

BIBLE STUDIES

"Now these were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, examining the Scriptures daily, whether these things **were** so" (Acts 17. 11).

VOLUME 20.

NEEDED TRUTH PUBLISHING OFFICE,
ROBOT BUILDINGS, LEEDS ROAD,
BRADFORD.

Printed in England by James Harwood Ltd*, Derby.

Editors:

J. Miller, Jas. 'Martin, A. T. Doodson, S. Burrows, F. L. Evans, J. Baird.

CONTENTS

Editorials..	1, 13, 23, 33, 53, 65, 75, 87 , 107
The Book of Daniel:	<i>Page</i>
Daniel, the faithful c a p t i v e	Chapter 1. 2
Nebuchadnezzar's d r e a m	Chapter. 2. 14
Nebuchadnezzar's golden i m a g e	Chapter 3. 25
The Heavens do r u l e	Chapter 4. 34
Belshazzar's f e a s t	Chapter 5. 46
Daniel in the den of l i o n s	Chapter 6. 55
The vision of the four beasts.	Chapter 7. 66
The vision of the ram and h e - g o a t	Chapter 8. 76
Daniel's prayer and the vision of 70 w e e k s . .	Chapter 9. 88
The vision at Hiddekel.	Chapter 10. 100
The writing of t r u t h . . Chapter 10., 21., and Chapter 11.	109
Michael and the last days.	Chapter 12. 119
Spiritual Exercise	99
The Lord's Day.	108
The aims of Bible Studies—A Reminder	117
Comments.. .. 10, 20, 32 , 42, 51, 63, 72 , 83 , 95, 106, 115 , 126	
Questions and Answers.. 11 , 22, 32, 43, 52, 64, 74, 85, 97, 116, 127	
N o t i c e s	32, 74 , 106, 118

BIBLE STUDIES

"Now these were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the" word with all readiness of mind, examining the Scriptures daily, whether these things were so" (Acts 17. 11.)

VOLUME 20.

JANUARY, 1952.

CONTENTS.

	<i>Page</i>
Editorial	1
The Book of Daniel:	
Daniel, the faithful captive.	2
C o m m e n t s	10
Q u e s t i o n s a n d A n s w e r s	11

EDITORIAL.

Once more **we** greet fellow students and pray **that** our meditations on **the** life and character of **this** wonderful man, Daniel, and in the book that bears **his** name, **may be** to our spiritual profit. For, indeed, all knowledge of prophetic truths **is with the** object of purifying our lives. So wrote the beloved Apostle John, "Every one that **hath** this hope set on Him **purifieth** himself, even **as He is pure**" (1 John 3. 3).

To love **the** men that God loves **is** always **a** sure line to follow. From their lives **we** shall be **safe** in imitating the qualities that merit God's love. Of Daniel **it is said** that **he** was, "greatly beloved." God's chosen men, **whether** for **the** rank and file occupations, or for the more onerous task of leadership, **must pass** through God's school of instruction. This experience **is** often severe and searching. Its object **is** to **test the** calibre of the man, to make firm **the** fibre of **his** being and to consume **the waste**.

Daniel, though of noble blood, very early in his life **had** to leave **the** primrose path of life for the thorny road of exile. He **was** permitted to **see** his king humbled, the Temple of **his** God desecrated, and then **was** taken far from the promised land, where loved ones dwelt, to an alien king's court. What **a** change! Now over **him was** one of the cruellest of autocratic despots, who callously included in his code of punishments the fiery furnace, the slaying of sons before **a** father's eyes, and then putting out the latter that his last visible memory might be the agony of his dying offspring. What kept this youth from falling into the error and corruption of such a scene? **We** judge **his** early training in **the sacred** writings. **He** would recall the experiences of **a** Joseph, who lived **at** the beginning of the history of his race, and would feel that now **he was** being very similarly tested, perchance, **as** everything **seemed** to indicate, **at the** end of their history **as** a nation. **He** would have read the psalms of David. The key to such success **as** he attained lies in the words, "**But** Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself...." (1. 8). His first battle was indicative of his final victory. **Yea, he** passed through many trials

victoriously, and it is great tribute to the truth of the words spoken by king Darius, "Thy God whom thou servest continually, he will deliver thee," that for fully seventy years Daniel lived almost miraculously.

Companions also play a great part in the career of God's chosen men. The psalmist (some commentators think him Daniel) has written, "I am a companion of all them that fear Thee, and of them that observe Thy precepts" (Psalm 119. 63). Daniel was wise and happy in his choice in this sphere, a sphere that has a marked influence for good or evil in the lives of all young disciples of our Lord Jesus Christ.

God gave him tact and wisdom in dealing with his superiors. Daniel made no haughty claims for himself. This is wise action. The credit and glory he ascribed to the Lord, who was putting the very words of wisdom into his mouth.

The message of Daniel's life was, and is, one of the greatest importance to the Jewish and the Gentile world. Few men have had such a weighty commission. World history, from his day down past our own day, was being displayed in prophetic visions through this God-chosen man. Many centuries later, when the perturbed apostles asked the Lord Jesus, in all the eagerness expressed even in the written word, "Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of Thy coming, and of the end of the world? Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man lead you astray. . . . When therefore ye see the abomination of desolation, which was spoken of by Daniel the prophet. . . . then shall be great tribulation" (Matthew 24.).

One more point. Daniel's prophecy reveals most pointedly, and in sharp contrast, the wisdom, power, mercy, faithfulness and final supremacy of the God of heaven—our God—and the folly, weakness, cruelty, duplicity and ultimate doom of man, even of the highest and most noble of the race. This is a line worthy of future study.

Daniel's testing commenced with a very thin-edged wedge. But his refraining from spiritually contaminated food provided for him not only a clean healthy body, but strength of mind, courage, and clear vision of the will of God, and frustrated the blinding effects of the adversary as to the sinfulness of sin (compare 2 Corinthians 4. 1-6). Much more might be written. Our contributors have provided various aspects of this exemplary man's qualities. May we, then, amidst a world where self-gratification is prominent, display self-sacrifice, where mastery is much sought after, render humble service, and where possession is the general aim, learn renunciation. We cull, in closing, an exhortation from our last year's study: "Wherefore let them also that suffer according to the will of God commit their souls (lives) in well-doing unto a faithful Creator" (1 Peter 4. 19).

Jas. Martin.

THE BOOK OF DANIEL.

Daniel, the faithful captive.

(Chapter 1.).

From Cowdenbeath. —A comparison of verse 1 with Jeremiah 25. 1 would show that, in the year previous to his succession to the throne of Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar besieged Jerusalem for the first time and carried away certain princely young men. Daniel 2. 1 would agree with this, for by the second year of the king's reign Daniel had been three years in captivity.

It was no chance happening, but an overruling act of God, that Daniel was taken captive. Of him **it** might **be** said, as **it** was said of Joseph, " He sent a man before them. " Eight years later 10, 000 chief men were carried away, and, after another eleven years, Jerusalem was completely destroyed and the rest of the people, except the very poorest, were led away. Daniel remained in Babylon during the seventy years of Judah's captivity. He was still there when Cyrus in the first year of his reign made his important proclamation giving liberty to the captives to return to build Jerusalem.

Daniel **did** not refuse to be educated, **but** he valiantly took his stand when asked to violate his conscience. He and his three friends were given new names. Their Hebrew names ended with divine titles, two with *El* and two with *Jah*. It is given **by at** least one authority that their new names were after Babylonish divinities. This is helpful to an understanding of the following verse which, because it begins with "**but**," is **put** in contrast. The king might associate them in name with idolatry, **but** he was not able to command their submission to idolatrous practices. Though **it is** not expressly stated, **it** would seem that **we** are to understand that the king's food was offered to those idols. There was nothing wrong with the nature of the food [1]. The law stated no prohibition against partaking of dainties or wine. It was more pleasing to the palate to **eat** of these than to **eat** pulse; the question was not one of palate **but** of conscience. A pure conscience was **a** thing cherished **by** Daniel. He stood faithful to what he knew and believed to **be** right and pleasing to God. His reward **was** the finding of favour with the prince of the eunuchs.

Daniel's approach to this man is to **be** admired. There was **a** complete absence of defiance, **but** instead **a** spirit of meekness and fear. **Yet** even so there was that straightforwardness to make clear his purpose not to **be** defiled. Then **we** see his wisdom in suggesting **a** period of trial coupled with his faith in God that this would succeed.

When the appointed **day came** for them to **be** personally examined by the king, none of the others could compare with them. Indeed, they excelled their teachers (Psalm **119. 99**) to the extent that they were ten times better than the magicians and enchanters. Thus the word of God, spoken hundreds of years before, proved to **be** true in their experience: " Them that honour **Me** I will honour " (1 Samuel **2. 30**). *Jas. Bowman.*

From **Willington Quay**. —One feature **seems** predominant in this chapter, namely, the overruling of God in the giving **up** of His people to **a** heathen king in judgement.

Comparison was **made** between this bondage and that suffered under the hand of Pharaoh in Egypt, and the following points were noticed: (a) The Children of Israel were not in **Egypt** as **a** result of their- sin [2], (b) their bondage under the taskmasters was as slaves, and (c) they were to **be** brought out of **Egypt** with **a** mighty hand and in great triumph; whereas in our present study (a) they were in Babylon as **a** punishment allowed **by** God, (b) the form of the punishment was spiritual privation (Psalm **137. 4**) [8], and (c) they were to return in humility and contrition.

We saw three groups emerging in this chapter: the captives of Judah generally, and from these are taken the best **of** the young men, then out of this second group come four who are faithful and who refuse anything that defiles. These four, although possessing **a** measure of skill and cunning (verse **4**), were doubly blessed **by** God (verse **17**) because of their faithful stand. Among these Daniel leads in understanding of visions and dreams.

From Toronto. —Daniel, though not actually mentioned by name among the faithful ones of Hebrews 11., is, we believe, included in the "all" who had witness borne to them through their faith. Though not serving God in His house (for no altar was ever erected whilst the captives were in Babylon; the song had ceased, Psalm 137.), yet the bent knee and the open window towards the place of the Name reveal where his heart lay.

This young man and his three companions purposed in their hearts not to defile themselves. Why should the enjoyment of the delicacies of the king's meats occasion defilement? We believe the answer lies in 1 Corinthians 10. 20, in other words, to partake would be to transgress the law of their God. The diplomatic approach made to the prince of the eunuchs is worthy of note. It is not an open refusal, but a guarded request to "prove thy servants." There is no false pride here. The noble of Judah beseeches as a servant. We do well to learn from Daniel that firmness of purpose, yet graciousness withal (1 Peter 3. 14-17).

Introduced, like Joseph, as a captive to a new country, he is called upon at the very outset to display his colours. Daniel feared God (his name means "my God is judge") and God counted him worthy and honoured him. On a diet of pulse, usually taken to consist of a combination of peas, beans, lentils, etc., he and his three companions thrived, and proved at the end of three years to be superior to all in the realm in wisdom and understanding (verse 20).

We believe that there were many prayer meetings of these four young men in the course of the three testing years, the result being a steady growth, spiritually, mentally and physically. We are reminded of the Lord who "advanced in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and men," and who "stedfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem." *Anon.*

From Sunderland. —Daniel appears to be among the first of the inhabitants of Judah who were taken captive by Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, during the reigns of Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin and Zedekiah, kings of Judah. In his day the word of the Lord, given originally in the law, and confirmed by the prophets, overtook the nation because of their sin; and in this respect the sins of Manasseh, king of Judah, appear particularly to have evoked the anger of the Lord (2 Kings 24. 3, 4).

It happened to Daniel according to the word of the LORD through Isaiah to Hezekiah, that the seed royal and the nobles would be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon (2 Kings 20. 18). Even though removed from their own land and the service of the house of God, they still feared the LORD and kept His commandments. No doubt this would be the source of their wisdom and knowledge, because "the LORD giveth wisdom; and out of His mouth cometh knowledge and understanding" (Proverbs 2. 6). The decision of the young men to abstain from the king's meat, probably because it was unclean, was honoured by God. Faithfulness in a little was to be followed by faithfulness in much. *J. R., Jnr.*

EXTRACTS.

From Melbourne. —The removal of Judah out of the LORD'S sight (2 Kings 23. 27) was carried out by that great Gentile monarch Nebuchadnezzar in the year B. C. 606. The time was ripe for the Lord to bring just retribution on Judah "because of all the provocations that Manasseh had provoked Him withal."

Daniel and his three companions were born in the reign of Josiah, who turned to the LORD with all his heart (2 Kings 23. 25). For Daniel there **was** defilement in Nebuchadnezzar's **meat** and wine. Herein **is a** warning to believers in our day to **beware** of the things of the world, its pleasures that only defile.

Daniel and his three companions were united in purpose, and both the eunuch and the steward acceded to their **request**. If there **is not a** difference between **us** and the world, then **we** are lost to the will of God. Young men are responsible to allow the word of God to discipline them, even **as** Daniel did. *S. Stoope.*

From Brantford, Ont. —Apparently, Nebuchadnezzar **came** against Jerusalem more than once. The first time, **we** understand, he **was** general of the **armies** of his father: the second time **is** the one referred to in Daniel 1. [4]; and another **time** later **as** recorded in 2 Kings 25.

From Daniel 1. **we** gather that Daniel **must** have had good spiritual understanding before this calamity befell Judah. He had to share in the punishment that God meted out, though he was not **a** sinful man like many of the rest. **We** can learn **a** lesson here.

Nebuchadnezzar **was** God's servant (Jeremiah 25. 9): unknown to himself he **was** doing God's will.

The self-denial of these young men in Babylon **is** amazing. It **was because** of the fact that idolatry **was** involved in partaking of the king's food. They had **a** conscience about this. Their purpose and determination were graciously and wonderfully met by God Himself **as** He worked in the hearts of the men who looked after them.

Most thought that the pulse referred to here consisted of vegetables [5].

A. Sproul, R. Drake.

From Victoria, B. C. —Faith **is** active: "**By** works **was** faith **made** perfect" (James 2. 22). It ennobles the life, and in the hour of weakness makes one strong. Of Daniel's faith **it is said**—"through **f a i t h** stopped the mouths of lions" (Hebrews 11.).

In Daniel **we** have **a** young man of outstanding personality, having been chosen for high intelligence and ability. His wisdom, however, **did** not follow the pattern of this world. His meditations were on the **statutes** of God, his delight **was** in God's testimonies (cf. Psalm 119. 23, 24).

Verse 8 **is** the key to all that follows—"Daniel purposed in his heart. " In walking in the path of godliness the first **requisites** are an enlightened heart and **a fixed** purpose to serve God. Daniel having so determined **was** not found wanting in the testing time. The law of God **was at** stake; to keep himself undefiled he **must** not **eat** things **sacrificed** to idols, nor **fat**, nor blood (Leviticus 3. 17; Daniel 1. 8).

Daniel's faith **was** born from his knowledge of God and His Word. He knew what God could do. The fineness of his character **was** brought out in the **time** of testing. Such men **as** Daniel are only developed **by a** close walk with the LORD. The eunuch feared the king; Daniel feared God. " The fear of man bringeth **a** snare: **but** whoso putteth his trust **in the LORD shall be safe**", *A. McLeman.*

From **Ilford**. —Daniel was only a youth whom Nebuchadnezzar had carried to Shinar. Daniel feared God, and though, as verse 5 makes it clear, all others may have conformed to the king's command, verse 9 shows God's faithfulness to His own. Ezekiel 4. 13 indicates that Israelites in captivity were faced with eating food which was defiled, and that idolatry was common among the nations. Food sacrificed to idols would be usual.

We wondered that Daniel, being so conscientious about the meat, raised no objection to being trained to serve an idol-worshipping king [6]. While Daniel could have been just as skilful in wisdom without such instruction, he could lose nothing by acquiring knowledge such as the Chaldeans might teach, and by becoming proficient in their language. "As for these four youths, God gave them knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom": and it is hardly a surprise to read that they proved ten times better than all the rest. *C. J. T.*

From **Kingston-upon-Thames**. —Daniel 1. 1 is the partial fulfilment of the word of the Lord through Isaiah to Hezekiah (Isaiah 39. 7) 106 years previously, finally completed in the reigns of Jehoiachin and Zedekiah.

In 2 Chronicles 36. 6 we read of Nebuchadnezzar putting Jehoiakim in chains to carry him to Babylon. He must have been there for only a short time, because he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem (2 Kings 23. 36); also he died in Jerusalem and was given the burial of an ass outside the city wall (Jeremiah 22. 18-19).

It is good to see young men with the honour of the LORD as their chief concern. Wisdom of a very high order was needed by these four young men. Naturally gifted and wise, they had asked, we felt, for further wisdom, the wisdom that is from above (James 1. 5; Psalm 119. 97-104). We, too, by humble and consistent study of the Scriptures, allied with supplication to God for wisdom to understand them and then to fulfil the commandments, **may** bring glory to God to-day. *L. A. White.*

From **London, S. E.** —It is interesting to note that from chapter 1. to 2., verse 3, is written in Hebrew; then Aramaic to end of chapter 7., but again Hebrew to the end of the book. Daniel was taught the learning and the tongue of the Chaldeans.

The word "but" of verse 8 is significant. It suggests that Daniel had already thought out things that might happen, and had purposed in his heart. This is always where successful standing for principles begins: a knowledge of what is right and proper, and a turning matters over in the mind, and a purpose of heart to do, or not to do, certain things. The ten days passed and at the end it was found that God had honoured His servants so that they were fairer and fatter in flesh than all the children who ate of the king's portion. From the word "all" (verse 15) we would suggest that these four were the only ones to refuse. Having passed this first test, Daniel was found walking in the way and secret of God's purposes. He was to be the privileged vessel to receive visions from God, and to pass on to men the purposes of God for His own people and for the nations. If the Daniel of Ezekiel 14. 14 is the same, then he has the honour of being one of three outstanding righteous men.

The lesson for us all is to seek to be in the way of His commandments, vessels unto honour, so that when a man or a woman is needed, the vessel is ready to hand for God to use and, in that service, to honour. *H. Owles: -*

From Kilmarnock. —There is no record of Daniel's parents or his early life, yet according to verse 8 he was a God-fearing youth. The king wished to have the best of Judah's children, healthy, wise, and understanding science and the Chaldean language. Daniel and his companions purposed in their hearts that they would not defile themselves with the king's meat or wine. We judge this was because these would have been offered to idols. Young believers, especially, should give heed, and purpose in their hearts not to be defiled with the world's literature, such as novels, **but** to feed on God's word and thus "grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." Daniel was a faithful servant of God: we read of no failure in his life. "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee the crown of life" (Revelation 2. 10). A. G. S.

From Paisley. —Daniel and his companions were men of nobility naturally and spiritually. As a prince Daniel was chosen along with other picked men, to learn the language of the Chaldeans. The lowliest saint can gain the esteem of those without **if** he truly endeavours to support his verbal testimony **by** a life of humble obedience to his Master. The steward appointed **by** the prince of the eunuchs was asked to prove God's servants, and **did** so very warily, because of his fear of the king. This proving of the four godly princes **by** Nebuchadnezzar's steward must surely have been preceded **by** their proving of God.

There seem to be two main parts in the book of Daniel: (1) Chapter 1. to chapter 6., and (2) chapter 7. to chapter 12. The first part is in the third person and is possibly man's aspect of a climax in human history. The second part is in the first person and is very profound.

W. Terrell, Junr.

From Bradford, Halifax and Leeds. —It would seem that Judah and Benjamin, with very rare exceptions such as the reformations under Hezekiah and Josiah, continued in an evil course contrary to the law of God. The outcome of their apostasy was that God raised **up** Nebuchadnezzar to carry His people into **captivity**, thus giving power into the hands of the Gentiles, and inaugurating the times of the Gentiles (Luke 21. 24).

Daniel, God **my** Judge, was accompanied **by** three other captives, the meanings of whose names are Hananiah—the LORD is gracious, Mishael—who is as God?, Azariah—helped of the LORD. These bear testimony to the character of the God whom they faithfully served. It would seem that the changing of the names of the four captives was a Satanic attempt to stamp out the testimony of God in their lives, and to **tempt** them to compromise on the practice of separation.

Daniel is seen in this and other books as: (1) A man of purpose and principle (1. 8); (2) a man proved **by** temptation (1. and 6.); (8) a student of the Word of God (9. 2); (4) a man of prayer (6. 10; 9. 4); (5) a righteous man (Ezekiel 14. 20); (6) a man of faith (Hebrews 11. 38, last clause); (7) a man *truly separated* unto the LORD (cp. defile in 1. 8 with Leviticus 3. 17; 7. 26; 17. 10 to 14; Exodus 34. 15; 1 Corinthians 10. 20). *William G. Henderson.*

From Birmingham. —The life of Daniel is one from which we **can** glean many precious examples of faithfulness to God under most adverse circumstances. That Daniel and his friends were found in **captivity** was no fault of theirs: **it** was brought about **by** the wickedness of Jehoiakim

the king (2 Chronicles 36. 5) [7]. In view of the evil behaviour of the king, we would judge that little encouragement would have been given to Daniel to live a godly life, but despite this, he made a stand, faithful to the will of God, whatever the cost. This could not have been done apart from his purpose of heart which was rooted in faith, and his faith rooted in knowledge of God.

Daniel and his friends obtained wisdom and understanding, having abstained from the king's meat and having fed upon the pulse and water. Likewise shall we obtain, by separation from the things of the world and by being careful to feed upon the things of Christ, wisdom and understanding. Abstaining from the king's meat and drink in itself was not sufficient for the health of Daniel and his friends: without the pulse and water they would have died of starvation. There would have been no faithful captives, and no testimony in Babylon, had the word of God been neglected, but Daniel continued—the light burned still, despite all that happened, because of his purpose of heart.

H. Smith, K. Robertson.

From Nottingham. —Daniel in resolving in his heart not to defile himself with the king's meat, which we assume had been offered to idols and was therefore unclean (Hosea 9. 3), needed great courage. He was but a youthful captive, and was defying the greatest monarch of that time. God was with him, and after only ten days of the pulse diet, very great improvement was manifest in his bodily health. Daniel was greatly rewarded for his steadfastness in that he lived to have the joy of witnessing the return of the Jews to Jerusalem.

So in this day to those who have a real purpose of heart to serve Him, God will reveal His will and provide opportunities for service. They too will receive their rewards in a coming day. As those who fed on the king's meat showed less improvement than did they who fed on pulse, so our spiritual health is impaired if we do not feed wholly on the Word of God.

J. G. Bennison, G. Butlin.

From Cardiff. —This chapter emphasizes the fact that God brings His purposes to fruition by ways known only to Himself. Judah at this time was in a sad spiritual state. Jehoiakim, a wicked and idolatrous king, led the people away from God. In order to reprove their wicked ways, God delivered them into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar, as Isaiah had prophesied (Isaiah 39, 5-7). God often appears to use harsh methods in order to instruct His people. In Haggai's day the heaven was stayed from dew, and the earth stayed from her fruit for *their* sakes (Haggai 1. 10-11).

J. C. T., J. A. D.

From Birkenhead. —We observed that Daniel, in spite of his set purpose, approached those in charge of him in humility, and God made him to find favour. The food they asked for avoided the eating of that which was unclean. At the end of the period, they proved better not only physically, but also in wisdom and knowledge, than those who partook of the king's meat.

The bright testimony of Daniel in a heathen land must not be taken as a justification for individual believers today remaining in a wrong position and testifying there. Daniel was a captive and could not leave of his own accord. We cannot expect the blessing of God if we voluntarily associate with systems which are **contrary to** the revealed will of God.

From **Atherton**. —Whether it **was** customary for conquerors to be kind and sympathetic to the conquered in those days is doubtful. Rather we trace the good hand of God, for God's eye was favourable towards the captives (Jeremiah 24. 5, 6). It was suggested that there was a divine guarantee to God's faithful people in captivity (1 Kings 8. 50). The same principle is seen in Psalm **105**. 18-15. Whilst this appears to be the case, we have exceptions in those who were called upon to forfeit their lives (Hebrews 11. 36 to 38). The reason for Daniel's abstentions in the matter of the king's meat and drink were given thus: —(1) The Chaldeans ate all meats irrespective of that which was clean and that which was unclean according to the law of God; (2) They possibly ate too of the fat and the blood; (3) the king's meat and drink had already been used in association with idolatrous worship.

One of the things leading to the faithfulness of the four lads was early training in the law of the Lord. It is important that the young begin early. Parental instruction is essential, as Solomon points out in Proverbs 4. 1-5. It would appear that the Jewish boy assumed responsibility towards the law of the Lord at the age of twelve years. The reference to the Lord Himself is noteworthy (Luke 2. 40-52). *R. C. Jones, G. A. Jones.*

From **Crowborough**. —Here we have a man who was an Israelite indeed, and though in a foreign land, he did not forget that he was of the seed of Abraham and that the God of Israel was the living God. We are reminded here of Joseph the son of Jacob, who spent a great part of his life in the court of Pharaoh. Both these men were tempted and both stood faithful and kept themselves pure. The words of verse 8, "But Daniel purposed in his heart . . . " show his first step to victory over temptation, and perhaps we may say that upon these words everything else hangs. The words of Psalm 37. are appropriate: "The law of his God is in his heart; none of his steps shall slide," and the words of 1 John 2. 14, "I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the evil one." The faithfulness of Daniel was a victory for Jehovah, for he honoured God by honouring His law which was in his heart. Can we fail to think of the supreme example of faithfulness, even the Lord Jesus, of whom it is said, "I delight to do Thy will, O My God; yea, Thy law is within My heart" ? One "faithful amidst unfaithfulness." The same can be said of Daniel, who would not break the law of God and therefore would not partake of the table of the heathen, tempting as the food was. Faithfulness to God and His Word will ever bring spiritual success. *J. H. B.*

From **Edinburgh**. —For his wickedness **and** that of his predecessors, Jehoiakim **was** punished **by** being taken captive **by** Nebuchadnezzar. Some of the valuable vessels from the house of God (**Ezra 1. 7**) were **taken**

and deposited in Shinar to beautify the house of Nebuchadnezzar's heathen god. Daniel was set apart by his actions and by his faith. Although up to this time there is no record of any divine message, yet his whole bearing shows that he was helped and influenced by his God, as yet unknown to the Chaldeans. His testimony, even in those early days, was sure and steadfast, and could not but stir the hearts of those with whom he came in contact.

W. Bunting, Junr.

COMMENTS.

[1] (Cowdenbeath). —It would depend on how the animals, in the case of flesh-meat, were slaughtered to free the carcasses of blood, and also whether the animals were clean or unclean. Their difficulty about wine does not seem clear. —*J. M.*

[2] (Willington Quay). —The writer personally believes that the root cause of Israel being in Egypt was that Abraham went there in the time of famine (Genesis 12.), and the persecution of Abraham's seed began in Genesis 21. in the persecution of Isaac by Ishmael; this persecution covered 400 years, according to Genesis 15. The immediate cause of Israel being in Egypt was the wrong-doing of Joseph's brethren, who persecuted him and then sold him into Egypt. There are of course other matters which come in to fill in the picture, but wrong-doing was the cause of both the Egyptian and Babylonian captivities. —*J. M.*

[3] (Willington Quay). —Much more than spiritual deprivation would be involved in the transportation of a nation from one land to another, though there is no evidence of that extreme persecution under the Pharaohs ruling during the persecution and of the exodus. —*J. M.*

[4] (Brantford). —Daniel 1. refers to the first coming of Nebuchadnezzar to Jerusalem. This is said to be in the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim (Daniel 1. 1). In Jeremiah 25. 1 we are told that the fourth year of Jehoiakim was the first year of Nebuchadnezzar. Probably his coming to Jerusalem, as in Daniel 1. 1, was when his father was yet king, and if Nebuchadnezzar was then king of Babylon, he was possibly co-rex with Nebopolassar his father, but of that we cannot be certain. —*J. M.*

[5] (From Brantford). —Not all kinds of vegetables, but leguminous plants or their seeds. —*J. M.*

[6] (Ilford). —Jeremiah 27. 6-8 shows the reason; all nations were to serve the king of Babylon. —*J. M.*

[7] (Birmingham). —The captivity was brought about **by** the sins of Manasseh and other kings of Judah, and also **by** the sinful state of the people themselves. —*J. M.*

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

Questions from Willington Quay. —(1) How many times were the children of Judah taken as captives into Babylon ?

(2) Is there any distinction between "visions" and "dreams" (verse 17)?

Answers. —(1) There were at least four occasions on which the captives of Judah and Benjamin were carried to Babylon: (a) those who were carried away in the third year of Jehoiakim (Daniel 1. 1), (b) those who were carried away with Jehoiachin (2 Chronicles 36. 9, 10; 2 Kings 24. 11-16; Esther 2. 5, 6), which was eight years after the first captivity, (c) those who were carried away at the end of Zedekiah's eleven-year reign, in the nineteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar when he also destroyed Jerusalem (2 Chronicles 36. 17-20; 2 Kings 25., 8-22; Jeremiah 52. 12-27), and (d) those who were carried away in the twenty-third year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar (Jeremiah 52. 30). See Jeremiah 52. 28-30, where we have three occasions mentioned. No notice is taken of the captives of Daniel 1. 1. In the seventh year of Nebuchadnezzar (which answers to (b)) 3, 023 Jews were taken, and in the eighteenth year (which may answer to (c) though this is not quite certain) 832 were taken, and in the twenty-third year 745 were taken to Babylon. It is not easy to reconcile Jeremiah 52. with the records elsewhere. —*J. M.*

(2) A vision is a sight, something that is seen, which may or may not be associated with the idea of night (see "visions, of the night," Genesis 46. 2). What the three disciples were privileged to see on the holy mount is called by the Lord a vision (Matthew 17. 9). We are told that they saw this when they were fully awake (Luke 9. 32). A dream involves the idea of sleep; it is what may be heard or seen during sleep. —*J. M.*

Question from Melbourne. —Which is right: (1) "My Judge is God," also "God's judge" (Newberry); "God (*El*) is Judge" (Darby); "God is my Judge" (Oxford Cyclopedic Concordance); "God is Judge" (Young's Concordance) ?

Answer. —Gesenius says that Daniel means "God's judge," i. e., who delivers judgement in the name of God. What fulness is in the name of Daniel when great men see so much in it, all of which is true !—*J. M.*

Questions from Brantford, Ont. —(1) How old was Daniel when he was taken captive to Babylon ?

(2) After the test was completed, were the dainties and wine removed from all the Hebrew youths, or just from the four ?

Answers. —(1) We cannot say. He was a youth who was skilful in all wisdom, cunning in knowledge, and understanding science, and had ability to stand before the king. He would be in his teens I should think. —*J. M.*

(2) Just from the conscientious objectors I would think. —*J. M.*

Question from Kingston-upon-Thames. —Do we see the evidence of good king Josiah's influence in Daniel's godly life ? Is it possible that he was Daniel's father ?

Answer. —We can allege nothing without scriptural proof. Josiah's work was wonderful so far as it went, but its effect was largely superficial on treacherous Judah (Jeremiah 3. 10). It may be that Daniel caught some of the rays from good Josiah's life which illuminated his soul midst the gathering gloom of those times. We can say nothing definite, nor do

we know who Daniel's father was. Prophets did not obtain their work by heredity. —*J. M.*

Question from London. —The four youths were fairer and fatter in flesh than all the others; was this a supernatural result, or an indication that plain fare is better than the king's dainties ?

Answer. —I should think that probably both are true. But the chief thing in the story is that these youths wanted to live pure lives, for it is ever true—"Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God" (Matthew 5. 8). —*J. M.*

Question from Birmingham. —Can we have help on the difference of the food value of pulse and the meat and wine of the king ?

Answer. —Pulse—peas, beans, lentils, and such like, are most nutritious, but as we do not know what is meant by "the king's meat" we can make no comparison. See question from London. —*J. M.*

Questions from Cardiff. —(1) Is there any teaching for the present day to be gleaned from the carrying away of the vessels of the house of God to Babylon, and their ultimate restoration ?

(2) Is there any known reason why Daniel's name is not in the list of the returned exiles ? He is found in Babylon in the third year of Cyrus (Daniel 10. 1).

Answers. —(1) When beloved brethren (and sisters too) returned from spiritual Babylon (for open brethren are in Babylon as well as all other human systems), they brought back truths necessary to the service of the house of God as did the remnant in the time of Zerubbabel and Joshua bring back the holy vessels (Ezra 1.). Rome holds truths proper to God's house, though it may hold some in a superficial way. Truth was lost in the apostasy at the close of the first century and after, and it was with much patience and perseverance that it was recovered. This, I judge, may be one comparison between the past and the present. —*J. M.*

(2) That Daniel longed to be in Jerusalem is seen in the fact that he opened his window toward Jerusalem when praying, even on pain of death (Daniel 6.), and also prayed in Daniel 9. for the restoration of the captives to Jerusalem, seeking divine forgiveness for his own sins and the sins of the people of God. As to why Daniel is found in Babylon after the remnant had gone back to Jerusalem, there may be one or two reasons suggested: (1) By a comparison of Isaiah 39. 7 with the fact that Daniel and the rest were under the charge of Ashpenaz the master of the eunuchs, it may be that Daniel was a eunuch and therefore could not enter into the assembly of the LORD (Deuteronomy 23. 1); (2) It was necessary that he should remain in Babylon to complete the prophecy that bears his name; (3) By the time of the return of the remnant he was a very old man, and to take the journey of hundreds of miles in those days when there were but crude means of conveyance would probably make the journey for him impossible. But whether these or any of them give the reason why he was in Babylon in the third year of Cyrus, we may be sure of this, that Daniel's heart was in Jerusalem, and God had no more worthy servant than he. —*J. M.*

BIBLE STUDIES

"Now these were more **noble than** those in Thessalonica, **in that they** received the **word** with all readiness of mind, examining the **Scriptures** daily, whether these things were so" (Acts 17. 11).

VOLUME 20.

FEBRUARY, 1952.

CONTENTS.

	<i>Page</i>
Editorial	13
The Book of Daniel :	
Nebuchadnezzar's D r e a m	14
C o m m e n t s	20
Questions and A n s w e r s	22

EDITORIAL.

It is only through revelation that God **can** be known, and that the future **may be** pierced. From the **past**, we **may** learn much, **by** observation and deduction, **but** it is of God's mercy that He has come out to man to reveal Himself. His methods have been varied. **We** are now studying a book that treats of history, **but** also deals with dreams and visions from God, concerning " what shall **be** in *the latter days*" or at the end of **days**. Generally speaking, a **dream** is a vision in sleep, **in** distinction **from** a waking vision.

There **are** records in the Scriptures of dreams and visions that were given to men who were not amongst God's covenant-people. Such are Abimelech (Genesis 20. 3), Laban (Genesis 31. 24), Pharaoh (Genesis 41. 1), and Nebuchadnezzar (Daniel 2.)- Usually such people had come into close contact with men of God. The greater honour rests in the ability to interpret the dream or vision, as both Joseph and Daniel assert in such words as, "Do **not** interpretations belong to God?" (see Genesis 40. 8 and Daniel 2. 28) ..

The fundamental Old Testament passage on the methods of revelation is Numbers 12. 6-8, where **we** learn that God is willing to speak **to** prophets in dreams and visions, **but He** places His servant Moses, because of his faithfulness, on the high level of speaking to him "mouth to mouth, even manifestly, and not in dark speeches." On other occasions, angels were commissioned to reveal God's will. **We** are also told that "men spake from God, being moved **by** the Holy Spirit" (2 Peter 1. 21); and this **we** understand refers **to** men who wrote the Old Testament Scriptures. As is often the case since sin entered into the fair scene of earth, wicked men have endeavoured to counterfeit the true messages of God. Jeremiah warns against such (Jeremiah 23. 25; 27. 9; 29. 8).

Yet all this, in some measure, is an **imperfect** mode of revelation. Happily **we** live in the dispensation when "God, having of **old time** spoken unto the fathers in the prophets **by** divers portions and in divers manners, hath **at** the end of these **days** spoken unto us in **His Son**" (Hebrew* 1. 1-2).

Further, the blessed Holy Spirit has now come, and He indwells all believers on our Lord Jesus. We are assured that the same beloved Spirit, who indited the messages of old, is able to reveal them to us, if, like Daniel, we are men of purpose and of prayer (John 16. 13-14).

A unity in the Scriptures is discernible from the first page to the last. For us, then, the safe way of progress is to accept the Spirit's interpretation of the Scriptures, and avoid speculations. Our contributors have submitted their thoughts on the interpretation of this image of metals of ever-lessening value. The first three kingdoms are revealed, namely, as that of Nebuchadnezzar (Babylon), Persia (Daniel 8. 20), and Greece (Daniel 8. 21). The fourth kingdom is not named, although most of our contributors suggest it applies to Rome.

On one future event we can assuredly rejoice that "in the days of those kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed,.... it shall stand for ever. "
Jas. Martin.

THE BOOK OF DANIEL.

Nebuchadnezzar's Dream.

From Melbourne. —Though Nebuchadnezzar found Daniel and his companions ten times better in every matter of wisdom and understanding than all his magicians and enchanters (1. 20), they were not summoned to tell and interpret the dream. In his perplexity he did not ask their help and counsel, but relied on his sorcerers. Babylon's king had yet to learn that Daniel's God was the Lord of kings and a Revealer of secrets.

Nebuchadnezzar was a law unto himself: "Whom he would he slew, and whom he would he kept alive." His threat to cut in pieces the Chaldeans and all the wise men of Babylon, including Daniel and his friends, was characteristic of him. It brought together the four young men in prayer. Under trial they may have remembered the words of the Psalmist: "Call upon Me in the day of trouble" (Psalm 50. 15), or "I will be with him in trouble: I will deliver him, and honour him" (Psalm 91. 15). They prayed to the God of heaven, and swiftly came the answer; the secret was revealed in a night vision. With haste Daniel was ushered into the presence of the king. He was to become the saviour of all the wise men of Babylon. To the carnal-minded the prayer meeting is dull and unattractive, but to the spiritual it is a source of power, encouragement, blessing, strength and comfort.

The great and terrible image that Nebuchadnezzar saw depicts the times of the Gentiles from the carrying away to Babylon until the coming of the Son of Man with power and great glory (Luke 21. 24). The gold, silver, brass and iron phases are now history. The toes of the feet (unmixable iron and clay) are future; they set forth the ten kingdoms which, federated under one imperial head, represent the final form of the Roman empire. In the period between the iron (Rome) and the toes is this day of God's grace, has now extended to nearly twenty centuries. The Lord of Glory and Prince of Peace is the stone cut out without hands, which shall smite the image.

Nebuchadnezzar made Daniel a great man, ruler over the whole province of Babylon. Daniel and Joseph are parallel types of the Lord Jesus in rejection and exaltation.
S. Stoope.

From London, S. E. —"Nebuchadnezzar dreamed dreams. " These dreams were given that God's purposes for years to follow might be unveiled by **His** prophet Daniel. Again, it was no mere slip of memory which caused the king to forget the dream. God overruled that the wisdom of men might **be** made foolishness in the light of the true wisdom which comes from above.

The wisdom of men having failed, an order went forth which placed the **wise** men of Babylon under sentence of death; this included Daniel and his three companions. The effect of this **decree** on these four men was to humble them before their God to **ask** of **Him** the interpretation of the king's dream. That the request was granted **is** a testimony to the efficacy of collective prayer. In this our day, the power of collective prayer in **times** of dire need **is** surely no less than in the **days** of Daniel. The revelation to Daniel led to the king's recognition of God's power to reveal secrets (2. 47). **We** do well to note that he rendered thanks to God for the revelation received. How often do **we**, unlike Daniel, rejoice in the knowledge that our **request** has been heard, and forget to give thanks to God from whom the answer comes !

Several suggestions were **made** concerning the interpretation of the dream; summarily, these were: —(1) The kingdoms **depicted** in the **image** have all passed; the divided kingdom, represented by the **feet** of the image, was the Roman empire, and the stone **cut** out of the mountain without hands refers to the first coming to earth of the Lord **Jesus** Christ, whose kingdom **is** spiritual, and so **differs** from the previous terrestrial ones. (2) All the kingdoms have yet to be established, and hence cannot be identified with any of earth's empires which have **existed** hitherto. Furthermore, when the kingdoms of the **image** are set up, they will all **be** contemporary, and in "the days of those kings" (2. 44) God's kingdom will **be** established. (3) All except the last kingdom, represented **by** the feet of the image, are past and **can** be identified with the empires of Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece and Rome. The final kingdom, which will be divided, **is** future and its identity **as** yet unknown [1].

A. C. Bishop.

From Ilford. —The first suggestion put forward was that the great image represented the nations of world power in consecutive order, commencing with the Babylonian kingdom **as** the head of gold (2. 38). Babylon **is** called a "golden city" in Isaiah 14. 4. The God of Heaven gave Nebuchadnezzar power, strength, glory, and also to rule over the beasts of the field and the birds of the air. **Persia** was the world power represented by the silver breast and arms of the image, and **is stated to be** inferior.

It was pointed out that the spreading of the Greek language facilitated the spread of the Gospel years afterwards. Brass, being inferior to the two previous metals, shows **a** progressive decline. This thought **is** continued when we come to the last world kingdom mentioned, namely the Roman power. However, although it **is** inferior to the other three in many respects, we cannot fail to **see** the characteristic of strength in the symbol, this being **a** true attribute of Rome.

The stone represents Christ who shall establish **His** kingdom (Luke 1. 31-33), which will eventually fill the whole earth (Isaiah 9. 7 and Psalm 2. 7-9).
*

C. A. Bartlett.

EXTRACTS.

From Nottingham. —Verse 37 brings us to the interpretation of the dream. The kingdom which Nebuchadnezzar received was an earthly kingdom, but much more is involved. The kingdom spoken of has to do with heaven's rule on earth, which should not be confused with the kingdom which God established in Israel at Sinai. God made Nebuchadnezzar king of all kings with world-wide authority. This kingdom and authority was to pass to another people, and from thence to another, and again to yet another, following which it was to become divided. These four kingdoms or empires are, in order, the Babylonian, Medo-Persian, Grecian and Roman, as depicted by the various metals in the image. Then there is a fifth kingdom set forth as a stone cut out of the mountain without hands; this is Messiah's kingdom in the Millennium, which, besides bringing to nought all other kingdoms, is to endure for ever. Here again we must be careful not to confuse this kingdom with the kingdom of God established among God's divinely gathered people in Israel or in this dispensation among His disciples.

J. Miller.

From Brantford, Ont. —In this second chapter God is taking up the young men of the first chapter. He who looketh upon the heart (1 Samuel 16. 7) would look into Daniel's and see the purpose of heart that was his. No wonder he was a man greatly beloved! Here was one whom God could use in such a responsible and important work. God had already fitted Daniel as one who had understanding in all visions and dreams. Joseph, in his day, was raised up to preserve seed; Daniel, the precious words of prophecy.

The King of kings revealed unto the greatest earthly Gentile monarch his position as the head of gold. First Nebuchadnezzar speaks of Daniel's God (2. 47); later he honoured the King of Heaven (4. 37). After this an excellent greatness was added unto the king. "Them that honour Me I will honour" (1 Samuel 2. 30).

Silver is mentioned for the second kingdom, which did not attain unto the glory of the first, but some of its kings, like Darius, extolled the God of Daniel, and commanded the people to tremble and fear before Him [2].

The next kingdom followed after learning and physical culture and, departing further from God, trampled the sanctuary. Their's was a downward trend.

