowledge	" "
VII. Apostasy	2 Thess. 2:3
VIII. Occults	2 Tim. 4:1-2
IX. Wickedness	2 Pet. 3:1-12
X. Scoffers	2 Tim. 3:1-5
XI. Ecumenical church	Rev. 17:1-6
XII. One world government	Daniel 2

In our discussion, LaHaye's comments rather than scripture references, will determine the chronology. The



headings speak for themselves unless LaHaye has used portions of the book of Daniel to support a particular assertion.

### The Second Sign

The second sign, Israel's rebirth, includes the rebuilding of the temple. Verses from Daniel are among those cited as evidence for the rebuilding of the temple in the last days (9:27, 12:11).<sup>59</sup> (Matthew 24:15 and Mark 13:14, also cited, refer back to Daniel.)

### The Third Sign

As we have seen before, Russia figures prominently in the interpretation of prophecy.

The sobering conclusion is this: many of the African nations will be united and allied with the Russians in the invasion of Israel. This is in accord with Daniel's graphic description of this invasion (11:36-45). Here the Russian force is called "the king of the north" and the African (Cush) is called "the king of the south."<sup>60</sup>

Within this discussion Daniel's use of animals to depict governments, is used as a basis for interpreting the young lions of Tarshish (England, Ezek. 38:13) as possibly "the only reference to the United States, Canada and Australia to be found in Scripture."<sup>61</sup>

### The Fifth and Sixth Signs

The fifth and sixth signs of the approaching end are found in Daniel 12:4, "many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased."

### The Eleventh Sign

Although LaHaye does not quote from Daniel as evidence of the possibility of an ecumenical church forecasting the end times, hints of this are evident in Daniel's treatment of the general topic.

It could very easily be accomplished right after the Antichrist signs a covenant with srael to begin the tribulation. The ecumenicized Church of Rome and Protestantism with the government of Antichrist to back it, could very quickly bring all the religions of the world into one gigantic tent, for all have one thing in common - a religion of externals.<sup>62</sup>

### The Twelfth Sign

The final sign of the end is, for Tim LaHaye, a one-world government. "The prophet Daniel recorded two visions that are reaching their climax today; Nebuchadnezzar's image and vision of world government in chapter two, and Daniel's vision of world government in chapter seven."<sup>63</sup> Although these two visions are recorded from slightly differing viewpoints of history they both reach their fulfillment in Christ's second coming.<sup>64</sup> For example, Nebuchadnezzar's vision (chapter 2) of a stone which smashes the feet and the statue "can only mean the cataclysmic return of Christ to establish the righteous millennial kingdom which this world so desperately needs."<sup>65</sup>

Daniel's vision in 7:8 mentions "a little horn." This is the dictator who will rule the earth.<sup>66</sup> He is also presented as the beast of 7:23 who will devour. Identification of this person is related to the fourth beast, or Rome. "The Roman form of government is at the core of almost all

governments today, from the so-called democracies to the dictatorships. Even the United Nations Charter."<sup>67</sup>

LaHaye's conclusion is that we are in the twilight of the generation mentioned in Matthew 24:34; "I tell you the truth, this generation will certainly not pass away until all these things have happened."<sup>68</sup> This is true because of the current tendencies toward world disarmament<sup>69</sup> and a one-world government.<sup>70</sup> In a warning statement, LaHaye airs a view that differs from Lindsey, "Because this world will be dissolved in a gigantic atomic explosion (not set off by man, but controlled by God), we ought to leave no stone unturned in our efforts to warn the lost to come to Christ."<sup>71</sup>

### Ray Stedman

In What on Earth's Going to Happen? Ray Stedman focuses on the identity of that one world dictator who is to come. In his understanding of the book of Daniel he accepts as valid the view of Christ: "The Lord Jesus here [Matthew 24:15-22] clearly regards the Book of Daniel as a valid prophecy, inspired by the Holy Spirit, and accurate in detail."<sup>72</sup>

In interpreting Daniel 9:26-27, and considering the seventy weeks of Daniel's prophecy, Stedman understands the cutting off of the Messiah to represent the crucifixion. This was to happen after sixty-two weeks (of seven years). The prophecy that "the people of the ruler who will come

will destroy the city and the sanctuary" (v. 26) was fulfilled under Titus forty years after Christ's death.

Verse 27 introduces us to "ruler who will come" as he confirms "a covenant with many for one 'seven', but in the middle of that 'seven' he will put an end to sacrifice and offering. And the one who causes desolation will place abominations on a wing of the temple."<sup>73</sup> In presenting it as one of the signs of the close of the age, the desolating sacrilege is seen as "the coming of a man who would take away the continual burnt-offering of the Jews and instead offer himself as 'the abomination which makes desolate . . .'." (Daniel 8:23-26).

Stedman is one of many who believe in a parenthesis view or accepts an indeterminate period that intervenes between the crucifixion (representing the end of the first sixty-nine weeks) and the final seventieth week.<sup>74</sup> This prophecy then indicates a future fulfillment of this seventieth week. It also assumes that the antichrist will desecrate the temple, by his claim of deity, in the middle of this period. "It is evident, therefore, that it is only the last three and one-half years of this seven year period which can be properly called 'the end of the age.'"<sup>75</sup>

In looking at the desolating sacrilege, Stedman interprets it on two levels. Although the desolating sacrilege is a man,<sup>76</sup> as mentioned above, "the sign of the desolating sacrilege does more than mark the beginning of this end time. It also describes it."<sup>77</sup> "Because of the abysmal

lie that man can be his own god . . . when men give themselves to that lie it is the abomination that makes desolate, and the desolation is in abundant evidence all around."<sup>78</sup>

Stedman is also a pretribulationist and believes that the church will be removed from the earth "sometime before the desolating sacrilege spoken of by the prophet Daniel stands in the holy place."<sup>79</sup> It is most probably, in his opinion, that this will happen at the beginning of the seven years.

It is the last 3-1/2 years of the tribulation which can be interpreted as the Great Tribulation.<sup>80</sup> Daniel 12:1 tells us that the Jews, Daniel's people, will experience a time of great trouble, the Great Tribulation. Michael, however, will open the eyes of some of them to the messiahship of Christ.<sup>81</sup>

Within this period of time there will be two forces at work, which the antichrist must remove before he may reign. The political opponent will be Russia and the religious rival will be the false church.<sup>82</sup>

#### Arthur Bloomfield

In his The End of the Days Bloomfield works with the concept that "if a prophecy has never yet been completely fulfilled, then it is to be fulfilled in the future."<sup>83</sup> Daniel is seen as one of the prophetic books that deals both with historical and future times.<sup>84</sup>

Bloomfield remains conscious of time indicators throughout his book. "The time element is the most powerful detail of any prophecy: therefore, the time element of all prophecy is of extreme importance."<sup>85</sup> He sees Daniel's seventieth week as almost identical with "the day of the Lord" which is a time that leads up to Christ's return.<sup>86</sup>

Bloomfield accepts the concept of two lines of history and prophecy "one about the Jews that returned to Palestine about 536 B.C.; the other about the Jews that were scattered among the nations, were later joined by those from Palestine and are yet to return to their land."<sup>87</sup> Daniel's prophecy of 70 years, relates to those Jews who returned and involves a lapse between the historical rebuilding of Jerusalem, the rejection of Christ and the future coming of an antichrist. This lapse is called the Dispensation of Grace.<sup>88</sup> Daniel's prophecy is thus to be added to the period that fulfilled Jeremiah's prophecy of 70 years (which was fulfilled and recorded in Ezra and Nehemiah).<sup>89</sup>

Those Jews who did not return to Jerusalem under Jeremiah's prophecy, are under the prophecy of Ezekiel.<sup>90</sup> At this juncture, Bloomfield deals with specific numbers. His calculations are listed below. They are shared in an attempt to present the general tenor of his book.

Total years of punishment:	Ezek. 4:5	390
	Ezek. 4:6	40
		<hr/> 430
Years of punishment in Babylon		<hr/> -70
		<hr/> 360

"I will punish you for your sins  
seven times over." Lev. 26:18

$$\begin{array}{r} 360 \\ \times 7 \\ \hline 2520 \end{array} \quad 91$$

"When then, will the 2520 years of punishment for Israel end? All dates must be considered approximate, but . . ."<sup>92</sup> considering that the return of the Jews was between 536 and 516 B.C. "the prophecy . . . could start anytime within that 20 year period. It is so arranged that we cannot set actual dates in advance."<sup>93</sup> Nevertheless Bloomfield's math presents us with a approximate date of 2004 A.D.