The fourth kingdom, though strong from a military point of view, was corrupt in itself. Although its peoples lived at a time of greater miracles, performed by a Greater than Daniel, yet their crowning mistake was to take part in the crucifixion of the Lord of life and glory.

G. Soper, J. McL.

From Birkenhead. —In this chapter we see one of the characteristics of the book of Daniel, the contrast between two powers, the power of men and the power of God. It is clear that the reign of Nebuchadnezzar began the times of the Gentiles, which will be brought to an end when Christ returns to earth and sets up His kingdom. Babylon, ever a centre of wickedness, was at first the centre of Gentile dominion. Through various kinds of political systems Gentile powers descend further and further in value, until the time is opportune for the manifestation of the man of sin. Even

at that **time** the sovereignty of God will **be** maintained, for Revelation makes **it** clear that the **beast** cannot go beyond the limits which God has set. God's sovereignty will **be** fully manifested when Christ reigns.

M. H., R. L. S.

From Crowborough. —**We** had a little difficulty **as** to when this incident took place. **If it was** in the three-year probation of the four young men (Daniel **1.**), then their appointment (2. **48, 49**) scarcely agrees with their presentation to the king (**1.** 19).

In a dream, which the king failed to understand, God revealed the outline of events for many years to come. The king **was** much troubled and asked for help from his counsellors. They had much wisdom in connexion with the present, **but** the future was hidden from them. Only the God of Heaven fully knows what the **future** holds, **but** "The secret of the Lord **is** with them that fear **Him.**" Daniel's prayers reveal his trust in God. Knowledge of God brings **peace** and comfort to those who love **Him** truly. "Great **peace** have they which love Thy law" (Psalm **119.** 165). "Thou wilt keep him in perfect **peace,** whose mind **is** stayed on Thee" (Isaiah 26. 3).

The **image** typified " the **times** of the Gentiles, " when Gentile kings would rule in the affairs of men. Four great **empires** would rise and fall, bringing **us** to the **time** when "the kingdom of the world **is** become the kingdom of our Lord, and of **His** Christ" (Revelation 11. 15). *S. Swift.*

From Atherton. ---"The supplication of a righteous man availeth much in **its** working" (James **5.** 16). How much more the united prayers of four men accounted righteous in their generation ! The **secret was** then revealed to Daniel in a vision of the night, and he gave thanks and praise to God, yet linking with himself his three companions, who had prayed with him. Thus **we** have the important principle of fellowship (Matthew 18. 19).

The vision of the **ram** and the rough he-goat (chapter 8.) refers to Medo-Persia and Greece. **We** understand that this vision refers to the **same** kingdoms **as** those in chapter 2., the silver being Medo-Persia and the brass Greece. The legs of iron refer to the kingdom which followed Greece, namely Rome.

The difficulties which remain relate to the **feet** of iron and clay. It is clear from history that the ten-king confederacy of which the ten toes speak has never taken place (Daniel **7.** 24), and therefore Daniel looks on beyond this dispensation to the **time** when the Roman empire will **be revived** and antichrist will **be at** the head of the nations, the ten kings being his confederates (verse 44; Revelation 17. 12, 13).

Nebuchadnezzar's worship of Daniel **was** queried. It **was** suggested that Daniel did not accept such worship for himself. Perhaps he **was** taken by surprise and did not remonstrate, for he acknowledged the authority of the king [3].

D. H. Butler, G. A. Jones.

From Kingston-on-Thames. —**We** concluded that Nebuchadnezzar did not become sole king of Chaldea until a year after Daniel **was** taken **captive,** so that, when Nebuchadnezzar had his dreams, Daniel had completed his three **years'** training (1. 5), and possibly had stood before the king for nearly a year, since the king's reign **was** reckoned from the beginning of the calendar year following his ascension [4].

The title "God of Heaven" occurs in only a few other instances in the Bible (2 Chronicles 36. 23, Ezra 1. 2; Jonah 1. 9; Revelation 11. 13), and appears to relate to God's sovereignty, particularly in relation to the Gentiles.

The iron legs were thought to represent the Roman empire. The period from Pentecost to the rapture of the Church the Body is passed over, as is frequently the case in prophecy, and we come immediately to the revival of the Roman empire before the Millennium. The ten toes of the image speak of the ten kings of Revelation 17. 12. The ten kingdoms are in many respects separate. There was a difference of opinion as to whether each kingdom will exhibit the characteristics of iron and clay, or some kingdoms one quality and some the other. It was suggested that possibly the iron mixed with clay speaks of a dictatorship combined with a type of democracy.

Frank E. Jarvis.

From Barrhead and Paisley. —The head of the image was of fine gold; Nebuchadnezzar ruled as an autocrat. He was followed by three major world empires. These nations are easily identified, and, as the metals decrease in value and increase in strength, we see how God viewed this development of civilization, stronger in many ways, but the stern rule of Nebuchadnezzar has given place to more impure forms of rule.

The last phase, the feet of iron mixed with miry clay, is more difficult to understand. It will terminate in the arrival of the Son of Man; this is unfulfilled. Undoubtedly the shadows of those last days already darken our times, but this "last day" is different. Imperial Rome, the iron, no longer exists, yet in the last phase there is iron, though mixed with clay. It would seem that, before the return of the Son of Man, Rome, the iron, will return, perhaps as a confederacy of nations, but in it there will be that which will not cohere, the clay [5].

The words of the Lord in Matthew 21. 44 are recalled when this chapter is studied.

J. M. Gault.

From Kilmarnock. —Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, was a worshipper of idols and was ignorant of the God of Heaven, yet God was about to make known through him "what shall be in the latter days" (2. 28). Daniel and his companions prayed to God (2. 18), who revealed the secret to Daniel, who was then brought in before the king. In answering the king's question, "Art thou able to make known unto me the dream?" Daniel manifested a notably humble spirit in taking no glory to himself and in acknowledging God's mercy. We were reminded of Romans 12. 3.

In the interpretation of the dream, Nebuchadnezzar is represented as the head of gold. We understand that this means that God gave him all the kingdoms of the world and made him ruler over all, and we may say it is government after the divine pattern, which will yet be seen in the millennial kingdom of Christ. After Belshazzar was slain, the Medes and Persians received the kingdom (5. 28), represented by the silver. Then Greece is represented by the brass and Rome by the iron. The depreciation in value of the metals means a depreciation of government.

A. G. S.

From Edinburgh. —Nebuchadnezzar's dream could not be interpreted by the magicians. God caused the king to forget it. His wise men were ordered to tell the dream and its interpretation, or die. What a position they were in! The decree was sure. The king was upset and angry, and

his words were no idle threat. It would seem that only the Chaldeans were consulted without Daniel or his friends.

When Daniel heard of the trouble **he** succeeded in gaining a respite. In view of verses 25, **26** we were not certain that this was actually granted by the king. Daniel relied on the promise of God and was not forsaken. What a picture of united prayer and its result! After simple and sincere thanksgiving, Daniel **was** led to the king and revealed (1) **his** God, (2) the dream, and (3) its interpretation.

A. M. Hope.

From Toronto. —Nebuchadnezzar's dream covers the times of the Gentiles (Luke **21**. 24), excluding the dispensation of grace [6]. Nebuchadnezzar, the head of gold, **was** absolute in his dominion. Darius [Cyrus] (silver) had not Nebuchadnezzar's power, but **was** limited by governors (6. 7) [7]. The more democracy entered into government the less valuable **was** the metal used. The brass **was** Greece under Alexander the Great. The iron kingdom **was** Rome, and though the metal was stronger it **was** cheaper, for Rome was, in theory at least, a democracy. The ten toes of iron and clay speak of a future ten-kingdom confederacy under the leadership of the man of sin. Finally, there shall come the One whose right it **is** to reign, and **He** shall smite the image on the feet, breaking it in pieces, and, all Gentile world dominion having come to an end, **He** shall reign for ever.

Edwin Neely, Duncan Daly.

From Cowdenbeath. —The life of Daniel was endangered, yet how calmly **he** acted, finding strength and quietness in God. Such faith could only be manifested by one who had on previous occasions proved his God. Daniel was no doubt influenced by the belief that God had a purpose in him, and would preserve him for its fulfilment. God **is** the preserver of all men, but especially of them that believe.

The dream of Nebuchadnezzar **was** a preview of world power depicted **as** if the sequence of world empire were unbroken. No prophecy **is** made of the period between the fourth kingdom (iron) and the divided kingdom, the iron and the clay. During **this** period the dispensation of the grace of God runs its course [8]. God intended that Israel should **be** the head of the nations, but, because of backsliding and failure, God gave world power into Gentile hands from Nebuchadnezzar until the coming of the Son of Man. This power was to pass from one empire to another till the God of Heaven should set up a kingdom that shall never be destroyed. Then shall Israel **fill** her rightful place among the nations, and the times of the Gentiles shall end. Daniel saw the fulfilment of part of this dream, in the fall of Babylon and the rise of Medo-Persia. *James K. D. Johnston.*

From Willington Quay. —Israel had slighted the blessings and ignored the warnings of the LORD, and was now experiencing **His** judgement in the form of subjection to Gentile powers.

How applicable to Daniel are the words of the LORD through Isaiah! "But to this man will **I** look, even to him that **is** poor and of a contrite spirit, and that trembleth at My word." Moses forsook the Egyptian palace with its seeming advantages, later to return with great spiritual enlightenment: Daniel, standing apart in complete dependence upon God, **was** the channel of divine revelation.

Daniel's conduct and demeanour were exemplary. When told of the decree, how different was his attitude from that of the magicians! Amid consternation he answered with counsel and prudence. Never at any time

did Daniel **seek** self-aggrandizement. **On** the contrary, **he** sought to impress upon the king that God alone is able to reveal secrets. Such service must always **meet** with divine approbation. **K. R.**

From Sunderland. —There is some similarity in the circumstances surrounding the dreams of Nebuchadnezzar and Pharaoh, and the experiences of Daniel and Joseph. To both of the kings God **made** known something of His purposes; and He exalted both of His servants to high honour and rule in Gentile kingdoms through the interpretation of dreams. God gave the dreams, and **He** alone could provide the interpretations.

The image portrays the period of Gentile dominion called in Scripture "the times of the Gentiles" (Luke 21. 24). Its component parts reveal four great kingdoms which were to arise, and concerning which Daniel received further revelation later (chapter 7.), the kingdoms then being likened to four great beasts.

Faith rejoices that the kingdom of God shall have a yet fuller manifestation upon earth, when Christ comes to rule over the nations, to break them with a rod of iron, and to dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel (Psalm 2. 9). **J. B., Jnr.**

From Cardiff. —Verse 9 possibly suggests that Nebuchadnezzar remembered his dream, but would not reveal it. If the wise men were able to tell him the **dream**, he could rely on their interpretation. There is nothing to prove that the dream had left him, for verse 8 would suggest that he there refers to the command which he had delivered [9]. Nebuchadnezzar's rule was autocratic and was as near the ideal as man could expect to get [10]. In the kingdom of the Medes and Persians Darius was subject to the law of the Medes and Persians. In Greece the democratic element is increased, and Rome was largely democratic. The dual kingdom of the Medes and Persians would **be** suggested by the two arms.

Though the fourth empire is unnamed, it is fairly safe to say that it was Rome. The two legs might indicate the western and eastern empires into which it was latterly divided.

Discussion as to what the clay might represent produced three suggestions: (1) Democracy; (2) Communism, which has filtered in from Russia's influence; (3) The believing Jews who will make a covenant with the beast [11].

The **image** is destroyed in its entirety when the stone strikes the feet (verse 35). It was felt that either: (1) The final empire will incorporate the whole of the dominions of the other three; or (2) that the forms of government will all **be** expressed in the final **empire**; or (3) that all the kingdoms will **be** in existence when the stone strikes [12]. **G. F. D., E. S. T.**

COMMENTS.

[1] (London, S. E.). —There is no need, as I **see** it, to depart from the generally accepted exposition of Nebuchadnezzar's image, that **we** have here the four great world-empires, Babylon, Persia, Greece and Rome, and then the continuation of the iron kingdom to the toes of the image, in which you have a **mixture** of iron and clay; this brings us to the kingdom of the beast. "Thou art the head of gold," which was addressed to Nebuchadnezzar, shows that the **image** stretches from the **time** of that

great Babylonian monarch to the coming of Christ to set up His kingdom on earth. Gentile power, as seen in the feet of the image, will be in existence right on to the coming of the Son of Man. It is clear from many scriptures that Christ in His first coming did not come to set up His kingdom in Jerusalem (nor could He set it up anywhere else on earth); He came to die, to suffer and to put away sin. —*J. M.*

[2] (Brantford). —Darius the Mede received the kingdom of Babylonia, but Cyrus the Persian was at that time the supreme head of the Medo-Persian empire (Daniel 5. 30, **31**; 2 Chronicles **36. 22, 23**). —*J. M.*

[3] (Atherton). —What power could Daniel exert over an absolute monarch, in whose hand was the power of life and death? None, I judge. —*J. M.*

[4] (Kingston). —Some doubt whether Nebuchadnezzar was co-rex with his father Nabopolassar. Nebuchadnezzar is called king of Babylon in the fourth year of Jehoiakim when he smote Pharaoh-Neco, king of Egypt, at Carchemish (Jeremiah 46. 2). Authorities on the history of Babylon say that Nabopolassar was still alive when this battle took place and for some short while thereafter. The fourth year of Jehoiakim was the first year of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon (Jeremiah 25. 1). We must accept what Jeremiah says as a statement of historical fact. —*J. M.* See Jan. B. S., p. 10, comment 4. —*S. B.*

[5] (Barrhead **and** Paisley). —It is evident that in the image there is the continuity of the iron, so that the image right to the end bears the character of Rome, though the iron on the feet and toes is mixed with miry clay. In imperial Rome there was no mixture of clay. How mixed world government is to-day, and it will never be otherwise right to the end, even **in** the kingdom of the beast!. —*J. M.*

[6] (Toronto). —The times of the Gentiles run on through this dispensation, beginning with the reign of Nebuchadnezzar and ending with the coming of the Son of Man. —*J. M.*

[7] (Toronto). —See note [2] in paper from Brantford. —*J. M.*

[8] (Cowdenbeath). —The dispensation of grace, in which is "the fulness of the Gentiles" (Romans 11. 25), has nothing to do with "the times of the Gentiles" (Luke 21. 24). The former is the time when God is visiting the Gentiles to take out of them a people for His name (Acts 15. 14); the latter has to do with world government being placed in the hands of Gentile powers. "The fulness of the Gentiles" and "the times of the Gentiles" run concurrently through this dispensation, the former ending with the coming of the Lord to the air, and the latter ending with the coming of the Lord to the earth. —*J. M.*

[9] (Cardiff). —See answer to Melbourne's question.

[10] (Cardiff). —Whilst absolute monarchy is no doubt the ideal state, the difficulty has ever been to get the perfect king. Power in the hands of one man having been so often abused, men have deemed it unwise to put plenary power into the hands of a man like themselves, hence we have limited monarchy. The perfect King is coming—King Messiah. —*J. M.*

[11] (Cardiff). —Daniel's explanation of the iron and the miry clay is—"they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men"; who are the "they" in contrast to the seed of men? If the "they" can be explained we shall have a clear understanding of what is meant. —*J. M.*

[12] (Cardiff). —If Nebuchadnezzar is the head of **gold**, then he would not be alive when the Stone struck the feet of the image. The coming beast has a likeness to all three empires previous to the empire of Rome (see Revelation 13. 2 and Daniel 7. 4-6). "In the days of those kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom." This does not mean that it would take place in the days of Nebuchadnezzar, Cyrus, Alexander and Julius Caesar, but it would be at the end of Gentile dominion the kingdom of the Son of Man would be set up. —**J. M.**

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

Question from Melbourne. —Did Nebuchadnezzar actually forget the dream, or **was** it merely a pretence on his part to test his soothsaying servants ?

Answer. —**He** plainly says that he had forgotten when he says, "Ye **see** the thing is gone from me" (verse 8). —**J. M.**

There is no suggestion in our English Versions that it was "merely a pretence." Moreover Nebuchadnezzar's experience **was** in line with our own. How often we awake disturbed by a dream the details of which are only vaguely remembered.

It must, however, be said that there is some uncertainty about the meaning of the Aramaic words translated "the thing is gone from **me**" in verses 5 and 8. Gesenius (Tregelles edition) translates, "the word is gone out from **me**; what I have said is ratified and will not be recalled." Moffatt translates, "I mean what I say," **see** R. V. M. —**S. B.**

Question from London, S. E. —What was God's purpose in making known to Nebuchadnezzar the future history of the world, events over which he could have no control ?

Answer. —The **same** question could be asked of all prophecy and every man to whom it has come. **We** cannot control the future, yet God tells us of future events. In the prophecy **is** a message concerning the coming of Christ and the destruction of Gentile power in that coming. This was useful to Nebuchadnezzar and all other Gentile kings, if they heard and heeded what was said. See also Psalm 2. and in particular verses 10 to 12.

Question from Sunderland. —What would be suggested by the divided kingdom ?

Answer. —Simply this, that it would be partly strong, and partly broken. But what is meant by—"they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men" ? Who are the "they" ?—**J. M.**

Question from Wellington Quay. —In view of the words "in the days of those kings" (2. 44), are we to deduce that the conditions of the fourth kingdom must be revived before God sets up the kingdom which shall never be destroyed ?

Answer. —It will be seen that the iron, in which there was first no mixture of clay, continues to the end throughout feet and toes; so that in the last phase of Gentile power there will be the like character to the iron kingdom of Rome, but with the difference that clay is introduced, and in consequence the kingdom is only partly strong. The character of Rome continues to the end. There are only four metals in the image, and, in Daniel 7., four beasts; then comes the kingdom of one like unto a son of man (see verses 3 and 13 and 14). —**J. M.**

BIBLE STUDIES

"Now these were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, examining the Scriptures daily, whether these things were so" (Acts 17. 11.)

VOLUME 20.

MARCH, 1952.

CONTENTS.

	<i>Page</i>
Editorial	23
The Book of Daniel:	
Nebuchadnezzar's D r e a m	24
Nebuchadnezzar's Golden I m a g e	25
C o m m e n t s	32
Questions and Answers.	32
Notice.	32

EDITORIAL.

It was an unnamed man, nevertheless a " man of God, " who spake the following words from Jehovah to the old and failing priest, Eli, " Them that honour Me I will honour, and they that despise Me shall be lightly esteemed " (1 Samuel 2. 30). Here is a principle which has since been stressed in recorded scenes and inspired words, on many occasions. The Master, Himself, said, "Every one therefore who shall confess Me before men, him will I also confess before My Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny Me before men, him will I also deny before My Father which is in heaven" (Matthew 10. 32, 33; see also Luke 12. 8, 9, 2 Timothy 2. 12, 13, and Revelation 3. 5).

How wonderfully and vividly is this truth borne out in the story of the three faithful youths, who defied the mandate of the all-powerful monarch, Nebuchadnezzar!

It is incumbent on you, young men, to have indelibly printed on your hearts the lessons taught in our study. You know not the trials that yet may befall you, beloved brethren, but be instructed, for your attitude and behaviour under stress will much depend upon your knowledge of your God and your equipment in His word. Further, your response now to His demands will have a very marked bearing on your status at the Judgement Seat of Christ.

It is surprising with what similarity the cycles of history recur. Away back in 600 B. C. approximately, there was a ruler, who had been privileged to hear the words, " Thou art the head of gold, " and who became so proud in his imaginations that he demanded from all mankind what God has never vouchsafed to any creature—worship. If similar demands had not been

repeated so recently as in our own day, we would scarcely have believed it possible of recurrence. Modern states, even those in which liberties have been fought for through the ages and won at great cost, have in one edict uprooted many of the bases of these liberties. Some have even trespassed into the realm of the soul, demanding implicit obedience to all laws as well as requiring the bodies of men. There is a divine limit. The three youths marked it well—"We will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image." They knew of no compromise, therefore they gave a resolute, unwavering answer, and remained passive. At the beginning of this dispensation Peter and John very soon met trials arising out of a good deed done to an impotent man, but from opposition which had deeper roots. Again we rejoice at the clarity of their decision. "Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you rather than unto God, judge ye: for we cannot but speak the things which we saw and heard," and, later, "We must obey God rather than men" (Acts 4. 19, 20, and 5. 28, 29). Men can speak lucidly when they think clearly; men think clearly when the Holy Spirit illuminates their minds. The lesson is obvious.

Let us not forget, however, that a refusal to obey any State which trespasses into the realm of God's rights may bring penalties. Nebuchadnezzar was fierce enough to sacrifice some of his own servants in bringing punishment on the faithful youths. Such men have never been lacking in the world. They are imbued with the destructive mind of the Prince of the power of the air, the Adversary.

The avoidance of suffering by the youths would have meant the fore-going of the company of the Son of God. We dare not miss His companionship. The pathway may, by earthly standards, be deemed black, but if we walk with Him, we walk in the light. This brings fellowship with others so walking.

Again, faithfulness brings honour to His Name, and the fiery trial resulted in the God of the youths receiving the worship of the pagan despot and, by his command, homage of some of his people.

Finally, to the tried who remain faithful promotion is granted. "If so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified with Him" (Romans B. 17). Yea, "faithful is the saying: For if we died with Him, we shall also live with Him: if we endure, we shall also reign with Him: if we shall deny Him, He also will deny us" (2 Timothy 2. 11, 12).

Jas, Martin,

THE BOOK OF DANIEL.

Nebuchadnezzar's Dream.

(Chapter 3.)

From Victoria, B. C. —In the midst of all the turmoil we see God's chosen vessel, Daniel, being brought forward. The time had come for him to prove himself to the king. Time was granted and Daniel and his three companions prayed to God in Babylonish surroundings, but in a Jerusalem spirit. The words of Philippians 4, 6 are brought to our minds: "In nothing be anxious; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God." God's ever open ear was responsive to the call of the prophet, and the secret was revealed in a vision of the night. Daniel, now prepared by God, was ushered into the presence of the king to prove that there is a God in heaven

who revealeth secrets. The dream was revealed and the interpretation given that he might know what would come to pass.

Daniel did not forget his three companions, and as the reward of faithfulness they were appointed over the affairs of the province. They had been **prepared** to take their place at the side of Daniel and partake of pulse rather than be defiled with the king's dainties. The One, Whom we acknowledge as King of kings and Lord of lords, still seeks worshippers who will worship God in spirit and truth. This will entail suffering and rejection. Let us look forward to the recompense of reward. If we endure, we shall also reign with Him. *H. Curran.*

From Hamilton, Ontario. —Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah could have enjoyed the food and drink the king desired them to have. They also might have enjoyed the pleasures that came to those in whom the king found pleasure, but, like God's servant Moses, they would rather suffer affliction with the people of God than enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. Because of the godly stand Daniel took, God was able to use him to make known to the king the secret of his dream.

It is amazing to see how soon the king forgot the greatness of Jehovah. When he heard the interpretation of the dream, he said to Daniel, "Of a truth your God is the God of gods, . . . and a revealer of secrets." He realized for a time the greatness of the God of Daniel, yet soon after this we find him, his heart lifted up in pride, saying (4. 30), "Is not this great Babylon, which I have built . . . by the might of *my* power and for the glory of *my* majesty?" The result was that God by His power brought him low, until he came to realize and confess that God's kingdom was from generation to generation, and all the inhabitants of the earth, including himself, were as nothing.

Nebuchadnezzar's Golden Image.

(Chapter 3. 1-30).

From Atherton. —About 20 years lie between the events in chapters 2. and 3. of Daniel. Nebuchadnezzar's power stretched far and wide; he was the head of gold. He soon forgot the One who gave him this great power and glory.

Nebuchadnezzar conceived the plan of binding the nations by a common religion, the worship of the image (perhaps an effigy of himself) in the plain of Dura. The great concourse included the nobles, counsellors and captains, peoples of all grades. Only three dissentients were found, men from amongst God's- captive people. Psalm 137. would lead us to believe that there were not a few who still remembered Zion. The question arises: "Where was Daniel?" He was very definitely not there. One thing we can be sure of is that Daniel would be praying for his three friends, if he knew of the events which were happening.

Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego, probably men in their late thirties by now, strictly observed the law of their God in regard to worship. Exodus 20. 4, 5 show* that the making of a graven image was, under the law of Jehovah, sinful as was the worshipping of it. The king's word was absolute **and** he was furious that these men, captives raised by him to great eminence, should dare to disobey his command. So fierce was his anger that he had

no regard for the lives of the strongest **men** in his army who were bidden to throw these **men** into the fiery furnace.

All agreed that the fourth person **was** none other than the Lord **Jesus** Himself, also referred to in the Old Testament **as** the angel of the **LORD** and the angel of His presence (**Judges 13. 3; Isaiah 63. 9**). In fulfilment of Isaiah **43. 2** the companionship of the Son of God is here given to those who **put** faith **and** trust in His word. Fire is the emblem of faith's trial.

J. Bullock, R. C. Jones.

From Victoria, **B. C.** — "Thou **art** the head of gold," such were Daniel's words to Nebuchadnezzar. This God-given vision had brought no spirit of **meekness**, but he **became** filled with his own greatness **and** power to the exclusion of all else. It was in such **a** spirit that he sought to force **men** to worship **an** image in direct opposition to the God of heaven. It **was** a magnificent **statue**, being over ninety **feet** high **and** over nine **feet** broad.

Three **men** of God, Shadrach, Meshach **and** Abed-nego, who had **been** given high places **by** the king **and** who stood to lose much, had learned the great principle that God has first claim upon **us**. Nebuchadnezzar was not long in hearing of their disobedience. The **eyes** of the world are always searching the Christian's life. The king **seemed** surprised that **any** should disobey him, especially when the fiery furnace **was** the alternative. "Consider their faith." The answer they **gave** is noteworthy. They had **every** confidence that God could deliver them, **yet** if such **was** not His will, they were quite prepared to **suffer** death, **even** the fearful death of the fiery **furnace**. In very truth they were faithful unto death, having no knowledge **as** to how God would deliver them.

Nebuchadnezzar's anger **was** frustrated, the only ones slain being his own soldiers. Four were **seen** in the **furnace**—what **a** comfort the fourth **One** **was** to the three **men** in their trial! Such could often **be** the experience of children of God, if only during the fiery trial they would seek the **presence** of the One who said, "Lo, I **am** with you alway." The king **was** forced to exclaim, "Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, **and** **Abed-nego**." It **was** a right-about **face**. **What** confidence we should have in God!

A. McLeman.

From Crowborough. —The plain of Dura or Shinar has known the excavation of its soil for the erection of two of **men's** boldest works: (*a*) a tower to reach heaven (Genesis 11), (*b*) **an** image, whose value **and** size outdid all others. God in wisdom **stepped** in **and** both were doomed to failure. How true are David's words in Psalm **39. 5**: "Every **man** at his **best** estate is altogether vanity"!

The dedication of the image* **must** have **been** **an** impressive sight, **yet** it loses its glitter in the realization that the rulers bowed for very fear of the despot king. His anger only produced in the hearts of the three **men** of God **a** deeper, nobler trust in the Omnipotent One. The image speaks of **a** **future** **day**, when **men** will **be** deceived **by** lying wonders, **and** myriads will wonder after **and** worship the **beast**. In that **day** we shall behold our Lord **and** Saviour **Jesus** Christ, **and** joyfully unite in singing praise to Him. Gladly will every knee bow, not from fear, **but** from hearts that love perfectly.

B. V. F.

From Kingston-on-Thames. —The main theme running through the Book of Daniel is " the time of the end. " The historical portion is no exception, and the present chapter, we believe, foreshadows the image of the beast (Revelation 13. 14-18). In both cases we see politics and religion combining to demand from all men absolute homage and unquestioning obedience. Man, the creature, is demanding that which is the sole prerogative of God, the Creator, namely worship.

In Daniel's day men bowed down to the image, representing its maker, Nebuchadnezzar, who, in turn, was energised by the arch-enemy of God, the Devil. In the time of the end there will be the image, the beast and the Devil, finally fulfilling the word of Romans 1. 25, " They exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshipped and served the creature rather than the Creator, Who is blessed for ever. Amen. "

We judge the image represented the zenith of man's achievement at that time, causing great wonderment among men. We believe the image of the beast in a future day will be the culmination of scientific and technical progress, with Satan's supernatural power giving the finishing touch—an attempt to imitate the creation of man.

The " peoples, nations, and languages " were to bow down before the image, but as the only persons present were the satraps, the deputies, etc., it seems that these must have been representing the peoples whom they governed. This may explain the absence of Daniel, who was in the gate of the king and held a position of authority far above these representatives of the peoples.

Daniel's three friends are typical of those who, in the great tribulation, will keep the commandments of God and the testimony of Jesus, and suffer unprecedented persecution. These will be sustained by the certain knowledge that they will share in a future glorious resurrection, whilst their persecutors will be justly and terribly punished (Revelation 14. 6-13).

Truly they yielded their bodies that they might not serve nor worship any god except their own God. * Present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. "

L. Burrows.

EXTRACTS.

From **Melbourne.** —In order to bend all his subjects to his will, Nebuchadnezzar decided on idol-worship on a grand scale and erected an image of gold nearly 100 feet high, and about 12 feet broad, in the plain of Dura. There on that plain every eye could see it, and every knee bow down to worship it as soon as the sound of the cornet, etc., was heard. If religious feelings did not exist, then they must be stirred up by sweet and sensual harmony. The religious fervour of the masses may be aroused by the great swelling chords of the Cathedral pipe-organ in modern times, but they cannot find an echo in the church teachings of the New Testament: the music there is, " singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord " (Ephesians 5. 19), or " singing with grace in your hearts unto God " (Colossians 3. 16).

Possibly this great image was not unlike the one Nebuchadnezzar saw in his dreams (2. 31). We noted that it could not speak or breathe, as will the image of the beast in Revelation **13. 15.**

S. Stoope.

From Cowdenbeath. —The golden image was of great dimensions, and was set up in a place clearly visible to all in the plain of Dura. To it every subject was expected to offer worship or be cast into a burning fiery-furnace. It is here that Daniel's three friends, in their refusal to obey the king's command, displayed their faith in and loyalty to God, in the keeping of His first commandment, "Thou shalt have none other gods beside Me" (Exodus 20. 3).

From the outset, Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego determined to please God at all costs. They trusted in God in the midst of their trial. Because of their refusal to obey the king's command, they were bound and cast into the fiery furnace. The king's astonishment (3. 24) was not at his mighty men being consumed by the flames from the furnace, but at the sight of his captives, loosed of their bonds, walking in the midst of the fire unscathed, and accompanied by a fourth person. We suggest that the fourth person present in the furnace was the Lord Himself in His pre-incarnate days.

It is sad to read that, despite all that Nebuchadnezzar had learned of God, both through Daniel (chapter 2.) and his companions (chapter 3.), he still persisted in his false belief—the plurality of gods. *Ian T. H. Hunter.*

From Willington Quay. —The omission of Daniel's name in this chapter is not without note; perhaps he was fulfilling his office as ruler and chief governor at this time. He would be praying for these three men that they might be strengthened in the hour of their trial.

Their testimony before the king was a perfect example of courage and restraint. The words "But if not" convey the thought of resignation to God's will. Others had similar complete trust in the Lord; for example, Paul, who could say, "Whether we live, we live unto the Lord; or whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's" (Romans 14. 8). Job, too, said, "Though He slay me, yet will I wait for Him" (Job. 13. 15). Our Lord enjoined His disciples: "Be not afraid of them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear Him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell" (Matthew 10. 28). "Who is that God that shall deliver you out of my hands?" Nebuchadnezzar had asked. Little did he realize that before long he was to know their God and to understand that the greatly heated furnace was no obstacle to divine power. He was yet to say, "How great are His signs! and how mighty are His wonders!" (4. 3). *C. B.*

From Kilmarnock. —While the king seemed to be impressed by the fact that Daniel had been able to tell him his dream and to interpret it, there was on his part no real acknowledgement of the living God. Daniel had said that he was the head of gold; this may have given him the idea to make a golden image, representing himself as an object of worship. From verse 8 it would seem that Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego, were present in obedience to the king's command, but they did not bow down and so certain Chaldeans informed the king. It is noticeable that they did not accuse Daniel; perhaps he was in too high a position to be accused of

ignoring the **king's** command. The answer of the three young men to the king's question, "Is **it** of purpose... that ye serve not **my god** nor worship the golden image" (3. 14)—is noteworthy. They served **and** worshipped the living God **and**, if He willed, He would deliver them out of the **king's** hand, **and** from the fire. While we are not **faced** with such trials **now**, disciples of the Lord meet with trials **and** difficulties that the proof of their faith might be found unto praise **and** glory **and** honour (1 Peter 1. 7).

A. G. S.

From Edmonton, **Alberta**. —Nebuchadnezzar evidently failed to heed **the** warning contained **in** the interpretation of the vision (Daniel 2.). He attempted to magnify himself. The image once made, **all** rulers, etc. (3. 3) are gathered together for the dedication. **Music** (3. 5) was used to **call** all people to worship. Even among evangelical churches to-day, **music** is used to draw people to religious worship. They consider such **music** forms **an** acceptable **part** of worship, when actually **it** is only gratifying human tastes. God's people are exhorted to **sing and make** melody with their hearts to the Lord.

" They serve not thy gods... " (3. 12). What a splendid testimony ! Ready to defy the king himself, **in** defence of **godly principles**, and prepared to endure the furnace, confident **that** the Lord was able to deliver them ! Flames slew those who cast them in, **but** the **full** fury of the flames burned only their bonds, leaving no odour **upon** them, **and** not even a hair of their head was singed. **We** suggest that the fourth person was* truly the Son of God, bearing their affliction **and** delivering them from the **effects** of those flames.

The image is symbolic of the image of the beast of Revelation 13. The number of that beast will be **666**, " the number of a man " (Revelation 13. 18). Christ's blood-bought bride will escape that time of trouble (1 Thessalonians 4. 13-17), **but** faithful ones **then** will **defy the order** to take upon themselves the mark of the **beast**, **and** to fall down **and** worship his image. They will face greater tribulation than ever before endured **by saints** (Matthew 24. 21), **but** God will deliver them. They will be loosed from their bonds, **but** the ungodly will perish. The three godly men, Shadrach, Meshach **and** Abed-nego are typical of the godly remnant of Israel. The sons of **men** shall see the glory **and** majesty of the Lord, **and** know that God ruleth **in** the heavens.

R. P. Lundwill.

From Edinburgh. —To demonstrate his power, Nebuchadnezzar ordained that **all** men worship the image **at** the sound of **music**. Gold **and** such music would speak to us of pleasure, the craving of the flesh. "Men shall be . . . lovers of pleasure rather than lovers **of** God. " Such **an** idol is **not** seen to-day, **but** we **must** beware of glitter drawing our hearts from God.

Certain Chaldeans complained **against** the three Jews **and** they were taken before the king. He offered a second chance, **but** they remained steadfast. Their faith **was** strong, **and** God **does not suffer** His **own** to be tried beyond their faith. The king's wrath **was** kindled **and** his commands regarding the furnace obeyed.

The **effect** of the fire **was** to loose the cords that bound the men. **As** the king looked on he **was** afraid as he **saw** four men walking **in** the **midst** of the furnace, **and** one **was** like **unto** a son of the gods.

The king commanded them to come forth. He showed authority, but lacked the power to enforce his commands. What a change had taken place ! The three men, cast in bound against their will, now came forth loosed and of their own free will. They trusted God and He made them free indeed.

So Nebuchadnezzar was taught another lesson. There is an Almighty God who overrules in the affairs of men. The faithful three passed through the fire, and emerged the finer for it. Their faith was strengthened and their service blessed of God.

D. Meldrum.

From **London, S. E.** —Nebuchadnezzar's act was idolatrous and since the image was probably of human form, it also involved deification of man. Both of these things are direct transgressions against God, and to the law-abiding Jew, abhorrent, since they are breaches of the first two commandments. Idolatry and man's self-exaltation are the two main characteristics of Gentile times.

The great golden image reminds us of Revelation **13**. 11-18. Nebuchadnezzar's idolatry was accompanied **by** great pomp and sweet music, which were used to excite the religious emotions of the people.

The king in a great fury had the three young men bound and cast into the seven-times heated furnace, with fatal effects upon the guards, but without harm to the Jews. **We** can see the promise of God working, "When thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not **be** burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee " (Isaiah **43**. **2**). Freed and unhurt, they were called from the fire as " servants of the Most High God. " Many believe that the fourth, " like a son of the gods, " was Christ Himself. But whether this was the Son of God or an angelic being, deliverance was wrought **by** God, and the proud Gentile king was forced to acknowledge Him as the Omnipotent One.

We suggest again that this incident is a striking shadow of the beast and his image.

A. Reeve.

From **Sunderland.** —It has been said that the period of Gentile dominion commenced with the image of Nebuchadnezzar and will end with the image of the beast. In both these images the number six, the number of a man, is prominent (Daniel **3**. **1**; Revelation **13**. **18**), and to both of them universal homage is required.

The three men were men of purpose and had a proper sense of the power of God. The effectiveness of their faith in quenching the power of fire is seen in verse **27**; even the smell of fire did not pass on them. They honoured God and He honoured them.

J. R., Jun.

From **Birmingham.** —It was suggested that, after the experience in chapter 2., Nebuchadnezzar exalted himself, which foreshadows what will take place in a future day when the state and religious systems will join forces. Also it was suggested that Nebuchadnezzar's image was a foreshadowing of the image of Revelation **13**. 11-15, for in both cases those that refused to worship were to be put to death.

Daniel did not undergo the trial of Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego, **possibly** because of his high position in the kingdom. They trusted in the **Lord and** were preserved. **We**, too, when undergoing trial, **by** trusting will be delivered and will receive grace to strengthen us that **we** fall not.

D. Watts.

From Nottingham. —The image, which Nebuchadnezzar set **up**, would seem to **be a type** of the image which antichrist will set **up** in a coming day. Nebuchadnezzar's **image** was of immense proportions and set **up** on a plain. It seems clear that the object was that as many people as possible would **be** able to see it. It was remarked that, in the case of the **image** yet to **be**, some modern device of science might well **be** employed in order that nations and peoples world-wide will **be** able to look upon **it** and worship. **We** live in an **age** of materialism: man must see with his own eyes and faith is discounted. However, **we** know that God honours faith, whether it **be** in Daniel's **time** or in our own time, or in the **time yet to be**.

From Toronto. —The plain of Dura in Shinar has surely witnessed **many** strange scenes in its **day!** The great tower of Babel (Genesis 11.) was **erected** on this far-reaching plain, and now a united **empire**, whose centre was Babel. There Nebuchadnezzar set **up** his **image** of gold, presumably to **depict** his complete sovereignty over the nations of the earth. In complete rebellion against the God of heaven, whom he acknowledged to Daniel (2. 47), he decreed, on punishment of death, that this image **be** worshipped. **All** fell down in worship; three men, Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego, stood (Ephesians 6. 13). **We** feel sure they had previously been on their knees before their God.

" **We** are not careful to answer thee in this matter " (R. V. M.). There is no disrespect here; there **is** purpose of heart. Though young men, and perhaps inexperienced, **yet** in verse 13 God speaks of them as " men. " In His things they were mature, full-grown men (Ephesians 4. 13) and, like Stephen in a later day, full of faith (Hebrews 11. 34). Though **it** might **be** said that they harboured a doubt **as** to God's power to deliver them, **we** do not believe such is the interpretation of verses 17, 18, **but** rather that they were not certain whether **it** was God's will to deliver them from the fire. How often fellow-saints to-day go right into the trial before God shows His delivering arm and the **way** of escape ! " The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation, " and blessed are they who are accounted worthy to stand trial for the faith in our day (1 Peter 4. 14). God **did** not quench the fire into which Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego were cast. **Had He** promised to ? (Isaiah 43. 2). They were, however, delivered from the power of **it**, for its only effect was to burn off their bonds. *W. T., N. K.*

From Cardiff. —The setting **up** of the **image** of gold so soon after the dream and the interpretation led us to conclude that pride of heart in Nebuchadnezzar had conceived the **idea** of an **image** all of gold—no doubt represented in the form of a man in order that he personally might enjoy honours attributable formerly only to the gods of Babylon.

The three young conscientious objectors **met** this forced issue with uncompromising, passive, though unflinching, refusal—" **we** will not serve thy gods. " This is final. **We** noted the unusual stress placed in the accusation of verse 12, " These men, **O** king, (1) have not regarded thee: (2) they serve not thy gods, (3) nor worship the golden **image**... "

A deliverance was granted that was sensational, for of these three it is placed on record that they "quenched the power of fire." With them was a fourth. Is it wise to assume that Nebuchadnezzar saw the Son of God or that this person was "the angel of His presence" referred to in Isaiah 63. 9? [A]. The king later amends his statement to refer to this fourth person as the angel of God, in verse 28. F. Thompson, K. B.

COMMENTS.

[A] (Cardiff). The A. V. says "the fourth is like the Son of God" and the R. V. "the fourth is like a son of the gods" (*Elah*, Aramaic equivalent of Hebrew *Elohim*). The question is, What did Nebuchadnezzar mean? The answer must be, I think, what he says in verse 28, that the person he saw was an angel of God and not the Son of God. What could Nebuchadnezzar know of the Son of God? Probably nothing, but he saw a glorious being whom he deemed to be like a son of God. What did he know of the unity of the Divine Being, that God is one? Probably nothing. If we accept what is said by the Chaldeans, "They serve not thy gods" (verse 12), as being a correct rendering of what these men meant, it is probable that Nebuchadnezzar was a polytheist. My own view is that it is wrong to allege that the fourth person in the furnace was Christ, the Son of God. — J. M.

[B] (Atherton). Both the LXX and Theodotion versions open the chapter with the words, "In the eighteenth year" (of Nebuchadnezzar). — S. B.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

Question from Kilmarnock. — Would the fourth person be an angel of the LORD (as in Judges 13.), who appeared to Manoah?

Answer. — See comment [A] on paper from Cardiff. Of the angel of the LORD Manoah said, "We have seen God" (verse 22). — J. M.

Questions from Edinburgh. — (1) Where exactly was the plain of Dura?

(2) Daniel was not included in this trial. Had he been left as the king's deputy at Babylon?

(3) One was like unto a son of the gods. How did the king recognise this?

Answers. — (1) It is thought by some to be a plain on the left bank of the Tigris. But others have thought it was in the vicinity of Babylon on the south east of that City—a pedestal of a colossal statue has been found there.

(2) What God has not revealed, it is vain to conjecture.

(3) By the appearance of this glorious person, but who he was we are not told. See comment [A] on paper from Cardiff. — J. M.

NOTICE.

It will save some time and postage at end if correspondents will please send their papers direct to Mr. J. Baird, 4, Craigentenny Crescent, Edinburgh, 7. All other correspondence to be sent to Mr. J. Martin, 36, Whitley Crescent, Wigan, please.

BIBLE STUDIES

"Now these were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in **that** they received the word with all readiness of mind, examining the Scriptures daily, whether these things were so" (Acts 17. 11).

VOLUME 20.

APRIL, 1952.

CONTENTS.

	<i>Page</i>
Editorial	33
The Book of Daniel:	
Nebuchadnezzar's Golden Image	34
The Heavens do Rule.	34
C o m m e n t s	42
Questions and A n s w e r s	43

EDITORIAL.