Bloomfield refers to Daniel c. 9 in support of this idea. Jeremiah's 70 years are not those which usher in the kingdom. Daniel's people are given additional time because certain things must happen first. "Seventy 'sevens' are decreed for your people and your holy city to finish transgression, to put an end to sin. . ." (Dan. 9:24). Within this list is included "to bring in everlasting righteousness" and "to annoint the most holy," both of which refer to Christ's Second Coming.

"Daniel's 70th weeks, then, is the last seven years before the return of Christ in glory."<sup>94</sup> In order to understand Bloomfield's slant on the end times, two of his assumptions must be presented. First, he believes in three periods of 3-1/2 years each, two of which are included in Daniel's seventieth week and one which comes before.<sup>95</sup> Secondly, he believes that "tribulation is not a name for a definite period of time, but an experience that can come anytime, or that can come to different people at different

times."<sup>96</sup> According to Bloomfield, the sequence of events contains, in order, the rapture, a Gentile revival, signs in heaven, a Gentile tribulation, then the time of the anti-christ which will include a three and one-half year period of tribulation for the Jews and Israel (Daniel 9:27b). All of Israel will be saved during this time.<sup>97</sup>

Bloomfield also interprets Daniel, c. 2, for his readers. "The image of Nebuchadnezzar was symbolic of the world's political future; and so, according to Daniel, the image was meant to show what would take place in the latter days."<sup>98</sup> The image is magnificent but will crumble if its feet are struck. . . . God's estimation of human government is reflected by this imagery.<sup>99</sup> Bloomfield explains the briefness of this image. "Just here not much is said about these empires, but other details are shown in future visions. (A characteristic of all prophecy is that details increase as we approach the end time)."<sup>100</sup>

The final government, the Roman Empire, is seen as dividing into two legs, the East and the West. This empire does not fall but rather divides. "Clay is the reason every attempt at a United States of Europe has failed."<sup>101</sup> Clay is the divisive element seen in the ten-toe division. Here Bloomfield has a divergent viewpoint from others we have studied earlier. "The ten toes, then, represent the dividing of the empire. . . . the ten toes do not represent the revival or uniting of the empire."<sup>102</sup>

Russia has actually broken three toes off the image, having taken over totally Rumania, Bulgaria and



Hungary . . . But it will not work; it cannot last; it is contrary to the prophecy . . . They are the key to the future because they are prophetically out of place. Mark those countries well and watch them. God will break Russia, or Russia will break Daniel.<sup>103</sup>

The sign that the great image is about to stand again on toes of clay, and that the final stage of Daniel's prophecy to Nebuchadnezzar will be fulfilled, will be the rise of nations with ambitions for world-dominion."

When these nations are independent and give authority to the antichrist or beast, the end is near. "When Christ comes, the image will be standing."<sup>105</sup>

#### J. Barton Payne

Payne believes that "it is a good rule, in the case of any given prophecy, to look always for the nearest adequate accomplishment and then not to try to find other fulfillments beyond that one."<sup>106</sup> With this rule, and believing that prophecy isn't always predictive, Payne lists 72 prophecies that are relevant to the current age. Among these are five passages from Daniel (7:8a, 7:25, 12:13, 11:40-44, 7:11).<sup>107</sup>

Payne identifies the fourth kingdom as the Roman Empire, but he does not "insist on a group of exactly ten states since many kingdoms have come and gone in the last fifteen centuries."<sup>108</sup> Similarly, Payne does not insist on absolute dates for the tribulation. "Daniel 7:25 and 12:7 are the only sure allusions to its duration . . . we cannot be certain about the time involved."<sup>109</sup> Payne further asserts that the phrase "time, times and half a time" cannot

be interpreted absolutely.

Even though the prophecy of Daniel cannot give insight into these matters, it is the origin of prophecy about the antichrist. Chapter 7 reveals two features of the antichrist: (1) he shall speak out against the Most High (7:8, 11, 20 and 25) and (2) he will enact legislation that will alter times and laws (7:25).

Daniel c. 11 is understood by Payne to be the "only specific information about the international activities of the Antichrist."<sup>110</sup> He is seen as invading Egypt, the 'south,' but is halted in his offensive by rumors from the east and north (in this instance identified as Palestine).<sup>111</sup> He returns to Palestine and advances toward Armageddon.

In understanding Payne's approach to interpreting the events of Armageddon, we must keep in mind two of his presuppositions. First, Payne is conscious that the effects (specifically of the fifth trumpet in Rev. 9:5, 10) may continue on longer than the event itself. Secondly, "Daniel was one whose revelations concerning Armageddon were both significant in extent and symbolic in form."<sup>112</sup>

With these parameters in mind, Payne sees Daniel's vision as demonstrating that the little horn will have its authority and domination taken away when Christ's kingdom comes on earth.<sup>113</sup> The battle of Armageddon will not be restricted to a local area.

Isaiah foretold that in the course of the conflict, Israel will overrun the territories of Philistia in the

west and of Edom and Moab and Ammon in the east (Isa. 11:14; cf. Isa. 25:10-12) - the very lands that Daniel said the Antichrist would not harm.<sup>114</sup>

One final point concerning Payne's views, is a look at his view of the rapture. Daniel 12:3 is seen as referring to a rescue of Christians, which will be their resurrection at Christ's appearing. This verse infers, then, that God's saints can suffer even death due to the antichrist.<sup>115</sup>

#### George Ladd

George Ladd exhibits some very unique differences in his approach to the Bible and the Old Testament in particular. He feels that he must adopt a spiritualizing hermeneutic because he finds the New Testament applying to the spiritual Church promises which in the Old Testament refer to literal Israel.<sup>116</sup>

He understands the Messianic picture of the christology in Daniel c. 7 to be different from Davidic Messianic concepts. This distinction leads Ladd to see Christ as "even now reigning as messianic king."<sup>117</sup> The world is still evil, the nations ignore God and His kingdom. A second coming is necessary to complete the work begun at Christ's birth. "His Second Coming will mean nothing less than the Lordship which is his now will be made visible to all the world."<sup>118</sup>

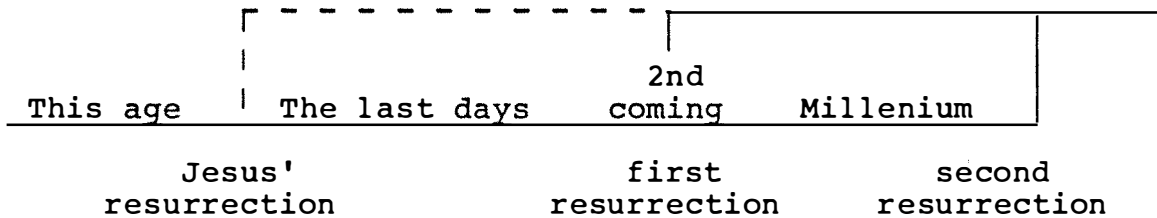
The antichrist is first seen in scripture in Daniel 11 and his coming is foreshadowed in the events of 168 B.C.

His basic characteristic is that of assuming for himself all divine power.

Ladd does not accept Daniel 9:26-27 as telling of the antichrist. He is one of the "many evangelical scholars [who] believe that the messianic interpretation fits the language better than the eschatological one."<sup>119</sup>

What is presently restraining this antichrist? Ladd does not believe, with the dispensationalists, that it is the Holy Spirit. Rather, he believes that the Roman government with its principle of law and order, is what restrains the antichrist.

Ladd's view is summarized in his diagram presented below.<sup>120</sup>



## FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup>Millard J. Erickson, Contemporary Options in Eschatology: A Study of the Millenium (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1977), p. 30.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Erickson, p. 21.

<sup>5</sup>Erickson, p. 75.

<sup>6</sup>Erickson, p. 74.

<sup>7</sup>Erickson, p. 94.

<sup>8</sup>J. Dwight Pentecost, Prophecy for Today (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1961), p.. 37-8.

<sup>9</sup>Pentecost, p. 67.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid.

<sup>11</sup>Pentecost, p. 68.

<sup>12</sup>Pentecost, p. 85.

<sup>13</sup>Pentecost, p. 86.

<sup>14</sup>Pentecost, p. 98.

<sup>15</sup>Pentecost, p. 88.

<sup>16</sup>Pentecost, p. 90.

<sup>17</sup>Pentecost, p. 91.

<sup>18</sup>Pentecost, p. 122 and p. 128.

<sup>19</sup>Pentecost, p. 95.

<sup>20</sup>Pentecost, p. 97.

<sup>21</sup>Pentecost, p. 98.

<sup>22</sup>Pentecost, p. 100.

<sup>23</sup>Pentecost, p. 131.

<sup>24</sup>Pentecost, p. 145.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid.

<sup>26</sup>Pentecost, p. 146.

<sup>27</sup>Pentecost, p. 146-7.

<sup>28</sup>Pentecost, p. 147.

<sup>29</sup>Ibid.

<sup>30</sup>Pentecost, p. 148.

<sup>31</sup>Hal Lindsey, The Late Great Planet Earth (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1970), p. 126.

<sup>32</sup>Lindsey, p. 89.

<sup>33</sup>Lindsey, p. 92.

<sup>34</sup>Lindsey, p. 93.

<sup>35</sup>Ibid.

<sup>36</sup>Lindsey, p. 94.

<sup>37</sup>Lindsey, p. 104.

<sup>38</sup>Ibid.

<sup>39</sup>Lindsey, p. 77.

<sup>40</sup>Lindsey, p. 152.

<sup>41</sup>Lindsey, p. 152-3.

<sup>42</sup>Lindsey, p. 153.

<sup>43</sup>Lindsey, p. 77.

<sup>44</sup>Lindsey, p. 78.

<sup>45</sup>Ibid.

<sup>46</sup>Lindsey, p. 157.

<sup>47</sup>Lindsey, p. 158.

<sup>48</sup>Lindsey, p. 160.

<sup>49</sup>Lindsey, p. 158.

<sup>50</sup>Lindsey, p. 161.

<sup>51</sup>Lindsey, p. 162.

<sup>52</sup>Ibid.

<sup>53</sup>Lindsey, p. 165.

<sup>54</sup>Lindsey, p. 166.

<sup>55</sup>Lindsey, p. 167.

<sup>56</sup>Lindsey, p. 177.

<sup>57</sup>Tim LaHaye, The Beginning of the End (Wheaton: Tyndale House Publishers, 1971), p. 40.

<sup>58</sup>Ibid.

<sup>59</sup>LaHaye, p. 50.

<sup>60</sup>LaHaye, p. 67-8.

<sup>61</sup>LaHaye, p. 71.

<sup>62</sup>LaHaye, p. 151.

<sup>63</sup>LaHaye, p. 156.

<sup>64</sup>LaHaye, p. 158.

<sup>65</sup>LaHaye, p. 156.

<sup>66</sup>LaHaye, p. 158.

<sup>67</sup>LaHaye, p. 159.

<sup>68</sup>LaHaye, p. 168.

<sup>69</sup>LaHaye, p. 159.

<sup>70</sup>LaHaye, p. 161.

<sup>71</sup>LaHaye, p. 144.

<sup>72</sup>Ray C. Stedman, What on Earth's Going to Happen? (Glendale: Regal Books Division, G/L Publications, 1970), p. 36.

<sup>73</sup>Stedman, p. 39.

<sup>74</sup>Ibid.

<sup>75</sup>Stedman, p. 43.

<sup>76</sup>Stedman, p. 52.

<sup>77</sup>Stedman, p. 44.

<sup>78</sup>Stedman, p. 48-9.

<sup>79</sup>Stedman, p. 61.

<sup>80</sup>Stedman, p. 98.

<sup>81</sup>Stedman, p. 72.

<sup>82</sup>Stedman, p. 84.

<sup>83</sup>Arthur E. Bloomfield, The End of the Days: A Study of Daniel's Visions (Minneapolis: Bethany Fellowship, Inc., 1961), p. 36.

<sup>84</sup>Bloomfield, p. 37.

<sup>85</sup>Ibid.

<sup>86</sup>Bloomfield, p. 38.

<sup>87</sup>Bloomfield, p. 49.

<sup>88</sup>Bloomfield, p. 50.

<sup>89</sup>Bloomfield, p. 49.

<sup>90</sup>Bloomfield, p. 50-2.

<sup>91</sup>Bloomfield, p. 50-3.

<sup>92</sup>Bloomfield, p. 53.

<sup>93</sup>Bloomfield, p. 54.

<sup>94</sup>Bloomfield, p. 65.

<sup>95</sup>Bloomfield, p. 72.

<sup>96</sup>Bloomfield, p. 73.

<sup>97</sup>Bloomfield, p. 67.

<sup>98</sup>Bloomfield, p. 81.

<sup>99</sup>Bloomfield, p. 82.

<sup>100</sup>Bloomfield, p. 89.

<sup>101</sup>Bloomfield, p. 91.

<sup>102</sup>Bloomfield, p. 92.

<sup>103</sup>Bloomfield, p. 93.

<sup>104</sup>Bloomfield, p. 93-4.



<sup>105</sup>Bloomfield, p. 95.

<sup>106</sup>J. Barton Payne, Biblical Prophecy for Today  
(Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1978), p. 6.

<sup>107</sup>Payne, p. 80-3.

<sup>108</sup>Payne, p. 14.

<sup>109</sup>Payne, p. 18.

<sup>110</sup>Payne, p. 68.

<sup>111</sup>Ibid.

<sup>112</sup>Payne, p. 73.

<sup>113</sup>Payne, p. 73-4.

<sup>114</sup>Payne, p. 74-5.

<sup>115</sup>Payne, p. 26.

<sup>116</sup>George Eldon Ladd, The Last Things: An  
Eschatology for Laymen (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans  
Publishing Company, 1978), p. 24.

<sup>117</sup>Ladd, p. 47.

<sup>118</sup>Ladd, p. 48.

<sup>119</sup>Ladd, p. 60.

<sup>120</sup>Ladd, p. 117.

## Chapter 5

### A COMPARISON OF CURRENT WORKS WITH DANIEL

This chapter is an attempt to compare current popular writings on the book of Daniel with more scholarly expositions. Major themes that have arisen in the survey of current authors, in chapter four of this paper, will be investigated through comparison with the understanding of the book of Daniel as presented in chapters two and three of this paper. Discrepancies will be noted and analyzed, as to their "militaristic" tendencies in chapter six.

Current authors include many details in their reviews of the book of Daniel but tend to focus on the following topics as major concepts within their discussions:

The timing of the end times,  
The antichrist,  
The fourth empire or beast,  
Israel, and  
Armageddon.

Each of these areas will be looked at specifically and then any discrepancies found will be dealt with.

#### Timing

Each of the authors has dealt with this issue in his own way. Most believe in a pre-tribulation rapture event, a seven-year tribulation, a second coming of Christ in glory

and a 1000 year millennium. Most also believe that the tribulation will be divided into two parts of 3-1/2 years each.

Bloomfield, Payne and Ladd differ somewhat from the above emphasis. Bloomfield believes that there are three 3-1/2 year periods, only the last two being contained in the tribulation. Ladd and Payne tend more toward a post-tribulation rapture, which is in turn combined with the second coming of Christ. These last two authors also tend to be unconcerned with determining specific times and periods.

Although this topic receives considerable interest, it primarily concerns itself with the setting of the last times, not their tone. Thus this area of concern is not central to this discussion. This writer will simply acknowledge the many discrepancies and confusions that are attendant with such a discussion, and leave the reader to choose his/her own interpretation.

### The Antichrist

In discussions of the end times questions of "Who is the antichrist?" run a close second to those requesting information on "When are the end times?"

Figure 4 displays the various interpretations of the antichrist and the verses from which these concepts come. The main verses which are seen to refer to the antichrist are:

7:8, 11, 20-22, 24-26	"A little horn"
8:9-12, 23-25	the goat's horn; the king, master of intrigue
9:26-27	
11:36-45	the king who exalts himself

The list of attributes, assigned to the antichrist in Figure 4 includes the following categories:

Introduction of the antichrist,  
His acts against God, and  
His political actions,  
his relation to the Jews, and  
the antichrist as a one-world dictator.