It is always a fruitful study to read what a man, and particularly a highly placed man of wide experience, records concerning the lessons he has learned for himself in God's dealings with him. Similarly, although in a different sense, the writer of one of the Maschil (for instruction) Psalms pens, "I speak the things which I have **made** touching the king."

In this month's study **we** have the candid findings of Nebuchadnezzar, after seven years of banishment from the society of mankind. He desired all the peoples to benefit by his experiences. Pride was the dread snare that brought about his downfall. He was proud of this great Babylon, proud of his royal dwelling place, proud of his might, proud of his power, proud of his glory and proud of his majesty. How many of his august Gentile followers have trodden this dizzy path to ephemeral glory, and have, despite Nebuchadnezzar's warnings, fallen headlong to destruction! Let us, humbler folk **in** the reckonings of earth, listen to our Master's voice; "Take heed, and keep yourselves from all covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth" (Luke 12. 15).

Nebuchadnezzar, the head of gold, recorded that "those that walk in pride He (the King of heaven) is able to abase." **He** learned how great indeed were the signs and how mighty were the wonders of the Most High God. God has ever been performing these in the sight of men, who have been blind to them, **and** the most marvellous of all were performed by His blessed Son (John 5. 36, 37).

He learned, further, what has so often evaded man's search, that all God's "works are **truth**, and His ways **judgement**" **Sad**, indeed, that after many centuries had rolled past, the Son of God had to say, "**But** now ye seek to kill Me, a Man that hath told you the **truth**, which I heard from God" (John 8. 40), and, again, "And this is **the judgement**, that the light is come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the light; for their works were evil" (John 3. 19).

Perchance most strange of all the findings to come from a bloodthirsty despot is that expressed in Nebuchadnezzar's wish—"peace **be** multiplied unto you."

In a later day the Apostle Peter, having heard the Master's benediction, "Peace I leave with you; My peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you" (John 14. 27), takes up the strain in his epistles to the dispersed saints in his day. How comforting to refresh ourselves with his words, and to pass them on to beloved fellow-students in places far apart, "Grace to you and *peace be multiplied* in the knowledge of God and of **Jesus** our Lord" !

Jas. Martin.

THE BOOK Or DANIEL.
Nebuchadnezzar's Golden Image.
(Chapter 3.)

From Hamilton, Ont. —The setting up of Nebuchadnezzar's golden image was contrary to the will of God. This great image was about ninety feet high, all of gold. He had not learned the lesson, which God required he should, "that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men." God had raised him to world-wide dominion. The times of the Gentiles had now begun, the reins of government having been given into the hands of the first great Gentile power. Daniel's three friends were most humble, yet boldly and with purpose of heart they took their stand for God. At a time when collective testimony for God had ceased, it is grand to see their bright individual testimonies for God amidst trial and temptation. Though captives in Babylon, in their hearts were the high ways to Zion (Psalm 84. 5). They were outstanding men of faith, and were able to give answer of the hope within them. They were willing to give their lives for God, reminding us of faithful saints, who, in a future day, "will resist even to death."

C. Meikle, T. Ramage.

The Heavens do Rule.
(Chapter 4).

From Edmonton, Alberta. —In Nebuchadnezzar's dream of the great tree, a revelation was imparted to him by the decree of the watchers, that God overrules in the kingdom of men. Nebuchadnezzar learned from bitter experience that men cannot slight divine authority. Belshazzar failed to heed the warning, and fell from his lofty place when God brought the great Babylonish empire to an end.

God always has His man ready in times of crisis. Daniel was summoned and unfolded the meaning of the dream. Nebuchadnezzar is pictured in the great tree as the head of the Chaldean empire by God's will, but the axe of judgement would fall upon the tree (4. 14), to teach him that the kingdom of men is under divine control. Nebuchadnezzar was raised up by God, not only to chastise His people, but also to be invested with universal authority.

In the rise of the Babylonian empire we see, despite idolatry and sin, the rule of the heavens. Gentile power will rule the world until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.

The tree in the king's dream portrays that great empire, and so great was its overspreading authority, that all nations depended on it for sustenance. Nothing of a spiritual character proceeded from this centre, but rather an iniquitous despotism, whose system trampled the poor underfoot (4. 27). Godless materialism held sway, and there has been no change in the pursuits of Gentile rulers down to modern times.

When the period of chastisement was accomplished, Nebuchadnezzar returned to acknowledge that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men (4. 37).

R. Armstrong.

From **Nottingham**. —In this chapter, as in all scripture, we see the mercy and the judgement of God. God ever desires to show mercy, and it is only when His grace is spurned and His warnings unheeded that He acts in judgement. So it was with Nebuchadnezzar. God's wondrous dealings and goodness toward him should have brought a state of humility and repentance; His warning by the mouth of Daniel should have caused a turning away from the king's sinful way of life. Twelvemonths of grace elapse and no evidence of a change of heart is seen; but there is a haughty spirit of self-glorification instead of giving the glory to God. The judgement of God was sure and complete. The lesson is salutary to men in all generations. "Those that walk in pride He is able to abase." Such was the abounding mercy of God, who could just as easily have uprooted and destroyed Nebuchadnezzar, that He left him the stump of his roots in order that in **due** season he might flourish once more. *O. W. M.*

From Kilmarnock. —In the opening verses of this chapter we find Nebuchadnezzar's message of peace to all the peoples and nations he had subdued. He also wished to make known the great signs and wonders God had wrought toward him. He had had another dream, which he remembered and had made known to his magicians, but they failed to interpret it. This would seem to be an over-ruling of God that Daniel's ability might again be manifested. This dream was about what would happen to Nebuchadnezzar. When Daniel heard the dream, he was astonished and troubled in his thoughts (4. 19).

It must have been a terrible blow to the king, when Daniel made known to him that he would be driven from men and his dwelling would be with the beasts of the field for seven years. This was a decree of the Most High, and it was needed that the proud king might learn that "the heavens do rule."

Alas! he failed to give heed to Daniel's wise counsel, and at the end of twelve months, while he was boasting of the great Babylon, which he had built by the might of his power, the judgement of God fell suddenly upon him. He was deprived of his reason and was driven from men to dwell with the beasts of the field. Pride was the cause of his downfall, and pride in men's hearts to-day is the cause of much trouble. "God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble" (1 Peter 5. 5). We do well to humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God. In the mercy of God, his understanding was restored, his counsellors and lords returned to him, and excellent greatness was added to him. Instead of being lifted up with pride he now praised and extolled and honoured the King of heaven.

How different it will be at the end of this world's governments! The antichrist will sit "in the temple of God, setting himself forth as God" (2 Thessalonians 2. 4), thus defying the God of heaven. But he shall be cast alive into the lake of fire (Revelation 19. 20). Then the rightful King shall reign and God's will shall be done on earth as it is in heaven.

A. G. S.

EXTRACTS.

From Liverpool. —Nebuchadnezzar was much troubled concerning the dream, and Daniel made known the interpretation thereof. The warning was soon forgotten; for twelve months later he was boasting within himself of his own glory and the power that was his (4. 30). Then God's judgement came upon him. He was stricken with some form of madness, and in this condition was driven from the company of men, according to the inter-

pretation of his dream. The question was asked: Did Nebuchadnezzar really come to know God in the true sense after this experience? This seems to be answered by his words in verse 37. From this same verse we ought to learn that pride in our natures must be stamped out if we are to please the Lord.

J. C. Mitchell.

From Birmingham.—This chapter points out that God giveth the kingdom to whomsoever He will. God abased king Nebuchadnezzar, and, in **due** season, exalted him again to his throne, adding to him even more excellent majesty than formerly.

Promise was made to Nebuchadnezzar that his kingdom would be preserved to him, the stump of the tree being left bound with a band of iron and brass. For a tree to grow again to its former stature, after being cut down, is a natural impossibility. So also, apart from the power of God, Nebuchadnezzar could not have resumed his position and former glory upon the return of his reason and understanding.

Verse 13 speaks of a watcher and an holy one coming down from heaven. It is difficult to discern whether or not two persons are indicated, and who he (or they) might be. Verse 17 speaks of a plurality of these persons: it may be that reference is made to the Trinity of the Godhead. [A]. Nebuchadnezzar and his kingdom are accounted as one, the tree being representative of him, just as in chapter 2. he was the golden head of the image. It may be that, as all flesh was fed of the great tree, so in a coming day, buying and selling will only be possible through wearing the mark of the beast. Thus, the obtaining of food will be dependent upon the ruler of that day.

It was felt that there was a sense in which the "everlasting kingdom" might apply to the rule of God over all His creation.

K. Robertson, H. Smith.

From Hayes.—Once again Nebuchadnezzar is pondering over a dream; and he calls upon the wise men and astrologers to give an explanation that will satisfy him; an earthly one, perhaps, as opposed to the heavenly interpretation that he knows Daniel can give. He is forced, finally, to ask Daniel the true interpretation. He refers to Daniel as one who has the spirit of the holy gods.

If a tree is severely pruned after it has matured, then recovery is always very slow, but we note that recovery was intended, and during this time the helpless tree was protected by a band of iron and brass, symbolizing the protection of the empire.

The lesson of this portion seems to be, in the Lord's words: "Whosoever shall exalt himself shall be humbled; and whosoever shall humble himself shall be exalted" (Matthew 23. 12). Nebuchadnezzar was given the right to govern the world, but he needed to learn that this was heavenly authority. He exalted himself, but how he was humiliated! In his humiliation, fortunately for him, he saw the error of his ways and repented. No longer did he cast his eyes over Babylon and speak as a rebel, but instead he looked toward heaven and spoke as a penitent. *John E. Lewin.*

From Edinburgh.—God had spoken time and again to Nebuchadnezzar, but, so far, His voice had not been heeded. The king had gone on in his own way attributing to his own power the establishment of his kingdom.

This time God acted in judgement, yet with grace. The fulfilment of his dream was to bring Nebuchadnezzar to a realization of his impotence in the hand of God. He was only an instrument in the hand of Him who ruleth in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and to whom none can say: "What doest Thou?" After learning his lesson Nebuchadnezzar could truly say: "Those that walk in pride He is able to abase." Compare Luke **14. 11**: "Every one that exalteth himself shall be humbled." To us is the exhortation: "Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time." *T. Hope.*

From Birkenhead. —The pride of man and the long-suffering of God are here brought before us. Nebuchadnezzar was brought to realize that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men. There is evidence that Nebuchadnezzar was a cruel monarch with no thought towards God, in spite of the way God had dealt with Him. Through the captives of Judah God spoke to him. Daniel confessed that his knowledge of the dream of the great image was from God: and Daniel's three companions (when the king had them cast into the fiery furnace), were a clear testimony of the power of the God of heaven. Yet Nebuchadnezzar was still proud of his own achievements, his power and his majesty. Even after the solemn warning from Daniel he continued to rejoice in his own strength. After the vision, he had opportunity to repent (4. 27). Daniel clearly spoke of a judgement which had been decreed against the king, but he also spoke of a possible lengthening of the king's tranquillity. It was within God's sovereign right to pardon Nebuchadnezzar, if he had shown repentance.

The principle that God overrules should be a guide to us in our attitude to politics. We should pray for those to whom power is given, but we should not seek to influence otherwise the government of the country in which we dwell. *P. Kelly P. C. Sands.*

From Melbourne. —The Lord gave to Nebuchadnezzar the might and strength to bring other nations under the rule of Babylon. He had the tremendous responsibility to rule in righteousness, and there was meat for all (4. 12). In pride of heart, he walked upon the royal palace, and viewed with ostentatious satisfaction the great Babylon, which he had built. It had broad walls and high gates (Jeremiah 51. 58). The wealth of the nations streamed into it for seventy years (Jeremiah 25. 11). "Babylon hath been a golden cup in the LORD'S hand, that made all the earth drunken: the nations have drunk of her wine; therefore the nations are mad" (Jeremiah 51. 7). When men are exalted, usually they become intoxicated with power. Recent world history shows two such men who, after plunging the nations into the madness of war, came to an inglorious end.

We suggest that Daniel would have complete control of the whole realm of Nebuchadnezzar during the latter's seven times (perhaps years) of humiliation and abasement [B]. We judge that Nebuchadnezzar ended his days a repentant man for he lifted up his eyes unto heaven (4. 34).

Daniel advised the king to break off his sins, but to no avail. Twelve months rolled by with Daniel's warning forgotten, and vaunting words of pride on his lips. Then came the judgement swiftly, "the kingdom is departed from thee." *S. Stoope**

From **Barrhead and Paisley**. —Nebuchadnezzar's boast, "Is not this great Babylon, which I have built", was no idle statement. Discoveries have proved that the constructions of ancient Babylon are truly amazing.

Nebuchadnezzar's sin was his pride in his own achievements, and forgetting **God** who had prospered his doings.

One of the differences between man and beast is man's consciousness of the Divine Being. During his seven years' experience he was to know utter estrangement from God such as will be experienced by those who through pride forget God [C].

The Chaldee word for God is the equivalent of the Eloah title of God, which portrays God as the one supreme object of worship, which fact Nebuchadnezzar forgot.

Chapter 4. continues in Aramaic [see margin, R. V., verses 1 and 4], and it seems appropriate that the words which record the delegating of world power to Gentile hands should be written in a Gentile language, the **use** of which may also account for much of the peculiar phraseology in the chapter.

The "watchers" are thought to be angels, probably those who in God's arrangement watch over the affairs of earth. The word comes from the verb "to uncover the eyes" and angels often were used to reveal the will of God to men.

J. M. Gault.

From Sunderland. —In a former day God raised **up** Pharaoh to show in him His power and to publish abroad His name in the earth; and a similar experience befell Nebuchadnezzar, save that Nebuchadnezzar's life was spared, and he lived to praise and extol and honour the King of heaven. His kingdom was strong and extensive, and Nebuchadnezzar himself had become great, but he had to learn of a greater kingdom and a greater King.

The sovereignty of God is marvellously depicted in the words of verse **35**. The revelation of His power would have a salutary effect upon Nebuchadnezzar and his peoples, and this would in turn **be** for the benefit of the captives of Israel in Babylon.

J. R., Jnr.

From Willington Quay. —The despotic power that was Nebuchadnezzar's resulted in pride filling his heart. Although he had conquered much, he had failed to subjugate self, and must needs learn from bitter experience that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men.

In contrast to the arbitrary acts of Nebuchadnezzar we see the long-suffering attitude, which at all times has characterized God's dealings in judgement. It would seem, from Daniel's remarks (4. 27), that Nebuchadnezzar would have been spared had he repented. God often warns men, and even though the warning goes unheeded, His purposes are still brought to fruition. The warning had little or no effect upon Nebuchadnezzar, and at the end of twelve months the fearful judgement was enacted. Some thought that during the period of expulsion Nebuchadnezzar had no understanding of his condition, but others thought that he must have been fully aware of his privations [D].

God's judgement had a profound effect upon this man, and in the end he was caused to praise, extol and honour the King of heaven. The pride which once filled his heart gave place to contrition, the object of God's judgement thus being achieved.

K. R.

From Kingston-on-Thames. —Nebuchadnezzar learnt a lesson that we do well to note, namely, that in prosperity we should realize that God has blessed us not for our own glory and pride, but for His glory and praise. Not to do so may cause God to bring adversity upon us that we may realize our own insignificance and His greatness.

The vision that Nebuchadnezzar saw gives us an insight into God's dealings with men. It appears to indicate the existence of heavenly beings who observe men's actions (4. 17) and pass judgement upon them with the intent that the living may know that the Most High ruleth. It was thought that Daniel was astonished and troubled at the dream because of his concern for the king and not because he feared him.

The fact that God raises up whom He will (even evil men) to accomplish His purposes is a strong reason why we to-day should take no part in putting any particular government into power, but should be subject to such powers as God may allow, and obey the laws so ordered which do not violate any claim of God upon us. The seven times were thought to be seven years. In support of this reference was made to Daniel 7. 25, where we have a time, times and half a time (i. e., three and one half times) referring to the same period as the forty-two months (three and one half years) in Revelation 11. 2.

Frank E. Jarvis.

From Ilford. —Nebuchadnezzar knew that Daniel on previous occasions had accurately interpreted dreams which had confounded the magicians and enchanters. He acknowledged this when he said: "The spirit of the holy gods is in thee" (4. 9), and he called him "master of the magicians." It is surprising, therefore, that he did not send for Daniel until after he had tried the enchanters and had found them unable to interpret the dream. Here God seems to be showing him (and us) that man's power is as nothing compared with the power of God.

Nebuchadnezzar was a proud man. He had built up his empire by conquest (4. 30). He was looking toward the earth, and so, when God punished him, his heart was changed to a beast's and he went about with his face to the earth eating grass as oxen. It was not until he lifted up his eyes to heaven that his understanding returned. Nebuchadnezzar spent seven years as an outcast, out of his mind, thinking himself to be a beast. We know that seven in the scriptures speaks of perfection, or God's standard. Nebuchadnezzar previously spoke of the holy gods in a very abstract manner, afterward he speaks of the Most High that liveth for ever, the King of heaven. In those beautiful verses (34-37) a king, who once thought himself omnipotent, acknowledges a Greater.

J. L. Coote.

From Cowdenbeath. —This dream, unlike the previous one, the king was able to relate in detail to the Babylonian wise men and to Daniel. We note that the wise men preceded Daniel, probably because he was "chief governor" over them (Daniel 2. 48). The king had not lost faith in Daniel, as, after the wise men failed to interpret the dream, Daniel was brought in. Daniel, on hearing the dream, betrayed his inward emotions upon his countenance: he understood what was involved, and expressed the wish that the dream be applied rather to the king's enemies (4. 19).

The tree was Nebuchadnezzar, who had risen until his greatness reached unto heaven and his dominion unto the end of the earth (4. 22). He was now king over the earth. The nations of the earth knew a measure of prosperity and were sustained by him. His kingdom with all its earthly glory was soon to depart from him. For a period of seven years he was to be insane (4. 23). He would be barred from human society to spend those years separated from the royal palace of Babylon. "The heavens do rule" (4. 26). This truth would be indelibly written upon Nebuchadnezzar's heart when his reason returned to him. Daniel's last words to the king, words of sound counsel and wisdom, were an appeal for repentance (4. 27).

Verses 27-30 tell us something of Nebuchadnezzar's character. He was an egotist, proud, arrogant, sinful, cruel and ruthless. He was yet to know that "the LORD is a God of knowledge, and by His actions are weighed" (1 Samuel 2. 3).

The rule of the heavens, we believe, has operated on earth from the beginning. God rules in heaven, and this rule extends over the earth as well (4. 35). The rule of Nebuchadnezzar gives us, we believe, a phase of the "kingdom of heaven," which term has been stated by some to mean "the rule of the heavens." Such men as Babylonian kings who ruled with absolute power were yet subservient to the overruling power and authority of the King of heaven. **R. Ross.**

From Atherton. —Some thought that verses 1-3 were related to the previous chapter, but it was generally agreed that they were spoken after the events of chapter 4.

Daniel's ministry under God on this occasion is worthy of mention. Faithfulness and courage are seen in his final outspoken words (4. 27). It was asked in this connexion, Is there any significance in the words "Daniel... was astonished for a while"? The word astonished (or astonished) would suggest taken by surprise (Isaiah 52. 14). It seems Daniel had some difficulty in delivering the message. We thought of the words, "It is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful." Daniel was indeed a faithful man.

There arose some discussion on the words "the heavens do rule." It was stated that this is "kingdom of heaven" teaching. It was necessary that Nebuchadnezzar should realize that there was only One who was Omnipotent: the God who ruled not only the heavens but also the earth. It was said, there would appear to be a spiritual aspect and a national aspect of the kingdom of heaven to-day. Some did not agree with this suggestion, and pointed out that before Christ came, God dealt with nations, primarily through Israel, and other nations were placed in relation to Israel. In this day the basis of God's dealings in the kingdom of heaven is the Church which is His Body (Matthew 16. 18, 19) [E].

G. A. Jones, J. Bullock.

From **Hamilton, Ont.** —Certain learned men of the world, especially the so-called "higher critics," have denied the divine inspiration of the book of Daniel, and one of the reasons given is the severe judgement brought on Nebuchadnezzar. Were it not that we know that the word of God is truth (John 17. 17) the things that happened to Nebuchadnezzar would be hard to believe, but where reason fails with all her powers, there faith prevails and love adores. Nebuchadnezzar's pride of heart had got out of control, as we learn when Daniel was brought in before Belshazzar to read and interpret the writing on the wall (Daniel 5.). In chapter 5. 18, Daniel says to Belshazzar: "The Most High God gave Nebuchadnezzar thy father the kingdom, and greatness, and glory, and majesty": and in verse 20 he says: "But when his heart was lifted up, and his spirit was hardened that he dealt proudly, he was deposed from his kingly throne, and they took his glory from him." The One, who had given him the kingdom and the glory, was the One who took it away.

Who took charge of the kingdom while the king was gone, we are not told; but we are sure Daniel played no mean part in holding the kingdom together, for he held a high position in the realm of Nebuchadnezzar.

J. Strachan, J. Ramage.

From Crowborough. —It seems that in chapter 4. Nebuchadnezzar has reached the zenith of his power. He has another dream and hears the interpretation from God's servant. Could the message have been made clearer with respect to the power and authority of the One on high? In spite of Daniel's entreaty the king does not seem to have repented, but after twelve months still revelled in the thought of his being the builder of the great Babylon, a place worthy of admiration. In his heart was no gratitude to the Most High, who had raised him up. His only feeling was one of self-adulation. "Is not this great Babylon, which *I* have built... by the might of *my* power and for the glory of *ray* majesty?" The emphasis, we believe, is on the pronouns. While Nebuchadnezzar was thus filled with self-aggrandizement, the judgement of heaven fell. The mighty king became insane and fell from his splendour. Because the heavens *do rule* this judgement fell upon him, and, although severe, it was just and righteous as the rule of heaven ever is. *J. H. B.*

From London. —Verses 1-3 are the outcome of the king's experience in the remaining part of the chapter. The failure of the magicians reminds us that "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him; and he cannot know them" (1 Corinthians 2. 14).

Nebuchadnezzar is portrayed by a tree (compare Ezekiel 31.). Its leaves were fair and the fruit thereof much. Altogether a goodly picture, but the effect was not what God intended. There was shade to those who sheltered under its branches, also rest and food, for Nebuchadnezzar afforded his subjects protection, security, and quietude.

Ger. Reeve.

From Cardiff. —This chapter presents many fundamental principles which are involved in the term "kingdom of heaven" and which affect the nations and peoples of the whole earth. Not only do we see that the kingdom of heaven is world-wide, but we suggest that this has been so since the creation, the "beginning" of Genesis 1.

This kingdom is the LORD'S and He is exalted as head above all (1 Chronicles 29. 11), for "the LORD hath established His throne in the heavens; and His kingdom ruleth over all" (Psalm 103. 19). The kingdom of God, which was resident in Israel, never became Nebuchadnezzar's, although he took the people captive, and, through such men as Ezra and Nehemiah, the remnant later rescued many truths relating to the house of God that had been neglected prior to and during the captivity.

We experienced difficulty in associating the truths we find in Daniel 4., and many N. T. scriptures which speak of "entering into" the kingdom of heaven (e. g., Matthew 7. 21, etc.). How can an individual already in the kingdom- (since its sphere is world-wide) "enter" the kingdom of heaven? [F].

In our discussion, some suggested a very strong association between the parable of the tares (Matthew 13.) and the present dispensation, although many thought that its particular reference was to a time prior to and after the present church period. Those who saw the connexion referred to sons of the kingdom as those who became such upon their belief in Christ, which suggested that previously they could be called "tares." The problem presents itself: "Do tares, even though sown as such, ever become wheat?" This seems impossible [G].

The parable of the mustard seed (Matthew 13.) seems to be related in some way with the tree of Daniel 4. These figures seem to infer that the kingdom of heaven, although world wide in its conception and sphere, is not so in its inception. It commences as a grain of mustard seed sowed in the field; Nebuchadnezzar saw a tree which grew, until it was seen from the four corners of the earth, which unlike the mustard seed " which becometh a tree. "

COMMENTS.

[A] (Birmingham). —Without being at all dogmatic, I have thought, that as in Satan's kingdom there are principalities associated with earthly kingdoms (the prince of Persia and the prince of Greece, Daniel 10. 13, 20, see also Ephesians 6. 12), there are principalities within the realm of the Most High in connexion with divine government in the earth (Michael, one of the chief princes, Daniel 10. 13; 12. 1). It is, I think, not erroneous to infer from Hebrews 2. 5 that angels have something to do with world government now, but the time will come when the Son of Man will be present on earth and in manifest control of all earthly government. The watchers or holy ones I would think are angelic beings. —J. M.

[B] (Melbourne). —This is more than the Scriptures reveal. —J. M.

[C] (Barrhead and Paisley). —I would think that Nebuchadnezzar was mentally deranged for seven years and humbled to the level of a beast. —J. M.

[D] (Willington Quay). —Nebuchadnezzar was a mental case; he thought he was a beast and behaved like one. How much he remembered of his former greatness in present misery no one can say—J. M.

[E] (Atherton). —If we keep before our mind that the sphere of the kingdom of heaven is the world—"the field is the world"—not the more limited sphere of God's separated and gathered together people, whether Israel or God's New Testament people, we shall get clear ideas of the kingdom of heaven. The kingdom of heaven cannot be set forth by one parable as it changes with the change of God's dealings with men. Let us ask ourselves such questions as, What was God doing in the world in Nebuchadnezzar's time? What was He doing in the Lord's time on earth? What is He doing in this dispensation? What will He do after the Church is caught up? What will He do in the Millennium? Great changes have taken and will take place, and consequently the rule or reign of the heavens must be seen to change also, and this is clearly the case. —J. M.

[F] (Cardiff). —Note that two classes of people are called "the sons of the kingdom" (Matthew 13. 38; 8. 12). The former are the "good seed," but the latter are truly sons of the wicked one, for of them it is said, "But the sons of the kingdom shall be cast forth into the outer darkness: there shall be the weeping and gnashing of teeth." Many Gentiles from east and west shall sit with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of the heavens, whilst the privileged Jewish people will be cast forth into the outer darkness. Some help may be derived from what is said in Acts 14. 22—"Through many tribulations we must enter into the kingdom of God." Though disciples may be in the kingdom of God, they are both to seek it (Matthew 6. 33; Luke 12. 31) and to enter it as in Acts 14. 22. Though the kingdom of God has been given to the little Flock, yet such exercise as is indicated in these scriptures is necessary to enter and continue to enter the kingdom of God. Although persons are in the sphere of the kingdom of the heavens, which is the field, otherwise the world, yet in due

time, unless they are believers in Christ, having shown this by their attitude to those whom Christ calls "My brethren" (Matthew 25. 84-40), and though they may be sons of the kingdom, as in Matthew 8. 12, they will be cast out into the eternal fire. —J. M.

[G] (Cardiff). —No, tares do not become wheat. Good seed are such persons as have received the testimony of God, but tares are such as have received the evil one's counterfeit message. There are many counterfeit gospels to-day, all of them alike in one particular, which is the base of the Devil's gospel, that man by his own efforts can reach heaven and glory. God's gospel announces that man can do no good naturally in His sight ("There is none that doeth good"), and that salvation is by repentance and faith, and rests entirely on the finished work of Christ. Woe to them that accept the Devil's counterfeit gospel!—J. M.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

Question from Liverpool. —Why did Daniel say: "My lord, the dream be to them that hate thee" (4. 19) ?

Answer. —It shows the magnanimous character of Daniel the prophet. There was nothing in him of gloating over a fellow-human being's misfortune, nor of saying something equivalent to—"serves you right for your treatment of the Jewish people or for your pride and wickedness." —J. M.

Questions from Edinburgh. —(1) Who is the watcher and the holy one (4. 13)?

(2) Is this the end of Nebuchadnezzar's life so far as God's purpose was concerned ?

Answers (1). —An angelic being, I think. See comment [A] on Birmingham's paper.

(2) It is the end, so far as God's revelation of His dealings with Nebuchadnezzar in Daniel's prophecy is concerned—and what a grand end ! and what a great confession for Nebuchadnezzar to make in writing "unto all the people, nations and languages, that dwell in all the earth" !—J. M.

Question from Birkenhead. —Why is the expression "the kingdom of men" and not the "kingdoms" used in this chapter concerning the over-rule of the Most High ?

Answer. —I am of the opinion that if it had said "the kingdoms of men" it would have viewed those kingdoms together, but as it is put in Daniel 4. 17, "the kingdom of men," it signifies that in each kingdom governed by men there the Most High rules and gives it to whomsoever He will. —J. M.

Question from Barrhead and Paisley. —The inhabitants of the sea are excluded from the shelter of the tree. Can it be assumed that this realm was not put under the authority of this man ? If not, why ? How could such authority be applied ?

Answer. —We should, I think, remember that this is a dream. —J. M.

Question from Kingston-on-Thames. —We wondered whether the "congregation of God" (Psalm 82. 1) had any connexion with the watchers in this chapter.

Answer.—I judge the "congregation of God" to be the people of Israel. Compare verse 1 of this Psalm with verse 6. "I said, Ye are gods," which was quoted by the Lord in John 10. 34, signifying the leaders or judges of Israel (Exodus 21. C, R. V. M.). See Newberry. —J. M.

Questions from Atherton. —(1) Would judgement after twelve months indicate an unrepentant heart in Nebuchadnezzar?

(2) What are the major lessons for us to-day in the sequence (a) Nebuchadnezzar's pride, (b) his humiliation, (c) his final exaltation?

Answers. —(1) Probably; Ecclesiastes 8. 11 is illustrated in God's patience with Nebuchadnezzar.

(2) I would think so far as what our friends indicate is concerned these lines express the lessons we might learn: —

"He that is down need fear no fall;

He that is low no pride;

He that is humble ever shall

Have God to be his Guide. "

J. M.

Questions from **Cardiff**. —(1) What was the position of the people of Israel in the kingdom of heaven during that period of their history before Christ came to earth?

(2) What kingdom is referred to in Acts 1. 6?

(3) Acts 2. 42; 1 Corinthians 1. 9: In Acts 2. 42 the revisers have translated without the article where it seems it should be (as taught in "The Search for the truth of God," p. 66, line 3), yet in 1 Corinthians 1. 9 where *koinonia* is construed differently they have (it seems) inserted the article, thereby confusing the connexion between the two scriptures. Can this be explained, and have we sufficient evidence for suggesting that in each case "the fellowship" is referred to?

Answers. —(1) Note what is said in Matthew 3. 2; 4. 17. "Repent ye; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand," or, "has drawn near"; also Mark 1. 15, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand," or, "has drawn near." The kingdom of God though expressed in Israel in the past dispensation was about to enter upon a new phase with the coming of Christ. The same is true of the kingdom of the heavens. In the past, prior to Christ's coming to earth, God ruled the nations and Israel was a holy nation in the midst of the nations, but with the coming of Messiah to reign God would establish world-wide dominion. It is easily seen that whilst God ruled the nations there was an enemy ever disturbing peace among the nations and these nations oftentimes disturbing the tranquillity of God's people. God often allowing this to correct His wayward people. Even Nebuchadnezzar who was raised up of God and given world-wide dominion was used of God to punish Judah and Benjamin for their wickedness. With the rise of Cyrus the Persian, God wrought in that king's heart to allow the Remnant to return to re-commence the service associated with Israel as His people and kingdom.

(2) This is the kingdom of God, I judge. See Matthew 21. 43.

(3) The definite article is in Acts 2. 42, where the Fellowship is treated objectively, with THE teaching of THE apostles, THE breaking of THE bread, THE prayers. In 1 Corinthians 1. 9 this same Fellowship is viewed characteristically as that into which we are called, which is "of" (not "with") His Son Jesus Christ our Lord. —J. M.

BIBLE STUDIES

"Now these were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word **with** all readiness of mind, examining the **Scriptures** daily, whether these things **were so**" (Acts 17. 11.)

VOLUME 20.

MAY, 1952.

CONTENTS.

	<i>Page</i>
The Book of Daniel:	
The Heavens do rule	45
Belshazzar's Feast	46
Comments.	51
Questions and Answers	52

THE BOOK OF DANIEL.

The Heavens do rule.

(Chapter 4.).

From **Toronto**, Ont. —Daniel 4. presents three **states of man**: — (1) A typical worldly **man** (4. 4, 30), thoughts of **ease**, wealth, power and personal glory filled his **mind**, but no thought of God; (2) A humbled **man** looks to God—"I Nebuchadnezzar lifted up mine **eyes** unto heaven... " (4. 34); (3) A happy believer—"I Nebuchadnezzar praise **and extol and honour** the King of heaven" (4. 37). In the earlier **verses** of the chapter he speaks with great pride of his own might and power. Later he accepts these things **as** conferred upon him (4. 25, 36).

Four vital truths underlie the testimony of the king: —

1. "The Most High ruleth in the kingdom of **men**" (4. 25). The **fact** that evil **men** are often at the head of nations **casts** no shadow of doubt over this truth. The king of Assyria **was used** to punish the **Jews because** of their national sins (Isaiah 10.).

2. God's judgement is sure. **Judgement was** pronounced on Nebuchadnezzar, **and must** fall. **Was** Daniel advising the king (4. 27) to repent in hope that the **sentence** would **be** waived? **Can** sins of the past **be** balanced **by** righteous **acts** of the **future**? Certainly not! Daniel hoped to lengthen the space of time before the **judgement** should fall.

3. God receives repentant men. It **was** a peculiar-looking **man** who lifted his **eyes** to heaven that day. His hair **was** grown like eagles' feathers, **and** his nails like birds' claws, **but** his heart **was** right! He **was** humble now.

4. "Those that walk **in** pride He is able to **abase**" (4. 37). **Satan** learned this: of him the Scriptures **say**: "Thine heart **was** lifted up because of thy **beauty**" (Ezekiel 28. 17). God assures **us** that, "though them shouldest make thy nest **as** high **as** the eagle, I will **bring** thee down **from** thence" (Jeremiah 49. 16).

R. Dryburgh.

Belshazzar's Feast.

(Chapter 5.).

From **Brantford, Ont.** —The sun which had shone on Babylon **was** about to set. Nebuchadnezzar's experience caused him to **say**: "I . . . praise and extol and honour the King of heaven," but Belshazzar **was** condemned by Daniel's words: "Thou knewest all this; **but** hast lifted **up** thyself against the Lord of heaven" (5. 22). These are solemn words to **us** in our **day**. Our prized possession is the Bible, in which are living illustrations clearly showing that the only wise course to take **is** to fear God and walk in His ways.

It is customary for kings to hold great **feasts** and drink wine, but, when sinful men **presume** to affront God **as** did Belshazzar, **it** is little wonder that the judgement of God should descend upon them. The precious vessels (in all probability those made **by** Solomon) had been sanctified for service in the house of God. These Belshazzar brought forth, from which to drink **at** his feast, and to praise his gods of gold, silver, brass, iron, wood and stone. Let **us** remember that things and persons which have been **set** apart to God are His in a special sense, and are to **be** used in His service according to His **will**. It is precious to note that God preserved these vessels during the downfall of Babylon, and, when the remnant of Israel returned, Cyrus commanded that they **be** given to Sheshbazzar. Five thousand and four hundred vessels were committed to faithful men to **be** taken to Jerusalem, the only place on earth where they could **be** used in the service of God according to His will.

Daniel **was** used of God to make known to Belshazzar the judgement that had been written on the wall. Daniel revealed three things: (1) the kingdom of Babylon **was** finished, (2) Belshazzar had been weighed by God and **was** found wanting, (3) the kingdom **was** given to the Medes and Persians. That very night the king **was** slain. *Jas. Bell.*

From Barrhead **and** Paisley. —Nebuchadnezzar's testimony to the majesty of God (4. 37) **was** seemingly forgotten in Belshazzar's **act** of desecration when he drank wine out of the golden vessels which had been taken out of the temple of the LORD. Praise **was** offered by Belshazzar and his lords to the heathen gods of gold, silver, wood and stone, when the fingers of a man's hand were seen over against the candlestick upon the plaster of the wall and aroused consternation in the heart of the king. Some of our number, assuming that "the fingers" referred to were God's, wondered if there **was** any particular significance in the words "the fingers of a man's hand" [A]. It **was suggested** that these words might bear some relation to personal dealing that God had with Belshazzar. The tenor of the chapter **as far as** verse nine would indicate that Daniel had lost favour with those in high place. Jeremiah 27. 7 would support the suggestion that Belshazzar could **be** the grandson of Nebuchadnezzar, and that the queen (5. 10) **was** the queen-mother and not Belshazzar's wife. **We** considered Daniel's replies to both kings, and noted the courtly way in which he shewed **respect** to Nebuchadnezzar, in contrast to his somewhat curt manner in revealing God's will to the wayward Belshazzar.

The words "Mene, mene, tekel, upharsin" were words that could have been interpreted, **but** the significance of the interpretation could only **be** understood by the man of God, Daniel. Translated, the words meant "**Numbered**, numbered, weighed and divisions," and Daniel **gave** God's meaning. *W. Terrell, Jun.*

From **Edinburgh**. —The vessels looted from Jerusalem were brought to Belshazzar's feast that he and his lords might drink therefrom. Emboldened by wine, they were praising their idols, when the fingers of a man's hand appeared where the light of the candlestick fell upon the wall. It is not clear whether all the people saw the fingers, reference being made only to the king. Was this the candlestick from the temple? [B].

The king was terror-stricken and sought advice from his wise men. They failed, and great honour and reward were promised to the one who should declare the writing. The queen was brought to the banquet hall and advised the king to call for Daniel, who had proved himself before. At the king's behest Daniel came and was told the position. Wealth, etc., were promised him, but he refused the gifts and gave the interpretation.

Daniel recalled the history of Nebuchadnezzar, whom God had raised up and blessed with great wealth and power, but when his heart was lifted up, God overruled and removed him from the throne until he acknowledged God. Though Belshazzar knew this, he had not taken the lesson to heart and had profaned the holy vessels of the Lord.

The fingers were sent to reveal his fate. His kingdom was numbered and finished: he had been weighed in the balances and found wanting; his kingdom was to be divided and given to the Medes and Persians. Belshazzar was slain that night and Darius the Mede reigned in his stead.

W. Taylor.

EXTRACTS.

From **Crowborough**. —Our chapter records the end of a mighty empire. How soon man forgets! Not many years had elapsed and Nebuchadnezzar's grandson Belshazzar, puffed up with pride, did things even worse than Nebuchadnezzar had done. The precious vessels that belonged to God's house, Belshazzar took and desecrated them. There was no warning this time, but instead immediate judgement from God. God is patient and longsuffering with the children of men, but, alas, men interpret His longsuffering to be slackness, and despise His warnings and entreaties. When God does act, then the children of men are swept off in a moment and it is then too late for repentance. The apostle Peter, writing on these matters in his Second Epistle, issues the warning that God will not be mocked.

S. Swift.

From **Willington Quay**. —Belshazzar was judged on three counts (5. 23): (a) he exalted himself against God, (b) he and his company drank from the vessels of God's house, and (c) he glorified not God, in whom "we live, and move, and have our being." That night he was slain and the kingdom was divided.

Daniel, God's servant, was not numbered with the thousand lords. He sat not in the seat of the scornful; his delight was in the law of the LORD. Nor was he found amongst the enchanters, Chaldeans or soothsayers; indeed he seemed to be overlooked by the king. His value to the kingdom was not appreciated. It was said of Daniel that he was the dissolver of doubts. There never was doubting with him; his confidence was in God.

C. B.

From **Sunderland**. —There is a lapse of several years between the events recorded in the fourth and fifth chapters of the book of Daniel, during which time one or more kings appear to have ruled over Babylon.

It would appear that Evil-merodach succeeded Nebuchadnezzar (2 Kings 25. 27). it is interesting to note that Daniel had two visions during Belshazzar's reign; one in the first year (7. 1) and one in the third year (8. 1).

God spoke through Jeremiah (chapters 50. and 51.) of days of vengeance coming upon Babylon and its gods, after He had **used** the nation in accomplishing His purposes upon Israel. This **came to pass** in the invasion of Babylon **by** the Medes (Jeremiah 51. 11).
J. R., Jun.

From Kingston-on-Thames. —The vessels of the house of God, which were so flagrantly **desecrated, seem to be** those that David **received** from the king of Hamath and dedicated to the LORD (2 Samuel 8. 10-11, 1 Kings 7. 51), **but we** were not clear **as** to what they were **used** for in the house of the LORD. [C].

Daniel **at** this **time was** an old man; he had been sixty-seven years in **captivity** and **must** have been **at** least eighty years old. The **time** had come when the judgement **must** fall: the **cup was** full. God had numbered the kingdom and brought it to an end. From the wonderfully detailed prophecies of Isaiah and Jeremiah, Daniel knew that the **time was** very near when Babylon's seventy years would **be** accomplished (Jeremiah 29. 10, 25. 12), and that very soon Cyrus, whose armies were even now approaching the **city**, would take control and **say** of Jerusalem, "She shall **be** built" (Isaiah 44. 28). What **a** joyous moment for Daniel! His thoughts went to the glorious city and the house of God for whose restoration he had **prayed** for many long years.

The **capture** of Babylon **by** the **Medes** and Persians **was** only a partial fulfilment of the prophecies of Isaiah 13. There **is** no record in history of any overthrow so complete **as** is there recorded. **We** therefore conclude that these events are still to **take** place and correspond to the prophecies of Revelation 18. This is an indication that the Babylon of Revelation is no symbol, **but** an actual city.
L. Burrows,

From Edmonton, Alberta. —The events recorded in this chapter prefigure the overthrow of all Gentile power and dominion in the **time** of the end, especially that the evil **system** referred to in Revelation 17. 5. **Belshazzar's** crowning **act** of impiety (5. 2-4) marked the climax in the filling of Babylon's **cup** of iniquity. God placed **a** very high value on the golden vessels used in His house. Would that men would profit **by** this record, which **is** written for our admonition!

Belshazzar had known of the overruling power of God during Nebuchadnezzar's reign, **yet** remained entirely indifferent to the man whom God had used, and continued to sin against light and knowledge.

Daniel held **a** marked respect for Nebuchadnezzar, and had besought him to repent. **But**, in dealing with Belshazzar, he recognized immediately that this wicked king's doom **was** sealed, his **cup** of iniquity filled, and that the hour of God's judgement had struck. Even while he pressed home to Belshazzar his sinfulness, and then solemnly read and interpreted the heaven-sent message, the invading hosts were drawing nearer to the palace, having achieved **a** **master** stroke of military **strategy** in gaining entry. The blow had actually fallen! Too late now to repent (4. 25-28)! How vividly this prefigures the sure destruction which will fall upon the forces of unrighteousness **at** Armageddon! There **is** also **a** solemn note of warning to the unsaved: "Weighed in the balances, and... found wanting." Oh, that Christ-rejecting sinners would awake to their inevitable doom!

F. Lundwill.

From Kilmarnock. —It would appear **that** Belshazzar was not a son **but** a grandson of Nebuchadnezzar (some ancient historians say a great-grandson), that he **gave** himself **up** to festivity and impious debauchery, and that this great feast **was** a religious festival. He was a worshipper of idols, and, perhaps in defiance of the Hebrews' God, he commanded to bring into the banquet the vessels taken from the temple in Jerusalem, and they all drank wine in them. **But** God was about to deal in judgement. As the fingers wrote on the wall, the king trembled. No matter how high and mighty men **may be**, when brought into contact with God, they are **made** to fear.