These concepts will be viewed against the background information, on the book of Daniel, presented in chapters two and three of this paper.

#### Against God

Under the topic of the antichrist acting against God, there is little disagreement with the notion that the future antichrist will be a man of sin who speaks against God and stands against Christ. Because of the antichrist's stance of exalting himself as a god, and perhaps his role in politics, there has arisen the concept of a one-world church. None of the various authors offered any other verses than the ones listed in Figure 4 in support of this belief. These verses include Daniel 7:25, 9:26 and 11:37. The various assumptions of the current authors and comments from chapter three of this paper are listed below.

CATEGORIES (AUTHOR CODE)	VERSE(S)
<u>Introduction</u>	7:8, 20, 24-25; 8:23; 9:26-27; 11:36-39
<u>Against God</u>	
man of sin (P)	9:26, 27
speaks against God (P)	9:25; 11:36
" (TL)	7:21
" (HL)	7:24
stands against Christ (P)	8:25b
recognizes no other religion	11:37
religious leader (HL)	7:24
sets up religious system (B)	9:26
<u>Political Actions - Jews</u>	
takes away sacrifice, offers self to worship (S)	8:23b
attempts to settle Arab-Israeli issue (P)	9:26
protects the Jews (P)	8:25
" (TL, S)	9:27
covenant with the Jews (P, TL)	9:27
desecrate the temple (S)	9:27
<u>Political Actions - One-World Government</u>	
head of Federated States of Europe (P)	
political leader (HL)	7:24
one-world dictator (TL)	7:8
Roman & Israeli leader (HL)	
lawless system (P)	9:25
destructive (P)	8:24
" (TL)	7:8; 7:23

(Author Codes: P = Pentecost; TL = Tim LaHaye;  
HL = Hal Lindsey; B = Bloomfield; S = Stedman)

Table 4

#### Interpretations of Antichrist

Sources: Bloomfield, The End of the Days; Pentecost, Prophecy for Today; Payne, Biblical Prophecy for Today; Lindsey, The Late Great Planet Earth; Stedman, What on Earth's Going to Happen?

<u>Verse</u>	<u>Views of the antichrist</u>	<u>Comments from chapter three</u>
7:24	a religious leader	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. "times and laws" represent foundations of human existence, i.e. horn would remove divine order which has structured.</li> <li>2. historically represents Antiochus Epiphanes.</li> </ol>
9:26	sets up a religious system	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. This passage most likely refers to Jesus, not the antichrist.</li> <li>2. Other views believe that this verse refers to Antiochus and/or the antichrist.</li> </ol>
11:36-7	recognizes no other religion	"one of his strongest characteristics will be his impiety".

When we look at the interpretation of 9:26, we see that it assumes a break in continuity. Behind the idea of a break between the 69 week-years and the last "week" of seven years lies two assumptions. First, it is believed that the Church is not mentioned in Old Testament prophecy and secondly, that the he of v. 27 refers to the future antichrist.<sup>1</sup> The traditional-conservative interpretation would see vv. 26-27 as centering on activities of the first century, such as Christ's crucifixion and the destruction of the temple by Titus in 70 A.D.<sup>2</sup> With such an interpretation these verses cannot be seen as relating information about a future antichrist.

In considering the interpretation of 11:36-37, The Wesleyan Bible Commentary asserts that the antichrist will attain "the full control of Satanic possession in the rejec-

tion of God and the enthronement of self."<sup>3</sup> Another commentary believes that his impiety will involve raising "himself above every god, not merely 'subjectively in his lofty imagination' . . . , but also by his actions,"<sup>4</sup> raising himself "above the gods, but also above other objects of pious veneration,"<sup>5</sup> and raising himself "from all piety toward men and God."<sup>6</sup>

These views do not appear to agree with the following statements:

It is through an ingenious settlement of the Middle East problem that the Antichrist will make good his<sup>7</sup> promise to bring peace to a world terrified of war.

The ecumenicized Church of Rome and Protestantism, with the government of Antichrist to back it, could very quickly bring all the religions of the world into one gigantic tent, for they all have one thing in common - a religion of externals.<sup>8</sup>

Two other powers which are present during part of that time and which must be removed before the Antichrist reigns unopposed . . . The religious rival is the false Church which is left behind when the true Church is removed.<sup>9</sup>

Daniel 7:24, 9:26, and 11:36-37 do not appear to support the assumptions made in the above statements. The idea of a one-world church and a future settlement of the Middle East problem, as signs of a coming end times, do not appear to be supportive from the book of Daniel alone.

#### Political Actions - Jewish Relations

The antichrist is also seen as someone who will provide protection for the Jews by means of a covenant with them. He will attempt to settle the Arab-Israeli conflict, but all of these peaceable activities will be halted when he

desecrates the temple. The rationale for these beliefs come from Daniel 9:26-27 and 8:25.

We have already seen how 9:26-27 may not refer to the time of the antichrist, but to the first century A.D. Similarly, in c. 8 of Daniel, "verses 24 and 25 describe in vivid detail the power and policy of Antiochus," of the second century B.C.<sup>10</sup> "Almost without dissent interpreters agree that whoever the little horn of chapter seven is, Antichrist or other, the little horn of chapter eight is Antiochus Epiphanes."<sup>11</sup> Antiochus, it must be remembered, can be seen as a type of the antichrist.

Neither of these passages then demands to be interpreted as contributing direct information about the antichrist and his activities. Particularly when asserting that the antichrist will attempt to settle the Arab-Israeli conflict, one must first believe that 9:26 refers to the antichrist and then assume that it refers to this antichrist in the context of the activities of c. 11 also.

#### Political Actions - One-World Government

Current authors often postulate a one-world government. Such a concept is partially supported by the verses listed in Figure 4.

Verse 7:8 relates that the horn was "a little one" that "came up among them; and three of the first horns were uprooted before it." This verse does not appear to directly support envisioning the horn as a political leader or one-world dictator. Perhaps the horns represent kings or king-



doms, but little else can be said to support the above idea of a one-world dictator.

Verses 7:23, 24 (25) tell us the following items:

The fourth beast is equal to a fourth kingdom.  
 This fourth kingdom will devour the whole earth.  
 Ten kings will come from this kingdom.  
 After them another king will arise.  
 He will subdue three kings,  
 speak out against the Most High, and  
 oppress the saints.

The phrase, within this section of scripture, which could be seen as speaking of a one-world dictator, is "it . . . will devour the whole earth" (v. 23). This phrase, though, is in reference to the fourth kingdom, not specifically to the king who "will arise, different from the earlier ones" (v. 23).

The assumption of the destructive intent of a future antichrist cannot be highly disputed. Verse 8:24 and others speak of this goal. Whether these verses refer to the antichrist primarily, or only secondarily, the implications are the same.

Whether the antichrist is the leader of the Roman system only, or of both the Roman and Israeli systems, is not crucial to this discussion. Therefore, this point will not be critiqued any further.

In review, it has been seen that although the antichrist will be a ruthless political leader, there is not strong evidence from the book of Daniel to support the concept of the antichrist as the head of a one-world government. The next section, which will discuss the concept of a

fourth empire, will look further at the above concept.

### The Fourth Empire

The fourth beast, or the fourth world empire, obviously appears in Daniel c. 2 as feet and toes of iron and clay, and in c. 7 as the fourth beast "terrifying and frightening and very powerful . . . . It was different from all the former beasts, and it had ten horns" (v. 7:7). It can also be seen to appear within the context of c. 8 and c. 11. Chapter 11 discusses the Battle of Armageddon, so these references will be discussed later.

There are differing views on this phenomena of a fourth world empire, but most of the translators reviewed accepted this empire as a form of the Roman Empire. While Bloomfield and Pentecost tend to emphasize the division of this empire, in the ten toes (2:42) or ten horns (7:7), others emphasize the unification of this Roman government in the end times.

The prophet Daniel recorded 529 visions that are reaching their climax today: Nebuchadnezzar's image and vision of world government in chapter two, and Daniel's vision of world government in chapter seven.<sup>12</sup>

Even with this understanding of a future unification, Tim LaHaye realizes that this confederation will ultimately break into the pre-determined ten parts.

Hal Lindsey envisions something similar in his understanding of the two phases of Rome (v. 7:19, 20). The first phase is when one gains world authority and then disappears until the end times. The second phase is the

kingdom in the form of a ten-nation confederacy.<sup>13</sup> This ten nation confederation will arise out of the cultural inheritance of Rome.

One final view is that of Barton Payne who believes that Christ's kingdom will come during this fourth empire. He agrees with Pentecost and Bloomfield in seeing this Roman Empire as a divided kingdom<sup>14</sup> (7:7, 20; 2:42) but is not concerned with an exact number of ten.<sup>15</sup>

In determining whether these concepts are convergent with the ideas presented in chapters two and three of this paper, it is seen that it is an acceptable pattern to assume this fourth empire may be a representative of the Roman Empire. At least at this point in history, no power has arisen since the Roman Empire that could be considered a world power.

Is there sufficient reason to see these scripture references as representing a divided empire, or should it be viewed as a future confederation? Dispensationalists believe that these toes do represent a revived Roman Empire and the stone cut out of the mountain is the second coming of Christ. Conservative interpreters believe that the fourth kingdom was the Roman empire, and the stone the first coming of Christ. The toes speak of the fact that the historical Roman empire was a divided one.<sup>16</sup>

One commentator observes that this dividedness will not be as much external as internal. If there is a unity represented, it is an "attempt . . . fruitless, and altoget-

her in vain."<sup>17</sup> The Broadman Bible Commentary challenges the concept of a present application of this verse.

"Through the passing of time and of powers, does the truth within the interpretation of the fourth kingdom (as applied to the twentieth century) move from Greece to Rome and to other forms of dominions?"<sup>18</sup>

Does the image in Daniel c. 7 contribute to our understanding of this fourth empire? Chapter 7 speaks of 10 horns which rise out of the fourth beast and represent "ten kings who will come from this kingdom," (v. 24).

If this number ten is to be taken literally, it provides evidence for a revived Roman Empire.

If the number is taken symbolically as an idea of completeness, the ten kingdoms might well form the transition from the ancient Roman<sup>19</sup> Empire to the realm of the antichrist of the future.

Within the second view is the understanding that the ten nations would not be present during this future time.

Daniel c. 11, which will be discussed later, offers no additional scriptures that might speak of a possible future federation of ten nations.

It is true that the interpretation of the nature of the fourth empire can be debated. Although the present writer accepts the idea of a symbolic number of toes or horns, even the belief in a revived Roman Empire does not appear to support some of the statements made by current authors.

Some of the statements are as follows:

Tim LaHaye believes that after Russia, and her confederation, is destroyed by God,

a natural outcome would be the suggestion by world leaders. "Now that Communism, the great deterrent to world peace, is destroyed, let us insure that there will be no more wars by turning all our armies over to the United Nations" . . . World disarmament a program already well planned by the United Nations, would be implemented . . . but will be broken into ten kingdoms soon to be ruled by the Antichrist.<sup>20</sup>

The United Nations . . . we predict<sup>21</sup> its total failure on the authority of God's Word.

Look for the emergence of a "United States of Europe" composed of ten inner member nations. The Common Market is laying the groundwork for this political confederacy which will become the mightiest coalition on earth.<sup>22</sup>

Hal Lindsey envisions this unification occurring because of the following reasons:<sup>23</sup>

1. the threat of communism;
2. the economic threat of the United States, as perceived by the European nations;
3. the Europeans will sense the basic weakness of the United States in its will to resist Communism; and
4. the United States will cease to be the leader in the West.

In support of his third statement above, Lindsey says, "The military capability of the United States, though it is at present the most powerful in the world, has already been neutralized because no one has the courage to use it decisively."<sup>24</sup>

To summarize, the book of Daniel does not give justification for the naming of specific organizations or countries as members of this Roman confederation. Addition-

ally, there is not present within this Old Testament book any idea that this confederation will be a one-world government. Yes, it is presented as a powerful confederation, but understanding it to be a totally dominate system that rules the entire world is taking the concept beyond its scriptural bounds.

### Israel

Israel is a consistent topic of Biblical discussion but particularly so within prophecy. There are several concepts about Israel which arise: its centrality within prophetic theories, its significance within the "battle" context of Daniel c. 11, the distinction between prophecy as relates to the Israeli and Gentile nations, and the importance of the temple in Jerusalem.

Initially, it must be acknowledged that Israel is central. Specifically, as relates to this study, the book of Daniel is set within a time when the Israelites were in exile from their land. References to Israel as a nation are found in 8:9 and 11:16, 41, 45, while Jerusalem is referred to in 9:25-26. Although these references are the minimum that may be interpreted as referring to Israel, they are sufficient for our discussion. Even though Bloomfield notes that Daniel 9:27a refers to a covenant with many, not necessarily all Jews or Israel as a nation, at least it refers to the Jewish leaders. It must be understood that a nation is often seen as represented by its leaders.<sup>25</sup>

Current authors, in interpreting these references, fall into two major camps. The first is well represented in George Ladd's view:

the popular Dispensational position that Israel is the "Clock of prophecy" is misguided. Possibly the modern return of Israel to Palestine is a part of God's purpose for Israel, but<sup>26</sup> the New Testament sheds no light on this problem.

Ladd's lack of emphasis upon the nation of Israel is a result of his unification of the two divergent Old Testament and New Testament eschatological focuses.

In the Old Testament the eschatological salvation is always pictured in terms of the national theocratic fate of the people Israel. There are no clear prophecies of the Christian Church as such in the Old Testament.

But "eschatology in the New Testament deals eagerly with the destiny of the church."<sup>28</sup> Ladd's removal of distinctions between these two themes, Israel and the Church, draws his focus away from Israel as a crucial nation in the end times.

On the other side, several authors see the Israeli nation as central in and crucial to prophetic fulfillment. J. Dwight Pentecost cites a "great body of scripture that tells us of a coming regathering and restoration of the Jews to Palestine,"<sup>29</sup> and specifically mentions Daniel 9:26-27. Bloomfield interprets Nebuchadnezzar's vision, Daniel c. 2, as relating specifically to the Middle East.

Twice we are told that when the stone strikes the image, it breaks in pieces the gold, the silver, the brass and the iron . . . But today . . . only the iron and clay of the feet are left. If the stone should strike now, it could crumble only the toes. So, great things are going to happen in the Middle East; unheard of changes are coming. <sup>30</sup>The world will again revolve around the Middle East.

Israel is given a central focus within prophetic theories for several reasons. The noticeable beginning of the tribulation is postulated as the signing of a covenant between Israel and a great world leader.<sup>31</sup> In addition, Israel becomes the stage for the activities of the anti-christ and thus for the final battle of Armageddon.

Israel is seen as serving as a stage for the anti-christ in several ways. The first is the signing of the covenant, and the second is centered around the antichrist's activities in the Temple (both are seen in Daniel 9:27). The temple is mentioned in Daniel 8:11, 13; 9:26, 27; 11:31, but there is disagreement over the centrality of the temple in the end times. If 9:27 speaks of the antichrist appearing in the temple, and the temple was destroyed in 70 A.D., how will this occur? Ray Stedman asserts that the temple must be rebuilt and "in view of that expectation perhaps the most important event since the first century was the capture of old Jerusalem by the Jews in the Six Day War of 1967."<sup>32</sup>

The Scriptures agree that the "desolating sacrilege" our Lord refers to is a man, a man of world prominence who enters the rebuilt temple in the city of Jerusalem and assumes the prerogatives and claims the powers of Deity.<sup>33</sup>

Similarly Tim LaHaye mentions six scriptures that require the rebuilding of the temple. Two of these are Daniel 9:27 and 12:11, and two refer back to Daniel, Matthew 24:15 and Mark 13:14. (Revelation 11:1-2 and 2 Thessalonians 2:3-4 are the last two.)<sup>34</sup>

J. Barton Payne does not agree with this emphasis



upon a literal rebuilding of the temple.