The magicians were unable to interpret the writing. Man's wisdom cannot understand God's writing, for "the world through its wisdom knew not God" (1 Corinthians 1. 21). Daniel declined the gifts and rewards the king promised and reminded him of Nebuchadnezzar's greatness and how he was deposed "until he knew that the Most High God ruleth in the kingdom of men" (5. 21). Although Belshazzar knew all this, he had not humbled himself. God **was** now making known to him **by** the writing on the wall that he was found wanting, and his kingdom was finished and divided and given to the Medes and Persians. That night the king was slain and the kingdom of Babylon **came** to an **end**, as foretold **by** Jeremiah many years previously. The kingdom represented **by** the head of gold had failed, and now the Medo-Persian power, represented **by** the breast and arms of silver, took possession of the kingdom. *A. G. S.*

From Cowdenbeath. —Belshazzar and his lords considered the city, with its massive walls and mighty gates, impregnable; and, while they **made** merry, they **gave** little thought to the armies of the **Medes and** Persians, who besieged it.

We would suggest that only the king **saw** the hand, and this would seem **to be** in keeping with God's ways, as witness the case of Balaam (Numbers 22) [D]. Daniel was brought **in** and **it** would seem that Belshazzar had no previous knowledge of Daniel, although Nebuchadnezzar had recognized Daniel's worth and given him an exalted place **in** the kingdom. Before Daniel read the writing and **gave** the interpretation, he **gave** the king a most solemn admonition. Briefly recounting the history of Nebuchadnezzar and God's dealings with him, he charged home to the king the gravity of his own indifference and his reckless insults against God. Daniel also brought before the king a most solemn and grave charge (5. 23): "the God in whose hand thy breath is, **and** whose are all thy ways, hast thou not glorified."

History tells **us** how the fall of Babylon **came** about. **By** diverting the course of the river Euphrates, which ran through the **city**, the **enemy** forces were able to march along the **bed** of the river and under the massive city gates, and so take possession. Thus was fulfilled God's word, and thus **did** Belshazzar perish. What a sequel to that gorgeous banquet! "He that being often reproved hardeneth his neck shall suddenly **be** broken, and that without **remedy**" (Proverbs 29. 1). *David McLelland.*

From Atherton. —The **message** upon the wall is unique inasmuch that **it** is the only such occurrence. There **are** other significant references to the hand, for example, Ezekiel 2. 9, 8. 3. The wise men's failure **to** read the **writing** caused some discussion. The words, according to Dr. Young, **wef** in Aramaic. The word Mena is also used in Daniel 2. 24, 49, 3. 12;

Ezra 7. 25. The question **was** then asked whether, in view of the **fact** that this **was** written in their own language, God deliberately veiled **it** from the wise men of Babylon. Some thought that this **was** the case; **but** others thought that although they could read the words, they could not understand the meaning.

Two other questions were considered: (1) Why **did** Belshazzar not know Daniel? The queen-mother obviously knew him (5. 11). Daniel never sought glory for himself, **but** sought constantly to walk humbly before God; and evidently Belshazzar had forgotten the existence of one who had stood high in his grandfather's estimation.

(2) What **is** meant by the third ruler in the kingdom? It was pointed out that **as** Belshazzar **was** only second ruler himself, he could only make Daniel third: Nabonidus **was** first, Belshazzar **was** second. **We pass** on the following meanings of the words, in addition to Daniel's interpretation: Mene, **fifty** shekels; tekel, **a** shekel; peres, half-shekel.

G. Sankey, D. H. Butler.

From Ilford. —Belshazzar, during the great feast, commanded that the vessels, which had been taken out of the temple at Jerusalem, should **be** brought in. These were then used in drinking and the praising of false gods. Almost immediately God indicated **His** disapproval, thus showing the seriousness of the sin. The **same** sort of thing **is** taking place to-day in spiritual Babylon. Those, who have no right to do so, are partaking in services which should **be** associated only with the house of God. Spiritual Babylon will no doubt **be** judged for this error.

It **was** thought strange that Daniel **was** not called earlier. It was suggested that this may have been to show the almighty power of God. The wisdom of men had failed to interpret the writing, **but** when Daniel **was** brought in God's power **was** shown. The interpretation of the word "tekel" **was** discussed. God's balance **is** perfect and His weights just. Would **we be** found wanting, **if we** were weighed in this balance?

E. H. Jarvis.

From Melbourne. —Though Daniel, when addressing Belshazzar, referred to Nebuchadnezzar **as** his father (5. 18), and in verse 22 **said**: "And thou his son, O Belshazzar", **we** judge that Evil-merodach **succeeded** Nebuchadnezzar **as** king of Babylon. This Merodach **was** a kind-hearted king, who in the very first year of his reign released Jehoiachin, king of Judah. It **was** thought that Merodach's **sister** was the mother of Belshazzar, therefore he would **be** the grandson of Nebuchadnezzar.

Belshazzar deliberately lifted **up** himself against God, and praised the gods of silver, gold, etc., although he had known the judgement of God upon his grandfather, Nebuchadnezzar. The Psalmist David **said** of the judgements of the LORD, that they are true and righteous altogether. David also knew the danger of letting them pass unheeded, for he continued: "Moreover **by** them **is** Thy servant warned" (Psalm 19. 11).

Belshazzar greatly accelerated the doom of the Chaldean empire, when he ordered the golden and silver vessels, taken out of the house of God, to **be used** for wine-drinking. Whilst Daniel **was** reading and interpreting the writing on the wall, the LORD **was** opening doors and **gates**, and preparing the way for Cyrus king of **Persia** to go in and conquer (Isaiah 45. 1-3). Belshazzar **defied** the God of heaven, and **paid** the penalty with his life and empire. *S. Stoope.*

From Birkenhead. —The experience of Nebuchadnezzar had apparently no effect upon Belshazzar. It could not be said of him that he was ignorant of God. The queen knew of the presence of Daniel in the land, and could remind Belshazzar of how he had brought the message of God to Nebuchadnezzar. Belshazzar in his pride profaned the vessels of the house of God. Daniel impressed this folly upon him, when he made known to him the meaning of the writing on the wall. Belshazzar did not realize that the captivity of the children of Israel was fulfilling a purpose of God, and that he himself was being used by God. Daniel, on the other hand, knew from the prophecy of Jeremiah how long Jerusalem would be desolate, and was assured of God's presence with him even in captivity. It was suggested that even after he had been greatly disturbed by the writing on the wall, Belshazzar's words to Daniel were spoken in unbelief: "I have heard of thee . . . now if thou canst . . . "

J. B., R. L. S.

From London, S. E. —Only three Chaldean kings are mentioned in Scripture, viz., Nebuchadnezzar, Evil-merodach (2 Kings 25. 27), and Belshazzar. The queen remembered Daniel, now a very old man, and recalled how that, during the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, he had displayed greater wisdom than all the wise men of that time.

The sin of the king and the inhabitants of Babylon had reached a climax, and God's judgement was pronounced. God is longsuffering, not willing that any should perish, but judgement is His strange work. If men after many warnings refuse to repent, then God's judgement is inevitable. Naturally wise men are unable to interpret the Scriptures aright, for the Spirit of God is not in them. The natural mind is enmity against God. Only to those, like Daniel, who are separated in heart and life, can God reveal **His** secrets.

E. C. Leamy.

COMMENTS.

[A] (Barrhead **and** Paisley). —The fingers are not said to be God's, but the fingers of a man's hand. —*J. M.*

[B] (Edinburgh). —One can hardly think that a banquet hall capable of holding 1, 000 lords was illuminated by only one source of light. In Solomon's temple there were ten lampstands (1 Kings 7. 49), so that we cannot speak of "the candlestick of the temple." The questioner is confusing the tabernacle with the temple. We cannot say which lampstand this one was. —*J. M.*

[C] (Kingston). —There were "oil vessels" connected with the service of the lampstand, dishes, spoons, bowls and cups, connected with the service of the table of Shewbread, and besides these, we read of "all the vessels of ministry, wherewith they minister in the sanctuary" (Numbers 4. 7, 9, 12). The Remnant carried back from Babylon 5, 400 vessels of gold and silver (Ezra 1. 11). Vessels were needed for incense and oil and for the drink and meal offerings which were associated with the pure table. See 2 Chronicles 4. 19-22 as to the vessels Solomon made, besides those which were gifted by kings, as indicated by our friends. Nebuchadnezzar cut in pieces Solomon's gold vessels (2 Kings 24. 13). Ahaz too had earlier cut in pieces the vessels of the house of God (2 Chronicles 28. 24). —*J. M.*

[D] (**Cowdenbeath**). —It cannot **be** true that only **the** king **saw** the writing on the wall, for the Chaldeans, enchanters, etc., also **saw** it, but could not read it (Daniel 5. 8). —J. M.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

Questions from Barrhead and Paisley. —(1) Why did Daniel eventually accept Belshazzar's honours after having refused them (5. 29) ?

(2) In the light of verse 29 would it be right for those in the Fellowship to-day to accept honours from those in high place ?

Answers. —(1) You may say that you have no desire for royal honours, **but** you may not **be** able to refuse them. Note here—"Then commanded Belshazzar", and this was followed **by**—"and they clothed Daniel with purple", etc. —*J. M.*

(2) **Read** verse 29 and it will be seen that Daniel is not said to have accepted Belshazzar's honours; they were imposed on him by royal command. —*J. M.*

Questions from Edinburgh. —(1) Why was Daniel's third word different (Upharsin, Peres) ?

(2) Was the writing Hebrew or an unknown grouping of characters ?

Answers. —(1) The root of both words in Hebrew is the same, meaning "divided".

(2) The words are in Hebrew in the text of Daniel 5. 25, but whether these are derived from some other language I **am** not certain. —*3. M.*

Question from Crowborough. —2 Kings 24. 13-14 records that Nebuchadnezzar carried out all the treasures of the house of the LORD, and cut in pieces all the vessels of gold which Solomon had made in the temple of the LORD (see Jeremiah SO. 5). Are these the same as are mentioned in Daniel 5. 2 ?

Answer. —No, I judge not. When the vessels were cut in pieces they were destroyed, though their value in the weight of the gold remained. See note [C] in Kingston's paper. —*J. M.*

Question from London, S. E. —What is the significance of a man's hand (5. 5)? It was sent from God (5. 24).

Answer. —It was something that Belshazzar and all others understood, that a man's hand is used in writing, and for innumerable other purposes. The significance of the miracle is not in the hand, but in the writing. —*J. M.*

BIBLE STUDIES

"Now these were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, examining the Scriptures daily, whether these things were so" (Acts 17. 11.)

VOLUME 20.

JUNE, 1952.

EDITORIAL.

Daniel 6. closes **that part of Daniel's prophecy** which has to do with the narration of certain events which happened in the life of Daniel and of his friends in Babylon. **After the introductory chapter 1., we have Daniel revealing to Nebuchadnezzar the meaning of his dreams regarding the image and the tree, his reading the writing on the wall to Belshazzar concerning his doom and the end of the Babylonian kingdom at that time, and, finally, the plot against Daniel's life and his being cast into the den of lions.** Then, in addition to this, **we have the story about Nebuchadnezzar's golden image on the plain of Dura and the faithfulness of Daniel's companions (Daniel 2. 17).**

It is of interest to note **that the Hebrew word for "companionship" is the word Chabar** which is **the same word as is used for the coupling of the curtains of the tabernacle (Exodus 26. 3, 6, 9, 11; 36. 10, 13, 16, 18), and means "to join together". It is also used in Exodus 39. 4 to describe the joining together of the shoulder pieces of the priestly ephod.** The unity of **the tabernacle was dependent on the coupling of the curtains together in the divinely ordained manner.** This word **Chabar** bespeaks fellowship. Even when there **was no nation together, the godly in Babylon sought to enjoy such fellowship as was possible in that dark, idolatrous land.**

The writer of Psalm 119. says in verse 63, "**I am a companion of all them that fear Thee.** " **Such** persons are drawn together intuitively. In **the New Testament, as in 1 John 1., fellowship with God should ever find its counterpart, in those who claim to enjoy fellowship with God and His Son through the fellowship of the Spirit (2 Corinthians 13. 14, Philippians 2. 1), in their fellowship one with another; and, where you find persons drawing away from fellowship with God-fearing persons in the Fellowship there is something wrong either with the mind or the heart, or both.**

There can be no doubt that the companionship of Daniel **and his friends was a source of comfort and strength.** The declarations of Nebuchadnezzar and Darius are worthy of note. Nebuchadnezzar said, "Blessed be **the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego**".... "How great are His signs! **And how mighty are His wonders! His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and His dominion is from generation to generation.**" (Daniel 3. 28, 4. 3).

Again **he** said, "I blessed the Most High, and I praised and honoured Him that liveth for ever; for **His** dominion is an everlasting dominion, and His kingdom from generation to generation". (Daniel 4. 34). Darius **the Mede added his testimony to the above when He said, "I make a decree, that in all the dominion of my kingdom men tremble and fear before the God of Daniel: for He is the living God, and steadfast for ever, and His kingdom that which shall not be destroyed". (Daniel 6. 26.).**

Such testimony of Gentile kings to **the** greatness and power of God is not elsewhere found in **the** Scriptures, and it **came** about by **the** faithfulness of Daniel and his companions. —J. M.

THE BOOK OF DANIEL.

Belshazzar's Feast.

(Chapter 5.).

From **Toronto**. —Belshazzar presents a vivid illustration of a man, answering to the description of Holy Writ: " There is no fear of God before his eyes. " Had he never known any better we could expect a different ending to our chapter. His inconsistency is difficult to understand; he would not grant to one God the reverence which he freely bestowed on others. In this, we believe, he differed from Nebuchadnezzar, who, although he was responsible for removing the holy vessels of the sanctuary to Babylon, did not presume further to desecrate them, but held them, as it were, in trust. Belshazzar, on the other hand, treated them as chattels; and the God, whose they were, as inferior to his gods of gold, silver, brass, iron, wood and stone.

We wondered if the writing were done by God, the Son, in view of John 1. 18: *' The only begotten S o n . . . hath declared Him "[1].

Daniel's attitude to the king and his rewards is worthy of more than passing note. As the true servant of God, his soul was vexed by the arrogance of Belshazzar. How then, could he defile himself with rewards at the hands of one so bereft of the fear of God ? What strength he was given by God, publicly to denounce not only the manifest wickedness of the king, but also the root of his wickedness, buried deep in his heart—pride ! It is perhaps significant that Daniel's opportunity to rebuke the king, was not of his own making. God, working through his "written" word, effected in Belshazzar a will to have God's word explained. Herein, perhaps, lies a lesson which God would have us learn. *S. K. Seath.*

' From Hamilton, Ont. —Belshazzar, Nebuchadnezzar's son, made several serious mistakes which are common to men of to-day. In verse 2 we read, " Belshazzar, whilst he tasted the wine, etc. " which would seem to show that, had it not been for the influence of strong drink, possibly he would never have thought to use the vessels of God's sanctuary. But, having partaken of the wine, he dared to show his complete disregard for the " Most High God " (5. 18).

In verses 5 and 6 we see how sudden was the judgement that came upon him, just as sudden as at the flood, when they were " eating and drinking " (Matthew 24. 38, 89). Just as those in Noah's day " knew not until the flood came, " so Belshazzar knew not until sudden judgement, in the form of the writing on the wall, came upon him. Immediately after he saw the writing, " the king's countenance was changed. " One would think that, after seeing his father's humiliation, he would have had a fear of falling into the hands of the God who had so dealt with Nebuchadnezzar. We are reminded that " it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God " (Hebrews 10. 31). How often we see this " lifting up " of heart take place ! We think of the words of the Lord Jesus Christ concerning Capernaum: "And thou, Capernaum, shalt thou be exalted unto heaven ? thou shalt go down unto Hades " (Matthew 11. 23).

We know that God is long-suffering (2 Peter 3. 9) and makes allowance for ignorance: " The times of ignorance therefore God overlooked " (Acts 17. 30). Belshazzar's sin was not one of ignorance, but in defiance of God

(5. 23). God's law was " thou shalt have none other gods before Me " (Exodus 20. 8), but we read that Belshazzar, with his followers, " praised the gods of gold, and of silver, " etc. He did this in spite of the fact that his father had set up a golden image (3. 1) and, as a result, was humbled by God. But all this had no voice for Belshazzar. Daniel, speaking to him, says, "And thou his son, O Belshazzar, hast not humbled thine heart, *though thou knewest all this.* "

In verse 31 we see the beginning of the " silver. " This was the other kingdom which was " inferior " to that of the " gold " (2. 38-39).

In Acts 12. 23 we read of the sudden judgement that came upon Herod, the king, " because he gave not God the glory. " Is this not a lesson for us to-day, to glorify God both collectively and individually ? (Romans 15. 6) Therefore, let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: " Fear God, and keep His commandments; for this is the whole duty of man " (Ecclesiastes 12. 13).
I. Mercer, W. Thompson.

From Victoria, B. C. —At Sinai God revealed Himself as One that " will by no means clear the guilty " (Exodus 34. 7). Isaiah 40. 23 tells us that he bringeth princes to nothing, and maketh the judges of the earth as vanity, and in chapter 45. the cry is: " Woe unto him that striveth with his Maker ! "

< The action in Daniel 5. is the culmination of a godless life. Belshazzar, taking no heed to conscience or the lessons that his father had learned so dearly, failed to comprehend that the LORD God is God alone, false idols having no place.

The finger writing upon the wall was indeed an awe-inspiring sight! Belshazzar immediately attributed it to the supernatural, and called for help from the wisdom of this world. Unhappy man that he was ! he had not understood that the wisdom of this world knows not God. Daniel, though respectful to the king, did not want any part of his gifts. He seems to have held him in low esteem, because he was at enmity with God. The child of God should never seek favour of those who are enemies of the cross of Christ. Daniel was not a seeker after earthly glory: the honour of his God was more important. In his words to the king we see the character of God as a jealous God who seeks humility in a man's heart and praise from his lips. Therefore Belshazzar was weighed and found wanting.

This narrative is a solemn warning from God to all mankind. " God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. "

A. McLeman.

Daniel in the den of lions.

(Chapter 6.)

From Cowdenbeath. — The intended, promotion of Daniel by Darius was resented by the other presidents and satraps. Envy filled their hearts and together they wrought for Daniel's downfall; but their efforts met with failure, because Daniel was a faithful man. As he discharged his duties he had the king's interests at heart. They looked for both error and failure, but found none. In

Ezra 4. 22, the Hebrew word here translated " error " is rendered in the **A. V.** as " fail " and in the **R. V.** as " to be slack. " This would seem to suggest that, as they examined Daniel's work, they looked for things which he had failed to do concerning which he had been slack. The word for " fault " **it derived** from a verb meaning ** to decay or ruin " and is frequently rendered " corrupt. " They looked for corruption or the mishandling of affairs by Daniel, **but** found none. He is an example of what Christian men should be in the service of their masters. Faithfulness is the **fruit** of the indwelling Spirit (Galatians 5. 22), and is a characteristic which should be seen in all of us.

Daniel **made** petition and supplication. The word for " petition " means " to make request. " The word here translated " supplication " is on several occasions in **its verb** form rendered " beseech. " An examination of some of these occurrences will help to illustrate **its** meaning. Joseph in **distress** of soul besought his brethren (Genesis 42. 21); Esther in tears besought the king on behalf of the Jewish people (Esther 8. 3): Moses besought God to allow him to enter the land (Deuteronomy 3. 23). Daniel not only **made** request, **but did** so with earnest entreaty. Too often, perhaps, we make **request** without supplication, which **gives** reality to our asking. Prayer, that is a mere making of **request**, is cold and lifeless, **but** when associated with supplication, what a warmth of feeling is expressed! In the early part of the reign of Darius (chapter 9.), Daniel **was** intently studying the prophecy of Jeremiah. There would be on his part, as there should also be on ours, a realisation that prayer and the study of God's word go together.

The tribute, which the king **paid** to Daniel in his manner of address to him, **was** one of which he **was** worthy—" Servant of the living God. " Daniel's **service was** both faithful and continuous, and his reply indicates the near place in which he lived to God. He **said** " My God. " Paul spoke similarly in Philippians 4. 19. Many others, especially the psalmists, spoke of God in this way. Such men lived close to God and are examples to **us**.

The wicked plot of the presidents and satraps resulted in their own destruction: and, **because** of the **deep** impression **made** upon the king by Daniel's deliverance, he sent a written proclamation throughout his kingdom commanding men to fear God. Thus God overruled for **His** own glory the evil design of wicked men and, **at a time** when Israel, **because** of failure, were not in their own land, He **used** other means to have witness borne concerning Himself throughout the earth. *James Bowman.*

From Melbourne. —Daniel's faithfulness and integrity were **as steadfast as** ever, although nearly seventy years had passed since he **was** taken **captive as a** youth. **His** testimony for God in idol-worshipping Babylon showed no sign of abating, **but** his **greatest test** lay yet before him. The Median and Persian satraps, whom Darius **set** over the kingdom, soon **became** jealous and cruel, driving their monarch against his will to destroy this righteous Jew. Darius **saw** the excellent **spirit** that **was** in Daniel and even thought of setting him over the whole realm, **but** his satraps prepared a cunning plot whereby Daniel **was** to be delivered to the lions.

Darius **was** a weak king and easily led. The presidents, satraps, counsellors and governors, instead of asking for orders, merely explained

what they wished **him** to do (6. 7). They **had** settled **this** among themselves **and there was** nothing **in** it against the **decrees** of Cyrus, from whom he **received** the kingdom (5. 31). (The A. V. says: "Darius the **Median took** the kingdom.") [2]. So king Darius established the interdict **and** signed the **writing**, thus making **a** statute that could not **be** changed. Daniel now faced a situation that has confronted the children of God down the **ages**—God's will or **man's** laws ! Some, like Daniel, **put** God's will **first and man's** afterwards. Daniel **was** unmoved **by** the king's statute **and** prayed **and gave** thanks to his God **as** before. The treacherous satraps **spied** on faithful Daniel, **and** hastened back to Darius with the **news** that " Daniel, which is of the children of the captivity of Judah, regardeth not thee, O king, nor the interdict that thou hast signed, **but** maketh his petition three times **a** day " (6. 13). Their artful words, **designed** to stir **up** the king's anger, only fills him with dismay. Darius **passed** the night **fasting and** without, the entertainment of **dancing** girls (R. V. M.), but Daniel spent **an** unforgettable night with the lions, **in nearness** to God, and **in** the ministry of **His** angel who stood by him.

God **made** Daniel to prosper; he put God **first in** all his ways, **and** God put him first **in** the kingdom. Great though his responsibilities were, he (now aged) **was** not unbalanced by honours. He continued diligently **in** the study of the Holy Scriptures, for chapter 9. 2 declares he understood by the books the words of Jeremiah 29. 10.

When studying Daniel 6., we were **caused** to admire every phase of Daniel's character **and** work, his whole-hearted spirituality Godward, his resolute and determined purpose of heart **in** testimony manward, and felt how far short we come of Daniel's standard. *S. Stoope.*

From Willington Quay. —The admission, which the **enemies** of Daniel were **caused** to make when they **said**, " **We** shall not **find** any occasion against this Daniel, except **we find** it against him concerning the law of his God, " serves to remind **us** of the righteousness which characterized his life. Such righteousness, whilst being well pleasing to God, **and** acceptable **in** the eyes of Darius, **was** certain, **ere** long, to make Daniel the object of the intrigues of the wicked.

How similar **was** this experience of Daniel's to those of the psalmist! Although **at** this time he **was** perhaps over eighty years of age, Daniel **was** not dismayed **by** the **seeming** power **and** strength of his adversaries, for his reliance **was** upon his God. True **in** Daniel's **case** were the words of the psalmist, " The LORD knoweth the way of the righteous: but the way of the wicked shall perish. " The presidents **and** satraps, with their plan of evil, little thought that they were but devising the nature of their own end.

Daniel **suffered** because of his well-doing, **and** not **as** a result of sin. Peter in his epistle **reminds us** that such suffering **is** acceptable with God (1 Peter 2. 20).

It **was** thought by some that Darius sought to exalt himself **as** God **and used** the **request** of the satraps **and** deputies to attain this end. Others thought that his position, unlike that of Nebuchadnezzar, **was** not one of supreme authority, **and** the **signing** of the interdict **was incumbent** upon him. *KM.*

From Atherton. —The present chapter unfolds the excellencies of the man of God, a life and character moulded by the Spirit of God so that neither fault nor corruption could be found in this pre-eminent president of Babylon.

As in the case of the Lord Jesus, the great adversary stirred up opposition and treachery against Daniel; but it is remarkable that all agreed that there was no opportunity to accuse him, except it be in connexion with the law of his God. How aptly do the words of Psalm 119, 116, 117, 161, 162, apply to Daniel's difficulty ! In the limitless power of prayer, do we not find strength to put on the whole armour of God ? (See Ephesians 6. 11-14, 17, 18). Prayer three times a day seemed to characterize these mighty men of God. David said: " As for me, I will call upon God ; . . . evening, and morning, and at noonday, will I complain, and moan: and He shall hear my voice " (Psalm 55. 17). Is this not a practice that we should imitate ?

Deep impressions were made upon Darius by the excellencies of Daniel. Tricked and baffled by the strategy of his rulers, first of all he set his heart on Daniel to deliver him (6. 14); then he commended Daniel to the deliverance of his God (6. 16). Note the words: " He will deliver thee. " Implicit faith and courage are bound to be honoured by God, whether the law of the Medes and Persians be violated or not; and divine intervention, as in the case of the three Hebrew youths of chapter 3., brought the selfsame result: " No manner of hurt was found upon him. "

Consideration of the prayerful, godly and faithful life of Daniel, raised a number of questions.

(1) Is it always necessary when we pray to God, to include thanksgiving and confession so as to be acceptable to God ? It was agreed that this should be the case, not only in assembly prayers, but also in individual prayers; but it was not thought to be necessary for every brother to make confession at assembly prayer meetings [3].

(2) Seeing that Matthew 6. 9-15 was taught the disciples of the Lord Jesus, why do we not use this formula ? It was said that, although the basis of the prayer is worthy of imitation, yet the main reason is that it does not apply to this present dispensation. The change of the dispensation is indicated in Matthew 16. 13-20 and 21. 43. [4].

(3) Is it possible by personal exercise to increase our individual faith ? Faith can be increased by exercise, but two things are absolutely essential: (a) frequent reading of God's word, and (b) continuous believing prayer (see also Romans 10. 17).

(4) Is the flesh more likely to spoil an excellent spirit in a disciple than the temptations of the devil ?

A number of scriptures were referred to James 1. 13-15, Romans 7. 18, 8. 5-8), but we were unable to agree definitely. Some thought that the flesh is our greatest enemy; others said we must remember how Eve was deceived in the garden, for there we see the fulfilment of 1 John 2. 16, " The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the vainglory of life. " We would appreciate some help on this question [5].

Birchall, D. H. Butler.

From **Sunderland**. —In verse **29** of the previous chapter we read that Daniel **was made** the third ruler in the kingdom, or that he should rule **as** one of three (R. V. M.). This **may** have some bearing on Daniel's status in the kingdom of Darius the **Mede**, though it is recognised that **a** change of king might also bring **a** change of rulers. In any **case**, Daniel found favour in the **eyes** of the king, thus evoking the envy of the other presidents and satraps. The **fact** that they could find no fault in him bears high testimony to Daniel's faithfulness and his adherence to the commandments of the Lord.

Daniel's affections were ever toward Jerusalem, and the steadfastness of his prayers, three times **a** day, indicates that he preferred Jerusalem above his chief joy. He had not forgotten the prayer of Solomon **at** the dedication of the temple concerning Israel in captivity (**1 Kings 8. 46-50**). Also in the first year of Darius he understood the number of the years for the accomplishing of the desolation of Jerusalem, even seventy years (**9. 2**).

His faith **was** then **put** to the test. Previously, it **was** his three friends who through faith quenched the power of fire (chapter 3.). Daniel's trial **was** of **a** different kind **but** with the **same** results: through faith he stopped the mouths of lions. He served the **same** God, who **was** unto him **a** God of deliverances. **As** for his accusers, their mischief returned upon their own heads.

Darius issued a decree proclaiming the greatness of God in terms **very** similar to those issued by Nebuchadnezzar (**3. 29**). Formerly it **was** the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego (**3. 28**), now it is the God of Daniel **6. 26**.
J. R., Jnr.

From Kingston-upon-Thames. —Daniel had been about sixty-eight years **a captive**, and, **if he was** about eighteen when he first **came** to Babylon, this would make him about eighty-six.

After Babylon had been **captured** by Darius, he **seems** to have let it remain much **as** it **was**. Daniel, having been raised to **be** the third ruler in the kingdom by Belshazzar, **seems** to have been chosen for appointment **as** one of the three presidents, their function being to **see** that the king suffered no **damage** (or loss). Daniel's wisdom **was** proverbial (**Ezekiel 28. 3**). Can we **see** his desire in Psalm 119. **29**: " Remove from **me** the way of falsehood " ? His meditation on, and his ordering of his life according to the law of the LORD had had **a** wonderful **effect** upon him. Darius no doubt noted these qualities and thought to **set** him over the whole realm. An excellent spirit **was** in him. Excellent means **abundant**. This **seems** to indicate breadth of vision, wisdom, and knowledge of the law of his God.

We know from Daniel **9. 2** that he **studied** the book of Jeremiah. The words of Jeremiah **9. 23, 24** had their **due** effect. How he gloried in knowing and understanding the LORD, His loving kindness, **His** judgement, and His righteousness in the earth! Daniel knew that if Israel would repent and seek the LORD the time **was** ripe for the LORD to turn again their captivity and bring them again to the land of His choice (**Jeremiah 25. 12, and 29. 10**).

As foretold by Daniel when interpreting Nebuchadnezzar's dream, the world empire, which would arise after Babylon, namely the Medo-Persian, would **be** inferior. The power and authority of Darius was not absolute, for after the signing of the interdict Darius was powerless to **save** Daniel.

When Daniel knew that the interdict had been signed, he went into his house, not in a spirit of bravado. His thoughts **and** prayers were not for his own safety, but, as implied in the phrase, "Now his windows were open in his chamber toward Jerusalem," his one desire was for the restoration of the people of Israel to the land (6. 10, and compare Psalm 28. 2, 1 Kings 8. 28). This was his consuming desire and had been for a long time as the word "aforetime" seems to indicate (6. 10). This desire was no doubt intensified by the revelation to him, during the first year of Darius, that the accomplishing of the desolations of Jerusalem was to end after seventy years (9. 2). This we judged to have commenced in the third year of Jehoiakim (1. 1) and to have ended in the first year of Cyrus (Ezra 1. 1-3). The prophecies in Jeremiah (notably chapter 33.) in relation to the return of the children of Israel to the land have yet to be finally fulfilled.

It must have been with a deep sadness of heart that Daniel heard his fate, for he knew that the accomplishing of the desolations of Jerusalem would take place in two years. If he were to die, he would never witness the return, yet his faith never failed.

L. A. White.

EXTRACTS.

From Barrhead **and** Paisley. —Despite the legislation forbidding prayer of any kind and carrying dire penalties, Daniel did not depart from his habitual devotions, but continued to pray with his windows open toward Jerusalem. We learn from his example that there can be no compromise by the Christian when the laws of the land infringe divine principle. Submission and obedience are our duties to the state, provided state laws do not prohibit spiritual exercise. They may carry heavy penalties, but let us follow the example of Daniel. In this matter, however, we had some difficulty with Romans 13. 1 [6].

Daniel remembered the words of Solomon at the dedication of the temple, when he asked God to bless those who should pray with their eyes toward the house. Daniel's window was opened toward the temple. Whatever we may ask, whether as individuals or as a people, should be with an eye to the ultimate good of the house. Such attitude should indeed characterize our whole life; we should know but one centre, the place of the Name.

It was thought that Daniel must have prayed audibly, when he was heard by his fellow-counsellors: and it was thought that, given proper conditions, audible prayer could be more beneficial to the supplicant himself. It would be an aid to concentration of thought, and might lead to a more earnest expression of the petition. It is of course not always possible and not always expedient. Reference was made to the instruction of the Lord to pray in secret, and it was asked what this meant. It was thought this would apply to private prayer and not to public or assembly prayer. The example of the Lord (John 17.), when He prayed in the hearing of His disciples, is a clear indication of the assembly position.

J. M. Gault.

From Brantford, Ont. —Daniel is seen in a high place of honour and with bright prospects, to go higher in the kingdom. The fear of the Lord was ever in him, and his purpose to serve Jehovah. Circumstances of life were not allowed to interfere with his faith and dependence upon God. The secret of Jehovah is with them that fear Him. Contact with God brings strength.

The jealous courtiers were eager to find something against Daniel, but could not. In planning to get rid of Daniel, the men, like the cunning serpent, lied, for Daniel was not consulted. Their hearts studied oppression, and their lips spake mischief. Jealousy is seen in their evil workings, and is not uncommon to-day, but " Whoso diggeth a pit shall fall therein. "

" Whoso walketh uprightly shall be delivered. " Daniel was steadfast, going to his house, kneeling down before God as he did aforetime, windows opened toward Jerusalem. Prayer was part of his very life: he was a man of prayer. Are we ? Prayer is necessary for the maintenance of a separated life.

" It is better, if the will of God should so will, that ye suffer for well-doing than for evil-doing " (1 Peter 3. 17), " having your behaviour seemly among the Gentiles; that, wherein they speak against you as evil-doers, they may by your good works, which they behold, glorify God in the day of visitation " (1 Peter 2. 12). Taking our stand may cost something, but this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. One has said that only living faith in a living word enables us to lay hold on a living God. Herein is the secret of victory for those who desire to walk the separated path, for the eyes of the Lord are towards the righteous and His ears are open to their cry. Daniel's deliverance was a testimony to the king that God does rule. We have been delivered from a deeper pit, therefore let Christ be magnified in our body, whether in life or in death, and let us be willing to suffer, yea to die, if need be, for Him. *Neil Sproul.*

From Edinburgh. —Since Daniel was appointed first president, it would seem that Darius knew something of him and his history. In spite of his high office, he was still regarded as an outsider.

As first president, Daniel would only exact a just toll, and would ensure (1) that the king received his due, and (2) that the people were not robbed. Because his faithfulness and integrity were beyond reproach, the king sought to make Daniel his viceroy and thus stirred up jealousy in the hearts of the other officials.

Seeking occasion against him, they could only find it in his faithfulness to his God. How many of us can lay claim to this to-day ? They approached the king with their scheme; and, not realising what lay behind it, he was flattered and signed the decree. Daniel was trapped.

Reference was made to the progression in John's epistle: —Children, young men, fathers. Pulse to feed children, young men tried by fire, fathers tried, perchance, by loneliness. *W. Bunting, Jnr.*

From Crowborough. —Prayer was vital with Daniel. Although men's jealousy had reached such heights of spite and deceit, he would rather lose his life than lose communion with his God. Notice his window opened toward Jerusalem, the city of God. Maybe even at this time, the house of God was being rebuilt by Daniel's kindred under the hand of Zerubbabel. Do we not appreciate the longings of heart of this captive prince " His own dear land to see " ?

God honoured the faith of Daniel in a remarkable way, that His divine purposes should be made known among the nations, and that praise and glory and honour should be gotten to His **Name**. *J. R., B. V. F.*

From Kilmarnock. —Although Daniel was a Hebrew **captive he had** been highly thought of **during** the preceding reigns, because of his knowledge and! understanding, and Darius recognized his excellent spirit too. Because he **was** thus favoured **by** the king, this **caused** envy among the other presidents, but they could find no fault in him so **far** as the king's business was concerned. He **was** faithful to his earthly **master** and did all in the fear of his God. It **is** the Lord's will that His disciples should **serve** their earthly masters " not with **eye** service, **as** men-pleasers, but in singleness of heart, fearing the Lord " (Colossians 3. 22).

When Daniel knew that the writing **was** signed, he **was** not **upset**, but prayed and **gave** God thanks three **times** a day, **as** aforetime (6. 10). What an example for God's people now ! While **we** have no fear of " the lions' den, " **we** have the great adversary, the devil, who goeth about **as** a roaring lion seeking whom he **may** devour, and **we** need to withstand **steadfast** in faith. The king showed great concern about Daniel, **but** he could not hinder the **decree** being carried out, and after a sleepless night, he **was** exceeding glad to find Daniel alive and commanded Daniel to **be** taken up. **He** thus proved the power of God **in** shutting the lions' mouths, **and** we are encouraged to have faith in God (Mark 11. 22). A. G. S.

From London, S. E. —Having survived Nebuchadnezzar and Belshazzar, Daniel **was** well **advanced** in years **and** probably over eighty when Darius the **Mede** set him in high position of authority **in** his kingdom. In spite of his **age** Daniel **must** have **been** more than normally active to bear his heavy burden of responsibility, **and** the **same** " excellent spirit **was** in him " which **was** in him **as** a young man. The reason for this is not difficult to find, for **we** read of the unflinching regularity with which he prayed to God with windows which he, **as** an exiled **yet** loyal **Jew**, had opened towards Jerusalem.

If the conspirators had not had so much **cause** to rely on Daniel's unflinching loyalty to his God, their plotting would have **been** in vain. With the **same** quiet, modest dependability **as** before, Daniel **made** his petitions **and** **gave** thanks to God. Well aware of the consequence of his action, death **in** a den of lions, Daniel enjoyed unspoiled communion with God. In **an** exemplary **way** Daniel **was** obeying **an** admonition to **be** written by Paul to those of another dispensation (Philippians 4. 6): " In nothing **be** anxious; **but** **in** everything by prayer **and** supplication with thanksgiving let your **requests** **be** made known unto God. "

Darius **was** genuinely anxious for Daniel's **safety**, **as** **was** shown by the **extent** of his abnegation (6. 18), **and** his unwonted early rising the **next** day. It **may** **be** that Darius **was** worried **at** the prospect of losing his ablest administrator, or he may have **been** afraid of causing the death of one who **was** palpably a righteous **and** innocent **man**. In either **case**, he did **as** Nebuchadnezzar had done before, **and** **as** men often do in **cases** of extremity, he acknowledged the living God. Daniel, assured of his own innocence, **and** the righteousness of his God, had **trusted** implicitly **and** **was** saved.

It is comforting to **see** how God not only keeps His own in time of persecution **and** suffering, **but** puts down their enemies until they threaten no more. Mordecai lived to **see** **Haman** hanged on his own gallows; **and** Daniel was spared, while the **savage** lions tore **in** **pieces** not only the conspirators, **but** also their **wives** **and** children.

We can rest assured that He who has delivered us in the past will continue to do so until we enjoy the blessings which will abound when He, whose right it is to reign, shall reign. *D. G. E.*

From **Iford**. —This chapter gives the wonderful record of a fearless and faithful servant of God in the face of known dangers. Daniel rose to high position and honour "because an excellent spirit was in him." In this respect he was much like another Old Testament worthy, Joseph, who also prospered in the face of much adversity and opposition because of his faithfulness to God. He has set an inspiring example to us all, for not only was he faithful to God, but it is obvious that he was diligent and conscientious in his dealings with men so far as they did not interfere with his allegiance to God. This is of prime importance for us all to remember. Like Peter at a later date, "We must obey God rather than men," even if this entails suffering and trial. The jealous satraps could find no fault in Daniel. His manner of life was exemplary. We should study to be diligent in our business dealings. The Christian should be the most conscientious of workers, while at the same time remaining true to the Master who bought him.

It is interesting to note that God sent an angel to protect Daniel in his need. This opens up an interesting subject. Scripture would appear to indicate that these heavenly beings still have a charge to perform in relation to each one of us to-day. God is interested in us as individuals, and He is able to deliver us as He did Daniel. We wonder whether we realise that the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in our hearts can have such an effect on our lives that the miracle of the lions' den can daily be repeated in our experience. *A. G. J.*

COMMENTS.

[1] (Toronto). —I should say that the writing was an act of the Trinity. John 1. 18 has in view the revelation of the Father by the Son incarnate. —*J. M.*

[2] (Melbourne). —"Darius the Mede received the kingdom" is the better rendering here. —*J. M.*

[3] (Atherton). —Prayer should not be stilted by observing this rule or that. Grace in the heart will ever make us thankful to God for the bestowal of so much upon us, and will provoke confession of how little we have done or given in consequence of all God's goodness to us. God's faithfulness will make us feel keenly our unfaithfulness. In seeking God's forgiveness we should not forget to forgive others, and in seeking mercy to be ourselves merciful. God has given us great boldness (freedom of speech) before Him; what He wants to hear from our lips is what our hearts are saying, so it seems to me. —*J. M.*

[4] (Atherton). —Really, I had not thought that the Lord's words in Matthew 6. 9-15 were at all changed by a dispensational change. He said that they were to pray "thus," "in this way," "in like manner," which does not mean that they were to use a prayer "formula," using the exact words He spoke. This would make prayer formal, the exact opposite of what it should be. It should ever be the outpouring of the heart in the energy of an ungrieved Holy Spirit. I should say that the Lord's prayer

(so called) of Matthew 6. contains what we also may and should pray for.—*J. M.*

[5] **Atherton.**—How would the devil's temptations reach us except through the flesh?—*J. M.*

[6] (Barrhead and Paisley).—We are called upon to be subject to the higher powers, this we should ever be: but it might be that we could not obey some particular law that might be enacted, we could not obey them in it. Subjection and obedience are not equivalent terms. Subjection means to be placed under; obedience to hear as one who is under another.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

Questions from **Toronto.**—(1) In what respect does God possess a man's way? (Daniel 5. 23).

0 (2) How was Belshazzar's kingdom "numbered"?

(3) Against what was Belshazzar weighed?

Answers.—(1) Proverbs 20. 24 says,

"A man's goings are of the LORD;

How then can man understand his way."

Again we are told,

"A man's heart deviseth his way:

But the LORD directeth his steps" (Proverbs 16. 9).

God has marked out the course of each man, and in that way of life man should fear God and work righteousness (Acts 10. 34, 35). If a man acts wickedly, then this will bring upon him divine displeasure. We are not here referring to the display of grace to men in the gospel.

(2) The kingdom of Babylon was to continue as is indicated in Jeremiah 27. 7, "All the nations shall serve him (Nebuchadnezzar), and his son, and his son's son, until the time of his own land come: and then many nations and great kings shall serve themselves of him." That time of the destruction of the Babylonian empire had come. Its years had been numbered and brought to an end.

(3) He had been weighed in the light of the eternal gospel—"Fear God, and give Him glory" (Revelation 14. 7). Of Belshazzar it is said, "God... hast thou not glorified" (Daniel 5. 23).—*J. M.*

Question from Hamilton.—Is there any significance in the fact that Daniel when interpreting the handwriting on the wall, did not give the interpretation of the word "upharsin," but changed it to "peres"?

Answer.—Both words have the same root.—*J. M.*

Question from Melbourne.—Was Darius subject in any way to Cyrus?

Answer.—Note what is said in Daniel 8. 3 re the ram with the two horns. The empire was a joint one—of the Medes and Persians, but the one king was higher than the other: Cyrus the Persian was higher than Darius the Mede, consequently Darius was under Cyrus.—*J. M.*

BIBLE STUDIES

"Now these were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, examining the Scriptures daily, whether these things were so" (Acts 17. 11).

VOLUME 20.

JULY, 1952.

EDITORIAL.