Some have thought that the "temple" to which the apostle here refers must be a building in Jerusalem..., but no such location is suggested. Rather, Paul's metaphorical use of this word in his other epistles (cf. I Cor. 3:17; II Cor. 6:16; Eph. 2:21) suggests that it here refers to the way in which the Antichrist, satanically and deceptively, attempts to put himself in the place of God as the object of men's devotion.<sup>35</sup>

Ladd Similarly believes that Daniel 9:25-27 can be interpreted in a messianic sense which sees Christ, not antichrist, as the subject.<sup>36</sup> Within this context,

the temple itself, which, following the rending of the veil (Mark 15:38) will . . . become abominable and unacceptable to the Lord. By this language the complete destruction of the temple is signified. This state of destruction will continue even until the consummation or "full end" . . . .<sup>37</sup>

The reader may make his or her own conclusions about these two divergent interpretations. Several comments will be made in chapter six of this paper concerning the implications of these views for a militaristic interpretation of the book of Daniel.

The significance of Israel, as the stage for the "battle" activities of Daniel c. 11 and of the antichrist, will be discussed in the next section.

### Armageddon

The eleventh chapter of Daniel is perhaps the most difficult to understand and translate. Current authors tend to follow some general themes in its interpretation, yet their differences are also striking.

Several translators see this chapter as being unique

in its treatment of the end times. "Only Daniel traces the exploits of Antichrist as such, regardless of whether they involve the nations, or the saints, or the Jews."<sup>38</sup> Payne also sees this chapter as presenting the only specific information about the international activities of the anti-christ.<sup>39</sup>

Although this distinction may be true, it will be seen that much of the interpretation of these verses is done with additional input of verses outside the book of Daniel, particularly Revelation and Ezekiel c. 38-39. This fact becomes important when investigating the identification of c. 11's participants.

One of the major interests of the current authors, in dealing with this chapter, is a determination of the characters who will participate in these battles. Daniel 11:40-45 are of major importance in this discussion. These verses are as follows:

At the time of the end the king of the South will engage him in battle, and the king of the North will storm out against him with chariots and cavalry and a great fleet of ships. He will invade many countries and sweep through them like a flood. He will also invade the Beautiful Land. Many countries will fall, but Edom, Moab and the leaders of Ammon will be delivered from his hand. He will extend his power over many countries; Egypt will not escape. He will gain control of the treasures of gold and silver and all the riches of Egypt, with the Libyans and Nubians in submission. But reports from the east and the north will alarm him, and he will set out in a great rage to destroy and annihilate many. He will pitch his royal tents between the seas at the beautiful holy mountain. Yet he will come to his end, and no one will help him.

The various interpretations of these verses are listed in Figure 5. In attempting to understand these

<u>Verse(s)</u>	<u>Pentecost</u>	<u>Hal Lindsay</u>	<u>Payne</u>	<u>Bloomfield</u>
11:40	Russia & Egypt go against Palestine	Arab-African confederacy headed by Egypt attacks	Federated States move against Palestine and Egypt	
11:41	Russia invades Israel	Russia invades Israel as a warning		
11:42-3		Russians double-crosses Egypt	Antichrist invades Egypt	Egypt tries to overcome Africa, when falls African people unite with the antichrist
11:44	Asiatic coalition	Russian forces return from Egypt to withstand Eastern coalition		This is an independent group, anyone other than Europe.
11:45	Seas = Dead and Med- iterranean Seas		Megiddo	
11:16	Antichrist is in authority over Israel. Russia seen as attacker			
Rev. 19	Forces go against Christ			
Rev. 16:13, 14,16		Roman Dictator goes against the Oriental forces		

**Table 5**

Interpretations of Daniel 11:40-45

Sources: Arthur E. Bloomfield, The End of the Days; J. Dwight Pentecost, Prophecy For Today; J. Barton Payne, Biblical Prophecy for Today; Hal Lindsey, The Late Great Planet Earth.

larger than perhaps first understood. Payne sees that the theater of battle cannot be restricted to north central Palestine but will probably overflow into Philistia, Edom, Moab and Ammon.<sup>41</sup> He also sees the possibility of battle effects continuing for five months (Rev. 9:5, 10).<sup>42</sup> Hal Lindsey talks of world-wide destruction.<sup>43</sup> Although his postulated starting point for this destruction will be the battle of Armageddon, "the conflict will not be limited to the Middle East."<sup>44</sup>

Do these modern authors correctly identify these participants of a future battle? This paper gives historical information about the identity of these forces that is relevant to 11:5-35. Its pages relay the information that these historical forces, as presented in 11:36-45, may be a type of the future antichrist and his activities. Either as a type of the antichrist, or as referring to the antichrist alone, these latter verses are best understood as identifying future enemies of this antichrist. None of the commentaries attempted to identify the exact identity of these future enemies.

### Russia

The identification of Russia within scripture appear to this writer to be drawn out to extremes. It is important to look at the reasons, offered by current authors, for their identification of Russia as a major participant in the future battle of Armageddon.

Tim LaHaye does not rely heavily upon the names

interpretations, the authors' identification of the kings and powers mentioned in c. 11 needs to be reviewed.

<u>Title</u>	<u>Identification</u>	<u>Verse(s)</u>	<u>Author Code</u>
1st great power	European confederacy		P
King of North	Russian confederacy "	Ezek 38-9 Dan 11:40	P Pa, HL, TL
King of South	Egypt " Africans Egypt, and maybe more	Dan 11 Dan 11:40 Dan 11:40 Dan 11:25, B 40	P Pa, HL TL B
King of East	nations from beyond Euphrates Asiatic coalition Romans Any nation beyond Europe (Britain, U.S., allies)	Rev 16:12 Dan 11:44 Dan 11:44 Dan 11:44 Ezek	P P HL B

(Author Codes: P = Pentecost; Pa = Payne; HL = Hal Lindsey; TL = Tim LaHaye; B = Bloomfield)

Although several authors refer back to Ezekiel c. 38-39 as substantiating their "identification claims," Tim LaHaye asserts that this passage is not equivalent to Armageddon. In Ezekiel Israel's dwelling is secure, at least at the beginning, and there are two confederations of nations which go out against Israel. In Daniel these things are not true.<sup>40</sup> Stedman, nevertheless, appears to feel comfortable with lumping together the passages which he feels refer to Russia and includes Ezekiel 39 and 39, Daniel 11, Joel 2 and Isaiah 10. He identifies Russia in these scriptures from the names presented in Ezekiel.

Another minor theme that current authors see in this chapter of Daniel is the idea of battle effects that are

presented in Ezekiel 38 and 39 as his rationale for identifying Russia. He does quote Hal Lindsey's evaluation of the words Gog, Magog, Ros, Meschech and Tubal (from Ezekiel 38:2), and their historical reference to people who lived in what is now modern Russia.<sup>45</sup> Lindsey is also quoted as believing that "the final evidence for identifying this northern commander lies in its geographical location from Israel."<sup>46</sup>

LaHaye then moves beyond this: "the evidence for the identity of Russia as the principal nation in this prophecy does not rest solely on etymology."<sup>47</sup> He lists the following reasons: Russian mistreatment of the Jews.<sup>48</sup>

There are two areas that need to be questioned. Current authors stress the identification of Russia. In addition, they believe that policies characteristic of Russia, such as communism, are under divine attack. Some comments are listed below:

Russia has actually broken three toes off the image, having taken over totally Rumania, Bulgaria, and Hungary . . . Mark those countries well and watch them,<sup>49</sup> God will break Russia, or Russia will break Daniel

At this very moment there sit enthroned in Moscow and Peking, systems and individual leaders who are as specifically antichrist as were the Caesars at their worst.<sup>50</sup>

I have no hesitancy whatsoever in declaring to you from the Word that Russian Communism,<sup>51</sup> . . . is a doomed system which God is going to judge.

The Bible deals with the downfall of Russia in very short order. When you consider the amount of space that Scripture gives to what is truly important in God's sight, it is remarkable that the threat to the world and to God's cause from atheistic Russia is dealt with so briefly. The story is contained largely in two

chapters from the Book of Ezekiel, chapters 38 and 39. These are supplemented by passages in Daniel 11, Joel 2 and Isaiah 10.<sup>52</sup>

Does Daniel c. 11 present us with justifiable reasons for naming Russia specifically? It has been seen that one commentary simply identifies the kings of the north and south as future enemies of the antichrist. Other commentaries see these kings as the Seleucids and Ptolomies, respectively, and do not mention any specific parallels to the end times.<sup>53</sup> One final commentary gives additional light on this topic:

The king against whom the king of the south pushes . . . vers. 21-39, is not only distinctly designated as the king of the north (vers. 13-21), but also, according to vers. 40-43, he advances from the north against the Holy Land and against Egypt; thus also, according to vers. 40b-43, must be identifiable with the king of the north.<sup>54</sup>

Thus the king of the north is identical with the king of vv. 11:36-39 and cannot be someone other than the antichrist.