A little horn: This little horn came up among the ten horns, in Daniel 7. 8, whereas in Daniel 8. 9 it is said to come forth from one of the four horns or kingdoms (Daniel 8. 22) into which the kingdom of Alexander the Great was divided. Quite evidently the little horn is the person of the beast, the king of fierce countenance who shall destroy the mighty ones and the holy people (Daniel 8. 23, 24); he will make war with the saints and prevail against them (Daniel 7. 21).

The little horn is one of the heads of the beast of Revelation 13. 1-9 and Revelation 17. 1-18. The beast of these chapters is both a system and a man, a political system set forth as a beast with seven heads and ten horns, and he is also a man, a person who will make war with the saints, and stand up against the Lord Himself, the Prince of princes (Daniel 8. 25), in the battle of Armageddon (Revelation 16. 12-16; 19. 11-21) and be cast alive with the false prophet into the lake of fire. The man who is the beast is that head of the bestial system that was smitten unto death, who will go down into the abyss and come again (Revelation 11. 7; 17. 8), and clearly from Revelation 17. 9-11 he is one of the first five heads. The seven kings symbolized in the seven heads reign consecutively, whereas the ten kings reign concurrently.

Babylon and Jerusalem. —Babylon the harlot is upheld by the beast (Revelation 17. 3), for she sits upon the heads of the beast (Revelation 17. 9) not upon the ten horns, for they hate the woman (verse 16). This woman is "the great city, which reigned over the kings of the earth" (verse 18). The beast (the man) in his first term of office (for he is one of the seven) is one of the kings of Babylon, but when he comes up from the abyss, at which time ten kings come to power with him, these destroy Babylon, the centre of political power, of religion, and of commerce, and the beast then makes Jerusalem the world centre of religion and power (2 Thessalonians 2. 4; Matthew 24. 15; Daniel 11. 31, 41, 45). The beast with his confederate ten kings will rule the world and at the end war against the Lamb (Revelation 17. 14).
J. M.

THE BOOK OF DANIEL

Daniel in the den of lions.

(Chapter 6.)

From Edmonton, Alberta. —Some, who belong to Christ, have used Daniel's high place in Babylon as justification for taking part in this world's politics. There is no scriptural principle which gives believers liberty to-day to engage in politics. "For our citizenship is in heaven" (Philippians 3. 20). Peter declares that we are "sojourners and pilgrims". God has not left His people in the world to shape national policies. We are called to suffer, not to reign.

God's **men** of faith **in the past** were those who stood with conviction and courage for **the** truth they **knew**. Torture never loosened the grip of faith on unseen eternal realities. Suffering **was** one of the paths through which they moved to their eternal reward. Lovely lives these were: fragrant and loved by God, although despised by men. God **was** "not ashamed of them, to **be** called their God" (Hebrews 11. 16). God still wants men to stand for His truth to-day; men who will not be turned aside **by** adversity, or **by** such **as** would delude men's souls.

Daniel's fearless testimony had far-reaching effects, for God's name and power were extolled by Gentile monarchs. It **was** in the first year of Cyrus (in whose reign Daniel prospered) that God brought about the royal decree to rebuild the house of God at Jerusalem. *R. Armstrong.*

From Hamilton, Ont. —"Jealousy **is** cruel **as** the grave" (Song of Songs 8. 6) is the **key** to Daniel 6., for it **was** jealousy that caused the satraps to **seek** fault in Daniel. They could find no fault in Daniel, the man of God, who lived in fellowship with God.

The king **was** soon to find his mistake, yet he did not admit he had done wrong. Is it not true **of us** that often **we** err in the words **we** speak and, like the king, **we** are slow to go back on our word? Let **us** be "swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath" (James 1. 19).

God had proved Daniel, and knew that he could bear the trial of the lion's den. So too with Abraham, who **was** on the way from Ur long before God asked him to offer up Isaac. To-day God proves His children and tries them, finding joy in those of **His** own who pass through trials. "That the proof of your faith, being more precious than gold that perisheth though it is proved by fire, might be found unto praise and glory and honour **at** the revelation of Jesus Christ" (1 Peter 1. 7). *J. Young, R. Dryburgh.*

From Toronto, Ont. —Like One in a later day, Daniel could say, "They . . . hate **me** without **a** cause" (Psalm 69. 4). Through flattery his enemies succeeded in making Darius sign the interdict. Despite this, Daniel prayed to God towards Jerusalem. As aforetime, his windows were open. Prayer and thanksgiving constituted **a** vital part of his daily life. No decrees were allowed to break this communion with his God. **We** assumed that he prayed towards Jerusalem **because** the House of God had been there, and priestly service had temporarily ceased. Daniel, who had no appeal, **was** cast into the den of lions. The king spent **a** sleepless night. What of Daniel? **We** could well apply the scripture, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind **is** stayed on Thee." *N. K.*

The Vision of the Four Beasts. (Chapter 7.).

From Cardiff. —It is generally assumed that in Daniel's vision there **was** given **a** picture of world government to supplement Nebuchadnezzar's dream (Daniel 2.). Close examination of the chapter revealed to **us** certain details which were found hard to reconcile **if** this were so. (1) The four beasts arise, **as** the result of **a** tempest, out of the great sea. Can it **be** said that the four empires had their beginnings in the Mediterranean? No other interpretation can be ascribed **in** this instance to the term "great sea" [2]. (2) "These great beasts . . . are four kings, which **shall** arise out

of the earth" (verse 17). (3) The third beast does not answer to Alexander's empire, for his kingdom **was** single-headed until his death, **but** this leopard had four heads **and wings** when it arose from the **sea** [3]. (4) The fourth beast **is** to "devour the whole earth". This cannot **be** said of any empire in history [4].

A suggestion **was made** that these four beasts may **be** indicative of the final stage of world affairs immediately prior to the falling of "the stone" [5]. If the **ten** horns correspond to the toes of the **image** (chapter 2.), then this must either point to the vision having particular reference to the final period of world **empire** and not to **its** course, or else **we** have here the perfect background for what **is** termed by some "the revived Roman empire" [6]. Against this **it was suggested** that, **in** Revelation 18., the restoration of the literal **city** of Babylon **is** indicated and that antichrist, the king of the north, **is** to **be** the final world-ruler with Babylon **as** his capital. It would **seem** obvious that the great **city** which **is** destroyed **by** the **ten** horns and the beast (Revelation 17. 16) cannot **be** the literal city which **is** destroyed by divine wrath **in** chapter 18. There the kings and merchants of the earth bewail her destruction.

Ken Berrisford.

From Birmingham. —The four great beasts represent Babylon, Medo-Persia, **Greece**, and the Roman **empire**, **in** both past and future aspects. The lion with **wings** speaks of strength. The **ten** horns, which are **ten** kings, were **subdued** by the little horn, the antichrist. The three kings, who were plucked up, were thought to **be** the **same** as the kings **in** Revelation 17. **10-13**, who were given back their power for one hour to serve the **beast** [7].

In Revelation 13. **2** the **beasts** are all combined into one **beast**, which **was** overthrown **by** the Ancient of Days, who gave all authority to the Son of Man, who then **set** up his everlasting kingdom [8]. The Ancient of Days and the Most High are the **same** person.

S. Carson, D. Adams, D. Brown.

From Liverpool. —Daniel's vision of the **beasts** corresponds to Nebuchadnezzar's (chapter 2.). In **it** God views the four empires **as** **beasts** of prey coming **up** from the sea. The great sea, **it** was thought, represented the peoples of the earth (Revelation 13. **1**; Matthew 13, 47). There were those who thought that the "Great Sea", **being** a name for the Mediterranean Sea, may **suggest** that these kingdoms **came** up from around it. As Babylonia **and** Medo-Persia were not on the borders of the Great Sea, this could not apply.

The fourth **beast** represented the Roman Empire, out of which shall arise **ten** kings **and** another king shall arise after the ten. **We** understood this to refer to a **future time** (Revelation 13.). According to Revelation 19. **19-21**, this king will **be** taken by the **One** who **is** called Faithful **and** True **and** cast into the lake of fire. **We** had difficulty in understanding verse 13. **We** thought that the title "Ancient of Days" belongs to God, and the one like unto a son of man **is** the Son of God who **became** Son of Man, into whose hand all judgement has **been** given. Would the parallel **be** what **we** read **in** Revelation 5., where the throne of God **is** **seen** and the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, **is** given the book after which the judgements descend upon the earth? [9]. For the fulfilment of Daniel 7. see Matthew 24. 29-31, Revelation 13. **17**, **19**.

R. Ruffley, G. J.

From **London, S. E.** —Daniel's vision of the great sea being stirred up by four winds represents the sea of humanity being stirred up by conflicting races. The first beast speaks of the rise of the Chaldean king Nebuchadnezzar. The second beast, a bear, speaks of the Medo-Persians. The third beast, a leopard, represents the Grecian empire under Alexander the Great. The fourth beast had no likeness to any in the animal kingdom, but was terrible and powerful. Some have conceived this to be the Roman empire, some consider it to represent Antiochus.

In Revelation 13. a beast is described similar to the beast visualised here. The beast of Revelation 13. is the beast that will arise in a day to come and persecute the children of Israel for forty-two months, which would correspond to the time, times and half a time of Daniel 7. 25.

Daniel saw thrones cast down and One who is the Ancient of Days seated in judgement. The open books speak of the impartiality of His justice. The fourth beast was slain and not superseded by another, and the vision turned to the ten thousand times ten thousand before the throne, bringing to our minds the scene in Revelation 5. Although the fourth beast was slain, the other beasts' lives were prolonged for a season and a time.

K. H. R.

EXTRACTS.

From Edmonton, Alberta. —The first three beasts are briefly referred to, but stress is laid upon the fourth, as diverse from the other three. It had ten horns; it was dreadful, and terrible, and strong exceedingly; it devoured, brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with its feet. From the reference to the ten horns, and the little horn of verse 8, we feel certain that the fourth beast refers to the restored Roman empire; the ten horns might represent a ten-kingdom confederacy which may be coming into existence to-day in Europe, and the little horn the man of sin. Help would be acceptable on this point [10]. This compares with Revelation 13. 1-7. This beast, according to Revelation 13. 2 embraced the characteristics of the other three, in addition to its own. The imperial form of government had been dealt a death stroke, but the deadly wound was healed, and this empire restored with world-wide dominion under the man of sin [11].

To-day we see the increasing power of Rome in opposition to the saints of God until 2 Thessalonians 2. 7 is fulfilled. Daniel 7. 13, 14 refers to the climax of the great tribulation, when Christ will descend in glory.

R. F. Lundwill.

From Brantford, **Ont.** —This chapter shews God's view or interpretation of the kingdoms as compared with man's interpretation in chapter 2. Comparisons were made between Daniel 7. and Revelation 13., many queries remaining unanswered. Our attention was devoted finally to the antichrist, who must be for a short period a world-ruler, and who, we suggest, is the first beast of Revelation 13. The question was raised as to his nationality —Gentile or Jew? Ezekiel 21. 24-27 was referred to, as also other scriptures, but a definite conclusion could not be reached [12].

Many questions still remain. Who is the Ancient of Days? [13].

Robert Drake.

From Kingston-on-Thames. —The "little horn", mentioned in both chapters 7. and 8., depicts the same person, antichrist. The "great sea" is used figuratively of the nations as in Luke 21. 25 and Revelation 13. 1.

The angel told Daniel that the four kings would arise out of the *earth* (verse 17). There is no contradiction in this, as the "sea" is figurative, but the angel is speaking literally.

What the characteristics of these beasts represent is obscure to us; **but** the Holy Spirit will make it plain to those in the future who are seeking to know God's purposes on earth, and they will receive help and guidance from these wonderful prophecies. The fourth beast was diverse from the first three and could not be likened to any known animal. It closely resembles the beast of Revelation 13. and 17., except that the seven heads are not mentioned in Daniel.

Verses 13 and 14 record the investiture of the Son of Man as King of kings and Lord of lords, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and the saints of the Most High shall share His kingdom (7. 27). *L. Burrows.*

From Edinburgh. —The great sea brings before us a picture of this troubled world (compare Isaiah 17. 12-14). The first beast had outward glory, **but** it had a cruel inner nature. The lion (Babylon) gradually **decayed** and fell before the bear, heavy and slow, fierce, and unbalanced as Medo-Persia was divided. The leopard (Greece) was swift and terrible. The nameless and undefined fourth beast was terrible in its strength, and representing the iron of Daniel 2. *William Muirhead,*

From Crowborough. —Daniel's dream is similar to that of Nebuchadnezzar (Daniel 2.) and refers to the same four world empires and then to the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ. Daniel saw these empires as four wild beasts coming up out of a troubled sea, which speaks of strife among nations. The four kingdoms symbolized by the four beasts are, we suggest, Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece and Rome. The first power was then still in existence when Daniel had the dream. In this dream Daniel does not see any collision between these four powers, **but** he saw the little horn in terrible conflict with the saints and **it** prevailed against them. Some notable points about this little horn are: (1) It is more stout than its fellows; (2) **it** was little **at** first, **but** **became** stronger; (3) **it** had eyes like the eyes of man; (4) **it** had a mouth speaking great things, and **it** would claim all authority, for it spake against the Most High.

If this notable horn or power is the same as that in Revelation 13., then **we** there have further characteristics of it. He asserts power over the nations. **He will be worshipped by** all on the earth whose names are not written in the book of life of the **Lamb** (Revelation 13. 8). *J. W. B.*

From Kilmarnock. —The power and value of the kingdoms were **made** known to Nebuchadnezzar, **but** to Daniel their characters were presented in the form of wild beasts, which are called "kings" in verse 17, and "kingdoms" in verse 23.

The fourth beast seems to have been unlike any other beast of nature, terrible and dreadful and had ten horns. This represented Rome, which manifested great enmity to God and His saints in the past. It was under Rome that Christ was crucified, Jerusalem destroyed, and the apostles suffered persecution and imprisonment.

As disciples of the Lord **we** are **not** called upon to take part in the government of the world, **but** to live "soberly and righteously and godly . . . ; looking for the blessed hope and appearing of the glory of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ" (Titus 2. 13). **See** also Romans 13. 1-7. *A. G. S.*

From Paisley and Barrhead. —Some said that the Ancient of Days (verse 9) was the Lord Jesus Christ; but this answer did not satisfy others because the Son of Man, the Christ, was brought to the Ancient of Days.

As we considered the little horn our thoughts were directed to the first beast of Revelation 13., which we considered to be the antichrist. In Revelation 13. we have a trinity of evil: (1) the dragon, (2) the beast, and (3) the second beast or false prophet. As God has delegated all authority unto the Son, so will the dragon delegate his authority to the antichrist. Our attention was drawn to the mystery of lawlessness which doth already work, a way being paved for the appearance of the little horn or the antichrist. Some of us thought the one who restraineth to be the devil, others the Holy Spirit. Explanation of this point would be greatly **appreciated** [14].

W. Terrell, Junr.

From Melbourne. —The little horn had eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking great things: this agrees with 2 Thessalonians 2. 4. This is anti-god; for the world accepts and worships him as God. Revelation 13. 5 gives more information about him and even the number of months (forty-two) in which he is to reign with great authority. Some suggest that his successor, ". . . . another beast coming up out of the earth" (Revelation 13. 11), is antichrist, whose appearance and oratory will deceive the world [15]. He is called in Revelation 19. 20 "the false prophet".

S. Stoope.

From Toronto, Ont. —In the chapter before us we have five empires. The Holy Spirit here gives us a different aspect of the four great Gentile empires, as well as a fifth, to be set up by the Lord. The first was like a lion—the Babylonian empire. In verse 5 we have a description of the Persian empire figured as a bear devouring its prey. History tells us the Persians dealt severely with the people over whom they ruled, although in some ways they favoured the Jews.

In the third beast we have the Grecian empire in the figure of a leopard, one of the fastest animals in the world; it is depicted as having four wings, suggesting incredible speed. Indeed speed was essential to Alexander in forming his empire by a swift succession of conquests. *W. D. Daly.*

From Ilford. —It was suggested that the kingdoms of chapter 7. would be clearly recognised, when the time comes, by those instructed in the Word. By keeping the words of prophecy in our heart we may guard against becoming entangled in systems of Satanic origin. That he is the master-mind behind these "beasts" is proved by a comparison of the chapter with Revelation 13. 1-10, where we find further details about the fourth beast, whose authority and power will come from "the dragon".

The fourth beast made war with the saints, and for three and a half years, we judge (forty-two months in Revelation 13.), will speak great things and blasphemies. But God has His records; words and deeds are recorded, and, when the judgement is set, the books will be opened.

We considered the thrones being placed or cast down (R. V. M.). In his vision Daniel would see them from an earthly viewpoint. Looking up, he would see thrones coming down from heaven and stopping in positions appointed. The alternative view was that the thrones cast down were earthly thrones overthrown.

C. J. T.

From Sunderland.—The fourth beast, with iron teeth and nails of brass, is of such a terrible nature that no comparison with any known beast is made. Its power is seen in wanton destruction. Out of it ten kings arise, and the little horn, which came up among them. This little horn bears the characteristics of the man of sin of 2 Thessalonians 2. 3 and of the first beast of Revelation 13. 1, which came out of the sea, though this latter beast appears to embody all the beasts of Daniel 7. (see Revelation 13. 2). According to Daniel 7. 11 this beast was slain, but in Revelation 19. 20 the beast was cast alive into the lake of fire.

It is remarkable that Daniel, who had understanding of dreams, should have needed on this occasion to approach another for the interpretation of his own dream. *J. R., Junr.*

From Cowdenbeath.—In the over-ruling purposes of God the first three kingdoms, enjoyed dominion in their turn. When each lost dominion to the succeeding one it did not cease to exist as a nation. This may be the explanation of verse 12, and may be given this place for contrast with the treatment meted out to the fourth kingdom. The fourth kingdom will be in existence when the Son of Man comes. The beast, whose aspect was more terrible than the others, gives us a picture of the final manifestation of Gentile power. With extreme ruthlessness will this kingdom consolidate its position. Divine judgement will not only bring its dominion to an end, but destroy it completely. Not only are the characteristics of the fourth kingdom foreshadowed, but also certain facts are revealed concerning the man of sin, who will rise to power in the kingdom, which appears to be a confederacy of ten kings, and the man of sin in rising to power will put down three of them.

The Ancient of Days, whose appearance baffles description, can only be God Himself, and to Him is brought one like unto a son of man to receive dominion and glory and a kingdom. This is the fulfilment of Psalm 2. 8, "Ask of Me, and I will give thee the nations for thine inheritance". The God-appointed ruler will establish an everlasting kingdom, and they who endure shall reign with Him.

It is good to see the agreement between Daniel's vision and the later revelation to John; we must remember that there is no attempt by Daniel to give a full picture. After Gentile dominion has been brought to an end, the saints of the Most High will possess the kingdom. *James K. D. Johnston,*

From Birkenhead.—Daniel's vision of the four beasts, which came about forty years later, has many points of similarity to Nebuchadnezzar's image, with a notable development in the details concerning the fourth kingdom, and there are also certain differences. Great prominence is given to the fourth beast, the ten horns which are ten kings, and the little horn. This fourth beast is evidently the first beast of Revelation 13., and the scarlet beast of Revelation 17., who shall make war against the saints and overcome them, but he himself shall be slain and the saints possess the kingdom.

Points of apparent difference from the image of chapter 2. are:— (1) The four winds of the heaven which brake forth upon the great sea suggest a great upheaval of the nations, out of which arise the four beasts which are four kings (7. 17), whereas Daniel 2. suggests successive world powers. (2) The "great sea" is clearly the Mediterranean, which seems remote from the first two empires [16]. (3) Daniel's vision is in the period of the first world power, yet verse 17 suggests that the four beasts are future [17]. (4) After the fourth beast was slain, the lives of the other

beasts were prolonged for a season and a time (7. 12). Based principally on the common characteristics of the beasts, various explanations of these differences were discussed. The unity of the visions, as covering "the times of the Gentiles", is clearly seen in Daniel 2. 34: the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver **and** gold, **were** "broken in pieces *together*".

It was to men greatly beloved of God that these visions and their interpretations were given, Daniel in Babylon and John in the Isle of Patmos. Those who live closest to God are those to whom God is pleased to reveal His purposes. There is an obvious unity in the general outline of the prophecies in Daniel and the Revelation, so widely separated as to **time** yet breathing the **same** Spirit of divine revelation. *T. M. H., N. A.*

From Atherton. —It is usual to identify the four beasts of this chapter with the parts of the image in chapter 2., but there are certain difficulties in accepting it: (1) Near the end of the Babylonian empire the four beasts were spoken of as arising at a time which was then future, so that the future tense could not apply to that empire [18]. (2) According to the vision the four beasts appeared together rising out of the great sea, the Mediterranean (7. 2, 3). This is incompatible with four kingdoms following each other and each destroying the preceding one, as typified in chapter 8. by the beasts fighting each other [19]. There is no suggestion of this in chapter 7., rather the reverse seems to be true, for, although the last beast was slain and delivered to burning fire, the others continued to live although deprived of their dominion (7. 12). (3) Both chapters 2. and 7. were written originally in Aramaic, and, if we take the accepted view, chapter 7. is largely a repetition of chapter 2. [20]. It seems unreasonable that Daniel should interpret the vision of chapter 2., whereas later he needed to have this similar vision interpreted to him. (4) According to history the characteristics of the four beasts do not symbolise the empires allegedly typified [21].
R. C. Jones, D. H. Butler.

COMMENTS.

[2] (Cardiff). —By connecting Daniel 7. with Revelation 13. 1 and 17. 1, 15, it will be seen, I think, that the sea tossed by the four winds of heaven speaks of humanity in its various nations in a state of fearful turbulence, brought about by nations bent on war and aggression. History will confirm this. Nebuchadnezzar marched against Pharaoh-Neco, the Medes and Persians against Babylon, etc., the Greeks under Alexander against the Medes and Persians, and the Romans against the Greeks and every other earthly power, and will not present and future turbulence of nations at last throw up the coming beast ?—*J. M.*

[3] (Cardiff). —"Earth" should not be contrasted with "sea". —*J. M.*

[4] (Cardiff). —As there are only four metals in Nebuchadnezzar's image (Daniel 2.), so there are only four beasts in Daniel 7. The last phase of the fourth kingdom will devour, break in pieces and stamp the residue, and will devour the whole earth. —*J. M.*

[5] (Cardiff). —No scripture supports such a suggestion. —*J. M.*

[6] (Cardiff). —What can be meant by "the perfect background" ? It will be seen in Daniel 8. that the beast rises from one of the four parts into which Alexander's kingdom was divided (verse 9), and in the light of this it is, I think, wise to be careful as to making positive and negative statements. The woman of Revelation 17. is the great city of Babylon (verse 18) which reigneth over the kings of the earth. The beast (the man) is one of the seven heads of the composite beast with seven heads and ten

horns. The ten horns come to power when the beast, who was slain, comes up from the abyss at the middle of Daniel's week, and these carry out the destruction of Babylon which God puts into their hearts to do (Revelation 17. 16, 17). —*J. M.*

[7] (Birmingham). —But only three horns were plucked up. Revelation 13. and 17. make no reference to this. —*J. M.*

[8] (Birmingham). —Not by the Ancient of Days, but by the Lamb (see Revelation 17. 12-14). —*J. M.*

[9] (**Liverpool**). —Both are heavenly scenes. Luke 19. 12, 15 would agree with Daniel 7. 13. —*J. M.*

[10] (Edmonton). —It is wise, I think, not to be too exact in our application of prophecy to current events in the world, remembering what some would-be prophets have written elsewhere of the great northern confederacy of Russia and Germany and have proved it all to their own liking by texts from the prophets. It might well be that out of present confusion and plans of men will arise events which will lead on to the last scenes of Gentile dominion. A man once wrote that he was neither a prophet nor the son of a prophet, yet through grace he became a prophet all the same. —*J. M.*

[11] (Edmonton). —Note, the beast is both a composite beast of seven heads (kings) and ten horns (kings), and the beast is also a man who is killed, goes down into the abyss, and comes up again (Revelation 11. 7; 13. 3, 12; 17. 8-11; 19. 19, 20). —*J. M.*

[12] (Brantford). —Whether Jew or Gentile, he sits on a Gentile throne. *J. M.*

[13] (Brantford). —The Ancient of Days is God the Father. —*J. M.*

[14] (**Paisley and Barrhead**). —See Jottings in 1951, which deal with this subject. Space forbids dealing with the matter here. —*J. M.*

[15] (Melbourne). —The first beast is *the* antichrist, who is also the beast, and the man of sin, the son of perdition, who denies both the Father and the Son (1 John 2. 22). —*J. M.*

[16] (Birkenhead). —Of course no world powers ever arose out of the Mediterranean literally. The storm-tossed sea must speak of the nations in the turbulence of lawlessness and war. —*J. M.*

[17] (Birkenhead). —Consider what is said in Daniel 2. 28 as to making known to Nebuchadnezzar "what shall be in the latter days", whereas part of it belonged to the then present. —*J. M.*

[18] (Atherton). —"Shall arise" is, I judge, to be understood that it is a fact that four kingdoms would arise, rather than treat the "shall" in the sense of future to the time then present. Care must be exercised in treating prophetic tenses. —*J. M.*

[19] (Atherton). —There is no indication that the four beasts came up out of the sea at one and the same time, or what is the use of saying "the first", "the second", and so forth? Again, you do not find everything stated in one passage of scripture. That there is no mention of fighting does not imply that there was no fighting. —*J. M.*

[20] (**Atherton**). —Chapter 7. was not a repetition of chapter 2., but the same facts are referred to, as they are elsewhere alluded to. —*J. M.*

[21] (Atherton). —I should have thought history, such as it may be, would confirm the generally accepted views of these chapters (2. and 7.). —*J. M.*

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

Question **from** Toronto. —During the captivity, **did** God no longer dwell in **His** house in Jerusalem ?

Answer. —There was no house **in** Jerusalem for God to dwell in. God did not choose another city in which to cause His name to dwell. —**J. M.**

Question **from** Melbourne. —Who **is** the Ancient of Days and who **is** the one like a son of man ?

Answer. —The Father and the Son. —**J. M.**

Question **from** Paisley **and** Barrhead. —Please give an explanation of verse 12, particularly the latter part of the verse.

Answer. —Whilst the four kingdoms arose in consequence of four dynamic personalities, Nebuchadnezzar, Cyrus, Alexander the great, and Julius Caesar, yet quite evidently those beasts are composite beasts or kingdoms which were ruled by others that followed them. The body of the beast was burned, we are told; this cannot mean that the body of the man called the beast was destroyed by burning, for he with the false prophet was cast *alive* into the lake of fire (Revelation 19. 20). It must refer to the destruction of the bestial kingdom, and that the other beasts, i. e., kingdoms, were not brought to an end just at that time. I notice that the Chaldee rendering in the margin of the A. V. says "a prolonging in life was given them". Those beasts or kingdoms, i. e., Babylon, Media and Persia, Greece, which continued subservient to the beast, the little horn, during the reign of that horn, are not destroyed instantly like the beast's kingdom. —**J. M.**

Question from Toronto. —The four winds (Daniel 7. 2): It is unnatural to have, four winds blowing at the same time, what does it mean ?

Answer. —I suppose it is, but this is a dream. —**J. M.**

Questions **from** Birkenhead. —(1) Who is "the Ancient of Days" ? (2) Who are included in "the saints of the Most High" ?

Answers. —(1) God the Father. —**J. M.**

(2) Such as are indicated in (1) Matthew 25. 34 (persons alive in mortal bodies), (2) in Revelation 20. 4, such as will be slain in a future time (persons in resurrected bodies), in 2 Timothy 2. 12 (persons of this dispensation of grace), besides Abraham, etc., etc. (Luke 13. 28, 29), and the faithful of the children of Israel will **be** there also in that Messianic kingdom. —**J. M.**

Question **from** Edinburgh. —Are we to understand from this and other prophecies that the Roman empire will rise again ?

Answer. —There is a continuation of the fourth kingdom, whether we view the vision of Daniel 2. (the iron), or that of Daniel 7. (the terrible wild beast); but to say that the capital city is Rome in Italy, I believe, would be incorrect. The capital of the last phase of Gentile power will be Jerusalem (after the destruction of Babylon in Revelation 17. and 18), where the beast will claim the worship of mankind. —**J. M.**

Question **from** Crowborough. —Is the scene in Daniel 7. 9-14 an earthly or heavenly one ?

Answer. —The scene of Daniel 7. 9, 10, 13, 14 is heavenly. —**J. M.**

NOTICE.

Editors will be glad to consider for publication short articles of a general character such as were published some years ago.

The subject for next year will be that of the Epistle to the Galatians, and the syllabus will be issued shortly.

BIBLE STUDIES

"Now these were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, examining the Scriptures daily, whether these things were so" (Acts 17. 11.)

VOLUME 20.

AUGUST, 1952.

EDITORIAL.

There is a phrase in our current study which we desire to investigate as a word-study, namely, * 'dark sentences' (Daniel 8. 28). There is little doubt, from the repeated phrases which precede it in the chapter, — " the time of the end, " " the latter time, " " the appointed time of the end " (vv. 17, 19, and 28), that verse 23 and the following verses refer to the antichrist. We have met this phrase already in Daniel 5. 12, where the "shewing of dark sentences " is given as an attribute of Daniel himself. The word used in Daniel 5. 12, is a Chaldean word whose equivalent is the Hebrew word " cheydak, " meaning " a puzzle, a proverb, a hard question. " It is interesting that, etymologically, this is derived from a root word, meaning " to tie a knot " or, metaphorically, " to propound a riddle. " We find the same word used in the following places: Judges 14., eight times, translated " riddle "; 1 Kings 10. 1, as " hard questions, " asked by the Queen of Sheba; Proverbs I. 6 as " dark sayings, " indicating one of the purports of the Book of Proverbs; Numbers 12. 8, as "dark speeches, " but not the manner of Jehovah's speaking to, and through Moses; and in the Psalms 49. 4, and 78. 2, as " dark sayings. "

The latter psalm is quoted in Matthew 13. 35, the wonderful chapter containing the parables of the Kingdom of Heaven, where the Lord Jesus claims to be the Revealer of " things hidden from the foundation of the world. " This Revised Version reading leads us to a study of " things hidden. " We are instructed in Colossians 2. 3 that in Christ " are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge hidden. " Thus it will be the ambition of the antichrist to emulate the Christ of God in his " understanding dark sentences. "

A parallel study of the word " mystery " suggests itself to us. The Greek word " musterion " is derived from a root, " muo, " which, through the idea of silence imposed by the initiation into some religious rites, means " to shut the mouth, " hence indicating a secret or a mystery. " Mysteries " (as used in the New Testament) are matters unknown to men, and not attainable by human reasoning, but apprehensible by revelation. There are not a few such mysteries revealed in Holy Writ. In Colossians 2. 2, we have the " mystery of God, even Christ, in whom are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge hidden. " Then, progressively, as far as the human race is concerned, we have, in Colossians 1. 27, the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory "; then in Colossians 1. 26, the mystery of the Body of Christ, " even the mystery which hath been hid from all ages and generations: but now hath it been manifested to His saints. "

Jas, Martin.

THE BOOK OF DANIEL.
The vision of the four beasts.
 (Chapter 7.).

From Victoria, B. C. —The four beasts of this chapter portray four kingdoms, whose purpose was to subject or destroy as many nations as possible. The first alone stood up as a man and " a man's heart was given to it " (7. 4). This may suggest the time when Nebuchadnezzar acknowledged the true God.

The fourth beast is outstanding: it had ten horns which seem to compare with the toes of the image. Among these there arose " a little horn, " which has various names in the word of God: " a king of fierce countenance " (8. 23), " the prince that shall come " (9. 26), " the man of sin " (2 Thessalonians 2. 3), " the lawless one " (2 Thessalonians 2. 8). He is also called " the liar, " " the antichrist ", and " the beast that was, and is not " (Revelation 17. 11).

He will have world-wide power, thus taking control of all religions, merging them into a religion of his own, that is, to worship himself and his image (Revelation 13. 8-15). The Beast will seek to blot out all that is of God, and " wear out the saints of the Most High ". They will then appreciate the places of **refuge** that God has put aside for them. *A. McLeman.*

The Vision of the Ram and the He-goat.
 (Chapter 8.).

From Ilford. —The chapter is clearly divided into two parts, the vision and the interpretation. Certain facts are stated in the interpretation which can be laid down as the foundation for comments on the subject. (1) The ram represents the Persian empire (8. 20). (2) The goat represents the king of Greece (8. 21). (3) The time appointed for the vision is the " time of the end " (8. 17).

After the he-goat overcame the ram the kingdom was divided into four, and one of these became exceedingly powerful. This king, as he is called in verse 23, moved on to Palestine, which we took to be the " pleasant land, " and there through craft and subtlety caused some of the Jews and the leaders to be put down, caused the burnt offering to be stopped, and the sanctuary to be marred. [1] We assumed the Prince of the host was the Lord, and that, by the stopping of the burnt offering and the casting down of the sanctuary, this king actually challenged Him. It is clear from verses 12 and 13 that this was a judgement of God upon His ancient people for transgression (chapter 11. 36 is helpful here). This series of conquests by the nations referred to in this chapter can easily, and with a degree of accuracy, be placed in history, but we could not reconcile this with the fact that it is for the " time of the end. " It was suggested that the historical record was a prefiguring of a future series of events. We could place no special significance on the 2, 300 days of the judgement, and it was decided that it was just a fact presented for guidance.

This chapter contains a practical lesson for us. God deals with transgressors, therefore we should be exceedingly careful how we walk, lest we find ourselves in a similar position to the Jews of that time.

We sought to compare the ram's ways with God's ways. The ram *pushes* every way except eastward. Was that where God dwelt? [2]

By contrast, **God draws men** to Himself. The **ram** magnified himself, **but** the Lord sought to magnify God, His **law**, and His Word. Like Daniel, though **we may** not fully understand the prophecy, we can still carry on with the King's business.

C A. Bartlett

From Kingston-on-Thames. For about two years Daniel had pondered upon the vision of the four beasts. He had **kept** the matter in his heart, and now, in the third year of Belshazzar's reign, God **gave** to Daniel further light on future events. His vision took him to Shushan, the capital of the Persian empire (Esther 2. 5).

These wonderfully detailed prophecies concerning the Persian and Grecian empires were fulfilled to the letter. So striking was the fulfilment that men have tried to prove that Daniel **was** written after these events had come to pass. Their anxiety in this matter is understandable. If they cannot prove the book to **be** a forgery, they must **accept** it as the word of God: there is no other **way** out.

This chapter depicts the **defeat** of the Persian empire, the rapid rise of Alexander the Great, his death, and the division of his empire into four parts " toward the four winds of heaven. " Verses 10-14 **may** have double fulfilment in Antiochus Epiphanes, and the complete fulfilment in the antichrist.

A king (8. 23) will rise **up** when transgressors **are** come to the full. This will not **be** until the **time** of the end, the great tribulation. The most remarkable thing about this king is that he will **attempt** to extend his dominion even into heaven (8. 10). This is amplified in Isaiah 14. 13, 14: "And thou saidst in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, . . . : I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will **be** like the Most High. " He will **be** assisted in this **by** Satan, for the dragon will give him his power, and his throne, and great authority. God will allow him **a** certain amount of success, **but** his fall will **be** all the greater, he will " **be** brought down to Sheol (R. V. M.), to the uttermost parts of the pit. " [8]

Verses 11, 12, seem to refer to the abomination of desolation standing in the holy place. According to Daniel 11. 31, when the continual burnt offering is **taken away**, the abomination of desolation will **be** set up. Will this **be** the image of the **beast** which all **must** worship? (See Revelation 13. 15). [4]

The **time** during which the sanctuary and the host are to **be** trodden under foot is important; it seems to **be** the main object of the vision (8. 26). It is 2, 300 days or six years and twenty weeks. This is considerably more than the half of Daniel's last **week** or three **and a** half years, indicated in Daniel 9. 27, and it **may be** that antichrist will begin to exercise his authority over the services of the temple long before the abomination of desolation is actually **set up**.

L. Burrows.

From Crowborough. This second vision to Daniel occurred some two years **after** the first. Daniel saw the vision in Shushan, the capital of Persia. The Babylonian empire had passed into history, and this vision deals with the Persian and Grecian empires. The Medo-Persian kingdom was not equally divided, as is shown **by** the two horns; the Medes **came** first and were the stronger power, the Persians second. Darius the **Mede** was under Cyrus **the** Persian. The conquest was toward the west, north **and**

south, the east not being mentioned. This campaign was very successful and none was able to withstand the fierce advance of Cyrus. This empire was founded in 536 B. C., and continued until 332 B. C., when under Alexander the Great the Grecian empire began. The Grecian empire lasted for just over 200 years, and then was succeeded by Rome.

The vision now centres on events in Palestine, where a king arises, beginning in a small way, but rapidly gaining power. He begins to oppress the people of Israel and takes away the temple service. He carries everything before him until he stands up against the Prince of princes, at which time his power is broken. The "appointed time of the end" seems to indicate that this is the final overthrow of Gentile power and the beginning of the reign of God's King.

S. Swift

From **Kilmarnock**. —The vision that Daniel received in the third year of Belshazzar's reign referred to the kingdoms that would arise after the fall of the Babylonian kingdom. In this vision the beasts differed from those of the previous vision, and he was unable to understand the meaning until God's messenger, Gabriel, explained it to him.

He firstly made known that the vision "belongeth to the appointed time of the end" (verses 17, 19), so that we gather it covers a long period of time.

The ram with the two horns represents the kings of Media and Persia. The higher horn, we understand, represents Cyrus, king of Persia, who was mightier than Darius, king of Media, but both formed one kingdom. It is said that this kingdom continued for over 200 years and was overthrown by Alexander the Great of Greece, who is represented in the vision by the he-goat with the great horn between its eyes.

Although he had great power and "magnified himself exceedingly" (8. 8) yet he had a short life, and after his death the kingdom was divided among four of his generals "but not with his power."

We understand that verse 23 prefigures the Roman kingdom, and "the king of fierce countenance" is the "little horn" of verse 9. [5] What is said of these two seems to agree with John's vision in Revelation 13., and, we think, foretells the antichrist.

A, G. S.

From **Barrhead and Paisley**. —Two years had elapsed since the last vision. In this chapter (8.) we have the Medo-Persian and Grecian empires, and associated with them the antichrist and the great tribulation. The "little horn" of chapter 7. and the "little horn" of chapter 8. both seem to be identified with the coming antichrist. Yet in chapter 7. he is associated with the last beast (Rome) and in chapter 8. with Greece.

It was suggested that the "little horn" of Daniel 8. speaks primarily of Antiochus Epiphanes [6] and also constitutes a foreshadowing of the man of sin. Most, however, felt that the language was too strong to support this view, though the above mentioned despot may have been a partial fulfilment.

The identity of the Prince of the host came under review. Is this the Lord Himself? (Surely the continual burnt offering is being offered in unbelief) [7], Or does the Prince of the host refer to Michael? See chapter 10. 13 and chapter 12. 1.

Another interpretation of verse II **was** put forward, **based** on the Authorised Version, ". . ." and **by** him (the Prince of the host) the daily sacrifice... and the place of his (antichrist's) sanctuary **was cast down**. "[8].

Who compose "the host" of verse 12 and the "holy ones" of verse 18? Both, we thought, referred to angelic beings. (See Deuteronomy 33. 2, 1 Peter 1. 12, Luke 2. 13-15).

Are the "stars" of verse 10 literal stars, or **is** this figurative speech referring to heavenly beings again? (Revelation 12. 4) [0]. *J. D. T.*

From Atherton. —The ram **was** the royal ensign of **Persia**. The ram with the two high horns, one higher than the other, is the past kingdom in which the Persians **became** the more prominent. The goat **was** the acknowledged symbol of Macedonia. The goat symbolised **Greece** under Alexander the Great who **is** referred to **as** the great horn. In twelve years Alexander overran the world and **at** the zenith of his power **died at** the early age of thirty-two. His kingdom **was** divided into four, **as** typified **by** the four notable horns. If this is so, then it **seems** logical to expect the man spoken of **as** the "little horn, which **waxed** exceeding great" to arise soon after these events, and so the picture **is** completed **by** fitting in Antiochus Epiphanes, the brutal persecutor of the **Jews** in the second century B. C., **as** this little horn. There are several points which confirm this view: (1) Antiochus **was a** descendant of one of Alexander's generals; (2) he took **away** the morning and evening sacrifice, **desecrated** the altar **by** sacrificing swine and defiled the temple; (3) the temple **was** later to **be** cleansed whereas in the **future** before the millennium is ushered in the temple is to **be** rebuilt (Zechariah 6. 12, 13) [10]; (4) the Roman empire does not **figure** here whereas from other scriptures there **is** evidence that this empire will **be** revived and **be** very prominent in the time of antichrist. The most startling revelation of the prophecy however does not **seem** to find **a** counterpart in Antiochus, for it is written that he shall stand up against the Prince of princes. Besides this the reference to the latter time of the end leads **us** to think that it is antichrist who is really in view here. It **may be** argued that both are to **be** seen for, in **a way**, Antiochus Epiphanes may **be** viewed **as a** type of antichrist, who will walk in the **same way** and do much more vile things against God and His people.

The number of days provides **yet** another difficulty **as** the number 2, 300 is about twice the length of the **time** given in Daniel 12. and what **we** consider to **be** the **time** of the great persecution. The **time** of the desolations under Antiochus **was** approximately three years, so the number of **days** does not fit this either. It **was suggested** that 2, 300 evenings and mornings referred to half that number of **days**, **but** this **is** hardly credible.

J. Bullock, R. C. Jones.

EXTRACTS.

From Melbourne. —Only two **beasts** are seen in this vision of Daniel's, **as** against four **beasts** in his earlier vision. Daniel **was a** seeker after truth and knowledge, **a** most commendable trait. When he had seen the vision, he sought understanding (8. 15, R. V. M.), and was not disappointed. The meaning of the vision **was given by** Gabriel whose place and position **was** one of standing in the presence of God (Luke 1. 19). Four times was he

sent **by** God. Twice was he sent to Daniel, once to Zacharias, father of John the baptiser (Luke 1. 13), and once to Mary (Luke 1. 26-28). Michael would also seem to **be** the protector of the children of Israel. The great horn of the he-goat is Alexander the Great, who came with swiftness and ferocity, and was one of the greatest conquerors the world has ever known, and died **at** the early **age** of thirty-two. His early death led to the dividing **up** of his kingdom into four parts, under four of his generals. From one of them rose **a** king of fierce countenance out of the north, one that should magnify himself and destroy wonderfully. This was Antiochus Epiphanes. [11].

S. Stoope.

From Birmingham. —The various visions of the book of Daniel seem to **be** interdependent. There is **a** connexion between chapters 8. and 7.: both appear to focus upon the "little horn" that **waxed** exceeding great. It was **felt** that the same person was referred to in both, the "man of sin," whose power will **be** "according **to** the working of Satan with all power **and** signs and lying wonders." It is interesting to note that chapter 7. speaks of **a** confederacy of ten kings, from which another arose greater than all, and **put** down three kings; **but** chapter 8. speaks of four kings of Greece, from which **a** greater one arose. Thus it would appear that the same period of future events is under reference in both chapters.

The he-goat was "moved with choler." Animals of different kinds have different temperaments. The lamb, meek and gentle and **dumb** before the slaughter, is used as **a** **type** of the Lord Jesus. The he-goat could not **be** called **a** docile animal, **but** liable to **be** easily roused and stirred to anger. The animals of the visions **may** speak somewhat of the nations they represent. The he-goat describes the Grecian kingdom as being **a** warlike nation. The very force of its choler carried it to victory.

The little horn which **waxed** exceeding great, magnifying itself even to the casting down **of** some of the host of heaven and of the stars, **appears** to be identifiable with the red dragon of Revelation 12. 3, 4. The dragon speaks of **Satan**, **and** also of **a** federation of kings, and again, specifically of **a** king (Revelation 17. 9, 10, 11).

Daniel, after the vision, was sick certain days. **It may well be** that his glimpse of the treading down of the sanctuary and the host of the people of God had much to do with it.

K. Robertson, H. Smith.

From Liverpool. —Out of one of the four kingdoms (Syria) **came** forth **a** little horn which **waxed** exceeding great. It was thought that this referred to Antiochus Epiphanes, others thought **it** looked beyond the time of the Grecian empire. Verses 10-14 and 25 seem to refer to someone **greater** than this man, and to the same one **as** chapter 7. **and** chapter 9. 26, 27. These things are spoken of **by** the Lord (Matthew 24. 15) as the abomination of desolation, of which Daniel 8. **is** **a** **type**, the antitype being given in 2 Thessalonians 2. 4-12, Revelation 13. 11-17; Revelation 19. 20.

Note Daniel 8. 19: "For it belongeth to the appointed time of the end," also 8. 28, "in the latter time of their kingdom, when the transgressors are come to the full." Verse 24 is very like Revelation 13. Verse 25: "**He** shall **be** broken without hand." **It was** thought that this has **a** parallel in 2 Thessalonians 2. 8: "whom the Lord Jesus shall slay with the breath of His mouth."

G. H. J. J. L.

From **London, S. E.** —The Grecian empire prospered **and** none could withstand its power, but in the figure the horn **was** broken. This refers to the death of Alexander in his prime. In his place **came** up four notable horns (**8. 8**); at the death of Alexander the kingdom **was** divided into four divisions, **under** four Greek generals.

Two lines of thought were put forward on the remainder of the vision: —

(1) The dream has **been** fulfilled in its entirety. The Jewish people were **subject** to the Egyptian monarchy for a time, a great **number** being carried **away** into that country. They then were subject to the Syrian monarchy, from which kingdom arose one who challenged the authority of God, **and set** himself up to rule **and** persecute those who obeyed him not. He is referred to **as** the little horn (verse **0**). Note that the horn **came** from one of them, **i. e.**, the kingdoms **and** not from the Grecian empire **as a whole**. Antiochus Epiphanes **set** himself up over the Jewish people **and** deprived them of every civil **and** religious liberty. He **erected** his **statue** on the altar of burnt offering (see **8. 13**) **and** dedicated the temple of God to Jupiter Olympus. He **magnified** himself **and** did **as** he pleased. The period referred to in verse **14** **was** thought to **be** the period **between** the setting up of Antiochus Epiphanes **and** the cleansing of the temple. [**12**]

(2) The remainder of the vision **is** future, **and** the **man** of sin will arise from the Grecian empire. He will challenge the authority of God **and** will **be** destroyed without hand **by** the Lord **Jesus Christ**. Some thought that the abomination of desolation of Daniel **9. and** of Revelation **was** the **same** **as** that **in** this chapter; others thought that **it was** not. *E. S.*

From Willington Quay. —Many have tried with varying measures of **success** to interpret these chapters historically. Perhaps this chapter lends itself to interpretation more than most. **We** concluded that most of the vision is **as yet** unfulfilled. The expressions "the time of the **end**" (**8. 17, 19**) **and** "**many days** to come" (**8. 26**) cannot **be** without **future** significance, perhaps allowing for the revealing **and** introducing of the mystery of the Church, the Body of Christ.

Verses 10 to 12 provoked discussion, particularly with reference to the host of heaven **and** the stars that were **cast** down to the ground. **We** concluded that verse **11** is an earthly **scene**, at Jerusalem, speaking of desolation in the city. The sanctuary referred to in verse **11** is not the **same** **as** that in verse **14**, the former **being cast** down, the latter cleansed. The words **used in** these **verses** are different, **and** so too in chapter **9. 17, 26**. [**13**] Perhaps the second word relates more to the people themselves rather than to the divine **service and** building in Jerusalem.

Undoubtedly the power of the evil one is behind the little horn. **He** understands dark **sentences and** is motivated **by** a power not his own. Satan is allowed **by** God to bring forth his man. *C. B.*

From Hamilton, Ont. —The expression **in** verse **3**, "the higher **came** up last," **we** suggest refers to Cyrus king of Persia, who was not only **used** **by** God in the rebuilding of the temple (Ezra **1. 1**), **but was** also called **by** the LORD "His anointed" (Isaiah **45. 1**). God **used** Cyrus to restore His things, **but** we also notice **in** verse **23** that the "king of fierce countenance" will **be** used of Satan, for we read "not by his own power."

We considered God's dealings with the kings of the earth from the beginning of the captivity unto the time of the end. First He sent against His people Neco, the king of Egypt (2 Chronicles 35. 21), followed by Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, who carried them away captive (2 Chronicles 36. 7, Daniel 1. 2). After this, Cyrus was raised up for the rebuilding of the house. In the visions of the four beasts and the ram and he-goat we note that God allows wickedness to reign, but in the end His purposes shall be established when He comes whose right it is to reign.

Whether it be with regard to the waves of the sea, or Satan's treatment of Job, or the power of Gentile monarchs, the expression is true in each case: "Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further" (Job 38. 11). In the light of this, it becomes us not to be upset because of present world conditions, but with the Psalmist let us say, "The LORD is on my side; I will not fear: what can man do unto me?"

W. Thompson, N. MacKay,

From **Edinburgh.** —The Babylonian kingdom was well-nigh finished and a further revelation of Nebuchadnezzar's image was given to Daniel.

In the vision the ram had two horns which speak of the Medes and Persians, the latter being the stronger and more prominent. Following his conquests, the ram came against the he-goat which speaks of Alexander of Greece. The he-goat was moved with great anger and the Persian empire fell. In process of time, the Grecian empire was broken up into four kingdoms. This happened after Alexander's death when his four generals divided the kingdom. Out of one was to arise a king of fierce countenance. This is yet future, so it would seem that this does not relate to past Roman power, but to a revived Roman power. He will wax great towards the east, the south and the glorious land. He is not the king of the north mentioned in chapter 11. 3-6, but was thought to be the king mentioned in chapter 7. 23-26.

Jas. Paterson.

From **Brantford, Ont.** —We thought that chapters 2., 7. and 8. are connected with one another thus: chapter 2. is man's view of Gentile rule; chapter 7. is God's view of Gentile rule; and chapter 8. is a further revelation of these nations, particularly of the middle two, Medo-Persia and Greece. But there are some things in chapter 7. that made us consider whether the nations mentioned there are synonymous with the parts of the image of chapter 2.

We noticed that the little horn of chapter 7. came up from the fourth beast or according to chapter 2. the Roman empire, while the little horn of chapter 8. came up from the rough he-goat or the Grecian empire. We concluded that they speak of different people.

The little horn of chapter 8. seems, according to history, to be Antiochus Epiphanes, whose record corresponds to what is said here. There are certain characteristics that fit perfectly the man of sin, but we thought they applied firstly to that Syrian king. [14] Pride and power seem to go together; and these men magnified themselves exceedingly. This has been a failure and a sin all through the ages. In all these difficult things that prophecy brings before us there is, we think, a key verse in the Revelation: "The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." May we know much of this in our reaching out after things past and to come.

Alex Sproul.

From Sunderland. —The ram with two horns is stated definitely to be the kings of Media and Persia, and the he-goat to be the king of Greece. In contrast to the second and third beasts of chapter 7. it is observed that prominence is given to the horns of the beasts in chapter 8., these representing actual kings. Again our attention is drawn to a little horn, arising out of Greece. The second beast of Revelation 13. 11 is spoken of as having two horns like unto a lamb and speaking as a dragon. It may be that the apparent differences of origin of the little horns in Daniel 7. and 8. are accounted for in the two **beasts** of Revelation 13. **J. R., Jnr.**

From Cowdenbeath. —Daniel's second vision came at a time when the supremacy of the Babylonian empire, of which Belshazzar was the last monarch, was drawing to a close. It would appear that at the time of the vision Daniel was still resident in Babylon (Daniel 5. 11), but during the vision was carried away in spirit to Shushan, to the seat of power of the then future Medo-Persian empire (Esther 1. 2, 3). Thus Daniel was given an insight into an empire which was still to come.

We regard the first eight verses as being purely historical, the remainder of the vision being of still future fulfilment.

Verse 9 indicates that the "little horn" emanated from one of the four horns of the divided Grecian empire, though it may refer to the territory once controlled by one of the four rulers, and this may suggest a future fulfilment.

Secular history introduces a character of disrepute, Antiochus Epiphanes, a tyrant king of Syria, who delighted in the persecution of the Jewish people, but verse 10 would indicate supernatural happenings which we associate with "the time of the end." Hence, although verses 10-14 may in a measure describe the tyrannical actions of Antiochus Epiphanes, we are inclined to regard the "little horn" as the man of sin. The statement that "The vision belongeth to the time of the end" (verse 17) would seem to indicate a future fulfilment of the portion and help to strengthen our understanding of it. The "holy people" (verse 24) would seem to be the faithful of that future day, the preachers of the gospel of the kingdom, who will refuse to worship the man of sin.

The "king of fierce countenance" (verses 23-25), would seem to portray the man of sin again, who, although still seen as the "little horn" of verse 9, will arise from obscurity to bear this title when in power. In these verses, we see him in his rise against the Son of Man. At the end of the great tribulation (Matthew 24. 29) he will try to thwart the purposes of God, "not by his own power" but with the help of Satan (Revelation 13. 4). He will stand against the "Prince of princes," whom we consider to be the Lord Himself, by whom the confederacy of the man of sin and his Satanic forces will **be** broken and utterly **subdued**. **Iain Hunter.**

COMMENTS.

[1] (Ilford). —We must not confuse Antiochus IV, called *Epiphanes*, or the Illustrious, with the little horn of Daniel 8. 9, the king of fierce countenance, and understanding dark sentences (verse 23), who is the antichrist. This king rises from one of the kingdoms (verse 22) into which

Alexander's empire was divided; notice that it is in the latter time when this takes place, when transgressors are come to the full (verse 23). No doubt there is a measure of similarity in the character and acts of Antiochus Epiphanes to that of the man of sin, but it is the latter that fills the picture in verses 9—14 and 23—27. —*J. M.*

[2] (Ilford). —Eastward (see Daniel 8. 4) being absent shows the strong movement of the Persian empire to be mainly in other directions. Eastward would be to the east of Persia, and has no reference to where God dwelt, which was in Jerusalem. —*J. M.*

[3] (Kingston). —Whilst the same spirit of pride will be in the anti-christ as is in the devil, of seeking to ascend to the highest heights and be as God, which was the dazzling bait that the devil spread before Eve—"Ye shall be as God" (or gods) (Genesis 3. 5), yet, I think, Isaiah 14. 12-14 goes beyond the literal king of Babylon. —*J. M.*

[4] (Kingston). —Yes, I judge Daniel 8. 11, 12 refers to the removal of the burnt offering with the altar, and the setting up and worship of the beast. —*J. M.*

[5] (Kilmarnock). —Not the Roman of the past, but a kingdom and king which are yet future. —*J. M.*

[6] (Barrhead and Paisley). —See [1] above.

[7] (Barrhead and Paisley). —It should, I think, be remembered that though the temple in our Lord's time was one rebuilt by Herod (called "the great"), yet the Lord called it "My Father's house" (John 2. 16), and it is called, in Matthew 21. 12, "the temple of God," and, in verse 13, He showed it was still God's house, for He quoted from Isaiah 56. 7, "My house shall be called a house of prayer." "The future house, which will be desecrated by the man of sin, is also called "the temple of God" (2 Thessalonians 2. 4). Again, though the high priests in our Lord's time, Annas and Caiaphas, were rank unbelievers, guilty of the most awful of all crimes, they were the heads of a priesthood that ministered in God's house. When this dispensation ends God will again begin to deal with Israel and bring them through the refining fires of persecution. We must differentiate between what God deals with nationally and the condition of men individually, who presume to minister to Him. We are told in Daniel 8. 11, "It (the horn) took away from Him the continual burnt offering." The burnt offering was never Michael's nor was it offered to Michael. The "Him" is the Prince of the host and must, I judge, be a Divine Being. —*J. M.*

[8] (Barrhead and Paisley). —The marginal reading of the A. V. is⁴⁴ from him, "which is, I judge, the correct reading. —*J. M.*

[9] (Barrhead and Paisley). —See question from Liverpool. —*J. M.*

[10] (Atherton). —See [1] above.

[11] (Melbourne). —The little horn is antichrist. See Gabriel's explanation (Daniel 8. 23-25). —*J. M.*

[12] (London). —See [1] above.

[13] (Willington Quay). —These are not different words, but different forms of the same word. *Miqdash*, of Daniel 8. 11; 9. 17, is derived from *Qodesh*, of Daniel 8. 18, 14; 9. 26. Sanctuary in each verse refers to the same place, the temple at Jerusalem. —*J. M.*

[14] (Brantford). —See notes above on this point. —*J. M.*

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

Questions from Liverpool. —(1) Verse 10: " the host " and " the stars. " To what do these refer ?

Question 2. —Verse 11: Who is " the Prince of the host " ?

Question 3. —Verse 14: Is there an explanation of the 2, 300 days ?

Question 4. —Daniel 8. 9; 7. 20, 21: Do these scriptures refer to the same person ?

Answer 1. —The word host (Heb. *Tsaba*) signifies a mass of persons or things organized for war. (1) It applies to the people of Israel (Exodus 12. 41), to the Levites (Numbers 4. 23), to the warriors of Israel (2 Samuel 8. 16), to the angelic hosts (1 Kings 22. 19), to the sun, moon and stars (Deuteronomy 4. 19; 17. 3), to a Gentile army (Judges 4. 2). "Host" here (Daniel 8. 10) I regard to relate to the material heaven, not to the angelic hosts of God. —*J. M.*

Answer 2. —He is, I think, the Lord Jesus, from whom the continual burnt offering is taken away. —*J. M.*

Answer 3. —We might ask another question. When do the 2, 300 days begin ? The host that was given over to it, is not, in my judgement, the host of heaven, of verse 10, but the host of God's faithful saints, as is stated in Revelation 13. 7, "It was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them. " Against these, through the beast, Satan (the dragon) will make war (Revelation 12. 17). If the 2, 300 days begin at the beginning of the reign of the beast, who shall continue (in his second term of office, after he comes up from the abyss, Revelation 11. 8; 17. 8) for forty-two months, 1, 260 days (Revelation 13. 5), then we have 1, 040 days after the destruction of the beast until the cleansing of the sanctuary. The taking away the burnt offering, and the setting up of the image and worship of the beast, take place at the middle of Daniel's seventieth week (Daniel 9. 27). Note how, after the destruction of the beast, the lives of the other beasts were prolonged for a season and a time (Daniel 7. 12). Many things will happen in the early years of the millennial reign. —*J. M.*

Answer 4. —These horns both refer to antichrist, in my opinion. —*J. M.*

Question from London, S. E. —Is the person referred to as " the Prince of princes " (8. 25) the same person as ** the Prince of the host " ? Is He the Lord Jesus Christ ?

Answer. —In my opinion, yes is the answer to both questions. —*J. M.*

Questions from Willington Quay. —(1) Daniel 8. 24 indicates that " the little horn " prospers and does his pleasure. To what extent has Satan power to raise up kings ? Compare Romans 13. 1: " There is no power but of God; and the powers that be are ordained of God. "

Question 2. —Luke 4. 6: "**To whomsoever I will I give it.**" Are we to conclude **that** the kingdoms of the earth are in the hands and control of Satan ?

Answer 1. —The little horn doing his pleasure has nothing to do with his being raised up. His pleasure is to do what is evil in God's sight; and for which he will **be** punished eternally. It is given to him **by** God to make war with the saints and to overcome them, **a** very evil work, **but** it is **a** work in which he finds pleasure. Pontius Pilate had authority from heaven to condemn and crucify Christ, though he knew it not until Christ told him, **yet** he was terribly responsible for what he did. He knew he **did** wrong (John 19. 11, 12). The beast will have divine authority to continue for **42** months (Revelation 13. 5). Daniel 4. 17 contains the truth as to rulers being raised up. God sets **up** oftentimes the lowest of men as kings and rulers, and Satan uses such low characters terribly. Even so will Satan **use** the beast, his willing ally.

Answer 2. —It was the father of lies that said this in Luke 4. 6 to **Him** who **is** the only Ruler of princes. The kingdoms of the earth are not in the control of Satan, though he uses men in power, has done and will do so, in **a** fearsome **way**. Christ has all authority in heaven and on earth (Matthew 28. 18). —*J. M.*

Question from Brantford. —Is the river Ulai the same as the river Tigris, or are they different ?

Answer. —It is said to **be a river** which flows into the Euphrates and Tigris after they have united. Its modern name is Karah or Kurun. It flows past Shushan (Susa). —*J. M.*

Questions from Cowdenbeath. —(1) What is the relationship between the **2, 300** evenings and mornings (8. 14) and the **1, 260** days (Revelation 12. 6-14), or, as in Daniel 7. 25, "**a time** and times and half **a time**" ?

Question 2. —How are **we** to understand "then shall the sanctuary be cleansed" (8. 14) with regard to Zechariah 6. 12, 13 ?

Answer (1). —The **42** months, **1, 260** days, three and **a** half years, is the duration of the reign of the beast, the extent of the tribulation or Jacob's trouble. The **2, 300** days, if these begin in the middle of Daniel's seventieth week, and this seems to **be** the case from Daniel 8. 11-14, extend for **1, 040** days beyond the destruction of the beast and continue until the cleansing of the sanctuary.

Answer 2. —I think **we** must **accept** the cleansing of the sanctuary in the same sense as the LORD speaks in Haggai, when **He** says, "The latter glory of this house shall **be** greater than the former" (Haggai 2. 9). Again **He** says, "I will fill this house with glory" (verse 7). If **we** take this to signify the millennial house, **it** will not **be** the house the remnant built. The house in the Lord's **time** on earth was one rebuilt **by** Herod. **We** must not **be** too **exact** in our interpretation. The cleansing of the temple means the cleansing of it **by** sacrifice and making it suitable for divine service, as Daniel 9. 24 indicates. —*J. M.*

BIBLE STUDIES

"Now these were **more noble** than **those In Thessalonica**, **In** that they received the **word** with all readiness of **mind**, **examining** the Scriptures daily, whether these **things** were **BO**" (Acts 17. 11).

VOLUME 20.

SEPTEMBER, 1952.

EDITORIAL.

Daniel searched **the** Scriptures, for **he** could **say**, " I Daniel understood **by** the **books**... " Thus, **being** acquainted **with** the time for God **to** work, and being in close communion with his God, Daniel did not pray amiss. Herein is one of **the** great advantages of Bible-study.

For **the** fact **that** God's purposes and plans will **be** perfected in His own **time** does not preclude godly men from praying to **that** end. Thus **taught** the Master when His disciples said, " Lord, **teach** us to **pr**ay... , " in the words, " Thy kingdom come. Thy will **be** done, **as** in heaven, so on earth. "

Let **us** mark some of the points in Daniel's prayer. Here **was** an old man, unspoilt **by** wealth or position, deeply absorbed in **the** things of God, **the** people of God, and the city of God. Prayers on behalf of **such** will ever avail with our God. **Oh** to **be** so exercised ! The first recorded words of "**the** Boy **Jesus**" were, "Wist **ye** not **that** I **must** **be** in **the** things of **My** **Father** ? " (Luke 2. 49 R. V. M.).

There were purpose, resolution and determination in Daniel's prayer. " I **set** **my** **face**... " **Yet**, withal, how humble **he** **was**! for though wont to **be** **decked** in semi-regal robes, **he** **was** found fasting in sackcloth and in ashes. Have **we** ever been there, in spirit ? Note **the** repetition of " **we** have sinned. " You will also find **it** a profitable **study** to trace **the** individual **cases**, where men **have** cried out, " I **have** sinned, " some in contrition who found repentance, and some, too late, to whom repentance **was** not granted. The noble man Daniel, against whom no recorded wrong **is** found in Scripture, linked himself with his people, who were God's people, and pleaded on their behalf. Thus too **did** Moses (Exodus 32. 32) and Paul (Romans 9. 2, 3 and 10. 1). Learn to plead for **the** needs of a " friend " **as** if his needs were your needs. On **such** a **basis** **the** Lord **said**, " Every one **that** asketh **receiveth**... " (Luke 11. 5-13). This leads to intense and fervent prayer.

One more point. Your prayers will reveal whether or not you know your God. To Daniel, **He** **was** " Adonai Elohim " (verse 3), **his** Master, Proprietor, **the** Almighty One; **his** " Jehovah **my** Elohim " (verse 4), who ever **existeth** and keepeth covenant. His God **was** great and dreadful, and righteous, **yet** capable of showing a shining **face** and full of mercies and forgiveness. Surely **such** intimate knowledge brings strength to one's prayers, for Daniel could pray: " O Lord, according to all Thy righteousness, let Thine anger and Thy **fury**, I pray Thee, **be** turned **away** from **Thy** city Jerusalem, **Thy** holy mountain... " " **Thy** sanctuary **that** is desolate . . . and **the** city **which** is called by Thy name " are potent pleas with our God.

The answer came. At the beginning of his supplication, heaven was moved, Gabriel flew swiftly, and came near with instruction and understanding for the man greatly beloved.

What remained for Daniel, remains for us . . . " Consider the matter. " No revelation exempts us from this obligation... to consider... to meditate. The word to the Hebrews is " Consider... Jesus, " " consider one another, " " consider Him " (Hebrews 3. 1; 10. 24; 12. 3).

Please read Psalm 9. 10, 11.

Jas. Martin.

THE BOOK OF DANIEL.

Daniel's **Prayer and the Vision of 70 weeks.**

(Chapter 9.)

From **Edmonton.** — It is clear from verse 2 that Daniel read, and understood, the prophecy of Jeremiah, who wrote as he was moved by the Holy Spirit. Daniel was likewise moved by the Holy Spirit. (2 Peter 1. 21).

Daniel had noted that God would accomplish seventy years in " the desolations of Jerusalem. " These seventy years must have been nearly run out at this time, and the beloved prophet was saddened as he considered Israel's iniquities and sins, which had drawn Jehovah's righteous judgement. He referred to his prayer of intercession as " my confession. " No Pharisaical attitude! All Israel was included in Daniel's prayer. As one reads his supplications, one little wonders that such cries reached heaven, being the prayer of a man of God to a loving and righteous God, on behalf of an unrighteous and stiff-necked people. To be referred to as one " greatly beloved " must have been a source of comfort to Daniel..

Seventy weeks are determined. It would appear that these seventy weeks were to be divided into three parts, each week being of seven years' duration. The first period, 49 years, began with the call to rebuild the walls of the city. The order of Artaxerxes would seem to be the starting point (Nehemiah 2. 5-8). The second period, sixty-two weeks or 434 years, ended at the crucifixion of our Lord Jesus Christ. The reason for the separation of the seven weeks and the sixty-two weeks is not clear. They do not appear to run in direct chronological order. Help on this would be appreciated [1].

The seventieth week is yet unfulfilled. At the beginning of the seventieth week the man of sin will make a covenant with many of Israel. In the midst of the week he will break this covenant, and impose idolatry on the people who had rejected the true Messiah and crucified Him. The Scriptures show that the course of this dreadful period of tribulation will be three and a half years (Daniel 12. 11; Revelation 11. 2; Revelation 13. 5). During it the gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed. The 144, 000 of Israel, and the great multitude of the Gentiles in Revelation 7, God's elect, as in Matthew 24. 22, are of that time.

R. F. Lundwill.

From **Edinburgh**. —We see Daniel's ways in prayer, faith and works. He humbled himself, and made confession of sins and iniquities for himself, for Israel, and for Jerusalem. Here is a lesson for us: confession should be made not only in private prayer, but also in public prayer.

God is careful to mark the exact time, the first year of Darius. Daniel, having read in the books (of Jeremiah's prophecies), understood that the day of deliverance was approaching. The captivity would only be for seventy years.

Seventy weeks are determined upon the people of Israel and the holy city to (1) finish transgression, (2) make an end of sins, (3) make reconciliation for iniquity, (4) bring in everlasting righteousness, (5) seal up the vision, (6) seal up prophecy, and (7) anoint the most holy. This is not the seventy years of Jeremiah's captivity, but seventy weeks of years, and is broken up into seven weeks, sixty-two weeks, and one week. From Daniel's time to the end of Malachi's day was a period of approximately forty-nine years (seven weeks of seven years). From then to the day that Christ entered Jerusalem on an ass and was rejected as king was 434 years (62 weeks of 7 years). Thus 69 weeks have passed; the 70th week will end when Messiah comes to earth to reign.

Variations of thought arose regarding the timing of the seventieth week, but, in general, it was thought that the following is approximately correct. The gathering again of Israel as a nation will signal the rapture of the present day Church [2]. When the Church is removed, the man of sin will assume power. He will make a covenant (9. 27) for one week, which we thought to be Daniel's seventieth week. In the midst of that week he will break his covenant and cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease. He will set up the abomination of desolation, and then will great tribulation come upon Israel.

Difference of opinion was expressed regarding the phrase "cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease." Some contended that this referred to offerings under the Levitical law offered up by a Levitical priesthood, while others thought that the sacrifice of Calvary would meet the need of that day. Light on this point would **be** appreciated [3]. D. Meldrum.

From Cardiff. —In verse 24 we read of "seventy weeks" decreed on the people and the city. From the going forth of the commandment to restore and build (which we assume was that of Artaxerxes) unto the Anointed One, the Prince, shall be seven weeks and sixty and two weeks. "And after the threescore and two weeks shall the Anointed One be cut off." Questions were raised as to where in the life of Messiah does the "unto" bring us. It is believed by many that His entry into Jerusalem on a colt, the foal of an ass, is the actual day referred to here, while others would suggest that His anointing as Messiah took place when the Holy Spirit came upon Him on Jordan's banks (John 1.) [4]. But it is *after* sixty-two weeks and seven weeks have ended that the Anointed One is cut off, which would suggest that the seventieth week was fulfilled in its first half by the three-and-a-half year ministry and death of Messiah. In Revelation 13. 5 we are told that the duration of antichrist's authority is forty-two months, i. e., three-and-a-half years [5].

The man Gabriel explained "seven weeks: and three score and two weeks". The command to rebuild was given in the month Nisan (Nehemiah 2. 1), and neither year nor weeks of years could *begin* with this month [6]. Is there something behind this division of the weeks or years relative to the punishment of Israel referred to in 2 Chronicles 36. 21, where we are told that the seventy years' desolation was for the seventy profaned sabbaths "for as long as she lay desolate she kept sabbath, to fulfil threescore and ten years" ? [7].

Help is sought as to the actual period in the Lord's life to which this recognition of His anointing refers (verse 26) [8]. If He was cut off *after* the sixty-nine weeks and the seventieth does not find fulfilment until a future date, "the day of grace" must have commenced at some period prior to His death, and the crucifixion must be the commencement of the Church age, and not Acts 1., 2. and 3 [9].

K. Berrisford.

From **Liverpool**. —Daniel's confession of sin, his own and that of his people and his appreciation of God's mercies and forgiveness, are worthy of note. His knowledge of Moses' writings is apparent, for he clearly realized that the calamities that had come upon Israel were the fruits of departure from God's law. Therefore the curse was poured out; and God confirmed His words, by bringing upon them this great evil.

Gabriel said: "*At the beginning* of thy supplications the commandment went forth " (9. 23). God does not so much consider how much we say as our condition of heart when we seek His face. Daniel's prayer brought a speedy answer, and to him were revealed many secret things (Psalm 25. 12-14). We are reminded of the words of the Psalmist; " But know that the LORD hath set apart him that is godly for Himself: the LORD will hear when I call unto Him " (Psalm 84. 3).

Upon Daniel's people and city seventy weeks (of years) were determined. From the commandment to restore and build Jerusalem to the death of Christ would be seven weeks, and sixty-two weeks. The city was built in troublous times (Ezra and Nehemiah). After the second period Messiah was to be "cut off. " After this again the city and sanctuary were to be destroyed by the people of the prince that should come. It was generally agreed that the " people " were the armies of Rome under Titus, and 70 A. D. the time of the destruction. The " prince " (9. 26) was judged to be the covenant-maker (9. 27), and none other than the antichrist, concerning whom the Lord Jesus said, " if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive " (John 5. 43).

Israel will be deceived by the lying wonders of the man of sin into making a covenant with him. But he is also a covenant-breaker, for he will break it in the midst of the week, i. e., after three and a half years. This period is similar in length to that mentioned in Revelation 11. 2, forty-two months, the duration of the testimony of the two witnesses (Revelation 11. 3), 1, 260 days, and to the " time, and times, and half a time " (Revelation 12. 14), the time of Jacob's trouble or the great tribulation (Matthew 24. 21; Zechariah 12. 13, 14). This terrible period will end with the return of the Lord to the earth (Zechariah 14. 4; Revelation 19. 11-21).

A. Fairhurst, jun., A. Horridge.

EXTRACTS.

From **Willington Quay**. —We would understand the vision (verse 28) to be different from those of previous chapters in that it was not something which Daniel saw, but a presentation to him of matters relevant to future times. "Seventy weeks are decreed" (verse 24) could be read as "seventy sevens are divided", which would help us to understand the division of the seventy weeks into periods of seven, sixty-two and one week respectively [10]. The seventy weeks commenced at the going forth of the commandment to restore and build Jerusalem, and, whilst various times are suggested as being the starting point, we take it that the correct one is that recorded in Nehemiah 2. 8.

Sixty-nine of the seventy weeks having been completed at the time when the Lord Jesus Christ was crucified, there yet remains one week which requires fulfilment. The general picture of the seventieth week is one of desolation. We are given details concerning the prince, the making of the covenant, the breaking of it, and the desolations. There would not appear, however, to be any revelation here of the sequel to these events, albeit some of the blessings of verse 24 are yet to follow. *K. R.*

From Crowborough. —From verse four to verse fifteen Daniel identified himself with wayward, backsliding Israel, whereas in the second half he supplicated as a righteous man the God he knew and loved. The honour of God's name and the beauty of the house meant much to Daniel.

The seventy weeks are clearly divided: (1) seven weeks to Malachi and the end of Old Testament prophecy; (2) sixty-two weeks which bring us to the "cutting off", or death, of the Lord Jesus; and (3) one week which begins after the rapture of the Church, and is marked by the making of a covenant between the prince (the beast) and many of the Jews. The worship of himself and his image will be brought in and will end in his final **defeat** by the Lord Jesus Christ. *B. V. French.*

From **Kilmarnock**. —Jeremiah 29. 10 says, "After seventy years be accomplished for Babylon, I will visit you". According to Newberry's dates, the seventy years were nearly fulfilled when Daniel made confession and supplication to God on behalf of the nation. Although he had been a God-fearing man all his life, yet he identified himself with them. He was one of the nation and pleaded with God for mercy and forgiveness, "because Thy city and Thy people are called by Thy name" (9. 19).

We understand that the seventy weeks are weeks of years and are to be reckoned from the time the commandment was given to restore and build Jerusalem (9. 25, Nehemiah 2.). We take it that Christ's death was at the end of the sixty-nine weeks, when the Jews as a nation rejected Him as their King, and God's dealings with them as a nation then ceased. With the descent of the Holy Spirit God's purpose was to call out of all nations a people for His name (Acts 15. 14). *A. G. S.*

London, S. E. —By the prophecy of Jeremiah, Daniel **knew** which prophecies had **been** fulfilled (9. 2) **and was** in a position to receive further enlightenment through Gabriel. The element of **prayer** which characterized the entire life of Daniel **must not be** overlooked, for arising out of his supplication to God, that His **face** should **be** turned to Jerusalem **and made** to shine upon the sanctuary, **came** the revelation of the **seventy** weeks. Daniel's experience **may** indicate to **us** the general complexity of prophetic interpretation: that prophetic imagery **and** symbols are meaningless **except** to those who prove their worthiness to God to receive explanation through the Holy-Spirit.

The **seventy** weeks are not literal ones, **but** weeks of years (9. 24-27). There is scriptural precedent for this in Leviticus **25. 8** **and** Ezekiel **4. 6**. **Again**, there **is** no difficulty **in** translating the two Hebrew words *shebua* *shibah* directly as **490** years, **because** *shebua* refers especially to a week of years, **and** *shibah* **can mean seven, seventy or seventy times seven** (see Dr. Strong's Concordance **and** the critical works of scholars such as Dr. Barnes). Verses **24** **and** **26** could not relate to **any** other **event** **in** Scripture than the death of Christ: (i) to finish transgression, (ii) to make **an end** of sins, (iii) to make reconciliation for **iniquity**, (iv) to bring **in** everlasting righteousness, (v) to seal **up** vision **and** prophecy, **and** (vi) to anoint the most holy.

On the foundation of the words of the Lord **Jesus** Christ **in** Matthew 24. 15-31, -the abomination of desolation (9. 27) is shown **as** being in the **future** **and** so the seventieth week remains to **be** fulfilled. Desolation is the result of destruction. Clearly 2 Thessalonians **2. 1-10** **and** Revelation **13. 14-18** are connected with the **image** of the **beast**. The week is divided into two (9. 27). Daniel (8. **9-14**, 9. **27**, **11. 31**, 12. **7**, **11-13**) clearly shows that the abomination of desolation will **be** accomplished **in** the second half of the week.

The shortening of the days for the elect's sake (Matthew 24. **22**) is probably shown by the **1, 290** days of Daniel 12. **11**, thirty **days** longer than the **1, 260** days of Revelation 12. 6. The **1, 335** days of Daniel 12. **12** relate to the commencement of the thousand year reign of Christ. The forty-five days' difference is, perhaps, accounted for in the **judgement** of the nations by Christ, when **He** descends as Son of **man** (Matthew **25. 31-46**).

Reginald D. Wood.

From Melbourne. —Daniel **set** his **face** unto the Lord God: his heart **was** not **in** Babylon, **but** **in** Jerusalem, **and** so his prayer **was** that of a **burdened** heart, seeking mercy **and** forgiveness for the sins of his people, himself included. "A broken **and** a contrite heart, **O** God, Thou wilt not despise" (Psalm 51. 17).

It would **seem** that the sixty-nine weeks of years finished when the Lord **Jesus**, after **entering** Jerusalem **sitting** on a young **ass**, **said**: "If thou hadst known **in** this day, even thou, the things which belong unto **peace** !" (Luke 19. 42). After sixty-nine weeks shall the Anointed **One** **be** cut off, **and** there shall **be** none belonging to **Him** (9. **26**, R. V. M.) [12], Moses wrote of the coming of Christ (Deuteronomy 18. 16), Daniel wrote of His death (9. 26). One week **remains** to **be** fulfilled ere Christ shall bring in everlasting righteousness, when Psalm **66. 4** will **be** realized, **and** "the **LORD** shall **be**

king over all the earth: " (Zechariah 14. 9). Between the sixty-ninth and seventieth week lies this period of God's grace to both Jew and Gentile, called by the apostle Paul "the day of salvation". The seventieth week will begin with the appearance of the man of sin, and will end with his disappearance [13]. In the midst of the week (three-and-a-half years) he shall cause the sacrifice to cease (9. 27). This is the time of the abomination of desolation, the time of Jacob's trouble (Jeremiah 30. 7). *S. Stoop.*

From Barrhead and Paisley. —The beginning of the 490 years, the commandment to restore and build Jerusalem, was thought not to be the command of Cyrus (Ezra 1.), but an unrecorded command resulting from the conversation between Nehemiah and Artaxerxes (Nehemiah 2-) about 446 B. C. From this point until the cutting off of the Messiah was to be sixty-nine weeks, yet from 446 B. C. until 80 A. D. is only 476 years [15]. It would appear, therefore, that here the unit of time is a year of 360 days, as was apparently used by the people of that day. In Genesis 7. and 8. the 150 days of the flood are shown as from the seventeenth of the second month until the seventeenth of the seventh month, five months of thirty days each. There is nothing to indicate that this period of 490 years was to be broken at the end of the forty-ninth year. This division seems only to indicate that such a period would see the restoration of the city, but there is much that would indicate a break after the sixty-ninth week.

It would appear that, when the antichrist comes, there will be a temple erected, and this point raised some discussion as to whether such a temple and its service would receive divine recognition prior to the Millennium. It was thought that what temple service there might then be would be merely an empty observance of the Mosaic ceremonial law without God's approval. Such homage antichrist will appropriate to himself [16]. After the Millennium, however, it was thought that the temple scenes as recorded in Ezekiel would have their fulfilment. Help is sought as to what significance the sacrifices and offerings would have at that time [17],

J. M. Gault.

From Cowdenbeath. —There are two periods of seventy years viewed in the scripture in relation to Israel's captivity. Jeremiah 29. 10 refers to the captivity dating from Nebuchadnezzar's first recorded visit against Jerusalem until the proclamation of Cyrus (606 B. C. -536 B. C.). On the other hand Jeremiah 25. 11 speaks of the desolation of the land of Israel and this agrees with 2 Chronicles 36. 21. Therefore we might conclude that the period of desolation began some eighteen years later when Jerusalem and the temple were destroyed, and consequently, the fulfilment of this seventy years would extend beyond the captives' release. We note that God's judgement against Babylon was carried out by Darius who preceded Cyrus by two years. It is difficult to see how a period of seventy years exactly had transpired in this case [18].

Disobedience to the voice of God is the charge against Daniel's people (9. 5, 6, 10, 11, 12, 14). A solemn charge indeed, and one which we might consider well to profit (Hebrews 2. 2, 3). The outcome of disobedience is

judgement. Thus a people bound by covenant and oath (Deuteronomy 29. 12) brought a divine curse upon themselves (Deuteronomy 28. 49) through failure. The city was in ruins (2 Kings 25. 8), the House of God was desecrated and destroyed. This grieved Daniel greatly, for he loved the House of God and the God of the House. This comes out strikingly in his prayer (9. 16 and 17) as he thought of a desolate sanctuary. In his thoughts the House was closely associated with the people, for by their behaviour the testimony was blighted (9. 16, see 1 Timothy 3. 15). We should remember that, "Holiness becometh Thine house, O LORD, for evermore" (9. 16, 20).

R. Ross.

From Atherton. —It is interesting to notice the order of his prayer. (1) Daniel extolled God's greatness, faithfulness, mercy and love. (2) He confessed his own sinfulness and wickedness and that of rod's people. (3) Despite repeated warnings from God, through Moses and the prophets, the people ignored the voice of God, who then fulfilled His word and brought upon them confusion of face. (4) Then, despite all that the Lord had brought on them, they had not intreated His favour, that He might forgive them. (5) Remembering God's greatness in bringing forth His people from Egypt, he besought God to turn away His anger and fury from Jerusalem. Finally he importuned God with the memorable words of verse 19. Such was the supplication of this man, greatly beloved, that while he was speaking God heard his prayer, a fulfilment of Isaiah 65. 24.

The seventy weeks of verse 24 are seventy "sevens", and each "seven" refers to seven years. The fact that the seventieth week has not yet been fulfilled shows that God has suspended His dealings with His people Israel, but will again take them up. The Lord Jesus attached great importance to this prophecy (Matthew 24. 15-31). The commencement of the seven years is the making of a firm covenant, and the commencement of the tribulation is the breaking of the covenant (Revelation 13. 14-15). Then will follow a time of unparalleled persecution and suffering for those who would be faithful to God (Revelation 12. 13-17). It was suggested that verse 24 will be fulfilled when the Lord Jesus comes back to reign. God will make a new covenant with His people (Hebrews 8. 8-12).

D. H. Butler, R. C. Jones.

From Kingston-upon-Thames. —Daniel understood from the books (Jeremiah 25. 12) that the accomplishing of the desolations of Jerusalem was at hand, but the return of the nation of Judah to the land would be conditional (Deuteronomy 30., Leviticus 26. 40). Seventy hebdomads, or seventy sevens, may mean hours, days, weeks, months or years. Decreed means severed, cut off. Therefore 490 years are set apart from the longer period of the "Times of the Gentiles". This 490 years period started with the commandment to restore and build Jerusalem. Most scholars conclude that this command was given by Artaxerxes to Nehemiah (Nehemiah 2. 6). We believe this to be wrong for the following reasons: (1) Such an important commandment would not be given so indistinctly. The decree of Cyrus, we are told, referred only to the building of the house,

but Isaiah 44. 28 also distinctly [?] mentions the wall. (2) It was quite clear to the adversaries of Ezra that the remnant were at least intending to build the city. The house, as it was not fortified, could not be rebellious, nor insurrections (Ezra 4. 12, 10). (3) The news given to Nehemiah by Hanani should not have caused surprise, because a man in his position would have known that Nebuchadnezzar had burned down the wall over a hundred years previously. The reason for his surprise and sorrow was that Cyrus's command to build the house and the city had not been carried out. This to us is a very important matter [19].

"To anoint a most holy place" (R. V. M.) is very interesting. God instructed Moses to make a holy anointing oil and anoint the Tabernacle, the furniture, Aaron and his sons (Exodus 30., 40.). We read nothing in relation to anointing at the dedications of any of the temples. We believe that the temple which the Jews will build before the Millennium will be destroyed. Then the Lord Jesus will build a temple which will be the glory of the whole earth (Zechariah 6. 12, 13). This temple will be anointed. Here the Lord Jesus will be enthroned as the King-Priest. No ark of the covenant will be in the most holy place of this temple, for the Lord Jesus, of whom the ark speaks, will be there in person. It will be anointed, because the priesthood will have changed from the type of Aaron to that of Melchizedek [20].

L. A. White.

COMMENTS.

[1] (Edmonton). —If we follow the chronology given in many Authorised Bibles, which is followed by Newberry, we find that Nehemiah 1. is given as B. C. 446, and Malachi 1. as B. C. 397, so that according to this forty-nine years bring us to the close of the prophetic scripture, and from Malachi the next period runs on to the Lord's death, when He was cut off and had nothing. —*J. M.*

[2] (Edinburgh). —It should be remembered that many of the Jewish people are already gathered in Palestine, and about three years ago or so became a nation, taking their place amongst the nations of the earth; and though this is so, the Church the Body is not yet caught up by the Lord. As far as I understand, the gathering of Israel has nothing to do with the Lord's coming to the air, but has much to do with His coming to earth. No one can say that the removal of the Church from this scene will coincide with the revelation of the man of sin, nor yet can anyone say that the close of this dispensation of grace is at the beginning of the last seven years of the seventy weeks of years of Daniel's prophecy. If this were so, we would have to recast many of our thoughts as to the Lord's coming for the Church. —*J. M.*

[3] (Edinburgh). —"The sacrifice and the oblation" I understand to be the sacrifices of the book of Leviticus. —*J. M.*

[4] (Cardiff). —Conjecture is ever a dangerous expedient in dealing with the Scriptures. Daniel 9. 26 tells us, "And after the threescore and two weeks shall the Anointed One be cut off, and shall have nothing." I take it from this, that the threescore and two weeks end with the Cross. The Lord's public entry into Jerusalem on the ass's colt was only a few days before this. This does not deal with the time when the Lord was anointed (He was anointed more than once), but with His being cut off. —*J. M.*

[5] (Cardiff). —How is such a conjecture arrived at? If the Messiah is cut off after the sixty-two weeks, this cannot mean sixty-two weeks plus three-and-a-half years. Then again, what about the prince that shall come making a covenant with many for one week, is this not the week that is severed from the other sixty-nine? If the cutting off of Messiah is after the sixty-two weeks, how can the first half of the seventieth week (three-and-a-half years) be prior to the death of Messiah?—*J. M.*

[6] (Cardiff). —Really! I should think that Exodus 12. 2; 13. 4 would prove the exact opposite. Abib or Nisan was to be to Israel a new beginning of the year, according to redemption, or the beginning of their religious year, as men would say.—*J. M.*

[7] (Cardiff). —I cannot see any relationship between the seventy years and the seventy weeks, except it be, that, at the end of each, Israel in a remnant is delivered.—*J. M.*

[8] (Cardiff). —The Lord was the Christ prior to His anointing with the Spirit and power at the Jordan. Compare Luke 2. 11 with Acts 10. 38. He was also anointed in resurrection with the oil of gladness (Hebrews 1. 9).—*J. M.*

[9] (Cardiff). —We do not at all follow the deductions of our Cardiff friends, but we cannot devote more space to their paper.—*J. M.*

[10] (Willington Quay). —See note [1].