There is little evidence, within the book of Daniel, for identification of Russia as a major participant in the battles of the last times. Nor is there reason to declare that God has doomed Russian Communism.

### Weaponry

Modern authors make several references to the use of weapons in the end times. Some of these references appear to read into the pages of scripture specifics about these implements of war. Although some of the biblical references are from Revelation and other parts of the Bible, they are translated back into the concept of the Armageddon in

Daniel.

He also predicts [Rev. 9:15-18] that entire islands and mountains would be blown off the map. It seems to indicate an all-out attack of ballistic<sup>55</sup> missiles upon the great metropolitan areas of the world.

Isaiah predicts in chapter 24 . . . "Therefore, a curse devours the earth, and its inhabitants suffer for their guilt; therefore the inhabitants of the earth are scorched (burned), and few men are left (verses 1, 5, 6)." . . . All of these verses seem to indicate the unleashing of incredible weapons the world over.<sup>56</sup>

Ezekiel used terms meaningful to his people, "Horses, swords, armor, bucklers, and shields," could be symbolic terms of implements of warfare which in our day would represent tanks, M-16's, machine guns, rockets, boozookas, etc.<sup>57</sup>

The description of torrents of fire and brimstone raining down upon the Red Army, coupled with an unprecedented shaking of the land of Israel could well be describing the use<sup>58</sup> of tactical nuclear weapons against them by the Romans.

Because this world will be dissolved in a gigantic atomic explosion (not set off by man, but controlled by God), . . .<sup>59</sup>

As long as these assumptions are seen as assumptions and attached to the verses from which they originate, perhaps they are appropriate. They lose their appropriateness, and usefulness, when they are accepted as fact, and when they are read into other verses. Great caution must be taken in the use of such comments.

### Summary

The statements of current authors' not supported by the scripture of the book of Daniel, are listed below.

The antichrist is seen as a peace-maker in the Middle East crisis.

The antichrist is seen as the instigator and leader of a world-wide religious system.



The fourth empire is seen as a presently divided group of nations which will be unified into a future confederation, or a one-world government.

This one-world government is seen in the activities of the Common Market.

The future enemies of the antichrist are specifically named.

Other assumptions, which can be questioned, include:

Israel is the time-piece of the end times.

The use of modern weapons, including atomic weapons, is seen.

Chapter six will review these discrepancies to discover whether they support militaristic concepts.

## FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup>Bert H. Hall, Isaiah through Malachi, ed. Charles W. Carter, The Wesleyan Bible Commentary, Vol. 3 (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1969), p. 546-7.

<sup>2</sup>Hall, p. 546.

<sup>3</sup>Hall, p. 556.

<sup>4</sup>C. R. Kiel, Biblical Commentary on the Book of Daniel, trans. M. G. Easton (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company), p. 463.

<sup>5</sup>Kiel, p. 464.

<sup>6</sup>Kiel, p. 465.

<sup>7</sup>Hal Lindsey, The Late Great Planet Earth (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1970), p. 152.

<sup>8</sup>Tim LaHaye, The Beginning of the End (Wheaton: Tyndale House Publishers, 1972), p. 151.

<sup>9</sup>Ray C. Stedman, What on Earth's Going to Happen? (Glendale: Regal Books Division, G/L Publications, 1970), p. 84.

<sup>10</sup>Hall, p. 541.

<sup>11</sup>Roy E. Swim, Daniel, ed. A. F. Harper, Beacon Bible Commentary Vol. III, The Major Prophets (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press, 1966), p. 667.

<sup>12</sup>LaHaye, p. 156.

<sup>13</sup>Lindsey, p. 92.

<sup>14</sup>Lindsey, p. 14.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid.

<sup>16</sup>Hall, p. 516.

<sup>17</sup>Kiel, p. 108.

<sup>18</sup>John Joseph Owens, Jeremiah - Daniel, ed. Clifton J. Allen, The Broadman Bible Commentary, Vol. 6 (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1971), p. 392.

<sup>19</sup>Hall, p. 537.

<sup>20</sup>LaHaye, p. 159.

<sup>21</sup>LaHaye, p. 160.

<sup>22</sup>Lindsey, p. 185.

<sup>23</sup>Lindsey, p. 95.

<sup>24</sup>Lindsey, p. 186.

<sup>25</sup>Arthur E. Bloomfield, The End of the Days: A Study of Daniel's Visions (Minneapolis: Bethany Fellowship, Inc., 1961), p. 66.

<sup>26</sup>George Eldon Ladd, The Last Things (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1978), p. 28.

<sup>27</sup>Ladd, pp. 8-9.

<sup>28</sup>Ibid.

<sup>29</sup>J. Dwight Pentecost, Prophecy for Today (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1961), p. 67.

<sup>30</sup>Bloomfield, p. 95.

<sup>31</sup>LaHaye, p. 83.

<sup>32</sup>Stedman, p. 42.

<sup>33</sup>Stedman, p. 52.

<sup>34</sup>LaHaye, p. 50.

<sup>35</sup>J. Barton Payne, Biblical Prophecy for Today (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1978), pp. 23-24.

<sup>36</sup>Ladd, p. 61.

<sup>37</sup>Ibid.

<sup>38</sup>Bloomfield, p. 213.

<sup>39</sup>Payne, p. 68.

<sup>40</sup>LaHaye, p. 78-79.

<sup>41</sup>Payne, p. 74.

<sup>42</sup>Ibid.

<sup>43</sup>Lindsey, p. 165.

<sup>44</sup>Lindsey, p. 166.

- <sup>45</sup>LaHaye, p. 64-66.
- <sup>46</sup>LaHaye, p. 66.
- <sup>47</sup>LaHaye, p. 64.
- <sup>48</sup>LaHaye, p. 64-65.
- <sup>49</sup>Bloomfield, p. 93.
- <sup>50</sup>Payne, p. 25.
- <sup>51</sup>Pentecost, p. 135.
- <sup>52</sup>Stedman, p. 85.
- <sup>53</sup>Swim, p. 680-681.
- <sup>54</sup>Kiel, p. 470.
- <sup>55</sup>Lindsey, p. 166.
- <sup>56</sup>Lindsey, p. 167.
- <sup>57</sup>LaHaye, p. 74.
- <sup>58</sup>Lindsey, p. 161.
- <sup>59</sup>LaHaye, p. 144.

## Chapter 6

### MILITARISM?

The definition of militarism, presented in chapter one of this paper, included the following elements:<sup>1</sup> pre-dominance of military class or prevalence of their ideals; spirit which exalts military virtues or ideals; policy of aggressive military preparedness. Do any of these tendencies appear in the discrepancies that were listed at the end of chapter five?

This writer believes that the tendencies to see future unification as a sign of the end times, or as an activity involving the antichrist, causes people to distrust any tendency toward or mention of a one-world government. Thus, there is distrust of proposals for world-wide communication and cooperation. If people are warned against future unification, little effort will be made to understand other countries or to move toward a unified attempt at solving some of the world-wide problems, such as hunger, environmental pollution, etc.

Hal Lindsey illustrates this point well when he lists his reasons for believing in the future unification of a European Common Market. Within this list, his third reason is that the

Europeans sense the basic weakness of the United States in its will to resist Communism. They seem to realize that if Europe were really at stake the United States would be dragging its feet in reacting against a Russian invasion.<sup>2</sup>

Similarly he says, "The military capability of the United States, though it is at present the most powerful in the world, has already been neutralized because no one has the courage to use it decisively."<sup>3</sup>

Although Lindsey also mentions some economic facts, his major points revolve around Russia's threat and strength, and the United States' military weakness. He then has "a spirit that exalts military virtues" and laments the lack of a "policy of aggressive military preparedness."

Beyond directly calling for a strong military, Lindsey is also proposing an attitude which will keep the United States ready for attack, for battle and for confrontation. Such an attitude does not permit strong attempts at maintaining peace.