[12] (Melbourne). —The words "cut off" (Hebrew *karath*) can mean nothing else than the Lord's death on the cross. Gesenius suggests three meanings of the word: (1) to cut off a part of a garment, to cut off branches of trees or cut down trees or images of false gods, (2) to kill or destroy persons, and (3) to make a covenant by slaying and dividing victims. "Cut off" in Daniel 9. 26 signifies the Lord's death. The text rather than the marginal reading of the R. V. expresses the meaning of what Newberry says is the literal rendering, "and nothing to Him" = "and shall have nothing", i. e., in Israel nationally, though He had many belonging to Him who were of Israel racially.—*J. M.*

[13] (Melbourne). —Will the man of sin or antichrist not have appeared prior to the seventieth week? He is a prince in so strong a position as to make a covenant with many of the people of Israel for seven years. Such events do not just happen overnight.—*J. M.*

[15] (Barrhead and Paisley). —Anyone who has made a study of chronology, to a greater or lesser extent, knows how difficult is this period as to certainty of dates. What we cannot be certain about now, would, I judge, be clearer to the early Christians who lived nearer to those times, and, perhaps, the period of 483 years of Daniel's prophecy could be proved by them. Though we may not be able to compute exactly those years, we may be quite certain of the divine accuracy of prophecy.—*J. M.*

[16] (Barrhead and Paisley). —As God left His house in Jerusalem when the Son was rejected, who said, "Your house is left unto you desolate", which means deserted, and they were not to see Him again till they said, "Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord", the house will remain deserted till the Son gets His place as Messiah by His people. At the same time God will again be dealing with His people to bring them to repentance.—*J. M.*

[17] (**Barrhead and Paisley**). —If there is a literal house of God in Jerusalem, and a literal altar (and who can deny this ?) then undoubtedly, as the Scriptures show, there will be literal sacrifices of animals. —*J. M.*

[18] (**Cowdenbeath**). —I have read something in which some make a difference between the seventy years of captivity and seventy years of desolations, * but whatever may be said about such matters, there is no difference between the seventy years of Jeremiah 26. 11 and 29. 10. The nations were to serve the king of Babylon seventy years (25. 11), and in 29. 10 it says, "After seventy years be accomplished for Babylon, I will visit you." Both of these seventy years end with the destruction of Belshazzar by the Medes and Persians, and the proclamation was thereafter made in the first year of Cyrus, relative to the return of the remnant. —*J. M.* *See B. S. 1934, p. 57—*S. B.*

[19] (**Kingston**). —This matter of the command to build Jerusalem has been one of some dispute. The statement in Isaiah 44. 28 is plain enough, but we find no reference to the building of Jerusalem, except in the lying accusations of Bishlam and his friends, who were enemies of the Jewish remnant, and little or no reliance can be placed on what they said to give colouring to their accusations. The city with its wall was largely a ruin when Nehemiah came. He had said to Artaxerxes, "The city, the place of my fathers' sepulchres, lieth waste" (Nehemiah 2. 3), a statement of fact, and he sought from the king the necessary permit for timber to build the wall and to set up the gates, and also permission to go to Jerusalem to see the work through. There was no searching of the Persian archives to discover an earlier command re the building of the city, as was done in the case of the house (Ezra 5. 13—6. 12). In the decree of Cyrus, as discovered by Darius Hystaspes, there is no reference, as far as is recorded in that part of Ezra just quoted, to the building of the wall of the city. We think our friends' statement that the command to build the city, as in Nehemiah 2. is not the commandment of Daniel 9. 25, is rather strong. What, no doubt, they mean is, that this is their opinion. —*J. M.*

See B. S., 1934, pp. 55-56. —*S. B.*

[20] (**Kingston**). —What of the sons of Zadok ? See Ezekiel 42. 46; 44. 15 and many other scriptures which refer to the Levitical priests in the millennial house. —*J. M.*

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

Questions from Liverpool. —(1) Please explain what is meant by confusion of face.

(2) Why the division into seven and sixty-two ? Is there any particular significance in the "seven" period ?

(3) What is meant by the "flood" (9. 26) ?

Answers. —(1) It means the appearance of the face of a person who is ashamed.

(2) I have said elsewhere, if we accept the chronology in some A. V. Bibles, the forty-nine years bring us to the end of the Old Testament.

(3) The flood here is the flood waters of divine judgement. Wrath (or extermination) shall be poured out upon the desolator, as in Daniel 9. 27.

See Isaiah **28**. 17 where divine judgement is compared to flood waters.—*J. M.*

Questions from Cardiff.—(1) What did Peter mean when he made the appeal to Israel in Acts 3. 10? Had Israel repented as a nation *would* the Christ have come?

(2) When did God cease to have dealings with His ancient people as a nation?

Answers.—(1) Note Peter's qualification in Acts 3. 21, "Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restoration of all things." The times of the Acts were not the times of restoration, but of tremendous activity in spreading the gospel. Problematical questions can only be given problematical answers. We know what did happen.

(2) When Israel nationally in the decision of the Sanhedrim rejected and crucified the Lord.—*J. M.*

Question from Atherton.—What is meant by the words "to anoint the most holy" (verse 24)?

Answer.—It means to anoint "the most holy place" or "the holy of holies". It does not mean to anoint the most holy Person, i. e., Christ. Its answer in the Tabernacle of old is seen in Leviticus **8**. 10, etc.—*J. M.*

Question from Cowdenbeath.—(1) The accepted date of the commandment being made to restore and build Jerusalem is 446 B. C. The Lord Jesus died in the year 84 A. D. The period of time scarcely agrees with the 488 years required by Daniel's prophecy. Can this discrepancy be explained?

(2) In the light of verses 21 and 23 it was questioned whether Daniel had received a vision before he commenced to pray.

Answers.—(1) If there is any discrepancy, then Daniel's prophecy is right and chronology is wrong. See note [15] in paper from Barrhead and Paisley.—*J. M.*

(2) No vision is mentioned, but rather he knew by reading Jeremiah's prophecy that the end of the seventy years was imminent, and as a result he set his face to seek the Lord by prayer.—*J. M.*

Question from Barrhead **and Paisley.**—Does Matthew **24**. 22 convey the thought that the seventieth week is to be cut short?

Answer.—Every seven years or thereby the Jewish people added another month to the year, to correct their calendar, called Ve-Adar or the second Adar. The cutting short of Matthew 24. 22 may refer to the cutting off of thirty days and may account for the difference between 1, 260 days of Revelation and 1, 290 of Daniel 12. 11.—*J. M.*

BIBLE STUDIES

"Now these were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, **examining** the Scriptures daily, whether these things were so" (Acts 17. 11.)

VOLUME 20.

OCTOBER, 1952.

SPIRITUAL EXERCISE.

The principal characteristic which marks Daniel's witness and work indelibly on the mind and heart is that he was a man of vision. That which gives clarity and power to vision is faith, and this Daniel possessed in full measure. Throughout the Scriptures great men for God stood out by reason of their ability to rise above the prevailing circumstances of departure from the living God and to look ahead to the fulfilment of divine promises. Daniel's strength lay in his obedience to God's word and to prayer, and also training and experience were vital.

Full growth or perfection is attained by spiritual exercise, and Hebrews 5. speaks of babes as without experience of the word of righteousness, unskilled in rightly dividing the word of truth. Perception is granted to those who by reason of use have their senses exercised and are able to discern the evil from the good. It is one thing to receive instruction, but another to act upon it as Daniel did, using those gifts with which God had endowed him by virtue of his faith.

There may be a tendency to follow a predetermined pattern of teaching and ministry without the application of individual thought and exercise through the Word which is so necessary in order to make a real contribution to the work of God. This does not infer an unleashing of uncontrolled individualism, but a greater and deeper exercise individually as to our true position and relationship to God and His Christ. Daniel's aspirations were towards the resuscitation and re-establishment of God's testimony in the place of the Name, and this should be the aim and objective of our interest and energy. One is a means and the other the end.

May we, like Daniel, not rest upon the laurels of those who have so valiantly fought and won so much, but exercise to the full our faculties of spiritual intelligence upon the fountain of divine truth in the Scriptures so that a brighter and more real testimony may result. *L. H. Taylor.*

THE BOOK OF DANIEL.

Daniel's Prayer and the Vision of 70 weeks.

(Chapter 9.)

From Hamilton, Ont. —Daniel lived an exemplary life and was pre-eminently a man of prayer. He was accustomed to pray, and had an appointed place and a set time. "He kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime" (6. 10) He was consistent, faithful, and sincere. It is a matter of great importance for us to form a habit of prayer. Our blessed Lord and Master, the perfect Man of whom Daniel the beloved was but a type, went into the mountain

to pray; and He continued all night in prayer to God (Luke 6. 12). Also "He came out, and went, as His custom was, unto the Mount of Olives; and the disciples also followed Him" (Luke 22. 39), His earnest prayer showing His entire dependency upon God.

It will be noted Daniel's prayer was at the time of the evening oblation. It may be said of him that his prayer was set before God as incense, and the lifting up of his hands as the evening oblation (Psalm 141. 2). Unseen by Daniel, his prayer was working, for it was in the second year of Darius the king, after the seventy years of captivity, that the word of the LORD came by Haggai the prophet to go up and build the house of God (Haggai 1. 1-8). These were the things Daniel was praying for. "The supplication of a righteous man availeth much in its working" (James 5. 16). Daniel's prayer did so, for he is referred to as a notable example of righteousness by Ezekiel, his contemporary (Ezekiel 14. 14). The eyes of the Lord were upon His righteous servant and His ears were open to his cry.

Daniel, we believe, was praying for something far greater than the restoration of God's people, even the glory of God, "for the Lord's sake" (verse 17). How precious to think that to-day we are associated with God's house, spiritual Zion! Nothing on earth can be compared with it. May our appreciation of the truth of God be such that we, like David, may set our affections towards God's house and from sanctified hearts be able to say "LORD, I love the habitation of Thy house, and the place where Thy glory dwelleth" (Psalm 26. 8)! *Thomas Ramage, Alex Davidson.*

The Vision at Hiddekel.

(Chapter 10.)

From **Melbourne**.—In the third year of Cyrus, Daniel was still amongst those who had not returned to Jerusalem. It may be that his years had prevented him from returning with Zerubbabel, as the journey was long and arduous, but it was certainly not his lack of desire towards the God of Israel and the place of the Name. Although the remnant which had returned to Jerusalem had been given a little reviving, no doubt Daniel was aware of the difficulties and discouragements which had beset them; and the greater part of the people were still in an alien land. Of any immediate fulfilment of the times of restoration and blessing foretold by the prophets, there was no sign upon the political horizon, and the general condition, both of those who had returned and those who remained, called for deep exercise on the part of the prophet. We suggest that there was a threefold cause for Daniel's mourning. (1) On behalf of those who had returned to Jerusalem, and who were being discouraged by their adversaries in the building of the temple. (2) On behalf of those who remained, that God would stir up the spirits of others to return to the place of the name. (3) On behalf of the nation as a whole, that God would hasten the time of national repentance and restoration.

As a result of the deep exercise of soul through which Daniel had passed, he was given the vision of a great and glorious personage, with a somewhat similar result to that of which John speaks at a later date (Revelation 1. 17). Is this the same one whom John saw? [1]. Daniel's condition of soul had been noted and his prayer heard, from the first day when he had set his heart to understand, but for three weeks no answer had come. Here is

revealed something of the forces which are arrayed against the people of God, the principalities and powers in the heavenly places (Ephesians 6. 12), with which is our wrestling, unseen by human eyes, but real and powerful, though not omnipotent. We were here reminded of Satan's work in hindering the progress of the gospel (1 Thessalonians 2. 18). Are we to understand from verses 18-20 that amongst the principalities and powers there are mighty beings, directly under the control of the prince of the power of the air, who have special authority in connexion with the kingdoms of the earth? [2]. We see that, in the divine arrangement of things, Michael is spoken of as having a special responsibility for Israel—"Michael your prince"⁹, and "The great prince which standeth for the children of thy people."

This is a portion which lifts the veil hiding from view the spiritual forces at work for and against the people of God, and reminds us of the necessity for the whole armour of God (Ephesians 6. 10-20), in the use of which Daniel was not a stranger.

T. W. Fullerton.

From Brantford. —We come now to the preface of the final great prophecies of Daniel, and note the deep exercise of God's servant.

Much exchange of thought centred round the man of verse 5. It was suggested that he was none other than the Lord of glory, and we were caused to think of beloved John in the isle of Patmos, to whom the Lord appeared after the great work of Calvary [3]. We also thought of Saul of Tarsus. Just as the men with Daniel saw not the vision, so the men with Saul stood speechless, hearing the voice, but seeing no man. The glory of the vision caused Daniel to fall on his face, like John, who fell at his feet as one dead. To be face to face with God is indeed an experience which should cause us to see our own unworthiness.

Daniel sought an answer to his prayer. Three weeks passed; the heaven seemed closed, and the delay caused Daniel much exercise; God in past days had answered him without delay. The delay caused much comment (why three weeks?). While God is the Ruler of the world, Satan, the prince of this world, rules in opposition to God. Thus we have in Daniel 10. the prince of the kingdom of Persia and the prince of Greece. We cannot trifle with Satan; he is powerful, and attacks and harasses those who seek to walk in the path of separation. But God has provided weapons for our warfare, which are mighty before God to the casting down of strong holds (2 Corinthians 10. 4). Satan will put obstacles in our way. Jehoshaphat, surrounded by foes, cried: "We have no might against this great company that cometh against us; neither know we what to do: but our eyes are upon Thee." The battle is not ours, but God's. The Lord Jesus has triumphed over **all** our foes.

N. Sproul.

From **Sunderland**. —The vision came to Daniel in the third year of Cyrus, about two years after the return of the remnant from Babylon to Jerusalem, the time when the foundation of the temple was laid (Ezra 3. 8). The reason for Daniel remaining in Babylon, when others returned to Jerusalem, may be his advancing years and his place of responsibility in the kingdom.

The vision concerns a great warfare, details of which are given in chapter 11., and gives us a glimpse of warfare amongst the spiritual hosts in the heavenly places. Prominence is given to Michael the archangel, "the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people" (12. 1).

The vision of the man clothed in linen corresponds very closely to that given to John the apostle in the isle of Patmos, another man greatly beloved. The man is almost certainly the Lord Jesus Christ [4]. The sight of the Lord would be a source of great comfort to Daniel, especially in view of the times of conflict and trial through which the people of God were to pass.

J. B., Jr.

From **Willington Quay**. —The word used for vision in verses 7, 8 and 16 differs from that used in previous chapters. In seeking to find the sense in which it is used here we were helped by reference to Exodus 38. 8, where the same word is translated as "mirrors" [5].

Before the revelation could come to Daniel there was opposition to be overcome (10. 18), and we would take it that it is the same opposition which the apostle Paul describes as "the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places" (Ephesians 6.). From the description given in verses 5-6, we might at first think it was the Lord whom Daniel saw, but verses 11-18 would shew us that this was not so. It was suggested that it may have been Gabriel, as he was sent to convey God's purposes to men on numerous occasions [6].

Daniel's physical reaction to the vision shews that man's position is lower than that of angel's, and we likened his experience to that of Isaiah (Isaiah 6. 6).

"The prince of the kingdom of Persia, " is the title given to one of the servants of Satan, Persia denoting the delegated sphere in which he is to seek to thwart the purposes of God.

K. R.

From **Birkenhead**. —The vision was in the third year of Cyrus, king of Persia. It was in the first year of Cyrus that the decree was issued permitting the captives to return to Jerusalem. There were other prophets whom God used to speak to the returned remnant. Daniel was not among those who returned. It is possible that, because of his position in the land, he was not allowed to do so; but, in any case, it is clear that the place of his ministry was Babylon. God's further revelations to him are a sufficient proof that he was acting in accordance with the will of God in remaining in Babylon. Daniel's mourning may have been partly due to the small response of the people to the invitation to return.

The vision revealed a great conflict among angelic beings, one affecting the lives of men. It was suggested that one of the great lessons to be learned from Daniel is that events, which are unknown to us, are taking place in the unfolding of God's purposes, and we need to see the comparatively insignificant events of our own lives in relation to the great purposes of God.

Consideration of the work of these angelic beings raised an interesting question as to the extent of angelic ministrations to-day. In the New

Testament there are only a few suggestive references to it. It was thought, however, that the ministry of angels is in fact continued to-day. One possible explanation as to why so little is said of it in the New Testament is found in Colossians 1., where the pre-eminence of Christ is set forth. Lest there should develop a worshipping of angels, their ministry is but rarely spoken of.

The "writing of truth" we believe to be something different from the Scriptures of truth. It appears to signify the purposes of God as written in heaven, and what He revealed to His prophets from time to time. It differs also from the books which are to be opened as recorded in Revelation. These would appear to record the actions of men. Events are unfolded as set down in the writing of truth.

R. L. S.

EXTRACTS.

From **Kilmarnock**. —No doubt, owing to the position Daniel occupied in Babylon, his refusing to eat and drink would cause the servants who waited on him to wonder what was wrong. Men of the world to-day wonder why disciples of the Lord do not go in for the pleasures of the world, but we do well to take heed to the instruction in 1 John 2. 15, "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world." Daniel's concern was for the glory of God and the people of God, and God honoured him by making known to him what would befall his people in the latter days.

As God's people to-day, we are surrounded by spiritual enemies, wicked spirits in heavenly places (Ephesians 6. 10-18), and we need to "take up the whole armour of God," to enable us to stand. How encouraging to know that we may be "strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inward man" (Ephesians 3. 16)! A. G. S.

From **Crowborough**. —The man clothed in linen, who was seen by Daniel, we believe was the Son of God [7], whose work here was one of judgement. Hence the description of the eyes as lamps of fire. (Compare Revelation 1. 12-18). We decided that not only did the Lord Jesus appear, but also two angelic messengers, one of whom touched Daniel and set him upon his knees (10. 10). The other touched him and addressed words of comfort to him (10. 18) [8]. The king of Persia, we understand here to be the great adversary, Satan, who is spoken of in Ezekiel 28. as the prince of Tyre.

We were encouraged by thinking of this brave old man of God, a captive in a strange land, being faithful to God. We wondered if his three companions, Shadrach, Meshach, Abed-Nego, were still alive and had gone back to their own land. We found, too, from verse 12, that when God's people humble themselves and set themselves to understand God's mind and will, He is pleased to hear and reveal Himself as a prayer-hearing God.

J. Robertson.

From **Edinburgh**. —Daniel was weak in body after twenty-one days of fasting. He was found with companions by the river Hiddekel (or Tigris) and saw a vision of an amazing person. His companions saw not this vision, but fled in fear. At the sound of the voice, Daniel fainted and

lay with his **face to** the ground. The import **of** the **message** was that Daniel was marked from the first day he had set his heart towards God, and the future of his people was to be revealed to him. Daniel was overwhelmed at this, and again fell to the ground, but was raised and strengthened.

The angelic being was to return to combat the prince of Persia, **and** the prince of Greece would come forth. This would take place in Daniel's time, so that the certainty of the future revelation was established. The disposal of the kingdoms of the earth was and is in accordance with the will of God.

Wm. Taylor.

From Kingston-on-Thames. —Daniel's vision bears a remarkable resemblance to John's vision of the Son of Man (Revelation **1**), and the effect on both men was the same. The similarity in the appearance of the two visions seems to indicate that angels are **made** in the likeness of the Son of God, even as we also shall **be made** like unto the body of His glory.

This chapter gives us a glimpse into a spiritual sphere of which we know very little. We see Michael and another angel waging warfare with a member of the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. Satan, who is the prince of the power of the air and the prince of this world, has mighty princes ranged under him who seek to influence the actions of earthly kings. These spiritual beings, both under Satan and under God, have definite spheres of service allotted to them—the prince of Persia, the prince of Greece, Michael your prince. A continual struggle is taking place in the spiritual world between God's innumerable hosts of angels, who are ensuring that His eternal purposes unerringly come to fruition, and Satan's emissaries, who are desperately **but** unsuccessfully trying to frustrate them. We also are involved in this relentless struggle, and we will do well to heed the exhortation of Ephesians **6. 10 to** "be strong in the Lord, and in the strength of His might."

It may **be** that the angel's reference in verse **18** to the kings (plural) of Persia would indicate that **at** this time Cyrus shared the kingdom with Darius the **Mede**, and this was the third year of the joint kingdom.

Verse **20** presents some difficulty. It seems that the angel **was** announcing his intention of resuming his struggle with the prince of Persia as soon as his discourse with Daniel had been completed.

L. Burrows.

From London, S. E. —The chapter under consideration gives an outstanding example of a personal appearance to comfort and confirm. It has been wisely stated that the book of Daniel is "fitted to console and confirm the people of God under trial, whether from the persecutions or the blandishments of the world".

After a period of mourning lasting three whole weeks, Daniel lifted his eyes and looked, and saw a man. Who is this man? A comparison of Daniel **10. 5, 6** and Revelation **1. 18-16** gives the answer to the question,

we suggest [9]. Daniel's words **had been heard**, because he had **set** his heart **to understand and** because of his humility. To this "man greatly beloved" the writing of truth was revealed, just **as**, on a later occasion to the disciple whom Jesus loved, the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ were signified. This marked connexion between love and prophecy is further emphasized in the the first letter to the Corinthians, where the outstanding discourse on love is sandwiched between two especial references **to** prophecy: "Desire earnestly the greater gifts. And a still more excellent **way** shew I unto you. . . . Follow after love; **yet** desire earnestly spiritual gifts, **but** rather that **ye may** prophesy" (1 Corinthians 12. 81; 14. 1). Obviously, the Lord reveals His plans and His purposes to those who love Him and are beloved of Him. God is love and God is light. To those whom God loves He also gives light, the word of prophecy being as a lamp shining in a dark place.

This chapter gives us a noteworthy insight into the functions of Michael. He is called "one of the chief princes" (10. 13) and "your prince" (10. 21). He is "the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people" (12. 1). His greatness and his especial connexion with the people of Israel are further emphasized in **Jude 9**, where he is referred to as "the archangel" who disputed about the body of Israel's meek **but** mighty leader, Moses. Again, in Revelation 12. 7, he is set forth as the one who shall war with "the accuser of our brethren", and cast him from heaven down to earth. In Daniel 10. 21, Michael is brought before us as the only one who, along with "the man clothed in linen", had the task of protecting Israel. The world-powers were all arrayed against the people of God; a glimpse into the ultimate triumphant future of God's chosen was well **calculated** to reinvigorate and reassure the mourning Daniel. *F. L. E.*

From **Atherton**. —Daniel had **been** praying (10. 12) and conjoined to his prayer were mourning and fasting. For three whole weeks this continued—a period synchronizing, we suggest, with the one and twenty **days** to which the heavenly messenger referred (10. 13). The adversary withstood during the whole period of Daniel's supplication, **but** his prayer of importunity prevailed: "thy words **were** heard: and I **am** come for thy words' sake" (10. 12).

Whilst all were **agreed** that the person of the vision (10. 5) was probably the Lord Himself, **yet** it appears that the messenger of verses 10 and 18 was another person, probably Gabriel as before [10]. The messenger said: "**But** the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood **me** one and twenty **days**". No adversary can withstand God, or hinder for a moment His purposes, so that this could not possibly **be** the Lord Himself. The opposing forces are angelic beings, Michael, who **came** to help, and possibly Gabriel [11]. The prince of the kingdom of Persia is Satan himself, or one of his hosts. Possibly the latter is the case, since the prince of Greece is mentioned too, making two distinct beings, "world-rulers of this darkness" (Ephesians 6. 12). It would appear that their work is **to** spoil God's work, for God was working **at** that **time** through the Persian kings, namely, Cyrus and Darius, to **effect** His good pleasure in relation to the remnant. The constant prayers of faithful Daniel did much to **effect** the good purposes of God.

The question was asked: Is there teaching for us to-day in the attitude of Daniel regarding mourning and fasting (10. 2, 8)? [12]. Daniel gave up certain lawful pleasures to wrestle with God in prayer. Whilst there is no principle in the New Testament regarding fasting, yet the general principle of self-denial is clearly taught. There are many things we can do without, lawful in themselves, but not expedient. How much time do we spend in prayer? Have we a heart like Daniel's? a deep constant love for the house of God, the place of the name, and the Lord's people? Do we mourn over our own sad failure and that of God's saints? Alas, the apostle was caused to write when the church in Corinth failed to put away the sinning one: "Ye are puffed up, and did not rather mourn" (1 Corinthians 5. 2). How sad if we are complacent and indifferent when sin is in the camp! "Blessed are they that mourn" (Matthew 5. 4).

G. A. Jones, D. H. Butler.

COMMENTS.

[1] (**Melbourne**). —I am of the opinion that this person is one of God's princes, an angelic being, whom Michael helped against the prince of Persia (one of the princes in Satan's realm). See Daniel 10. 18, 20, 21. —*J. M.*

[2] (**Melbourne**). —I judge that this is so, powers that are called "the world-rulers of this darkness" (Ephesians 6. 12). —*J. M.*

[8] (**Brantford**). —See note in Melbourne's paper. —*J. M.*

[4] (**Sunderland**). —See note in Melbourne's paper. —*J. M.*

[5] (**Willington Quay**). —The word *marah* in Daniel 10. 7, 8, 16 is derived from *mareh*, in Daniel 8. 16, 26, 27; 9. 28; 10. 1; both are rendered vision. These words are identical, except for one vowel-point difference. —*J. M.*

[6] (**Willington Quay**). —We must not guess **at** what God has not told us. —*J. Af.*

[7] (**Crowborough**). —See note in Melbourne's paper. —*J. M.*

[8] (**Crowborough**). —I read of only one messenger in Daniel 10., not three. —*J. M.*

[9] (**London**). —See note in Melbourne's paper. —*J. M.*

[10] (**Atherton**). —See note in Melbourne's paper. I do not think that the person of verses 10 and 18 is other than the "man" of verse 5. —*J. M.*

[II] (**Atherton**). —Why guess? —*J. M.*

[12] (**Atherton**). —Perhaps we should all be better Christians if there were more mourning and fasting. —*J. M.*

NOTE.

The reference on page 92 (London) to Dr. Barnes was to Dr. Albert Barnes, the commentator, and not to the Bishop of Birmingham.

BIBLE STUDIES

"Now these were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, examining the Scriptures daily, whether these things were so" (Acts 17. 11.)

VOLUME 20.

NOVEMBER, 1952.

EDITORIAL.

"The hoary head is a crown of glory, if it be found in the way of righteousness" (Proverbs 16. 31, R. V. M.). Thus wrote Solomon, the wise; and thus demonstrates Daniel, the greatly beloved. It is a salutary experience for young men to study the lives of men, whom God loves, and to find out the secrets of their success before God.

When we meet Daniel at the threshold of his career he had learned self-discipline. Although of a princely line, and later in a ruling position, he knew how to curb self-gratification. His appetite in early days was under the control of the fear of the Lord. So we find him, when past fourscore years, able to deny himself pleasant bread, flesh and wine and ointments.

Paul, too, had to buffet himself; and he was able to refrain from meat in order to preserve "the brother for whose sake Christ died". His fear was lest **he** should "sin against Christ".

Men who live near God will oftentimes be found mourning. They will find their own comeliness turned into corruption. Natural strength will fail. **Then** can God use such. His hand will be stretched out to touch, and to heal. The recovery may be gradual, from tottering, upon one's hands and knees, to standing upright even although trembling and with downcast face and mute lips. Power will be imparted to open one's mouth, and finally vigour vouchsafed to understand weighty things. To such come peace, strength and **a** lack of fear.

The great apostle entered Corinth with much trembling. Please read 1 Corinthians 2. 1-5. Humility, therefore, is one more attribute requisite for successful service to our Lord and Master. To the prostrate **at His** kingly feet that wonderful voice says, "Fear not, " and opens up vistas and visions past the imagination of the finest human minds (compare Revelation 1. 17-20).

One more point. Let us be encouraged that God hears our prayers. "From the first day . . . thy words were heard" **is the cheer** given to the mourning Daniel. Hindrances, often unknown to **us**, may come between the petition and the answer to it, but God hears **and** answers prayer. "The supplication of **a** righteous man availeth **much** in its working" (James 5. 16-18). "To this **man** will I look, even to him that **is** poor and of **a** contrite spirit, and that trembleth at My word" (Isaiah 66. 2).

Jas. Martin.

THE LORD'S DAY.

Kuriake Hemera.
Revelation 1. 10.

Does the phrase *Kuriake hemera* refer to the first day of the week or to **the** day of **the** Lord ?

Some writers on prophecy and expositors of **the** Revelation **as** well **as** some versions e. g., Weymouth's, contend **that** the correct translation of this phrase **is** "the **day** of the Lord", and that **it** refers to that future day. Even Vine in his valuable and usually helpful "Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words" (Vol. I, p. 271, Vol. III, p. 18) favours this **view**. We purpose therefore to deal more fully with this question than **was** possible in the department of "Question and Answer" [B. S., 1951, p. 106].

Kuriake is an adjective, but unfortunately has no equivalent adjective in English. It quite frequently happens that an adjective in Greek cannot be translated by an adjective in English. In 1 Corinthians 11. 21 *idios*, an adjective, **is** translated "his own" (supper). This **is** in contrast with "Lord's" (supper) in verse 20. Again, *anthropinos* (from *anthropos*, a man) in none of its seven occurrences **is** translated by an adjective.

Adjectives in Greek, **as** in English, often have **a** suffix or termination the significance of which enters into the meaning of the word. The ending—*iakos*—"belonging to". Thus *oikiakos*—"belonging to the house", i. e., "household," (Matthew 10. 36), *Kuriakos*—"belonging to the Lord", and "Lord's" **is** therefore an almost exact equivalent: **it is** the rendering of all the recognized versions, A. V., R. V., A. R. V., A. S. V, and R. S. V., and, with one or two exceptions, of all the translations by individual scholars—Alford, Moffatt, Goodspeed, Ferrar Fenton, Darby and Kelly. Weymouth, **as** stated above, has "the day of the Lord".

But it may be said, **is** not "the day of the Lord" an equally good translation ? Considered simply **as** a translation of the two Greek words *kuriake hemera* this is so, but not as a translation of Revelation 1. 10, for now other factors must **be** taken into account. In the first place, these words are already appropriated to another Greek phrase—*hemera kuriou* or *hemera tou kuriou*, which occurs many times in the Old Testament Greek Scriptures (LXX) and four times in the New Testament (Acts 2. 20, 1 Thessalonians 5. 2, 2 Thessalonians 2. 2, R. V., 2 Peter 3. 10). The adjective *kuriakos* does not occur once in the LXX. This phrase, so well known to John and to those to whom he was writing, would, **we** must believe, have been **used** by John **if** he had intended the coming **day** of the Lord, or, **as** our esteemed brother J. M. has put it, "when changes are **made** by the **Spirit** in the words **He** inspired men to write, these **must be paid** attention to." Secondly, **a** reference to the day of the Lord in Revelation 1. 10 **is** quite out of place. **If** it had occurred in 4. 2, the **case** would have been different. Further, in early Christian writings *kuriake hemera*, or simply *kuriake*, always refers to the first day of the week, and in modern Greek *kuriake* **is** the only name for that day. Ignatius, **on** his way to martyrdom in Rome about A. D. 107 (some scholars say A. D. 115) wrote to **the** Magnesians "no longer observing the Sabbath, but living in the observance of the Lord's day"—*kata kuriake zontes*. Here, by contrast with the Sabbath, *kuriake* can only mean **the** first day of the week. What **is** possibly an even earlier reference **is** found in *The Didache*, an early Christian writing which some scholars place as early

as A. D. 90 and not later than A. D. 100. "Now on the Lord's **day** (*kata kuriake de kuriou*) when ye are assembled together break bread and give thanks." It **seems** probable, therefore, that *kuriake* was already in general **use** for the first **day** of the week when John wrote, and that the seven churches would so understand his words. Even if John under the guidance of the Spirit invented the phrase, its **use** so soon **after** for the first of the **week** clearly indicates the sense in which it **was** understood by the early Christians.

So on the one hand **we** have the improbability of John passing **by** a well-known phrase and inventing a new one for the **day** of the Lord, and on the other hand the clear and almost contemporary evidence that *kuriake hemera* means the first **day** of the week, known to **us** as "the Lord's **day**." S. B.

THE BOOK OF DANIEL.

The Writing of Truth.

(Chapter 11.)

From Cowdenbeath. —What **was** about to be **made** known unto Daniel was already inscribed in the writing of truth (10. 21) and is called "the truth" (11. 2). It is emphasized, therefore, **at** the commencement of this remarkable chapter that its contents are true.

A portion of the chapter is now history, **but** much of it still remains to be fulfilled. **We** have difficulty, however, in deciding where to **make** the division. Verses 2-4 are, doubtless, historical. Verses 5-19 describe wars, alliances and other operations of the kings of "the north" and of "the south". As verse 8 would indicate that the king of the south is Egypt, and as secular history **takes** notice of the rise of the monarchy of Syria, which is north of Palestine, and its rivalry with Egypt, it **seems** reasonable to accept that it is this which is being foretold to Daniel. **We** can with certainty accept verse 31 **as** being prophetic. **As** the continual burnt offering shall be taken **away by** the man of sin, the prince (Daniel 9. 26), and **as** the ten preceding **verses** describe the person mentioned in **verse 31**, **we** would conclude that the contemptible person of **verse 21** is thus, identified, and this establishes **verse 21** onwards **as** being prophetic. From **verses 19-21** we gather that three rulers are seen to hold power one after another. Although it might seem from the reading that these follow in immediate succession, **yet it may be** that **we** are not to understand it so. The division between the historical and prophetic portions of the chapter may, therefore, **be** made here.

Verses 32-35 tell how those noble people, who shall refuse to bow down to the abomination of desolation, shall fare in that evil day. When privilege **is** taken **away** from God's people, some **submit** and give up all, whilst others, valuing what they have lost, remain true and display loyalty in the **face** of trial. The holy covenant **we** believe to **be** a covenant **made** between God and His people. This will probably **be** a restoration on the part of the people of the Sinaitic covenant **as** in the **days** of Josiah (2 Chronicles 34. 29-33). God's purpose then, so now and in the past, will **be** for God-honouring faithful ones to **be** together **in** collective testimony **as** His divinely constituted people to **give** expression to **His** purpose peculiar to the **times** in which they live.

The man of sin is called "the king" (11. 36). He shall obtain world power, yet, not satisfied with undisputed authority politically **and** militarily, he shall set himself up as a god, claiming for himself the worship of men the world over. In the establishment of his universal authority he shall meet; with strong opposition from the kings of the south **and** the north [1]. He shall overcome these and shall continue on his conquest of other countries. The severity with which he shall deal with attempted uprisings against his authority is seen in verse 44. In contrast verse 45 presents a peaceful scene, the world's man having reached an unchallenged position; but "when they are saying, Peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them" (1 Thessalonians 5. 3).

What was made known unto Daniel was the unfolding of events as they affect the people of Israel (10. 14), whereas unto John was given the Revelation concerning events which would affect men throughout the whole earth.
James 'Bowman.

From Kilmarnock. —The truth concerning the vision that Daniel saw is now made known to him by the "one like the appearance of a man" (10. 18).

There would be other three kings of Persia, and the last king would be richer than them all, but a mighty king of Greece would overthrow the Persian kingdom. We take this to refer to Alexander the Great, whose kingdom was divided among four of his generals at his death.

It would seem that to verse 35 we have prophecy that has already been fulfilled, and from verse 36 the future is foretold regarding the rise of the antichrist [2]. This agrees with 2 Thessalonians 2. regarding the "falling away" and the man of sin being revealed. The Lord referred to this prophecy in Daniel 11. (Matthew 24. 15), and the warning to flee to the mountains when the abomination of desolation shall stand in the holy place, refers to the countries not subject to the power of the antichrist, namely, "Edom, and Moab, and the chief of the children of Ammon" (11. 41). When we consider the disturbed condition of the nations of the world to-day and the prominence of the land of Israel, with the Jews returning to their own land, it would seem that the prophecies of the Old Testament are beginning to be fulfilled to some extent now.

Although the antichrist will overthrow many countries, "yet he shall come to his end, and none shall help him" (11. 45). Revelation 19. 20 makes known what his end shall be: "Cast alive into the lake of fire."
A. G. S.

From London, S. E. —The turbulent history revealed to Daniel has been fulfilled with the exception of prophecy referring to the man of sin, the antichrist. Daniel was favoured of his all-wise God, who knows the end from the beginning, with an outsetting of coming national and international events.

Three kings were to arise in Persia, and a fourth far richer than they all (11. 2). This one is stated in a commentary to be Xerxes, famous for

his riches **and** believed to be the Ahasuerus of the book of Esther. **He** gathered a tremendous army, **estimated at between one and two million, and** invaded Greece.

The "mighty king" **seems to be** Alexander the Great, "**and** when he shall stand **up**, his kingdom shall **be** broken" (11. 4). His sudden death took **place B. C, 328**. His dominion was allotted to four of his generals and his children **put** to death. This indicates the state of the political atmosphere in those long-past days.

Verses 5-19 give an account of much conflict between the kings of the south and of the north. The former is believed to signify the king of **Egypt**. One of his princes seems from history to have been a **great** and powerful ruler, whose authority spread to Syria **and** beyond. The very complex strifes between these forces show how heathen nations are in constant conflicts, thus fulfilling God's word: "The wicked are like the troubled sea; for it cannot rest, **and** its waters **cast up** mire and dirt. There is no peace, saith **my** God, to the wicked" (Isaiah 57. 20-21).

Under the intense persecution experienced **by** the Jews there **were** those who stood out as triumphant ones (11. 32), **and** it is evident that the faithful ones endure **at** the price of their lives **in** many cases. In verse 31 this oppressor is viewed as being responsible for the setting up of the "abomination of desolation" spoken of **by** the Lord Jesus Christ (Matthew 24. 15).

It seems, from the fulfilment of prophecy in Antiochus **Epiphanes**, that the man of sin will arise from among the eastern despots. Even the **quite** recent turbulence in Egypt, Persia and other oriental lands **may be** workings of **Satan** unto this end. His methods of subtlety are to **be** seen in all the workings of the one referred to in Daniel's prophecy: lies, treachery, pride, cruelty (11. 21-31).

In verse 36 another king is referred to, intensely proud and self-glorifying (11. 37). Verse 38 shews his warlike disposition, and in verse 40 we see him in conflict with the kings of the south. It **is** very difficult from past history to place accurately this king or **his** future fulfilment. It **may** be that, even during the times of the man of sin, there will **be** severe disturbances between powers **in** the east, all adding to the miseries of the Jews. His fall **is** seen in the last two verses of this portion. The extent of his authority—**Egypt, Libya and** Ethiopia—marks him out **as** of great power, not only **in** conquest **but** also **in matters** of economic dealings as pertaining to **Egypt** (11. 43). Seeing that in the word of God Egypt **is** a type of this **present** world he **may be** fulfilled in entirety in one **yet to be** revealed and, perhaps, almost contemporary with, or following closely on, the **man** of sin. In view of all this let us maintain our testimony as a separated, waiting and serving people.

G. S. Pain.

From Kingston-on-Thames. —This chapter gives us a further example of God's overruling in the kingdom of men. The mighty Medo-Persian **empire** was to **be** used of God to **befriend** Israel and therefore God sent **an** angel to confirm and strengthen Darius (11. 1) **as He** possibly **did** also to Cyrus (2 Chronicles 36. 22-23).

At **this** time Cyrus **was the** reigning Persian monarch, **and the** angel spoke of **yet** three kings, the last of all (the fourth) **was to be** far richer than those before him **and was** also to make war against Greece. **We** identified this king with **Xerxes**, of whom the above **was** true, and whose forces engaged in war against Greece **at** Marathon and Salamis. Possibly **Cambyses** and Darius Hystaspes are the other two kings, which the Word of God quite clearly **states to be** the number between the then-reigning monarch and the mighty king of verse **3**, although secular Persian history might include others.

It was thought that verses **3** and **4** refer to Alexander and the Grecian empire, the next world power after the Persian Empire. The division of this kingdom towards the four winds of heaven occurred in the division of Alexander's empire between four of his generals (and not his posterity), although his brother Philip Aridaeus **was a** nominal king. The Grecian empire, **we know, was** followed by the Roman empire.

The king of the north and king of the south, **we** thought, related to the northern and southern tracts of Alexander's kingdom. North **and** south **quite** definitely **are** in relation to the land of Israel, which **was at that time** the centre in God's viewing, and to-day **is** becoming a centre of renewed nationalism in the re-establishment of Israel **as a** nation. Verse **8** would support the view that Egypt **is** included in the kingdom of the south. Jeremiah 1. 15 and Ezekiel **26. 7** indicate that the kingdom of the north **is** associated with the land over which Nebuchadnezzar ruled.

Verse **36** describes one who will **be** king of the north. There **seems** little doubt that he **is** the coming antichrist or the **beast** of Revelation. Some have thought that this chapter has had complete fulfilment, **but** the **message** of the angel concerning the vision stated **it to be** with reference to the "latter days". Also the words of the Lord **Jesus** (Matthew 24.), in reference to the setting **up** of "the abomination that maketh desolate", were in answer to the question: "What shall be the sign of Thy coming, and of the end of the world (age) ? "

Thus although some of these **verses** may have had partial fulfilment, **we suggest** that they also **describe** events leading **up to the beast, verses 5-20** detailing the political events by which he **is** able to **assume** power, and verse **21** onwards detailing his career.

The beast will **be a** great deceiver and will draw **great numbers** after him. Only those who seek to **be** true to God will discern his true character (11. 32, 33), and in loyalty to God will suffer great persecution. It is encouraging, however, to **see** that he will stand only **as long as** God **permits**; verses **27, 35, 36** and **45** all show that, when he has accomplished the role God has destined him to play in this world's history, he will not **be** able to continue.

During his reign, this king **is** troubled from **time to time** by the king of the south (Egypt), and **it would seem** (11. 44) that, possibly, an internal uprising led, perhaps, **by** the rightful descendant of the former king of the north will cause him to return from his fighting in the south.