Chapter five, of this paper, has revealed the tendency of modern authors to name specific participants in the activities of the end times.

Many of the current authors do not hesitate to assume that Russia will be a major participant. They are fairly definite in that identification and some also identify communism as one of God's "future targets." This "name-calling" also extends to include the European Common Market and Red China. "It is conjecture on this writer's [Hal Lindsey's] part, but it appears that the Oriental

powers, headed by Red China, will be permitted to mobilize its vast army by the Roman Dictator. . . ."4

Even though these authors often acknowledge the element of conjecture, they also project the future activities of these participants to the point that readers may be led to forget their "conjectured" starting point. If readers are accepting these theories as reality, or even possibility, what happens to their present attitude toward these countries or entities? This author believes that such conjecture leads to a suspicion of the named countries, Russia and Red China, and of named entities, The Common Market and the United Nations. Suspicion is often the cause of, and reason for, "a policy of aggressive military preparedness."

When a leader on the brink of war believes that his adversary will attack him, the chances of war are fairly high. When both leaders share this perception concerning each other's intent, war becomes a virtual certainty.

Other than the possible development of skepticism toward other countries, these authors reveal their militaristic tendencies in statements such as the following: "Look for the papacy to become even more involved in world politics especially in proposals for bringing world peace and world-wide economic prosperity."<sup>6</sup> Here, Hal Lindsey implies that there is something incorrect in working toward world peace.

A third discrepancy, listed in chapter five, is the assumption of a future world-wide religious system. The suspicion of the ecumenical movement seems largely drawn

from fears that it signifies the approaching end-times and will be dominated eventually by the antichrist. Although such a fear does not indicate anything concerning militarism, it provides for isolation of Christians across denominational lines and nurtures the attitude of suspicion for those unlike one's own self and group. It is this type of attitude which, on a larger and more national scale, keeps nations from working toward understanding and common problem solving.

Although the current authors do not assign their assumptions about the use of modern weapons to the book of Daniel, their readers may be doing so. This focus on weapons draws the reader away from thoughts of judgment by God, to human judgment. Certain authors did express their belief that these destructive effects will be caused by God, and not humans. When people assume it is their responsibility to enact judgment, militarism and militaristic ideas can result. In the 1600's, in England,

The Fifth Monarchy Men maintained that according to Biblical prophecy Christ was soon to return to establish on earth the "Fifth Monarchy" in succession to the Assyrian, Persian, Greek, and Roman empires . . . some wished<sub>7</sub> to use force to establish the Fifth Monarchy  
 . . .



## FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup>Webster's Collegiate Dictionary (5th ed.; Springfield: G. and C. Merriam Co., 1947), p. 633.

<sup>2</sup>Hal Lindsey, The Late Great Planet Earth (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1970), p. 95.

<sup>3</sup>Lindsey, p. 184.

<sup>4</sup>J. Dwight Pentecost, Prophecy for Today (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1961), p. 158.

<sup>5</sup>John G. Stoessinger, Why Nations Go To War (New York: St. Martins Press, 1982), p. 211.

<sup>6</sup>Lindsey, p. 185.

<sup>7</sup>Kenneth Scott Latourette, A History of Christianity Vol. II, Reformation to the Present (New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1953), p. 822.

## Chapter 7

### CONCLUSIONS

Within this chapter the current writer will discuss weaknesses of this study, will present some further comments and then will determine whether this study has achieved its goal.

#### Acknowledged Weaknesses

The first possible weakness is that most of the authors surveyed are in the dispensational or evangelical camps, while the author is an evangelical. The appearance may be then of an outsider attacking these authors from a prior bias. While it is true that these works have been evaluated against evangelical (traditional-conservative) guidelines, most of the conclusions remain valid. The discrepancies noted in chapter five of this paper could have been noted by dispensationalists as well.

Perhaps the future unification of ten nations will occur, but there remains no reason, or justification, for specifically identifying such possible confederations. No one can know exactly who will be involved. Conjecture is possible, but caution is necessary. Similarly, even if the antichrist can be seen to be a peace-maker in the Middle East, and the creator of a world-wide religious system,

designations of these entities should also be tempered with caution. Despite a certainty that the world, as we know it, will end, and that these activities will mark that ending, speculation must be attempted only with great caution. A curiosity and desire to know must be tempered, or assertions and proposals will become extreme. The Biblical text may become distorted.

An additional weakness is seen in that this paper artificially removes the book of Daniel from interaction with other Biblical references of the end times. Although this may reduce the applicability of the conclusions of this paper, it does not nullify them. Even when all scriptures referring to the end times are considered, many divergent opinions occur. Observe the various theories, applications and the variety of books currently available.

#### A Further Comment

The United States is mentioned only infrequently in current eschatological works. Some of the comments are as follows:

We realize that the United States is not mentioned in the Bible. However, it is certain that the leadership of the West must shift to Rome, in its revived form, and if the United States is still around at that time, it will not be the power it now is.<sup>1</sup>

The United States may be aligned with the Western forces headed by the ten-nation Revived Roman Empire of Europe . . . It is quite possible that Ezekiel was referring to the United States in part when he said: "I will send fire - upon those who dwell securely in the coastlands. . .".<sup>2</sup>

The Federated States of Europe will include, not only the continental states of Europe, but also those nations that were born out of Europe in the beginning.<sup>3</sup>

Most Bible scholars have identified England as the nation of Tarshish . . . The "young lions" seem to belong to Tarshish and could be the only reference to the United States, Canada, and Australia to be found in Scripture.<sup>4</sup>

This writer feels that it would be very profitable to review eschatological literature coming out of other countries, particularly Europe and European nations. America is in a removed status, removed from the center of activities as referred to in Daniel (although not removed from the general effects and implications of the End Times.) It would be enlightening to see the comments of those nations closer to the "center" of future activities. Perhaps our American perspective has been tainted by this sense of separateness.

#### Militarism Superimposed onto Daniel?

The visions of Daniel often center around conflict, primarily military in nature. Yet these visions are presented within the context of the entire book of Daniel. Daniel includes several chapters which are concerned with confrontation between a heathen (often the king) and a believing Jew. In each of the confrontations, despite what was done to them, the Jew's strongest "weapons" were his words and his reliance upon God. In each instance, neither militaristic ideas, nor any mention of aggressiveness, are found. The heathen may have invoked a punishment, but the Jews

involved submitted themselves to this punishment.

An explanation of this internal confusion of themes within the book of Daniel may be explained by a review of the characters of each chapter and their actions.

<u>Chapter</u>	<u>Incident</u>
2	King threatens Daniel's life, with the other magicians, Daniel interprets his dream for him.
3	The three Hebrews refuse to bow to the king's image and are thrown into the furnace.
4	God strikes the king with a disease.
5	Daniel interprets the king's vision.
6	Daniel is thrown into the lions' den because of the other presidents' jealousy.
7	Daniel's dream of four beasts, the fourth beast is terrible, the little horn destructive.
8	Daniel's vision of a ram and a goat that war against each other.
9	Daniel's prayer and vision of seventy seven's.
10	Daniel is reassured through a vision of a man.
11	The kings of the south and the north battle.
12	"There will be a time of distress," Daniel's question of "how long" is never directly answered.

In Daniel, those people who are closest to God are presented in terms and activities that carry no hint of militaristic attitudes on their part. Battles, anger and punishment are attributed either to God's enemies or to God's judgment on those enemies and on unbelievers. Thus the little horn is seen as destructive, Antiochus Epiphanes

is known to have persecuted the Jews, and the future battles are seen as culminating in a final skirmish against God.

Chapter five has presented some discrepancies between what modern authors write, and what the book of Daniel presents. Chapter six has shown how these discrepancies can provide support for militaristic interpretations of the end times, and even of current events. In this writer's opinion some current eschatological works do superimpose militarism and militaristic ideas upon the book of Daniel.

## FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup>Hal Lindsey, The Late Great Planet Earth (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1970), p. 96.

<sup>2</sup>Lindsey, p. 161.

<sup>3</sup>J. Dwight Pentecost, Prophecy for Today (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1961), p. 107.

<sup>4</sup>Tim LaHaye, The Beginning of the End (Wheaton: Tyndale House Publishers, 1972), p. 70.

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