Frank E. Jarvis,

From Atherton. —The mighty king of verse **3** appears to **be** Alexander the Great, the founder of the Grecian world-empire. At his death the kingdom **was** divided among his four generals, one **of** whom, Ptolemy I

(the king of the south, verse 5), ruled over southern Palestine, Arabia and Egypt, whereas another, Seleucus (the king of the north, verse 6) ruled over Syria, Assyria and Babylonia. The Holy Land was the part of the empire about which these two kings and their successors disputed over a period of 140 years. The phrase "at the end of the years" (verse 6) involves a period of about a century, verse 5 occurring B. C. 323, verse 6 about B. C. 222. Verses 6-13 refer to some of these battles, with political and matrimonial alliances taking place at different intervals, while generally the greater power rested with the king of the north. Verse 14 introduces for the first time in the vision the Jewish people ("thy people"); but it is difficult to understand whether they supported the north against the south, or whether these, as worthless persons, against the law of the Lord allied themselves to the southern power and consequently came to nought. Jerusalem was overcome about B. C. 208, by Antiochus the Great (the then king of the north) who lost his power and died in B. C. 190 (verse 19). Josephus states that, when Antiochus came against Jerusalem, the Jews turned to him and were favoured as a result. The son of Antiochus (verse 20) continued to rule for a short time only, eventually to be succeeded by Antiochus Epiphanes B. C. 176, whose moral character is seen in verse 21 [8].

Some have indicated a break in events at verse 35, taking the vision to the time of the end, which is seen in verse 36 and onwards (compare 2 Thessalonians 2. 3, 4), whereas others cite verses 30 and 31 as having reference to the coming days of antichrist. Some thought that the division occurred at verse 20 and others after verse 28. A difficulty expressed in relation to dividing the chapter at verse 20 was that antichrist is not a contemptible person, but one well received by the world [4]. Others thought it was consistent with the dealings of Satan for antichrist to obtain the kingdom by flatteries.

The figure of the king of the north is carried forward in verse 41, when Edom, Moab and Ammon know deliverance from antichrist's power because the godly Jews of that day, obeying the injunction of the Master Himself, will have fled there for deliverance in the evil day. The world's wealth and political and economic power will all be his (verse 43), but he shall come to his end and none shall help him (verse 45). The suddenness of the coming of the Son of Man and His glorious victory over him will fulfil the memorable words: "whom the Lord Jesus shall slay with the breath of his mouth, and bring to nought by the manifestation of his coming" (2 Thessalonians 2. 8) *E. Birchall, D. H. Butler.*

EXTRACTS.

From Melbourne. —It is said that the events up to verse 35 were so historically accurate that infidels alleged that the book was written about 100 B. C., that is, after Antiochus Epiphanes was repulsed by the might of Rome, when the ships of Kittim came against him (11. 30). Many kings have lived, reigned, fought and passed off the scene since Daniel's day. His own people, caught in the vortex of opposing forces, have passed through the fire. In those days the word was very precious, and amidst persecution and martyrdom teacher and scholar were to be found in earnest study of the word: those of them who knew their God did well. The king (11. 86), doing according to his own will, is to reign in a day future to us, and is the man of sin, who opposeth and exalteth himself against all that is called God. *S. S.*

From Willington Quay.—Certain observations can be made from this and the preceding chapters, namely, that God in His providence sets **up** and pulls down kings as guided by His own foreknowledge and wisdom (2. 21); that this world is full of wars and rumours of wars resulting from the lusts and the desire for power within man; that such changes and movements in the history of men are plainly foreseen by God; **also** that no word of His falls vainly to the ground.

Attempts to fix the details mentioned in this chapter depend mainly on external sources, and many scholars reach a measure of success in relating verses 2-30 to known history. They name such as Cambyses, Smerdis, Darius Hystaspes and Xerxes as those kings in verse 2, leading to Alexander the Great and eventually Antiochus Epiphanes [5].

We seem to have a picture of that which is still to come from 11. 36 to 12. 3, and to explain this leap in time one commentator remarks that prophecy does not concern itself with history as such, but only with history as it affects Israel and the Holy Land. We, on our part, are cautious in fixing any of the events of this chapter rigidly. *C. B.*

From Crowborough.—What God has declared in His word with regard to prophecy is true; "Thy word is truth". Just as everything else that God has said is truth, so is that which has been put on record in the book of Daniel in connexion with the rulers and kingdoms of the earth. Previously (chapter 7.) Daniel asked "the truth" concerning the vision of the four beasts. Here (chapter 11.) he is again being told what is inscribed in the writing of truth. What is told to Daniel carries us into the future.

It can be seen here, according to the writing of truth, that earth will never know rest and peace, except by the righteous rule of the Lord Jesus Christ. The truth of God's word is borne out to-day in the fact that there is no safety or security. The truth shown to Daniel tells us that this state of affairs will get worse under the pernicious influence of the devil, who will use the antichrist to turn many from God and utter blasphemy against God Himself; but his success will be of brief duration. The rightful Ruler will appear and the antichrist will come to his end and none shall help him. This is included in the writing of truth. God's word will surely come to pass: "For ever, O LORD, Thy word is settled in heaven". *J. H. B.*

From Edinburgh.—The succeeding verses fulfil the promise of 10. 21 and Daniel heard the truth. This was entirely future to Daniel, but to-day part of it has been fulfilled and part is yet to be fulfilled. The rise and fall of Persia are declared. Three kings, Cambyses, Darius, Hystaspes, would be followed by Xerxes, who waxed strong and set out to conquer Greece.

The ebb and flow of national warfare (11. 10-15) will continue till one strong king will emerge, who will wield into one all under his authority. He will be above jealousies and strifes; his whole energies will be set on one object—power. In seeking to expand his kingdom he will meet his end. Difficulty was experienced with verse 20: it seems one in power will seek to assume control, but the task will be too much for him, and he will be destroyed "neither in anger, nor in battle".

The vile person would appear **to be** the antichrist, who, in seeking power, will **make a** covenant with God's people, who will **be** able to continue a service in Jerusalem. The time will come when, moved with rage, he will break the **covenant and** will cause worship to cease. The **burnt** offering will be taken away, **and** the abomination that maketh desolate set **up**. The Scriptures, in the gospel **by** Matthew, picture the plight of the people in that **day**, as they **seek refuge** in the countries preserved **by** the hand of God. Faith will **be** tried **and** tested as the god of strength **and** war is honoured more **and** more. **We can be** thankful that our paths do not lead **us** through such times.

A. M. Hope,

From Brantford, Ont. —As we study this wonderful book of Daniel we are again **impressed** as we observe the infinite knowledge of God, who could by His Spirit foretell to Daniel the **events** pertaining to the rise **and** fall of nations. The conflict **between** the **kings** of the south **and** of the north (11. 6-19) **we** believe to have a future fulfilment [6]. **We** are aware that some have sought to show that these verses apply to Antiochus Epiphanes, others to the Ptolemy wars of Egypt. That Israel will **be** established as a nation, having the temple **in** operation during these trying times, is shown by such phrases as—"the glorious land, " "the covenant, " "the sanctuary. " It is possible the Lord referred to this time in Matthew 24. 6-8. A troubled Israel, looking for their Messiah, will hear of wars and rumours of wars, but the **end** is not **yet**. The words "the beginning of travail" **in** verse 8 may **suggest** that the **events** of Daniel 11. 6-19 will take place **near** the **beginning** of Daniel's seventieth week.

As to the **identity** of the king of the south **and** the **king** of the north, **we** would suggest **Egypt** to **be** the king of the south (11. 8), **and** Assyria to **be** the **king** of the north (see Isaiah 7. 17-20, 10. 5-11, **and** 24-27). It is significant that, in these portions of Isaiah, **Egypt** **and** Assyria are linked together **in** accomplishing God's purpose with regard to Israel.

We have **been** greatly **impressed**, as we have considered chapters 7. to 11., by the amount of detail relating to the **future** of God's people Israel **and** many Gentile nations. **Of** this **we can be** sure, that it will all **be** fulfilled in the minutest detail, for the word of God cannot be broken.

Jas. Bell.

COMMENTS.

[1] (Cowdenbeath). —The king of the south is the definition of a number of kings which have reigned over Egypt. The king of the north also defines a number of kings who have reigned in Syria **and** Mesopotamia. In verse 20 **we** have a king who stands **up** in the place or office (estate, A. V.) of the king of the north, who continues for a **few** days only, because he **taxes** the people. He is, **in my** opinion, the seventh head of the **beast** of Revelation 17. 10, "Five are fallen, the one is, the other is not **yet** come; **and** when he cometh, he **must** continue a *little while*. " Then the **beast** (the **man**) that was **and** went down into the abyss (who is one of the first five heads of the **beast as a system—a** **beast** with **seven** heads (kings) **and** **ten** horns (kings)—comes up **again** to become an eighth (in his second term of office), **but** he is out of the **seven**, that is, he is really one of the **seven** heads or kings. This is the vile person of Daniel 11. 21, who shall **stand up** in the office or estate of the **king** of the north, who shall obtain the kingdom **by** flatteries, who is the **man** of sin, the antichrist or wild **beast**, the **man** whom *God* views with the utmost contempt. —*J. M.*

[2] (Kilmarnock). —See paper from Cowdenbeath. We agree with their view that antichrist is seen in verse 21. —*J. M.*

[3] (Atherton). —See paper from Cowdenbeath. —*J. M.*

[4] (Atherton). —"Contemptible" to God, I would understand. —*J. M.*

[5] (Willington **Quay**). —See paper from Cowdenbeath. —*J. M.*

[6] (Brantford, Ont.). —We have in Daniel 11. first of all the wars between Persia and Greece, concluding with the destruction of the Persian empire by Alexander the Great. Then we have various conflicts between Syria and Egypt, between the king of the north and the king of the south, which agree with the secular history of these times. When we reach verse 20 we come to a king of the north who is yet future (see note in paper from Cowdenbeath), and from that verse to the end of the chapter we have events which are yet future. —*J. M.*

While what is set forth above may be true, there is something to be said for the view that the break between the past and the future comes at the end of verse 35. Verses 21-32 are such an exact description of the course of Antiochus Epiphanes that the higher critics say they must have been written after the events, but verses 36-45 cannot be identified with anything that happened in the past. Verses 33-35 seem to describe a long and protracted period of Jewish history from the time of Antiochus to "the time of the end". Verse 36 introduces a new actor in the scene, "the king". This king has all the characteristics of the antichrist and, as several corners point out, is to be distinguished from the kings of the south and the north (see verse 40), and is clearly to be distinguished also from the kings of 11. 35. On this view the Lord's words in Matthew 24. refer not to Daniel 11. 31, but to 12. 11. Antiochus is, of course, an outstanding type of the antichrist. —*S. B.*

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

Questions from Kingston-on-Thames. —(1) To what does the "little help" (11. 34) refer?

(2) Why are the kingdoms of Edom, Moab and the chief of the children of Ammon specially delivered out of the hands of the king of the north ?

(3) Consideration of Revelation 3. 21, Matthew 25. 31, and Luke 1. 32 would indicate that Christ's throne, as distinct from the Father's throne, is on earth: and Zechariah 6. 13 shows that He shall be a Priest upon His throne. We understand that these scriptures refer to the millennial reign of Christ, but Ezekiel makes it clear that during this period the Levites and the sons of Zadok will be appointed to the services of the House of God. How then can Christ be a Priest on earth at that time seeing there are those who offer the gifts according to the law (Hebrews 8. 4) ?

Answers. —(1) It means that God will at that time afford to His persecuted people a little help, but* not final and complete deliverance. This help, alas, will be vitiated to some extent by undesirable people who will join themselves to them by flatteries, and in consequence some shall fall by persecution to refine the people of those who shall be mere flatterers. —*J. M.*

(2) The reason for this is not clear to me, but if we take into account the great earthquake (Revelation 12. 15, 16) which will swallow up the forces of the dragon which will be sent after fleeing Israel, we may get a possible answer to the fact that those three kingdoms, which border on the Arabian desert to the east of the Jordan and the Dead Sea, will be delivered out of the hand of the beast. —*J. M.*

(3) Yes, true, but the Lord's throne is not limited to this earth. He ever was on God's throne in heaven, to which place He ascended after His resurrection (Psalm 110. 1 and Hebrews 1. 8). Further, think of Revelation 22. 3. Moreover the throne of David was the throne of Jehovah (1 Chronicles 29. 23). We must not take too confined a view of Christ's throne.

The answer is quite plain in Hebrews 8. as to why the Lord could not be a priest. A new order of things was in being to which men, because of the sacrifice of Christ, were being introduced. Of this new order the earthly tabernacle with its services was a copy. The priests of the Mosaic order rejected Christ the Sacrifice and Priest and went on with the shadow and lost the substance. Christ was not of Aaron's line and order, and in consequence could not be a priest on earth. But now hath He obtained a better ministry. He serves in the true tabernacle, not in one which was a shadow.

In the future there will be a house where Christ will be King-Priest, and there will be an Aaronic priesthood and animal sacrifices. Such is clearly taught in the Old Testament. —*J. M.*

Questions from Atherton. —(1) Is it possible that the whole of Daniel 11. has yet to be fulfilled?

(2) What connexion has the Russian empire with Daniel 11. ?

(3) Is the god of fortresses (11. 38, 39) a symbol of the devil? (Revelation 13. 2).

Answers. —(1) No, this cannot be the case. I put the break between what is historical and prophetic at the end of verse 19. —*J. M.*

(2) I see no connexion whatever. It might be that the Russians will form part of the forces of the coming king of the north, as other nations also will be in that vast world-wide confederacy, but we cannot without revelation make any statement on the point. —*J. M.*

(3) The A. V. margin says, the God of "munitions". Of old Nebuchadnezzar sacrificed to his net or his drag, which was his army. See Habakkuk 1. 13-17. I suppose the antichrist will do the same. He with the world's inhabitants will be devil-worshippers, as Revelation 13. 4 shows. —*J. M.*

THE AIMS OF BIBLE STUDIES—A REMINDER.

To a very great extent "Bible Studies" is the readers' own magazine; in that most of the articles are contributed by them. We feel the time is opportune, therefore * to re-state the purposes of the magazine, and the principles that have dictated the present form. Let us state some of the benefits that accrue from this type of study: —

1. A regular reading of the Scriptures and a discussion of the subject in the Assembly study circle.

2. The compilation, by one or other of the students, of their findings in written form.

3. A comparison with other contributions, later.
4. A link between **the young men of the Fellowship**.
5. Assistance **in** resolving difficulties by the answering of submitted questions, and **guidance** in "comments" by editors.

Perhaps the chief of these **is** the first. Thus students have already received the **benefit** of their study even before papers are written or later published.

Naturally, twenty different groups studying the **same** portion will usually express the **same** findings. There will be different styles **and** varying emphases, but it must be obvious that to print the **same** matter over many **times** would have a very deleterious effect on the final product, the published monthly. Editors, therefore, for some years now have been giving priority to fully published papers, **in** rotation, mainly, and have reduced others to "extracts". No correspondent need feel that, because his contribution has **been** reduced to **an** extract, it has not been acceptable, or that the labour has been **in** vain.

To enhance the value of the **magazine**, editors would welcome, every month, study papers not necessarily related to the main subject. Will you please oblige by supplying such ?

We judge, although it **is** difficult to ascertain facts, that there are many readers who are not connected with **a** study circle from which **a** paper comes. More and more of such readers will **be** attracted, **if** the material provided **in** the **magazine is** of a wider scope than the papers on the **main** subject. **It is an** indication of the value of the **magazine, as** a book of reference, that fully one third of the copies printed monthly are reserved for bound volumes. **Owing** to increased costs, the **magazine is** smaller **in** size, but we feel sure that the printing **in extenso** of all papers submitted would be undesirable and would detract from the value of the magazine. The **increase in** cost per copy would be approximately **100** per cent.

You **can** greatly **assist** the editors by sending **in** your contribution to schedule date, by writing, or preferably typing, it on one side of the paper only, leaving **an** ample margin, and by **being as** brief **as** possible. At **times** your discussions **and findings** on a problem briefly stated, may **be** more acceptable than **a** long article, or even **a** question.

It is our **prayer** that our **united** effort **may** result **in** a closer walk with the Master and **a** deeper knowledge of **His** will. —*Jas. M.*

NOTICE.

1. Students will by now be preparing their calendars of study for **1953**. Editors suggest that the calendars should **be** so arranged that the adverse **effect** of the holiday months will **be** reduced to **a minimum**. Properly Constructed calendars should help to reduce the number of late papers.

2. **Papers** are still **being sent** to Mr. **Martin**: such **papers, if** they reach Mr. **Martin** on last day, arrive late to Mr. Baird. The correct **address is**: Mr. John Baird, **4, Craigintinny Crescent, Edinburgh, 7.**

BIBLE STUDIES

"Now these were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, examining the Scriptures daily, whether these things were so " (Acts 17. 11.)

VOLUME 20.

DECEMBER, 1952.

THE BOOK OF DANIEL.

(Chapter 12.)

Michael and the last days.

From Barrhead and Paisley. —The archangel Michael appears to have a special responsibility toward the people of Israel, and it seems appropriate that at the final crisis in their history he should be present. Angels are referred to in earlier chapters as having certain powers among the nations, although the extent of such powers is unknown. In the Revelation, Michael and his angels are stated to war with the dragon and his angels.

The truth of the resurrection is here clearly stated. It is probably mentioned at this stage as a comfort to those who at that time might lose their lives for their faith. If this is so, the particular resurrection referred to would be the resurrection of faithful Jews after the tribulation. We thought that it is the general effect of resurrection that is stated here rather than any particular instance. The words of Paul (1 Corinthians 15.) "each in his own order" seem to indicate the manner of the resurrection. The just will not be raised with the unjust. The ultimate effect is that some are raised to everlasting life and some to everlasting shame and contempt. The words used in verse 2 resemble closely the words used by the Lord in John 5. 28-29. The state of the raised ones is described as everlasting [1].

The wise ones (12. 3) are probably those who at the time are able to interpret the word of God and teach it to others. (The word can also be translated "teachers".) They, among the godly who are raised, will have a special place in the glory, but as one star differeth from another in glory, so also individual rewards may vary. Increase of knowledge and travel is to characterize the time of the end. Surely the present, with its research in every field of science and increased travel facilities, would indicate its nearness.

The man in white linen, presumably the same as the one in Daniel 10. 5, is joined at this stage by two others, presumably angels. Their arrival may have been to witness the oath which the man in white linen was about to make. The announcement of the time of the end, made in such a fashion, must surely have special significance.

Daniel is made to understand that the blessing of his people will not take place during his lifetime, but he is assured that he will not be missed out, but will stand in his allotted portion in that great day. We think of Judas, who also went to his own place. The two periods of days mentioned, we thought, refer to the latter half of Daniel's seventieth week and run concurrently. The end of the shorter period may mark the end of the

tribulation period and the extra forty-five days may cover a transition period prior to the millennium. Anyone reaching that point will be indeed blessed.

The sealing of Daniel's prophecy can be contrasted with the unsealing in the Revelation to John. **J. M. Gault.**

From **Crowborough**. —This chapter brings us to the final scene in connexion with the times of the Gentiles. It is marked by a time of trouble for the Jewish nation, which will serve to humble and refine them. God is not unmindful of His covenant promise, and Michael the great prince will stand ready to see that God's promises to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob will be fulfilled. At this time the nation will be sifted, and those whose hearts are true to God will know His delivering hand. Difficulty was found in deciding if verse 2 refers to the literal resurrection from the grave [2]. (1) Those who gave their lives, in refusing to acknowledge the authority of the beast, have a place in the first resurrection (Revelation 20. 4-6). The rest of the dead lived not for a thousand years* (The saved of this dispensation, who will be raised at the coming of the Lord Jesus, are not reckoned in this prophecy, which concerns God's ancient people.) (2) There is a judgement of those who are raised, some to commendation and some to condemnation. Is there any authority for judgement other than the judgement of the living nations (Matthew 25.) at this time ? Some had the opinion that this refers to the resurrection of the Jewish nation, who were dead to God in unbelief. A comparison was made with the valley of dry bones (Ezekiel 37.) Verse 4 aptly describes the conditions of modern times, when world spaces are being spanned so quickly by land, sea, and air. The last half-century has been outstanding in the progress of knowledge in science, which betokens that we are very near the time of the end.

God has spoken and sworn by Himself that these things are true, and, though Daniel himself would be laid to rest long before these things will be accomplished, the promise is sure. A suggestion was made that the "time, times, and half a time" (1, 260 days) marked the beginning of judgement on the man of sin and his confederates. After thirty days the overthrow will be complete, then follow another forty-five days for the setting up of the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ. S. S.

From **Brantford, Ont.** —Daniel 12. begins with the words "at that time", which do not seem to refer to a moment of time but to a period of time, three and a half years or 1, 290 days, or "a time, times, and half a time". The time when Michael, the archangel, will stand up seems to be the same as that spoken of in Revelation, when Satan will be cast out of heaven. Deliverance for Israel seems always to come at a time of national calamity, and here (12. 1) will only be for those whose names are found written in the book. Compare this with the elect of Matthew 24., whom it was not possible to deceive or cause to fall. We note again that it is Daniel's people, the Jewish people, that will be delivered, a strong point against those that believe that Britain or the English speaking races are Israel.

The resurrection of verse 2 we linked with John 5. 29 and the judgement of the great white throne [3]. Daniel **was** told to seal **up** the book, John in the Revelation **refers** to a little book sealed with seven seals. Is this the **same** book as Daniel sealed? [4].

"Many shall run to and fro" indicates vast changes in rapid transportation, and, **we** believe, there will **yet be** more. Also knowledge that man has attained, for instance in the secret of the atom and its power, is truly startling already, and there **may be yet** more of that too. The references to "the holy people", "the holy city", **etc.**, emphasize that the Church, which is His Body, will no longer **be** here. To a certain **degree** the things, **as** they were prior to this dispensation, will take its place.
Alex. Sproul.

From Birkenhead. —The previous chapter brings **us** to the great tribulation, and chapter 12. commences with the words, "And **at** that time". This **we** understood to relate to the general time to which the prophecy refers, **as** the opening verses of this chapter clearly speak of the time when there will **be** war in heaven **as a** result of which the devil will **be cast** down to the earth and the great tribulation will begin. **We** thought it wise to emphasize that the Church, the Body of Christ, will not pass through this tribulation. Daniel's prophecy **is** concerned with the -people of Israel, and in the great tribulation God **is** again dealing with Israel **as a** nation. **At** that time there would **be a** temple which **is** called the temple of God. This could not **be** so while God was still dealing with His people of the present day.

We have here one of the clearest scriptures in the Old Testament regarding the resurrection of the body. Other supporting scriptures are found in Isaiah 26. and Job 19. It **was** noticed that some were raised to everlasting life and some to everlasting contempt (compare John 5. 28, Revelation 20. 1-5). "All that are in the tombs" would appear to refer to **a** final judgement, whereas in Daniel there are included the righteous dead, who, **we** believe, **must be** raised before the commencement of the millennium. **We** therefore concluded that the resurrection here spoken of **must** cover a considerable period of time.

We found nothing to **add** to the comment which has already been **made** on the difference between the **1, 290** days of Daniel and the 1, 260 days of Revelation, **but a** suggestion **was made** concerning the further forty-five days (12. 12). This maybe the time required for Christ to deal with His enemies after returning to the earth, and therefore **a** wonderful time to which the faithful could look forward.

In concluding our study of the book of Daniel we were reminded of various other Old Testament saints whose faith shone brightly, although it **was** revealed to them that many years would pass, after they themselves had died, before the blessings which had been promised to them could **be** fulfilled. Abraham knew of the **400** years which would **be** spent by the people of Israel **in Egypt** [5]; Jeremiah **must** have been an old man when the seventy years of captivity were revealed to him; and Daniel **was** told that the end would not **be** in his day, and he also had revealed unto him the vision of the seventy weeks. In spite of this, these men remained faithful to God to the end of their days. Would our response **be** the **same**, if **we** knew that **we must** die instead of being given the promise of the Lord's return to the air, **a** hope to cheer us daily in this life? *R. H., R. L. S.*

EXTRACTS.

From Kingston-on-Thames. —The deliverance to **be** granted to Daniel's people **seems** to be deliverance from spiritual failure in the **face** of **fiere** persecution **and** not deliverance from physical injury or death, for antichrist "shall destroy the mighty ones **and** the holy people" (8. 24). If this is so, then "the book", in which their **names** are written, would be the book of life of the Lamb that hath been slain from the foundation of the world [6]. Revelation 13. teaches that only those whose names are written therein will not bow down **and** worship the beast.

The resurrection of Daniel 12. **2** is the **same** as that revealed to Ezekiel (Ezekiel 37. 13-14). Two views were put forward—(a) The dead (them that sleep in the dust of the earth) take part **in** two resurrections: they that awake to everlasting life before the millennium, they that awake to shame and everlasting contempt after the millennium; (b) The meaning of the word for "everlasting" (Heb. *olam*) is "age" or "age-lasting". Both are raised together before the millennium; some will enjoy life with Christ and some will **suffer** shame **and** contempt during the thousand years [7].

In those dark days of intense persecution teachers who are Spirit-led will pierce the gloom with the brilliant light of truth and they will **be** given **an** everlasting reward. The common opinion, that the expression "many shall run to and fro" refers to the **present** passion for **faster and** even faster travel, " does not **seem** to fit the context. A more likely interpretation is that the book (i. e., Daniel) is to **be** sealed until the **time** of the end, and will then become the subject of much searching to **and** fro by **men** anxious to know God's will **and** purposes, **and** they will **be** rewarded with **an** increase of knowledge [8]. May our present studies have this happy result and may **we be** " filled with the knowledge **of His** will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding". It is interesting to note here that, **in** the Revelation, the angel tells John, "Seal not up the words of the prophecy of this book; for the time is at hand". In view of the similarity of the books of Daniel and Revelation, **we infer** that they both speak of the **same** events; so that for **us**, and indeed all of this dispensation, "the time **is at hand**" **and** the book of Daniel is now unsealed. For who **can** deny that the Lord's words (Matthew 24. and Luke 21.) join together Daniel and Revelation, and unseal for **us** the prophecies of the "time of the **end**" ?

The **significance** of the periods **in verses 11 and 12** is difficult to understand. It **seems** that, after the cleansing of the sanctuary, there is a period of waiting (forty-five days). This may **be** the **time** when **many** shall **say**, "My Lord tarrieth" (Matthew 24. 36-51), and will not **be waiting** for Him.

After his life of faithful service to God, Daniel was to **rest** in Abraham's bosom, and **at** the end of the days (i. e., **beginning** of the millennium) he will join that happy throng, who will awake to everlasting life, **and** enjoy the reward of his labours.

L. A. White, L. Burrows.

From Melbourne. —After centuries of world-rule, the times of the Gentiles dwindle to days, dating from when the abomination of desolation **is set up**. For **1, 260** days **is** the measured **time** of the reign of the last Gentile king, the antichrist. During this **time** of Jacob's trouble Michael, the great prince, has a special part to play **unseen** by those for whom he stands.

There are three distinct periods of days **beginning** from one point—the setting-up of the abomination of desolation, *viz.*, **1, 260** days, the duration of the great tribulation; **1, 290** days including additional thirty days;

1, 335 days with another additional forty-five days. What happens in those thirty and forty-five days **we** are not told. *S. Stoope.*

From Kilmarnock. —"At that time" (verse 1), **we** doubt not, refers to the end of the "times of the Gentiles", after the rapture of the saints of this dispensation. In the **New Testament** **we** learn that this time is still in the future. The Lord **Jesus** (Matthew 24.) instructed the disciples regarding the signs that will **be seen** and the terrible time of trouble that will arise before He comes in judgement **as** Son of Man. The apostle Paul (2 Thessalonians 2.) tells **us** that the falling away will come first, and the man of sin will **be** revealed. This is the antichrist, who will "make **a** firm covenant with many for one week (seven years): and in the midst of the week he shall **cause** the sacrifice and the oblation to cease" (9. 27, R. V. M.), and shall **set** himself up **as** God for all to worship (Revelation 13. 4-6). The apostle John makes known that what **was** revealed to him would take place **at** this time (Revelation 12. 7-9).

Michael, Israel's great prince, will fight against the dragon and his angels, and they will **be cast** unto the earth. **We** understand this will **be at** the commencement of the great tribulation and when all are exhorted to **flee** to the mountains. "He that endureth to the end, the **same** shall **be saved**" (Mark 13. 13). *A. G. S.*

From Sunderland. —The sufferings of the people of God, following the setting **up** of the abomination of desolation, will **be** of unprecedented severity and intensity: so much so that the Lord **Jesus** could say that, except these days **be** shortened, no flesh would **be** saved (Matthew 24. 22). Their only safety appears to **be** in flight to the mountains (Matthew 24. 16), or into the wilderness (Revelation 12. 14).

The **time** of trouble **seems** to **be** associated with the warfare between Michael and his angels and the dragon and his angels, following which Satan will **be cast** down to earth and will **persecute** the **seed** of Israel which keep the commandments of God and hold the testimony of **Jesus** (Revelation 12. 7, 17). It will **be** then that the people which know their God will **be** strong and do exploits. They will **be** refined in the fires of persecution, and they will make their robes white in the blood of the Lamb (Revelation 7. 14). The days of their sufferings are, however, numbered, and deliverance would appear to come to them 1, 335 days after the setting up of the abomination.

Among those who shine with lustre in the kingdom of our Lord will **be** Daniel, whose heart **was** faithful toward God and who kept the commandment of God. "Verily there **is** **a** reward for the righteous: verily there **is** **a** God that judgeth in the earth". *J. R., Jnr.*

From Cowdenbeath. —It **is** difficult to define exactly Michael's particular duty. No doubt Michael held **a** high place amongst the angelic beings. While **we** are not told much in Scripture concerning him, **we** would judge, from Daniel 10. 21, that his particular duty **was** to stand for God's people Israel. Michael **is** here associated with Daniel's people in what are **termed** "the latter days" (10. 14), which the Lord described **as** days of great tribulation (Matthew 24.). These days shall indeed **be** grievous for the faithful of that **time**. The severity of the tribulation **is** seen in verse 7,

"when they have made an end of breaking in pieces the power of the holy people".

We are told (12. 1) of the deliverance of the faithful of that day; and, while we are not told how they shall be delivered, we might assume that deliverance will take various forms. We know that many shall be delivered by the days being shortened (Matthew 24. 22), not a few will suffer martyrdom, being beheaded for the testimony of Jesus (Revelation 20. 4), while final deliverance will be accomplished by the coming of the Son of Man.

The faithful ones will have their place in a resurrection, which we judge to be the first resurrection (Revelation 20.), embracing those slain during the tribulation.

Rewards will be given (12. 3), and, during the millennial period, some shall shine as the brightness of the firmament and others as stars, according to the quality and nature of their service.

Daniel saw two angelic beings, and listened to a conversation between them (12. 5-7), during which one of the angels stated the duration and intensity of the tribulation. Much perplexed, Daniel pleaded for a better understanding of all these things, but no further enlightenment was given; the words are shut up and sealed till the time of the end. *D. McLelland,*

From London, S. E. —This chapter continues the vision of the previous chapter. All is definitely connected with God's people Israel, when the Lord shall come as the deliverer of His ancient people at the end of the indignation, and His arm is no longer stretched out against them. There shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time. Jeremiah 30. 5-9 and Isaiah 65. 8-18 speak of that time.

With reference to the words "thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book" (12. 1), we read in Revelation 13. 8: "All... shall worship him (the beast), every one whose name hath not been written in the book of life of the Lamb". Zechariah foretells that two-thirds shall be cut off and die, but a third part shall come through the fire, those found written in the book: and to them God shall say, "It is My people; and they shall say, The LORD is my God" (Zechariah 13. 9).

The Lord, speaking of this time, said: "When, therefore, ye see the abomination of desolation, which was spoken of by Daniel the prophet" (Matthew 24. 15), then added (verse 21): "For then shall be great tribulation, such as hath not been from the beginning of the world until now, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days had been shortened, no flesh would have been saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened."

In verse 2 we have brought before us what the apostle called the "hope toward God", the resurrection of the just and the unjust. "Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt." There are two resurrections spoken of always, and especially by the Lord—a resurrection to life and a resurrection to judgement. These are distinct as regards time, though one in their moral bearing both upon Jew and Gentile, inasmuch as all must stand up again either in eternal life, or to be judged and punished eternally. The resurrection of the just takes place at the commencement, that of the unjust and transgressors at the end of the thousand years' reign of Jesus Christ, the Son of Man (Revelation 20. 5).

Daniel, beloved of God, shall stand in his lot. He fell asleep in Babylon until the day of his Lord, when he shall stand with others in his lot. "In Thy presence is fulness of joy; in Thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore" (Psalm 16. 11). *J. D.*

From Atherton.—The first paragraph of the chapter is a continuation of the angel's message concerning what is inscribed in the writing of truth. The reference to Michael (12. 1) led some of us to think that this is a reference to the conflict in heaven (Revelation 12.). Since Michael is the prince on behalf of the people of Israel, the conflict in heaven, perhaps, has some reference to the people. Others thought that there was no connexion between this verse and Revelation 12. [9]. After this follows the prophesied great tribulation, the time of Jacob's trouble (Jeremiah 30. 7), when there will be for three and a half years a period of unprecedented persecution of those who are faithful to God. At the end of the tribulation will be the first resurrection (12. 2, and Revelation 20. 4-6). Those who meet their death in the great tribulation will be raised with the Old Testament saints and will then pass into the millennium, the golden age of prosperity. None of the unjust will be raised at this time, the rest of the dead will not be raised until after the millennium.

It was thought that verse 3 referred to the wise of all dispensations, who will turn many to righteousness by word and life [10]; and the words "Many shall run to and fro" (verse 4) were considered to have reference to apostasy (Amos 8. 12). Men will be swift to do evil, and knowledge will be increased at a tremendous rate during antichrist's reign [11].

The second paragraph reverts to the scene by the river Hiddekel (chapter 10.). The other two men referred to are in addition to those in chapter 10., and the "man clothed in linen" is the man of chapter 10. 5. From him we learn that the tribulation is to last for three and a half years. This agrees with:—half a week, three and a half years (Daniel 9.), forty-two months (Revelation 13. 6), and 1, 260 days, three and a half years of 360 days each (Revelation 12. 6).

It is, perhaps, a little difficult to fit in the longer periods of days in verses 11 and 12. The 1, 290 days is thirty days (one month) longer than the three and a half years of the tribulation, and it is difficult to tell from verse 11 what marks the end of this period. The longer period, 1, 335 days, may take in the time up to the millennium, when those, who have continued faithful, will enter with joy into that glorious age (Isaiah 32. 1-3; Psalm 45.; Psalm 72. 7-10). Some thought that the difference of number in these verses and in Revelation indicates a fulfilment of the Lord's words in Matthew 24. 22, the thirty days less in Revelation being the Ve-adar intercalary month added to the calendar each seven years to bring it into line with the solar calendar. During the great tribulation the days will be shortened by the intervention of God; this month will be omitted, and so the three and a half years will be 1, 260 days—forty-two months of thirty days. Others said that this was not consistent with either the Jewish or the prophetic year. The Jewish year consisted of twelve lunar months of alternately thirty and twenty-nine days, making a total of 354 days. The solar year consists of 365¼ days, the difference between the two being 11¼ days. The calendar was adjusted by the addition of an extra month of thirty days on the third, sixth and eighth years of a cycle of eight years (1¼ by 8=90 days). The prophetic year is one of 360 days, as is clearly indicated by scriptures already referred to (i. e., three and a half years, forty-two months, 1, 260 days). *R. C. Jones, D. H. Butler.*

COMMENTS.

[1] (Barrhead **and** Paisley). —We recently drew attention to what Dr. Tregelles said on Daniel 12. 2. I repeat it again: "The true rendering of this verse is, I believe, 'And many from amongst the sleepers of the dust of the earth shall awake; these shall be unto everlasting life; but those [the rest of the sleepers, those who do not awake at this time] shall be unto shame and everlasting contempt.' "

Mr. William Kelly sees in this verse not a resurrection at all, but "a national resuscitation of Daniel's people", and cites in proof of this Isaiah 26. and Ezekiel 37. But while we know that Israel will be saved at the coming of the Son of Man, and that the scattered children of Israel will be brought from among the Gentile nations to their own land, as Isaiah 49. 22 and 66. 20 clearly show, it is surely forcing Scripture when such a verse as Isaiah 26. 19 is made to be a spiritual revival: "Thy dead shall live; my dead bodies shall arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in the dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast forth the dead." I think too that the words, "Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake", are much too strong to signify simply a spiritual revival. We know that prior to the millennium there will be a resurrection, as Revelation 20. 4 clearly shews, and verse 5 says that the rest of the dead lived not until the thousand years should be finished. I am of the opinion that Revelation 20. 4, 5 casts light on Daniel 12. 2. —*J. M.*

[2] (Crowborough). —See comment on paper from Barrhead and Paisley. —*J. M.*

[3] (Brantford). —See comment on paper from Barrhead and Paisley. John 5. 29 is the resurrection prior to the Great White Throne judgement, and is after the thousand years. Note that it says "All that are in the tombs shall hear His voice." —*J. M.*

[4] (Brantford). —I judge the book Daniel wrote and that of Revelation 5. 1, the book sealed with seven seals, are two entirely different books. Note what happens in Revelation 6. and Revelation 8. 1, 2 at the breaking of the seven seals. —*J. M.*

[5] (Birkenhead). —If there are only 430 years between the covenant God made with Abraham and the giving of the law (see Galatians 3. 17), it is clear that the people of Israel did not spend 400 years in Egypt. It is generally understood that the 400 years of affliction (Genesis 15. 13) began in the persecution of Isaac by Ishmael, the son of Hagar the Egyptian (Genesis 21. 8, 9; Galatians 4. 29). —*J. M.*

See B. S., 1944, pp. 87-100, and 1945, p. 1. —*S. B.*

[6] (Kingston-on-Thames). —I am of the opinion that what Daniel 12. 1 says about deliverance, is what the Lord says in other words in Matthew 24. 13, "He that endureth to the end, the same shall be saved." This must be physical deliverance, for salvation from God's wrath is not procured by final perseverance. Indeed, the elect cannot be lost, such as have their names written in the book of life from the foundation of the world (Revelation 17. 8). Alas, some shall not have their names written there and shall wonder and worship the beast (Revelation 13. 3, 4). —*J. M.*

[7] (Kingston-on-Thames). —See comment on paper from Barrhead and Paisley. —*J. M.*

[8] (Kingston-on-Thames). —I am very doubtful of the suggestion of our friends *re* many running to and fro after the knowledge of God's will. Do not Isaiah 60. 2 and other scriptures indicate that it will be a time of most intense spiritual darkness? Does not Isaiah 30. 15 show that the proper attitude of the saint is one of quietness and confidence rather than running to and fro?—*J. M.*

[9] (Atherton). —I think there is a definite connexion between Daniel 12. 1 and Revelation 12. —*J. M.*

[10] (Atherton). —Whilst Daniel 12. 3 contains what may be regarded as having general application, its primary application is to those who will live in that period. —*J. M.*

[11] (Atherton). —Kingston-on-Thames presents the opposite view to this—I do not think that either view is correct. "Run to and fro" seems to me to indicate quick, ceaseless movement. Till the age of steam locomotion, the quickest mode of travel since the world began was on horseback, a slow means of transport compared with the present, and with the increase of knowledge movement may be quicker still. But after all, what does it amount to and what real satisfaction and happiness does it bring? None, it seems to me. —*J. M.*

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

Question from Kilmarnock. —Are we correct in thinking that, according to Daniel 11. 37, the antichrist will be a Jew by birth?

Answer. —"The gods of his fathers, " or "God" as in the A. V., is the word *Elohim*, but as this word is used of idols as well as of the true God, we cannot be dogmatic that the gods or God of his fathers means the God of Israel. It therefore follows that we cannot, from this verse, contend that the antichrist is a Jew by race. —*J. M.*

Question from London, S. E. —It is thought by many of the class that the man of sin will be a resurrected person from the abode of Satan (Revelation 11. 7), the evil one thus imitating, by deception, divine power.

Answer. —The beast (the man) receives a death-stroke, as in Revelation 13., goes down into the abyss or bottomless pit and comes up again (Revelation 17. and 11.), and his rising again occurs in the middle of Daniel's seventieth week, for after this he has authority to continue forty and two months (Revelation 13.). —*J. M.*

It does not seem necessary to take ch. 13. 3, 12; 17. 8, to mean that the beast is actually killed and raised from the dead. As a *King* he receives a "death stroke": "is not. " **He** then miraculously regains his power, his "death stroke is healed, " and is energised by an evil spirit from the abyss. See Y. M. C., 1917, p. 14. —*S. B.*

Questions from Barrhead and Paisley. —(1) When is "the end of the days"? (Daniel 12. 13). (2) Will Daniel and other Old Testament saints be raised to enjoy the millennium?

Answers (1). —I judge these are the end of the days that all the "blessed" shall reach. "Blessed is he that waiteth and cometh to the 1, 885 days."—*J. M.*

(2) Yes. "Ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and *all* the prophets, in the kingdom of God" (Luke 13. 28). —*J. M.*

Questions from Melbourne. —(1) Do both Jew and Gentile awake to everlasting life (Daniel 12. 2), or is this resurrection confined to Jews ?

(2) Is the resurrection of the dead in Christ at His coming said to be part of the first resurrection ?

(3) Do these sleepers in the dust awake at the commencement of Christ's reign on earth, and so for them begins eternal life ?

(4) Is this everlasting life on earth or with Christ in glory ?

(5) Is the beast with two horns (Revelation 13. 11) the false prophet ?

Answers. —(1) It applies to both Jew and Gentile. Note what is said about the living nations in Matthew 25. 46. See note on paper from Barrhead and Paisley in this issue. —*J. M.*

(2) Two groups are indicated in Revelation 20. 4, and another in verse 5, "the rest of the dead", who are not raised till after the thousand years. The two groups of verse 4 are, "they that sat upon" the thrones, and, such as were martyred by the beast. Such lived again. Then we are told—"This is the first resurrection". The demonstrative pronoun "this" points out what the first resurrection is. The raising of the saints who are of the Church is a pre-resurrection to this, as I see it. —*J. M.*

(3) If Dr. Tregelles is right (see note on paper from Barrhead and Paisley), then only the righteous awake to everlasting life. The others or "the rest of the dead", who are not awakened from their sleep in the dust, do not awake till after the millennium. We must distinguish between at least three presentations of eternal life in the New Testament: (a) eternal life is the gift of God to all believers, otherwise they would have no new life connected with the new birth, and such a thought is quite impossible (John 3. 16; Romans 6. 23, etc.); (b) eternal life can be reaped by such believers, who already have eternal life, as sow to the Spirit, and not to the flesh. "He that soweth unto the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap eternal life" (Galatians 6. 8); this is the abundant life of John 10. 10; (c) eternal life is an inheritance in the future for those who on earth had the gift of eternal life and reaped eternal life. "Every one that hath left houses, or brethren, or sisters, . . . *for My Name's sake*, shall **receive** a hundredfold, and shall inherit eternal life" (Matthew 19. 29). Inheritance implies a previous relationship. I do not understand that, in the case of such as awake to eternal life, this is eternal life the gift of God to the believing sinner, as at (a). —*J. M.*

(4) See answer (3). It is everlasting life enjoyed with Christ in the millennial reign and after. See (c) in answer (3). —*J. M.*

(5) Yes !—*J. M.*